

A HISTORY OF PALATINE LODGE, No 97

A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH AS WRITTEN BY HIMSELF
FOR THE INFORMATION OF HIS CHILDREN

1766 - 1805



Bro Michael Scarth
Worshipful Master 1792

SCARTH THE MAN

Michael Scarth was born on 10th October 1766 in County Durham, England the illegitimate child of a man named Stott. He married Ann Lane, a farmer's daughter, at Castle Eden Church in 1791. He was the father of 5 boys and 3 girls.

He died of typhus fever at the age of 39 years in Sunderland on 20th November 1805 and was buried at Castle Eden.

We know these facts from documents in the possession of a direct descendant of Michael's youngest son, W Bro Tom Smith, PPrGReg, PM of Lodge of Concord, No 6859

Thankfully, included among those documents, Michael left the autobiographical sketch for the information of his 8 children, which is set out below: -

HIS STORY

"25th July 1790, left Stockton where I had resided with great satisfaction as Clerk and Steward for Rowland Webster, Esq. of that place and went to Castle Eden, there to reside as principal Agent and Steward for Rowland Burdon (the owner of the Parish etc.) and who had been elected on the 8th of this month as Member of Parliament, after a Poll of 10 days.

Prior to this Election, Rowland Burdon transacted his own business, and consequently had no Steward to which situation I was recommended by my old and worthy master, Mr Webster, tho' I was not quite unknown to Mr Burdon, having promised several gentlemen and farmers in the Parish of Billingham and that neighbourhood to sign a Letter, at their request, to the Bishop of Peterborough, then Dean of Durham, requesting he would withdraw the opposition he was making against a Bill which Mr Burdon was going to present to the House of Commons for making a Turnpike Road from Bishopwearmouth to Norton, and for which service I shortly after received Mr Burdon's thanks in a very polite letter to Mr Webster. I having been also very active in obtaining promises from the Freeholders in Stockton, Cleveland etc to vote for Mr Burdon, and seeing them conveyed to and from the Poll.

During the first 7 days and nights I was not in bed. I was induced to take this active part through principle, having no idea until after the Poll, of coming to serve Mr Burdon, nor of any advantage:--- a few days before the Poll I declined a very handsome offer by Sir J Eden's friends.

On engaging to serve Mr Burdon, I stipulated in the same Manner, as when I went to Mr Webster that I should be allowed to be at private lodgings, in order that I might retire when not engaged in business.

In consequence of this arrangement, recommended me to Board and Lodge at Mr Lane's, a respectable farmer, near the Castle and who had been a Tenant on the farm under Mr Burdon a considerable period"

PRIVATE CAREER

- Land Steward to Rowland Burdon – 18th July 1790.
- Land Steward to C Brandling – February 1791.
- Partner in Patent Ropery with Messrs Grimshaw, Webster and Hills.
- Partner in Castle Eden Manufactory with Messrs Webster Junr. and Wilson.
- Third Partner in Bridge with Messrs Burdon and Wilson

THE DEPTFORD ROPERY

C 179

Robinson Library

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Webster's Ropery



Patent Ropery built at Deptford, south side of River Wear

Sunderland by the Sea in 1793



****Fig.2 Heritage Gallery - Rope Works**
©Sunderland City Council, Heritage Gallery

Built in 1797 by John Grimshaw and Rowland Webster, the original rope-works was designed to exploit the new technology of its day - a machine for spinning cordage, which had been invented by a local man, Richard Fothergill. This invention had a revolutionary impact on rope haulage.



RIVER WEAR

Now Council Offices and Tavistock Restaurant

