



The Diary of William Fisher of Barrow 1811 to 1859 (ed Rollinson & Harrison) Centre for North-West Regional Studies (1986) records p.70

21 (April 1849) the Reverd Dr Stonard of Aldingham Died aged 81 years.

Inside the church is a fine memorial to Rev John Stonard, which reads:
In Memory of JOHN STONARD D.D. Born at Lambeth in Surrey On 10th March 1769 Ordained to the Curacy of Chevening In Kent. Deacon on 10th June 1794. Priest of 21st December following. Afterwards Curate of Sundridge, And then of East Malham in Kent. Instituted to the Rectory of West Deeping in Lincolnshire In October 1811. And lastly to the Rectory of Aldingham on the 19th August 1814. Died 22nd April 1849.

In Memory also of his Two dear Sisters, ELIZABETH born 15th March 1770 Died 30th July 1840. And SARAH born 31 July 1772, Died 3 May 1817. Who quitted their native abode And their friends in the South To reside with their Brother In the adjoining Rectory In these frail memorials We call upon those who survive To consider their ways and their days. No visible Harm, No audible Voice, Issues from the Tomb If men have not heard the WORD of Truth Neither will they be persuaded Though one rose from the dead.



The Reverend Stonard was obviously a significant figure locally. He has a large hexagonal family memorial in the churchyard. It is Grade II listed.

On its sides the various plaques read (spelling and capitalisation as original):

1. In Memory of ELIZABETH STONARD Eldest daughter of JONATHAN STONARD, formerly of Lambeth in the County of Surry Esquire by FRANCES his Wife. Born 15 March 1770. Died 30 July 1840. After a long separation Her body reposes in this spot Beside her beloved Sister's: And here, in God's good time, their brother JOHN, Rector of this Parish, Hopes to rest in peace with them Till the last Trumpet shall sound And the dead shall be raised incorruptible, And We shall be changed Amen

2. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my words and believeth on Him that sent me, hath Everlasting Life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from Death unto Life. Blessed are the Meek, For they shall inherit the earth. Whosoever shall give to drink unto one of those little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple Verily I say unto you, He shall in no wise lose his reward.

3. Death is swallowed up in Victory! The Sting of Death is Sin; and the Strength of Sin is the Law; but thanks be to God, which giveth Us the Victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Awake and sing, Ye that dwell in dust! For thy dew is as the dew of herbs, And the Earth Shall cast out the dead. I am the Resurrection And the Life, sayeth the LORD. He that believeth in ME Though he were dead, Yet shall he live, And whosoever liveth And believeth in ME Shall never die. AMEN.

4. He which testifieth these things saith Behold I come quickly and my Reward is with me, to give to every man according as his work shall be. Amen! Even so! Come Lord Jesus! LORD! Give grace To all who hear and read These true and faithful Sayings, So to meditate thereon. And so to give their hearts to Thee And walk in Thy holy ways. That with full assurance of faith but with all humbleness of mind They surely follow beloved Apostle and Prophet, Sincerely saying Amen! Even so! Come quickly Come LORD JESUS!

5. Here lieth the Body of Miss SARAH STONARD, second daughter of JONATHAN STONARD formerly of Lambeth in the County of Surry Esquire by FRANCES his Wife. Born 31st July 1772. Died 3rd May 1817. Her surviving brother JOHN, THE Rector of this Parish, & Sister ELIZABETH Have erected this Memorial due to their Affection to their Sorrow and to their Hope.

6. JOHN STONARD Doctor in Divinity. 34 Years Rector of this Parish. Born 10th March 1769: Died 22nd April 1849: To his surviving Friends: My dear Parishioners! Some of my Works, some of my Words remain with you. Benefits, I pray to you & yours. As my Body reposes here, With those of my two Sisters, Once so dear to me in this life, So may our Spirits rest with theirs In God's own Treasury of Souls Where Christ is present, felt to be. The Hope, the Glory, and the Joy, Of them that sleep in Him Until he come again. With the Archangel's voice and the Trump of God To raise us up, In body and in soul, To Life and Bliss with Him Eternally in the Heavens, AMEN.

