

Friends of West Norwood CEMETERY

Newsletter No. 59 - May 2007

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Chairman's Report

by Bob Flanagan

I am pleased to report that the plans for the new Memorial Garden and for the rebuilding of the staff quarters in the NE corner of the cemetery have been approved by Lambeth Planning and by English Heritage. The works should start soon. Vehicular access to this part of the cemetery will of course be disrupted whilst the work is in progress, but access to the Greek Cemetery will still be possible from the eastern roadway. Planning towards further repairs to the roadways and paths in the cemetery continues, as does vegetation clearance, notably ivy removal from the boundary walls.

Further developments are that David Lambert (The Parks Agency) has been formally commissioned to draft the Scheme of Management for the cemetery. Meetings with the Management Advisory Group and the Scheme of Management Committee to expedite this work will be arranged in due course. Secondly, I'm very pleased to report that Cemeteries Manager Ken Dry and his line manager Neil Isaacs are active in attempting to remove the unsightly 'Biffa' bins by the simple solution of taking the rubbish from the litter bins out of the cemetery on a daily basis as discussed in the last newsletter.

National Federation of Cemetery Friends

This year's AGM will be hosted by the Friends of Key Hill Cemetery, in conjunction with the Lord Mayor's Office of Birmingham City Council on 9 June. Key Hill, although small, was once called 'The Westminster Abbey of the Midlands'. The meeting itself will be held in the Banqueting Suite of the Council House, Victoria Square. If any FOWNC member would like to attend, please let me know.

Association of Significant Cemeteries in Europe

The ASCE Annual General Meeting 2007 will take place from 20-22 September 2007 in Stavanger and Sandnes, Norway. The theme of this year's conference is *The Significance of Cemeteries in Society*. Its main purpose is highlighting the intrinsic values of cemeteries as places for mourning and contemplation, as important institutions for the preservation of cultural heritage, as open air museums, or as public park and recreational facilities.

Europa Nostra

Following nomination by Italia Nostra ('Italian Heritage'), the Heritage Awards Jury (Category 3) of Europa Nostra (the pan-European Federation for Cultural Heritage), has awarded ASCE one of 16 medals (2nd prizes) for Dedicated Service to the safeguarding of Europe's cultural heritage. ASCE has 100 member organizations, including 11 from the UK. The top Prizes, which each include a monetary award of €10,000, went to (i) Sarica Church in Cappadocia (Turkey), (ii) Santo Stefano di Sessanio near l'Aquila (Italy), (iii) Farbdiaarchiv zur Wand- und Decken-malerei (Germany) (a digital database to preserve the Colour Slide Archive of a large photographic campaign that took place in 1943-1945 to document valuable paintings and interior decoration in buildings endangered by Allied air raids), (iv) The Atlantic Wall Linear Museum (Italy/Belgium/France), and (v) The Mihai Eminescu Trust (Romania/UK). Somewhat remarkable that two major awards are connected with World War 2, and ironic that Europe's top cultural awards recognize the importance of cemetery conservation at a time when UK cemeteries are under threat as never before from impending legislation on the re-use of graves.

A Blue Plaque to William Mortlock (1832-1884)?



Robert Griffiths has written to say that he has tried to get English Heritage to put up a Blue Plaque to Mortlock, at 23 Monckton Street, Lambeth, Mortlock's home 1870-81. However, the request was turned down because 'he wasn't famous enough'! Mortlock was a very well-known cricketer for Surrey in the early days of professional cricket. He was one of 7 Surrey players who went on the first cricket tour to Australia (1861) promoted by the caterers Spiers & Pond via their agent Mallam. More details of Mortlock's career are to be found in *West Norwood Cemetery's Sportsmen*, available from the FOWNC bookstall. His grave at Norwood (grave 19,684, square 122), is marked by the base of a cross. A long-term aim has been to renovate the gravestone.

Felix Spiers (-1910) and Christopher Pond (1826-1881) were Englishmen who travelled to Australia at the time of the 1850s Gold Rush and made a fortune by providing catering on the Melbourne-Ballarat railway. Later they provided catering on the newly-built Metropolitan Railway in London. They also built and ran the Criterion Restaurant and Theatre in Piccadilly. Pond died at Brighton on 30 July 1881. His mausoleum at Norwood (grave 18,718, square 88) is intact and is listed Grade II (see Newsletter 58, January 2007).

Continued on page 16

George Bolwell Davidge (1793-1842)

by Bob Flanagan

The talk by Fabian Robertson on his ancestor Felix Slade (see Recent FOWNC events, page 14) reminded me of work I did some years ago on the actor-manager George Davidge. Not only is the Davidge family tomb (grave 398, square 62) adjacent to the Slade vault, but also his home, Davidge Terrace on what is now Kennington Road, was directly opposite the Slade family home in Kennington. Davidge's great friend Dr William Marsden (1796-1867), the founder of the Royal Free and Royal Marsden Hospitals, also lies at Norwood - his tomb (grave 269, square 62), which is listed Grade II, is literally over the road from the Davidge and Slade plots.



