

George Parkins (1794 – 1820)
William Parkins (1745 – 1835)
Sarah Parkins (1758 – 1840)

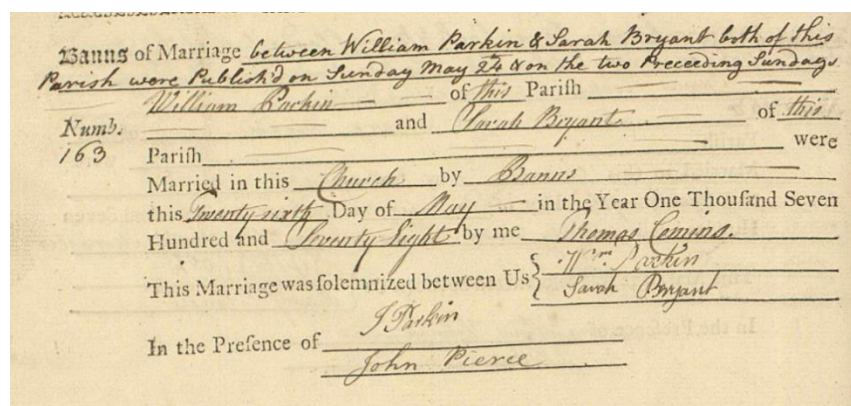
No Memorial

Frances Parkins (c.1822? – 1823)
William Parkins (1834 – 1836)
Helen Leonora Parkins (1836 – 1841)

One doesn't need to go far in Exeter without being reminded of the Parkin family legacy. F. (Francis) Parkin & Sons Ltd. were iron founders and steel stockholders from 1859 through four generations of the family until 1991.¹



William Parkin (1745-1835), Francis' grandfather, was a carpenter and joiner. Apprentice records show him being taken on by George Bryant "a joyner and carpenter of Exeter" as an apprentice on the 28th of September 1762.²



William married Sarah Bryant the daughter of George his Master on the 26th of May 1778 at St Georges Church, Exeter.³ William would have just finished his seven years apprenticeship with George.⁴

It is possible that William and Sarah had ten children although some of the primary evidence has not

¹ *The family firm in British business history : F Parkin & Sons Ltd., iron founders and steel stockholders 1859-1991 : four generations of an Exeter family firm*, Susan Pearl Marks, Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Exeter, 2006.

² 'UK, Register of Duties Paid for Apprentices' Indentures, 1710-1811, accessed via www.ancestry.co.uk

³ St George's church was situated in South Street, destroyed during WWII. St George's records accessed via www.findmypast.co.uk

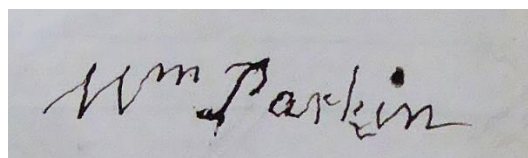
⁴ See Stone 34 Bryant biography at www.edgt.org.uk

been found. Some family connections have been taken from 'British 1820 settlers to South Africa'.⁵ William (c.1779-1843), **Charlotte** (1782-1787), Sarah (c.1784 - ?), John (1787-1853), Charlotte (c.1789 - ?), Isaac (c.1792-1854), **George** (1794-1820), Harriet (1801-1874), Elizabeth (c.1811- ?) and Sally (?-?).⁶

Except for Harriet, Elizabeth and Sally all were baptised at various churches within Exeter St. Kerrian's, St. Mary Major's and Holy Trinity.⁷ No records have been discovered for the three mentioned above. In the 1791 directory there are three Parkins listed William, carpenter in Magdalen Street, Mrs Parkin an upholster (upholsterer) in South Street and John Parkin also an upholster in North Street.⁸ Was this William and Sarah and John the 'J. Parkin' who was the witness at their wedding?

William lived to the great age of eighty. He died in 1835 and was buried on the 4th of June.⁹ The register has him as of St Sidwell's parish. We know that in 1834 Harriet, William and Sarah's daughter registers her illegitimate child with her address being Primrose Cottage, St. Sidwell's. She is still there when she marries in 1839. Was this where William and Sarah lived too?

He wrote his Will in May 1835 shortly before his death leaving two premises in South Street to his son Isaac. *'All the rest residue and remainder of my estate property and effects I give and bequeath unto my dear wife Sarah.'*¹⁰



William Parkin's signature on his Will and interesting seal depicting an ant?

Sarah died in March 1840 at the age of eighty-two.¹¹ There is a Sarah Perkins a widow from St. Sidwell's who was buried on the 17th of March in the Dissenters graveyard.¹² Was this "our" Sarah? So far, no death registration has been found for her.

⁵ British 1820 settlers to South Africa

<https://www.1820settlers.com/genealogy/getperson.php?personID=I35138&tree=master> accessed 18/11/2021.

⁶ Those marked in bold are buried in the Dissenters Graveyard.

