

Who was the Wife of Rev. Joseph Alexander, D.D.?

As of this date (1965) this writer has never been able to find any factual evidence which would reveal the name of Mr. Joseph Alexander's wife. For many, many years it has been taken for granted that she was Martha Davies (born 1755), a daughter of Rev. Samuel Davies who was President of the College of New Jersey (Princeton) from 1759 to 1761. Numerous sources contain positive statements to this effect, such as:

Published

- History of the Presbyterian Church in S. Carolina. Howe. 1872
- History of Rock Presbyterian Church in Cecil County, Maryland. Rev. J. H. Johns. 1872
- A Record of the Descendants of John Alexander of Lanarkshire, Scotland. Appendix. Rev. John E. Alexander. Principal of Washington College, Tennessee. 1878
- History of Head of Christiana Church, Delaware. Rev. Vallandigham and Rev. Welborn. 1933
- Obituary of John M. Alexander, written in Carrollton, Alabama immediately after his death and while his father, Mr. Samuel Davies Alexander, was still living in that town. 1855
- Alexander Family Tree. Compiled by Hattie N. Alexander (Mrs. Andrew R. Gordon), a descendant of Joseph Alexander, Truener, through James Alexander, Hezekiah, etc. 1910

It will be observed that none of these accounts were written until many years after both Mr. Alexander and his wife had died and it appears that, in most cases, the statements might have been based on that made by Howe in 1872. The obituary of John M. Alexander, written in 1855, should carry much weight but the headstone at the grave of Mr. Alexander's wife in the cemetery at Bullock Creek Church, York District, South Carolina, probably placed soon after her death, bears the name "Esther" and indicates she was born in 1747. No evidence of a contemporary nature has been found that will give a clue in this matter.

The Historical Section of the Presbyterian Church, Montreat, North Carolina, has much data regarding the Ministerial activities of Rev. Joseph Alexander but no information regarding his wife or her name and a letter from that section states that "the question of the name of Mr. Joseph Alexander's wife is a recurring one."

On the other hand, a genealogical work on the Davis and Davies families by Harry A. Davis, published in Washington, D.C. in 1927, contains the following statement in reference to Martha Davies, Page 78: (43) Martha (4) Davies: "Born Hanover County, Va. 14 Nov. 1755. Moved to Princeton, N. J. with parents 1759 and returned to Virginia with her mother after 1761; she married prior to 1783 Henry Morris of Petersburg, Va., born 24 Feb. 1744. He

served in the Revolution (Va. Sol. in Rev. p. 319).
Martha died 1785-1790 and he married (2) prior to 1795
Christina Holmes Meredith, born circa 1763, and set-
tled in Gloucester County, Va. where he died 22 Sept. 1810."

Mr. Davis further states that the said Henry Morris
and Martha Davies had two children, William Henry
Morris (b. 1783) and Margaret Davies Morris (b. 1785).
The latter married 1799 Robert Wallace (b. 1768) and
they removed to Maury County, Tenn. about 1813. Mar-
garet Davies, a maiden aunt (younger sister of Mar-
tha Davies) moved with them and died there after 1820.

Since no factual evidence has been found that
would identify Martha Davies, daughter of Rev. Samuel
Davies, as the wife of Rev. Joseph Alexander it seems
logical to investigate the possibility that his wife
was the daughter of one Samuel Davies but not the
Rev. Samuel Davies of the College of New Jersey, for
such a situation might result in one being mistaken
for the other. In the Courthouse in Charlotte, No. Car.
there is record of a deed from Rev. Joseph Alexander
to one Samuel Davies for 50 acres of land in Mech-
lenberg County, dated Dec. 26, 1774, but so far, this
writer has not been able to find a will relating
to this Samuel ^{DAVIS} Davies. However, the search was made
of North Carolina records and this Davies may have moved
to South Carolina.

Another possible area for exploration would be
the Baldwin family. Rev. Joseph Alexander named

one of his sons George Baldwin and Joseph's daughter Martha, who married a Byers, named one of her sons Baldwin. Since "Baldwin" is not a common given name it appears possible that it could have been the family name of Joseph's wife.

