

No Memorial

John Vowler Parminter and Family

Parminter d. 1765

Parminter d. 1774

Mary Parminter d. 1776

Elizabeth Parminter d. 8 April 1835¹

Although John Vowler Parminter (1739-1792) is not buried in the Dissenters graveyard some of his family and probably both his wives are there.

John (VP) was the son of Richard Parminter and Rebecca Vowler. Richard (1710-1756), John (VP)'s father was the brother of Samuel who is also buried in the Dissenters graveyard.² Richard, like his brother was on the Committee of Thirteen having been elected in 1737. It appears he was a Councillor in Exeter and treasurer of the committee being elected in 1748.³ *'And we desire Counsellor Mr Parminter will be for the future our treasurer and take care of our books and writings.'*

John (VP)'s parents, *'Mr Richard Parminter and Mrs Rebecca Vowler were marri'd May y^e 24th'* in 1733 at Heavitree parish church.⁴ Rebecca was the daughter of John Vowler of Bellair House, Exeter. John Vowler was a grocer who built Bellair in about 1700. It is now part of Devon County Council and is used by Council members as a meeting place.

Through his mother, Rebecca, John was also related to the Baring's of Exeter. His mother's sister Elizabeth Vowler had married Johan (John) Baring. He was also a cousin to Jane Parminter of A la Ronde and Uncle to Mary Parminter of the same place.



Elizabeth Baring née Vowler, John (VP)'s aunt. Was there a family resemblance?

John (VP) started his career as a grocer having served his apprenticeship under his uncle Samuel Parminter in Exeter.⁵ He started his seven-year apprenticeship on 14th March 1754.⁶ His freedom of the city was gained on 21st March in 1761.⁷

¹ See Elizabeth Parminter biography www.edgt.org.uk

² See Samuel Parminter biography www.edgt.org.uk

³ James Meeting minute book (1687-1760) South West heritage Trust (SWHT).

⁴ Heavitree marriage register accessed via www.findmypast.co.uk

⁵ As note 1.

⁶ Apprenticeship record accessed via www.ancestry.co.uk

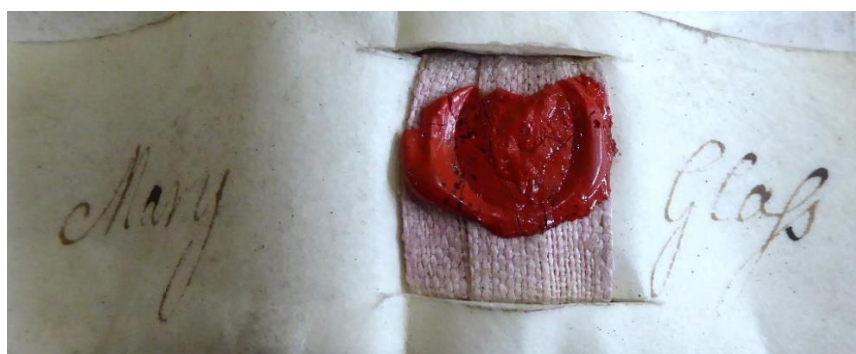
⁷ Exeter Freeman 1266-1967, Devon and Cornwall Record Society, Ed. Rowe, and Jackson, 1973.

Marriage soon followed. He married Mary Glass, the daughter of Dr. Thomas Glass, a prominent Exeter physician, on 2nd February 1762 at St. Stephens Church on Exeter High Street.⁸ The marriage settlement dated 29th January 1762.⁹



Dr Glass by John Opie c. 1780

The settlement was 'between John Vowler Parminter of the City of Exeter Merchant of the first part Thomas Glass of the same city Doctor in physic of the second part Mary Glass of the same city spinster eldest daughter of the said Thomas Glass by Mary his wife formerly Mary Hodges of the third part and Richard Parminter of the Middle Temple London Esquire John Parminter of Bideford in the County of Devon Merchant Samuel Glass of Oxford surgeon and Thomas Glass of the said city of Exeter Merchant of the fourth part'. Besides a monetary present, Skrinkhill near Little Silver in Tiverton, a moiety of Bible Field and parts of East Barton in Tiverton was presented. There were also provisos in case either of the two should die leaving children.



Mary's signature on their marriage settlement

⁸ St Stephens marriage register accessed via www.ancestry.co.uk

⁹ Marriage settlement (49/9/6/213) SWHT.

John and Mary had five children that we know lived into adulthood, Elizabeth (1762-1846), Mary (1763-1838), Rebecca (1767-1857), Ann (1769-1808), Charlotte (1776-1816).¹⁰ Charlotte is the only daughter for whom a baptismal record has been found. She was baptised on 7th August 1776 by the Reverend Micaiah Towgood at James Meeting House where they worshipped.¹¹ Baptismal records at James Meeting are spasmodic from the mid 1750s until 1772; just when John (VP) and Mary's children would have been baptised.

