

A HISTORY OF PALATINE LODGE, No 97  
A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH  
Of  
Bro William Reid Clanny 1777 - 1850



Bro W R Clanny, MD, FRSE, MRJA

Bro W R Clanny was born in Ireland in 1777, educated in Edinburgh and lived 45 years of his distinguished life in Sunderland.

He was present as assistant surgeon at the Battle of the Baltic in 1801.  
Among the many honours bestowed on him were: -

*Knight Commander of the Imperial Order of St John's of Jerusalem*



*The Ribbon of the Legion of Honour*



And many other foreign Orders and Badges of Distinction

Physician Extraordinary to HRH the Duke of Sussex  
He was also elected a Member of several Scientific Societies both at home and abroad.  
He was Consulting Physician to the Sunderland Infirmary.

Some time after becoming a joining member of the lodge Bro Clanny received the grateful thanks of the lodge for his generous offer to give advice 'gratis' to any brother of the lodge whose circumstances might not enable him to pay for such advice.

In 1812 he invented the Safety Lamp known as 'The Clanny', which soon gained the confidence of the miners.

In conferring such an obligation on coal owners etc. he was presented on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 1848 with a testimonial valued at £200 by the Marquis of Londonderry and other coal owners.

**THE BLUE CHOLERA EPIDEMIC OF 1831**

This disease spread across mainland Europe during the years 1829-1830 and reached Sunderland (the first place in England) in October 1831.

In Sunderland, the second person to die from the disease was Jack Crawford "The hero of Camperdown" (see below) who was buried in the churchyard of Sunderland Parish Church (Church of Holy Trinity)

Dr Clanny carried out tests on a sailor with the cholera disease and using a healthy person as a control he observed that the blood water level in the former was considerably lower than that in the case of the control and there was an increase in the volume of a certain other substance.



### Sunderland's Jack Crawford the hero of the Battle of Camperdown 1797

Mowbray Park, Sunderland, 14th November 2004

This statue was erected by subscription by the townspeople of Sunderland.  
The commemorative inscription at the base reads:-

“THE SAILOR WHO SO HEROICALLY NAILED ADMIRAL DUNCAN'S FLAG TO THE MAIN-TOP-GALLANT-MAST OF H. M. S. VENERABLE IN THE GLORIOUS ACTION OFF CAMPERDOWN, ON OCTOBER 11TH 1797.

JACK CRAWFORD WAS BORN AT THE POTTERY BANK SUNDERLAND IN 1775 AND DIED IN HIS NATIVE TOWN IN 1831 AGED 56 YEARS.”

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Beloved by the townspeople of Sunderland, among whom Dr Clanny laboured for 45 years, he died at his residence in Bridge Street on 10<sup>th</sup> January 1850 aged 73 years.

He was buried in the Gill Cemetery, Bishopwearmouth in the presence of a large body of Freemasons and a great concourse of townspeople.

## Research

### The Clanny

<http://www.minerslamps.net/homepage/safetylamphistory.htm>

### Jack Crawford

<http://www.sunderland.gov.uk/Public/Editable/Themes/Visitors-Guide/History/connections.asp?CTheme=71>