

**Vernon Noake
1741-1812**




High on the south wall of St John's Church in Milborne Port there is a marble wall-plaque that reads:

*Sacred to the Memory
of VERNON NOAKE
formerly a Lieutenant
in GENERAL SIR JAMES
ADOLPHUS OUGHTON'S Regiment
who died January 27th 1812
in the 71st year of his age.
ALSO OF
ELIZABETH his Widow
who died September 8th 1823
in the 73rd year of her age*


Vernon was one of the children of Robert Noke who were all baptised at Milborne Port: 20/12/1731 Hannah, 10/4/1733 Thomas, 22/8/1735 Robert and 3/2/1741 Caleb Vernon.

A 1767 Deed of Covenant regarding an estate at Trent details the intended marriage of Vernon Noake and Elizabeth Prankerd of Milborne Port. The marriage took place by licence in 1768 in Bath. Vernon's brother, Robert, had

previously married Elizabeth's sister, Mary Prankerd, in 1763 in Milborne Port. In 1769, Vernon and Elizabeth baptised their only child, Mary, in Milborne Port.

No. 040.
 Vernon Noake of the Parish of
Milborne Port in the County of
Somerset Bachelor, and Elizabeth
Prankerd of this Parish Spinster, were
Married in this Church by Licence with
Consent of Parents, this twentythird Day of
June— in the Year One Thousand Seven
Hundred and sixtyeight by me,
Rich. Roberts

1769. June 23

This Marriage was solemnized
between Mr. Vernon Noake
Elizabeth Prankerd
In the Presence of
Robt Noake 
Mary Noake
I do certify it above to be a true Copy from
the Marriage Register of the Parish of St. James
in the City of Bath, extracted this 7. Day
of Dec. 1820.
Charles Crook, Rector

From the memorial plaque we know that Vernon served as a Lieutenant in the Regiment of Sir James Adolphus Oughton, although we do not know how this came about or about his years of service. In 1741, Oughton was a lieutenant in St George's Regiment of Dragoons; he was promoted to Captain the following year and served in the Scottish Rebellion and at Culloden. In 1759, he became Colonel of the 55th Regiment of Foot which had been on active service in the conquest of French Canada. In 1761, he was Colonel of the 31st Foot and the

Regiment served overseas in the American War of Independence. He died in Bath in 1780.



Sir James Adolphus Oughton

By 1798, Vernon was the commander of 'The Sherborne Volunteers.' Throughout the 'invasion years' in the first part of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic war 1793-1805, Dorset was garrisoned by regular troops and militia regiments as well as by its own volunteer infantry and yeomanry. The Battle of the Nile, fought between British and French fleets near Alexandria, Egypt on 1st August 1798, was one of the greatest victories of the British Admiral Horatio Nelson. From 'The Sherborne Mercury' newspaper of 15th October 1798, we learn that in the evening the Sherborne Loyal Volunteers paraded throughout the town and afterwards fired (for the first time) six rounds ...



Battle of the Nile 1798 – Thomas Whitcombe (1763-1824), painted in 1799

The Militia Ballot List for Osborne for 1798 has survived

<https://www.opcdorset.org/OborneFiles/OborneMilitia1798.htm>

Similarly, it was reported that Wednesday 4th June 1800, being the birthday of his Majesty George III, was observed in Sherborne with the utmost respect. The Volunteers commanded by Captain Noake met and fired excellent volleys on the occasion in honour of the day.

At this time, Sherborne was divided into four tythings, Abbots Fee, Houndsmill, Eastbury and Westbury. Abbots Fee included principally the estate anciently belonging to, and lying in, the neighbourhood of the abbey and was where, in the 1798 Land Tax Assessment, Vernon held property owned by Reverend Nathaniel Bristed, who was the headmaster of Sherborne School and had connections with Milborne Port as detailed in this 1794 deed:

<https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/r/e6af8d96-dc67-465d-afc5-85348322f8e5>

In 1799, Vernon was again 'of Sherborne' and owned 'an estate situate in Kingsbury Regis' including land called 'Cains' which was occupied by Robert and John Baunton. Also in 1799, a bond to indemnify the parish of Sherborne from paying maintenance¹ for the illegitimate child of Deborah Bagg was entered into by Vernon.