In 1765 the Dissenters' burial accounts had '*Rec'd Mr John Parminter for making a cave 15/- paid 11 Nov 1765*'. It is presumed that this was John (VP). There is a gap of some twenty years in the burial register between 1757 and 1776. Could this have been a child of John (VP) and Mary's? Another entry for 1774 notes they '*Rec'd Mr John Vowler Parminter opening his cave 10/- paid 27 Nov 1774*' possibly for another child.

Very little is known about Mary, John's wife. She died in 1776 and it is believed is buried in the Dissenters' graveyard. Mary may have died through complications in giving birth to their daughter Charlotte. The entry in the accounts register reads that they '*Rec'd Mr John Vowler Parminter opening his cave 10/- paid 17 Aug 1776*'.¹²

Alick Cameron in his biography of Dr Glass suggests that Mary is buried in St. David's graveyard in Exeter with her father, mother, and her other siblings. This is not the case as only her father, mother and sister Elizabeth were interred there.¹³

Leaving small children under the age of fourteen must have been hard for John (VP). It appears they were sent to live with their grandfather Thomas Glass. '*The Glass household was augmented by six grandchildren who were largely cared for by Mary Wills, the Glass daughters' old family nurse.*'¹⁴ Thomas Glass in his will left a legacy to Mary Wills '*my daughters and grand daughters will remember the care their maid took of them in their infancy and childhood*'.¹⁵ The Glass family nurse was also remembered in John (VP) and Mary's Aunt Elizabeth Glass' Will when she died in 1800 '*To Mary Wills servant to the Miss Parminters four guineas*'.¹⁶

John Vowler Parminter

Before John (VP)'s marriage in 1762 he was a prominent figure within Exeter society. In 1759 he subscribed to the new meeting house which would become George's. He gave two generous subscriptions amounting to twenty-five pounds.¹⁷ His grandfather John Vowler had been chosen as one of the 'Committee of Thirteen' in 1714 to replace Mr Andrew Jeffery. He served until his death on 20th May 1748. John (VP) like his grandfather was also chosen for the committee in the place of Mr James Sealy on 22nd April 1767. He remained there until 1780.¹⁸

John remarried on 17th December 1777. His wife was Elizabeth Bretland a cousin of the Reverend

¹⁰ According to Alick Cameron in his book 'Thomas Glass MD, Physician of Georgian Exeter' there were six children, one a boy who died aged fifteen in 1783. No records for this child have been found.

¹¹ James Meeting Baptism register accessed via www.ancestry.co.uk

¹² Report and accounts book of dissenter's burial ground 1748-1832 (DRO3693D/0/B/1) SWHT.

¹³ The stone (number 46109) and possibly the remains were removed sometime in the 1980's.

¹⁴ As note 9.

¹⁵ Thomas Glass will (PROB 11/1138/325) accessed via www.ancestry.co.uk

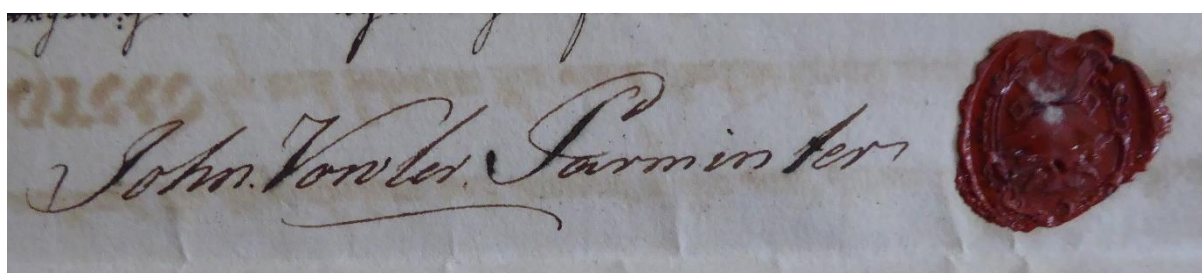
¹⁶ Elizabeth Glass Will (PROB 11/1351/278) accessed via www.ancestry.co.uk

¹⁷ List of subscribers SWHT.

¹⁸ James Meeting Minutes and account books SWHT.

Joseph Bretland, minister at the Mint Meeting in Exeter. They had 3 children Richard, John Bretland and Sophia.

By 1778 it appears John (VP) was in financial difficulties. An agreement between 'John Vowler Parminter of the City of Exeter, Merchant of the one part and John Baring of Mount Radford in the County of Devon and Richard Parminter of Pilton in the said county Esquire on the second part' was drawn up on 11th November 1778. The indenture between himself, his brother and cousin stated that '*it being thought adviseable and for the benefit and advantage of the said John Vowler Parminter and his family for good and sufficient reasons that his continuing to carry on his trade and business in the manner he has at times lately done will be rather prejudicial than beneficial to him and them therefore that he should as soon and as speedily as conveniently may be drop and discontinue the same and in order thereto sell off and dispose of his said stock in trade and by and with the money thereby and thereout arising or a competent part thereof pay and satisfy all his debts contracted in the said trade*'.¹⁹ Any money left over was to be given to John and Richard to invest for John (VP)'s family and he was never to trade as a merchant again.