These, of course, are mere conjectures but in the search for facts it may be worthwhile to explore these avenues.

A knowledge of the ages of Joseph Alexander's children, especially the birth years of the older ones, would reveal whether or not there was any probability that his wife was Martha Davies. There seems to be sufficient evidence that Samuel Davies Alexander was born 11/21/1771 but the birth dates of the other children are not now known. If we examine the will of Joseph Alexander we note that bequests to his children are made in the following order: Item (1) to Joseph and Baldwin Byers, children of his daughter Martha. Item (2) To his daughter Sarah Barnett. Item (3) To his son Samuel Davies Alexander. Item (4) To his daughter Editha Walker, etc.

In general, though not always so, the testator in his will is likely to make bequests to his children in order of their ages, beginning with the eldest, and if this were the case in Joseph Alexander's will it is probable that his daughter Martha was born about 1767. In that year Martha Davies, born in 1755, would have been only twelve years old and this would preclude any probability of her being married to Rev. Joseph Alexander.

gc
Esther (Davis) Alexander,

Wife of Rev. Joseph Alexander, D.D.

Attention is called to a published genealogical error regarding the noted Alexander family who migrated from Cecil Co., Md. (sometimes referred to as "from near Carlisle, Pa.") to western N. C. and S. C. in the mid 18th century.

Specifically, Rev. Dr. Joseph Alexander graduated from Princeton (then College of N. J.) in 1760, and came to Mecklenburg Co., N. C. about 1763 where he helped found, and occupied a high position at Queens College. Afterwards he conducted an academy and was a fiery patriot in York Co., S. C. where some of his published Presbyterian sermons are extant.

Presbyterian history, in widely published materials, state that Rev. Joseph Alexander was married to Martha Davies, daughter of Samuel Davies, 4th President of Princeton. Documentation found by Mr. Elmer O. Parker, researcher, has proven this incorrect. Court records of Mecklenburg Co., N. C. and York Co., S. C. prove that he married Esther Davis, daughter of Samuel Davis about 1763-67 in the Mecklenburg, Rowan, Anson County area.

Samuel Davis died in Mecklenburg Co. in 1815 at a very advanced age leaving a will, not found, which was contested at length by his grandchildren, children of his "only child Esther, deceased." According to their monuments at Bullocks Creek Presbyterian Church (York Co., S. C.), Esther died 13 Oct. 1803, aged 58 years, and Joseph Alexander born, 1735, died 30 July 1809.

This documentation is very important in correcting published errors regarding the Davis and Alexander families. The following descendants would welcome correspondence with interested people regarding the families of Esther (Davis) Alexander and her father, Samuel Davis.

Mrs. Sam Davis, 605 ~~Bonham Street~~, Grand Prairie, Tx. 75050 *my sister*
Mrs. Neville E. Hall, 702 Hill Street, Grand Prairie, Tx. 75050
Mrs. Christine P. Jones, 1520 Circle Drive, Guntersville, Al. 35976
Mrs. J. O. Woodman, 347 Shavano, ~~Salida, Colo.~~ 81201 *Lived in Austin TX*

