

A biographical search of Jospeh Clark has resulted in scattered pieces of information which are slowly beginning to come together. In his petition for assembly Clarke remarks that he has "a very large family to maintain" but as of 1828 his daughter remains the only surviving orphan. His son Horatio Clarke attended St. John's College and according to the vertical file's of the Maryland Historical magazine, he died of a putrid throat in 1794 affecting Clarke's ability to carry on with repair work on the dome. A vertical file on Clark at the Maryland historical society lists his occupation as architect, carpenter, and builder. He is given credit for designing portions of St. John's college in 1786 and the State House dome in Maryland. Although several authors of literature on the state house have implied that Clarke was merely the builder and not the architect of the dome, I do not feel that this is the case. It is clear that he was educated from his position as deputy Grand Master of Master Amanda Lodge No. 12 formed in Annapolis. It is said that he delivered an eloquent oration when acting as grand master pro tem at the laying of the cornerstone of the Capitol at Washington⁵. He authored the constitution of the lodge in 1794. Upon his death he is remembered as

"Joseph Clarke, architect and much respected member of society. He was formerly deputy grand master of the Free Masons in this state. In his death, the society have to lament the loss of a brother whose character and exertions reflected great honor on the exalted station which he held⁶".

⁵White, Roxana. Baltimore Sun. "Did Maryland Pinch Her Dome Designer?". 1941/06/22.

⁶Federal Gazette and Daily Advertiser. 1798/04/26.

→ Son of Joseph Clarke Begintree Essex
Apprentice