When he died, Rev. Stonard attracted many column inches in the local press. *Soulby's Ulverston Advertiser* 26 April 1849 carried a lengthy death notice:

22nd inst. The Rev. John Stonard, D. D. in the 81st year of his age : extensively known, and universally respected. In another part of our paper will be found a brief memoir of this esteemed divine, to which we refer our readers. Dr. Stonard was a man who had always enjoyed good health, which may be attributed to his regular habits. He has often been heard to say that he never remembered lying in bed two days together during the whole course of his long life. On Friday the 13th, though very unwell, he rose at half-past 7, took breakfast as usual, examined his housekeeping accounts, and remained downstairs till 5 o'clock, when he was attacked with a sudden fit of sickness. Upon retiring to rest he said, "I am going to bed for the last time." From that time to the day of his death he was never able to rise without assistance.

During his last illness, he scarcely ever complained of pain, though occasionally he appeared to suffer acutely. His time was spent in prayer, and the Fifty-First Psalm was often audibly uttered. Towards the last he became even too weak to pray, and said he could not remember words ; when a few Psalms were read to him and the Lord's Prayer was repeated; he clasped his hands in the attitude of earnest devotion, and payed (*sic*) the greatest amount of attention to what was being uttered. On Saturday last between 4 and 6 in the afternoon, his final struggle with death commenced, and he continued to grow calmer till 27 minutes past one, when he gave up his last breath almost imperceptibly. Even his death was an example to all who witnessed it. Well may we say "Let me die the death of the Righteous, and let my last end be like his."

The 'brief memoir' mentioned above is in fact a whole column in length, thickly edged in black. After a Eulogy initialled J. S. B., and the introduction carved on the church-wall tablet, it continues:

He acted in the capacity of college tutor to the present Earl of Lonsdale, and Col. Lowther, through the interest of whose family, we believe, he was inducted to the living of Aldingham. Thus, for a period of 35 years, this excellent pastor has, both by precept and example, ministered faithfully to the spiritual wants of his parishioners ; and by his unbounding liberality has alleviated the necessities of the poor amongst them, as well as those of others of the same class at a distance.

His life may be viewed in a threefold aspect – as an author, as a clergyman, and as a private gentleman.

As an author, the Rev. Dr. Stonard was eminent for simplicity and elegance. His works abound in passages of unaffected piety and eloquence, and manifest a correct and masterly acquaintance with Biblical literature. His learning was extensive and solid ; and his style possessed that first of all requisites – perspicuity. He laboured rather to instruct than to amuse ; and his one aim was to benefit those to whom he addressed himself, rather than make display of his own talents and acquirements. His divinity was sound and practical ; and his commentaries are ranked amongst the best of that class of publications, for the clearness with which obscure passages are illustrated, as well as for the learning and vigour of intellect brought to bear upon the discussion of questions of great difficulty ; and as a theologian he was at once profound and luminous.

The following is a list of the volumes which the Rev. Doctor published during his lifetime, and which were printed at our office, in addition to a great variety of Sermons published separately in the form of pamphlets, - "*A Commentary on the vision of Zachariah, with a correct Translation and Critical Notes*", "*A Dissertation on the Seventy Weeks of Daniel*", "*Discourses on the Evidences of the Christian Religion*", "*Six Sermons on the Church and Her*

Ministry", A Dissertation on the Discourse delivered by our blessed Saviour touching on the Destruction of the Temple and the End of the World", "A Sermon on Ezekiel XXI, 26, 27, with a new Translation of the whole Chapter, accompanied by Notes", "An Exposition of the Church Catechism, intended for the use of all Young Persons, but especially for such as are preparing for Confirmation".

As a clergyman, Doctor Stonard was indeed exemplary, not only for the earnestness of his appeals from the pulpit, but also for the virtues and excellencies (*sic*) that characterised his private life. His sermons were preached in his life, as well as in his church; and his actions were the best commentary upon his precepts. Possessed of very considerable wealth, he made it the instrument of his benevolence, and cheerfully bestowed it upon the poor of his parish; while his rich stores of knowledge and accumulated wisdom enabled him the better to counsel those who sought his advice. To say that he was universally esteemed and respected by his parishioners, would be to speak only a part of the truth, for he was held in intense admiration and reverence.

While as a private gentleman, the extreme urbanity of his manners joined to his numerous accomplishments, his varied acquirements, and his great wealth, entitled him not only to the consideration, but to the respect of the surrounding gentry. He was equally the favourite of all classes: - he was honoured by the wealthy, and by the poor he was beloved.