John (VP) became a freemason on 1st August 1780 at St. John's Lodge in Exeter the oldest lodge in Devon.²⁰ At the time John (VP) joined they met regularly in various pubs in Exeter until their premises were built in Gandy Street.

On 13th October 1780 John (VP) wrote his will.²¹ By this time the family had moved to Salviston (sic) within Ottery St. Mary. This possibly refers to Salston Manor just south of Ottery. It is not known how long they stayed there but by 1787 when Mary Glass, Mary's Aunt wrote her will John (VP) and his new family had moved to Bideford. He was listed in the 1791 directory for Bideford as a Salt Officer.²²

Children of John and Mary

Elizabeth (1762-1846), their oldest daughter married Jacob Melhuish a surgeon of Tiverton on 9th August 1786 in St Paul's church in Exeter.²³ They had nine children. Robert the final child was born just before his father's death and baptised after it in 1806. Elizabeth died in Tiverton in 1846.

Mary (1763-1838), married Samuel Thomas Black, also a surgeon, on 11th May 1796 in East Budleigh.²⁴ Samuel was from Littleham near Exmouth but practised in Exmouth on the Strand. They had four children. Mary died in 1838 one year after her husband. They were both buried in Lymptone parish church graveyard.

¹⁹ Articles of agreement (1926/B/B/FS4) SWHT.

²⁰ England, United Grand Lodge of England Freemason membership registers, 1751-1921 accessed via www.ancestry.co.uk

²¹ Will of John Vowler Parminter (49/9/6/211g) SWHT.

²² The Universal British Directory 1791 accessed via www.ancestry.co.uk

²³ St. Paul's marriage register accessed via www.findmypast.co.uk

²⁴ As note 22.

Rebecca (1767-1857) remained unmarried. She stayed in Exeter and wrote her will there in 1788 but by the time of her death she was a patient in Warburton's Lunatic Asylum in Bethnal House, Bethnal Green in East London.²⁵ In the 1851 census she was described in the list of patients as a gentlewoman. It is not known why or when she was admitted although it was probably prior to 1846. Her will of 1788 had no codicil so it was somewhat out of date by the time she died at the age of 98. She was buried in Tower Hamlets Cemetery.

Ann (1769-1808) like Rebecca remained unmarried. She had moved to Bath by 1803 where she was received into the Moravian Congregation of Monmouth Street. She wrote her will in 1805. She died on 21st March 1808 and was buried in the Moravian cemetery in Monmouth Street, Bath.²⁶

Charlotte (1776-1815) also remained unmarried. She moved to Bath where she was admitted into the Moravian Congregation in 1801.²⁷ Her second Cousin Jane Parminter (1748-1818) also worshipped there until she removed to Bristol in the early 1800s. Charlotte also moved to Bristol at some point before returning to Bath in 1807 where she died on 1st October 1815. She wrote her will in August 1808 just after her sister Ann had died and wrote that she wanted to be buried in the same grave as her.²⁸

Mary's siblings

Elizabeth Glass (c.1744 -1780) never married and died at the relatively early age of thirty-five or six in 1780. She was buried in St. David's church graveyard with her parents.²⁹

Melina Glass (c.1753-1837) married Samuel Daniell, a banker from Yeovil in Somerset on 24th November 1777 at St. Mary Arches church.³⁰ They do not appear to have had any children. Samuel died in 1798. Melina moved at some point to Bath where she died in 1837 at 2 Sion Hill, near to her sister Ann.

Ann Glass (1746 -1821) married John Lowder of Southampton in Hampshire on 1st May 1778 at St. Mary Arches church³¹. In his Will John described himself as a banker but he was also one of the developers of Lansdowne Place in Bath.³² He and Ann lived in 1 Lansdown Place until their deaths; he died in 1810. They were both buried in Walcot St. Swithin's graveyard. John Lowder their son was an architect for the city of Bath, and it is believed he may have designed A la Ronde for Jane Parminter.³³

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²⁵ For more on the Bethnal Green Asylum see <https://ezitis.myzen.co.uk/bethnalhouse.html> accessed 5/12/2023.

²⁶ Moravian burial register accessed via www.ancestry.co.uk

²⁷ As note 25.

²⁸ Charlotte Parminter's will (PROB 11/1579/42) accessed via www.ancestry.co.uk

²⁹ Document recording tombstone inscriptions held at St David's church, Exeter.

³⁰ St. Mary Arches marriage register accessed via www.findmypast.co.uk

³¹ As note 29.

³² Information on Lansdown Place, Bath see

[https://democracy.bathnes.gov.uk/celistdocuments.aspx?MID=928&DF=07%2F09%2F2005&A=1&R=0&F=embed\\$zAppendix2Update.htm](https://democracy.bathnes.gov.uk/celistdocuments.aspx?MID=928&DF=07%2F09%2F2005&A=1&R=0&F=embed$zAppendix2Update.htm)

³³ For more on the Parminters see <https://t.ly/qI5wa>