⁷ All accessed via www.findmypast.co.uk

⁸ The Universal British directory of trade, commerce, and manufacture, 1791 accessed via www.ancestry.co.uk

⁹ Georges meeting burial register (Presbyterian) 1824-1837 accessed via www.ancestry.co.uk

¹⁰ William Parkin's Will included in F.Parkin & Sons Ltd.1711-1991 (6234B) documents held at www.swheritage.org.uk

¹¹ As note 5.

¹² Georges meeting burial register 1837-1882 (DRO3693D/R1) www.swheritage.org.uk

Of their children, only one, **Charlotte** died in infancy in 1787 at the age of four. In the account book she was described as Mr Bryant's grandchild. She was buried on the 5th of October and four shillings was paid to 'open a grave for her'.¹³ It does not say which grave she was buried in although it is probable that it was the Bryant's grave which was already in existence by then.

George her brother died at the early age of twenty-five. Eight shillings was paid on the day of his burial the 27th of February 1820 to dig his grave.¹⁴

Frances/Francis Parkin who died in 1823 is probably the child of Harriet Parkin (1801-1874), William and Sarah's daughter. She had for many years lived with Zachary Turner, a solicitor, and by whom she had several children.¹⁵

The final two burials **William** and **Helen Leonora** were children of Isaac Parkin, William and Sarah's son mentioned in William's Will.

Isaac did not follow his father into the carpentry and building trade but instead was apprenticed as a silversmith. On the 1st of February 1809 Isaac and his father signed an indenture for Isaac to serve seven years with John Legg junior a silversmith in Exeter.¹⁶

Isaac married Ann Baker on the 12th of October 1817 at St Sidwell's church.¹⁷ As with his father before him and many other men at that time he married shortly after finishing his apprenticeship. They had a total of nine children, Mary Ann (1818-1901), Isaac (1822-1879), Louisa (1824 -1886), Francis (1827-1905), Emma Maria (1829- 1899), Catherine Sarah (1832-1911), **William Henry** (1834-1836), **Helen Leonora** (1834-1841) and Sophia Emily 1840-1887). Mary Ann was baptised at St. Mary Major whilst her siblings were all baptised at St. Edmunds church.¹⁸

Isaac worked as a silversmith and in Pigot's 1830 Directory of Exeter he was described as a 'working silversmith' living on Exe Island. On the 28th of April 1835 he was admitted a Freeman of the Company of Goldsmiths of Exeter.¹⁹



Isaac Parkin's maker's mark (right).

Isaac also became an assayer, making an oath in 1850 to, '*faithfully behave myself in the said office and no undue profit to myself take to the hurting or hindrance of any person that is owner or bringer in of*

¹³ Report and annual account book of dissenter's burial ground 1748-1832 (DRO3693D/0/B/1)

www.swheritage.org.uk

¹⁴ As note 13.

¹⁵ Zachary Turner's Will (PROB11 /1859/429) accessed via www.ancestry.co.uk

¹⁶ F.Parkin & Sons Ltd.1711-1991 (6234B) documents held at www.swheritage.org.uk

¹⁷ Transcript of St. Sidwell's Parish records accessed via www.findmypast.co.uk

¹⁸ As note 7.

¹⁹ As note 16.

any gold or silver plate to be assayed'.²⁰ He had strict rules to work by including exact amount of grains he was allowed to extract whilst assaying any item.²¹

Isaac's Will stated that he was '*Isaac parkin of the parish of Saint Edmunds on the Bridge in the County of the City of Exeter Silversmith and Innkeeper*'.²² The first we hear of Isaac as a victualler is in Robson's Directory of 1839 when he appears as landlord of '*The Ret of Beer*' on Exe Island.²³ Isaac and Ann then went on to run the 'Queen Victoria Inn' on Tudor Street, closed in 2008. Was this the same pub renamed?



The Queen Victoria Inn (c.2008) now a beauty salon.

Most of the literature states that Isaac was practicing as a silversmith in the 1820's and 30's and perhaps running a public house was eventually more lucrative than his silversmithing business. It was Isaac's son Francis who started the iron founding dynasty in Exeter.

Connections to South Africa²⁴

On the 7th of January 1820 John Parkin, Isaac's brother, and a party of about thirty people from Exeter including his wife and four children sailed from Portsmouth on the HM Store Ship Weymouth. They reached Table Bay in April.

It appears that a George Parkin was also due to sail but was not listed on the Muster-Roll for the Weymouth, it is assumed he remained in Exeter. Was this John's brother **George** who died in February 1820 just after they set sail and is the burial mentioned above?

John settled at Baakens River Farm in Port Elizabeth on the Eastern Cape.

A Amosford November 2021

²⁰ As note 16.

²¹ 'The Anglo American Magazine, January-July, Vol. 2, 1853 Toronto, pp.515-518 accessed via Google Books 15/11/2021.

²² Isaac Parkin Will (PROB 11/2199/319) accessed via www.ancestry.co.uk and handwritten will as note 15.

²³ Robson's Directory 1839 accessed via www.ancestry.co.uk

²⁴ As note 5.