The death of the Reverend Doctor has occasioned a blank in our neighbourhood which it will be difficult indeed to fill.

The following was written by the Reverend Doctor only three weeks before the period of his decease, and intended by him to be placed on a slab in the Church of Aldingham :-

"In this frail memorial we call upon those who survive to consider their ways and their days.

No visible Form

No audible Voice

Issues from the Tomb.

If men hear not the WORD of Truth, neither will they be persuaded, tho' one rose from the dead."

The following edition of *Soulby's Ulverston Advertiser* (3 May 1849) printed a romantic account of the funeral, without the usual list of mourners.

FUNERAL OF THE REV. J. STONARD, D.D.

The last remains of the learned and amiable Doctor were borne to their last resting-place, in the quiet and romantic grave-yard of Aldingham, on the morning of Saturday last. The funeral, according to his own especial wish and desire, was conducted with as little ostentation as possible. The coffin in which the corpse was interred was perfectly plain, and no lead was used on the occasion. The same pall was thrown over the remains of the Reverend Doctor, as that employed to cover the mortal part of the poorest of his parishioners. So far from desiring his body to be preserved after death, he requested that some earth might be placed in the coffin along with it. Eight of the most exemplary labourers in his parish carried him to the tomb, in accordance with his wish, to each of whom £5 and a suit of black, were presented. Several of the clergymen from the neighbouring parishes were also in attendance.

The burial service was read in a most impressive and solemn manner by the Rev. T. Ormandy, who has, for several years, been Curate of the parish of Aldingham.

The day was remarkably fine. The scene in the ancient churchyard, one of unusual impressiveness, - one of especial beauty. The waters of the shining bay, that washes its very walls, glittered with the glory of the gorgeous sunbeams. The thick verdure of the tall trees that congregate in luxuriant abundance in the beautiful pleasure grounds of the Rectory, was just bursting into spring promise. Every where (*sic*) the spirit of beauty appeared to be rousing herself from her long torpor to gladden the world with her beneficent smile. Yet amidst these scenes of universal loveliness, of youthful and joyous springtide, was one in the winter of his days carried to the silent grave. And although the idea might possibly suggest itself to the mind, that amidst such re-awakened festivity and budding beauty it was heard to leave the earth, yet the reflection would immediately follow that, he, for whom the mourning procession had congregated together, was past the period of earthly enjoyment, - that he was ripe in days, as well as ripe in virtues, and that the spirit-land to which he had departed was one infinitely more fair, infinitely more desirable than the earth, even when arrayed in all her glory.

We understand that the Rev. C. H. Hartshorne will succeed the Rev. Doctor in the Rectory at Aldingham.

On *Ancestry* I found an **Articles of Clerkship 1785**, attaching John Stonard to “Charles Wade to serve him as his clerk in the practice of an attorney and solicitor for the term of five years to be computed from the Day of the Date of the said Articles ...”. The document is dated 30 May 1785. It starts “In the King’s Bench” and gives Wade’s address as “Grand Court, Fleet Street, London.”

His will is also to be found on *Ancestry*, under **England & Wales Prerogative Court of Canterbury Wills 1848-1849**. This confirms that he left the bulk of his estate to his “friend and boon Companion Edward Jones Schollick”.

In the **1841 Census** (though difficult to read) John Stonard, (70), Clergyman, is living with the following, presumably at the old Aldingham Hall, or at the Rectory: Jas Vince (55); Philadelphia Vince (50); John Vince (50), Edward Scholick (15); Hannah Scholick (20); Mary Helling (45); Hanah Helling (40); Margt. Kendal (20); George Vince (15) Cabinet Maker; Sarah Vince (15), Milliner. (All spellings as on the form – though Vince looks like Brice or Bince)



I found this portrait of Rev. John Stonard by Daniel Crosthwaite on the British Museum website.

Lettered below image "Painted by Daniel Crosthwaite."
"London, Published by M. Colnaghi, Cockspur Street, Charing Cross, June 1833. (Printseller in ordinary to His Majesty & to H.R.H. the Duchess of Kent.)" "Rev.d John Stonard, D.D." "Engraved by A. M. Huffam." and "Printed by S. H. Hawkins."

I also found a new edition of a “classic text” by Stonard available on Amazon.