~~Catherine Lindsay Knorr~~
R3



NOV 24 1987

ALEX

K110174BAM84

MARRIAGE BONDS
and
MINISTERS' RETURNS
of
CHARLOTTE COUNTY, VIRGINIA
1764-1815

by Catherine Lindsay Knorr

Joseph Samuel Alexander to Esther Daniel

50

COMPILED AND PUBLISHED
BY
CATHERINE LINDSAY KNORR
1951

PUBLIC LIBRARY

MARRIAGES OF CHARLOTTE COUNTY, VIRGINIA 1764 - 1815

- 20 September 1787. David ADAMS and Mary Johnson, dau. Reuben Johnson. Sur. James Adams. Married by Rev. John Williams. p 100
- 12 June 1772. James ADAMS and Jenny Cunningham, dau. James Cunningham. James son of John Adams. Sur. Samuel Cunningham. p 13
- 3 June 1782. James ADAMS and Leanna Sulliyant (widow). Sur. William Morton. p 51
- 23 May 1787. James ADAMS and Mary Stowe, dau. Joel Stowe. Sur. William Stowe. Married 26 May by Rev. John Weatherford. p 101
- 16 October 1788. James ADAMS, Jr. and Mary Prusit, dau. Joseph Prusit. Sur. David Adams. Married same day by Rev. John Williams who says Mary Prewit. p 111
- 22 October 1813. James ADAMS and Mary Bouldin, dau. Richard Bouldin. Sur. Thomas T. Bouldin. p 497
- 10 December 1812. John A. ADAMS and Polly Cook, dau. Thomas Cook. Sur. James Brown. John A. son of Leannah Adams. Married 17 December by Rev. John Chappell. p 482
- 20 October 1786. Thomas ADAMS and Sally Ford, dau. Culverain Ford. Sur. Abner Barksdale. Married by Rev. Thomas Johnston who says 4 October. p 94
- 1 August 1785. William ADAMS and Keturah Ford. Sur. Culverine Ford. Married 4 August by Rev. Thomas Johnston. p 80
- 22 February 1790. William ADAMS and Susannah Kaddox. Sur. James Adams. Married 25 February by Rev. John Weatherford. p 141
- 3 February 1794. William ADAMS and Sally Brown. Sur. Burwell Brown. Married 6 February by Rev. Edward Almond. p 208
- 17 April 1797. Henry ADKERSON and Anne Lee (widow). Sur. Charles Newcomb. p 260
- 2 August 1790. William ADKINS and Sally Ryon. Sur. William Ryon. p 140
- 7 January 1793. Peter AKERS and Matsey Harroway, dau. Charles Harroway who is surety. Returned to May 1793 Court by Rev. John Chappell. p 197
- 27 January 1803. James ALDERSON and Nancy Stokes. Sur. Samuel Green. James son of Mary Alderson. Married 28 January by Rev. Edward Almond. p 335
- 7 December 1778. John ALDERSON and Keziah Foster, dau. Thomas Foster who is surety. p 29
- 14 July 1807. Archibald A. ALEXANDER and Fannie Morton, ward of William L. Morton who is surety. p 400
- 12 November 1767. Joseph ALEXANDER and Esther Daniel, dau. Samuel Daniel who is surety with Clement Read. p 5
- 6 March 1815. James R. ALLGOOD and Sallie Pollard, dau. William Pollard. Sur. William H. Davis. James son of Samuel Allgood. p 535

Alexander

Bullocks Co Cem

Esther Alex. Oct 13, 1803 age 58

Rev Joseph Alex July 30 1809 age 7

David King 2/10/1826 age 25

EH. " 4/2/1807 29

Isabella G" 10/12/1824 4 mos.

John " 4/9/1836 62

John " Dec 11, 1823 18 mos

McCluney James 6/5/1853 age 70

Mary A. Alexander wife of 1/24/1806 - 5/13/1836

Wm McCluney 12/6/1828 1/7/1829

received this from Va. archives

Know all men by these Presents that we Joseph Alexander
Samuel Davis & Clement Read are held and firmly bound
unto our Sovereign Lord George the third by the grace of
God & in fifty pounds Curr^t Money to be paid to our
S. Lord the King his Heirs & To which payment well
& Truly to be made we do bind ourselves our Heirs
Executors & Administrators jointly and severally firmly
by these Presents, Seald with our Seals and dated
this 12th of November 1767.

The Condition of the above obligation is such that whereas
there is a Marriage suddenly intended to be solemnized
between the above bound Joseph Alexander and Esther
Davis (Spinster) & therefore there be no lawfull Cause

Know all men by these Presents that we Joseph Alexander
Samuel Davis & Clement Read are held and firmly bound
unto our Sovereign Lord George the third by the grace of
God & in fifty pounds Curr^t Money to be paid to our
S. Lord the King his Heirs & To which payment well
& Truly to be made we do bind ourselves our Heirs
Executors & Administrators jointly and severally firmly
by these Presents, Seald with our Seals and dated
this 12th of November 1767.

The Condition of the above obligation is Such that whereas
there is a Marriage Suddenly intended to be Solemnized
between the above bound Joseph Alexander and Esther
Davis (Spinster) & therefore there be no lawfull Cause