

# A BLUE PLAQUE IN EDINBURGH TO COMMEMORATE JOHN BARLOW

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On the 14 September 2015 a blue plaque (Fig. 1) was unveiled at 1 Pilrig Street, Edinburgh in honour of John Barlow, who was Assistant Professor of Anatomy and Physiology<sup>1</sup> at the Royal Veterinary College, Edinburgh (as William Dick's College was known at the time)<sup>2</sup>. John Barlow was an early occupant of the house (1851-1856)<sup>3</sup>.

The production of the plaque and arrangements for the unveiling ceremony were organised by Antony R. Barlow, one of the great grandsons of John Barlow. Those present at the unveiling were; Antony and his brother Nicholas P. Barlow, the Lord Provost of Edinburgh the Right Honourable Donald Wilson (who unveiled the plaque), John and Maureen Campbell (the current house owners), Prof Brendan Corcoran and other representatives of the Dick Vet, members of the Edinburgh Quaker Meeting and staff of Historic Environment Scotland (Fig. 2). The plaque was mounted to the right of the entrance doorway on the façade, on the 9 October 2015.



**Fig. 1. Blue plaque (508mm diameter, manufactured by Leander Architectural) to commemorate John Barlow**

John Barlow was buried in the Quakers' Cemetery, the Pleasance, Edinburgh. As his gravestone is barely readable, Antony Barlow arranged for another plaque to be mounted above the stone. It was fixed by Estates and Buildings of the University of Edinburgh who supervise the property. It reads;

John Barlow (1815-1856) the eminent Professor of Anatomy and Physiology at The Royal Veterinary College and highly esteemed fellow of the Edinburgh scientific community.

He was also a much loved member of the Religious Society of Friends and married Eliza Nicholson in 1851.

They had three children – Alfred (1851-57), Mary (1853-99), John Henry (1855-1924).

This plaque was placed here in loving memory, by John Henry's grandchildren in September 2015

The original wording on the gravestone reads:

JOHN BARLOW DIED TWENTY-NINTH OF FIRST MONTH 1856 AGED FORTY YEARS  
AND HIS SON ALFRED DIED THIRTIETH OF SIXTH MONTH 1857 AGED FIVE YEARS



**Fig. 2. The unveiling of the plaque to John Barlow: from left to right, The Lord Provost of Edinburgh the Rt Hon Donald Wilson, Antony R. Barlow and his brother Nicholas P. Barlow and Prof Brendan Corcoran.**

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors gratefully acknowledge the very kind and generous hospitality shown by John and Maureen Campbell, the residents of 1 Pilrig Street, Edinburgh. Our thanks to Norrie Russell (Roslin Institute & R.(D.)S.V.S., The University of Edinburgh) for taking the photographs.

## REFERENCES AND COMMENTS

1. WARWICK, C.M and MACDONALD, A.A. (2006), John Barlow ‘a mind of no common mould’. *Veterinary History*, Vol. 13, No. 2 pp. 100-110; The occasion of the plaque mounting gives the current authors an opportunity to correct our error in stating in this article that John Barlow’s children had ‘died with no surviving family’. We apologise. Antony R. Barlow has published *He is our cousin, Cousin; a Quaker family’s history from 1660 to the present day*, Quacks Books, York, 2015.
2. MACDONALD, A.A. (2013), The Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies – what’s in a name? *Veterinary History*, Vol. 17 No. 1 pp. 33-65.
3. Post-Office Edinburgh & Leith Directories.

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## FROM *The Veterinarian* 1830 page 118

### SCIENTIFIC TREATMENT OF CONSTIPATION IN CATTLE

A pupil of Mr Dick was called to a poor ox labouring under constipation of the bowels. The disease proved obstinate, resisting every remedy adopted, and the case was abandoned as utterly hopeless. At this stage of the business, the old-established leech of the district stepped in, and confidently engaged to set matters to rights. He commenced with no less active a remedy than a *lively trout*, transferred from the river to the stomach of the patient, under the conviction, no doubt, that his agent would thread its way through all the mazes of the intestine, and ascribing the failure of so notable a dose to the *previous mismanagement* of the Edinburgh student.

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**DID YOU KNOW? Kindle** – A doe rabbit is said to kindle when she brings forth her young.

*William Taplin – The Sporting Dictionary 1803*