Vernon's will was dated 16/6/1808:

This is the last will and testament of me Vernon Noake of Sherborne in the County of Dorset Esquire ffirst I give devise and bequeath unto my daughter Mary the wife of Mr William Beard Jillard and likewise to Mr William Beard Jillard the sum of one hundred pounds each As to my customary or Copyhold Tenements or Estates situate at Motcombe and parcel of the Manor of Gillingham and all other my Copyhold Estates whatsoever the ffreehold messuage or dwelling house with its appurtenances late Mrs Adams and situate at Sherborne aforesaid and all other my monies sureties for money and personal Estate of every denomination whatsoever I give devise and bequeath the same and every part thereof unto my beloved wife Elizabeth and to her heirs Executors additions and assigns for ever but only _ to and chargeable

¹ This is interesting... Why was Vernon Noake taking financial responsibility got an illegitimate child? Was it his? Was it the child of a family member or friend? Was there some other association that he had with Deborah Bagg? We have no answers but it is an intriguing detail...

nevertheless with all my just debts and I nominate and appoint my said wife the sole Executrix of this my will in witness whereof and have hereunto set my hand and seal the sixteenth day of June in the year of our lord eighteen hundred and eight V Noake Signed sealed published and declared by the testator Vernon Noake as and for his last will and Testament in the presence of us who at his request and in his presence and in the presence of each other have subscribed our names as witnesses J Fooks, Francis Woodfords, Thomas Cockerane

Proved at London 1812

Vernon died 27/1/1812 aged 71 at Sherborne, but was buried at Milborne Port on 2/2/1818 - 'Captain Vernon Noake of Sherborne'

Vernon's wife Elizabeth died 8/9/1823 at Sherborne, 'a lady of exalted piety and benevolence'. And of significant property and wealth also! Note the lovely warning to her son-in-law...

Elizabeth Noake 1824

This is the last will and testament of me Elizabeth the widow of Vernon Noake late of Sherborne in the County of Dorset Gentleman whereby I dispose of the worldly Estate wherewith it hath pleased God to bless me in manner following that is to say as to the Messuage or Dwellinghouse with its spurts. wherein I now dwell and the Copyhold Tenements and Estates at Motcombe parcel of the Manor of Gillingham in the county of Dorset devised to me by the will of my said late dear husband as well as all other my Messuages and Lands Tenements and heritts whatsoever situate at Sherborne and Motcombe aforesaid or elsewhere to which I am entitled either in possession reversion remainder or expectancy I give and devise the same and every part thereof unto my friends The Rev Henry Dampier Phelps of Snodland in the County of Kent and Thomas Fooks of Sherborne aforesaid Gentleman and to their heirs Executors admins and assigns according to the nature and tenure of the said Estates and premises respectively

daughter Mary wife of Mr William Beard Jillard

Elizabeth Moore late servant of Mrs Adams £10 pa

Servant Charlotte Boniface £10 pa and £5 for mourning

Nephew John Prankerd pair of silver candlesticks which were my grandfathers Mr George Noake £5

Friends Mrs Phelps, Mrs Gollop, Mrs Dearing

Servant Ann Kird £19 19s and £5 for mourning

*Trustees to pay income from £4000 to daughter Mary (no intermeddling from husband William) and after her decease to her children
Wit Thomas Woodfords Ansford, Francis Woodforde, Thomas Lowman
Probate granted 25/2/1824*

Read more of The Rev Henry Dampier Phelps here
<https://www.snodlandhistory.org.uk/localhis/phelps.htm>

‘On Sundays he wore his University gown, which he had had at Oxford or Cambridge 50 years ago, and which from black to brown had lapsed into a dingy floor colour...’

The Noke/Noake family have been recorded in the Milborne Port parish registers since at least the middle of the 17th century. Other Noake plaques on the south wall of Milborne Port church are:-

In memory of
Hannah Noake
who died October 23d
1738 aged 7
Rachel Noake, who died
December 5th 1748, aged 37
Mary Noake, who died
November 22d, 1779, aged 39
Robert Noake, who died
November 24th, 1791, aged 88
Robert Noake, who died
January 10th 1801, aged 66

In memory of
Mary, wife of Wm P Jillard, Esqr
of Oakhill Cottage in this County
and only child of the
above Vernon and Elizabeth Noke
who died 14th Novr 1827
aged 56 years

The following inscriptions were recorded either by Revd John Collinson in his ‘History of Somerset’ printed 1791 or Revd Phelps in his ‘History of Somerset’

printed 1836 or Mr T H Baker of Salisbury, copied about 1890 in 'Dwelly's Parish Records' or Mr T W Matthews in 'Ye Olde Mortality' - but now cannot be located:

Near this place
lyeth ye body of John Noke
who dyed Feb ye 19 1701
aged 71

And also Elizabeth his wife, who
dyed July ye 16 1708 aged 87
She was ye mother, grandmother
and great-grandmother of 66
children

Here likewise are interred
John Noke, grandson of the above
and Mary Noake his wife
with four of their children
who all died young

John Noake died the 23rd of January 1737
aged 51 years

Mary Noake died the 18th April 1727
aged 39 years

Near this place lies the body of Elizabeth Noke, who died Aug 4 1775 aged 54.
Also the body of Catharine Noake, who died the 1st of November 1776 aged 50
years