George Davidge

George Davidge was the son of a Bristol undertaker. He was apprenticed to a printer, but found playbills in themselves so fascinating that he broke his apprenticeship in order to take up acting. He first appeared in Bath, Bristol, Weymouth and other provincial theatres. Charles Dickens (*Memoirs of Joseph Grimaldi* by 'Boz', 1838) recorded this description of Davidge at this time. 'He was then the Harlequin at Bath and Bristol, and although he afterwards became a round and magisterial figure, was than a light and very active pantomimist'. In the pantomimes Davidge was the Harlequin and Grimaldi, of course, the clown.

To cut a long story short, Davidge and Grimaldi, for whatever reason, determined to be revenged upon the Pantaloon, who was an indifferent actor given to bouts of drunkenness. The two friends contrived a novel ploy whereby the Pantaloon was locked in a box on stage during a performance. Davidge and Grimaldi thereupon finished the play and straightaway went home. It was only the next morning that the Pantaloon was released after having been missed at rehearsal. It transpired that the box had been lowered into the cellar immediately after the performance, the Pantaloon's cries for help falling on deaf ears!

In due course Davidge was engaged by Dibdin at the Surrey Theatre. Subsequently he was asked to join the company of the Royal Coburg Theatre at Waterloo (later the Royal Victoria Theatre, now the Old Vic) when it first opened in 1818 under the managership of William Barrymore. Davidge remained there until 1822 when he went first to Davis's Amphitheatre and then again to the Surrey. However, he returned to the Coburg in 1823, becoming joint lessee in 1824 and subsequently sole lessee from 1826 until March, 1833.

Whilst at the Coburg Davidge engaged William Dowton (grave 2,388, square 96) and Robert Honner (grave 3,372, square 36) as actors and, in 1828, enlisted Douglas Jerrold (grave 5,452, square 97) as an author on alternate weeks with Sadler's Wells. Jerrold thought Davidge 'the meanest man alive' and it is ironic that Jerrold's enduring hit, *Black Ey'd Susan; or All in the Downs*, should be written at the Coburg, but premiered in 1829 by Elliston at the Surrey. At the Coburg Davidge went to great lengths to avoid prosecution for infringing the monopoly of the 'patent' theatres (Covent Garden, Drury Lane and the Haymarket in the summer months) on the staging of Shakespeare and other 'true' drama - he once presented a translation of a celebrated French tragedy, but the 'French' play was in fact a translation of *Hamlet!*

Davidge's recruitment of Edmund Kean for a two-week season in June 1831 perhaps marks the high point of his management of the Coburg. By 1831 Davidge had also become proprietor of the New City Theatre in succession to John Chapman (q.v.), and his actors thenceforth played at the Coburg and at the City on the same evening, being transported across London in Hackney carriages fitted out as dressing rooms. However, the outbreak of Asiatic cholera which hit London in that same year, and which, incidentally, fuelled the demand for extra-mural cemeteries such as Kensal Green and Norwood, caused many regular patrons to move to the suburbs. Despite producing ever-cheaper entertainments at the Coburg in an attempt to make ends meet he lost the £6,000 or so he had accumulated during his time as lessee.

The rowdiness which prevailed towards the end of Davidge's reign at the Coburg is illustrated by stories of locals in the 'gods' amusing themselves by pouring drinks on the assembled gentry below. After failing again as a manager in Liverpool he was arrested for bankruptcy on petition of one of the owners of the Coburg, but passed his examination. Thereupon he was engaged as an actor by D.W. Osbaldiston (grave 2,782, square 74) at the Surrey where he later became lessee. This proved his salvation. He cleared, for example, £4,000 in one season from his production of *Poll and My Partner Joe*. However, after a long period of ill-health (Jerrold's invocation 'May he keep a carriage and not be able to ride in it' came true to an extent), he died on 1 February 1842 at his home in Davidge Terrace, Walcot Place, Kennington Road. His *Times* obituary records that he took a glass of sherry and a jelly half an hour before his death.

Davidge is buried at Norwood beneath an elaborate monument in the form of a hexagonal pulpit which he himself had commissioned and which survives near to the site of Tite's Episcopal Chapel. Davidge's executor Thomas Potter Cooke and Dr William Marsden were amongst the mourners at his funeral; Osbaldiston sent his carriage. It may yet be possible to find out who designed the Davidge tomb.

Others buried in the Davidge vault are his mother-in-law by his second marriage, Mrs Harriet Henrietta Pearce (1789-1851, stage name Mrs Parker), and three children of Joseph Kerschner, Davidge's box office manager, who married his sister-in-law Emily Pearce. These are Emily Maria Kerschner (born and died 1854), Harriet Susanna Kerschner (1846-1858), and Louisa Kerschner (born and died 1858). Little is known of



Davidge family tomb at Norwood

Mrs Pearce's stage career. She certainly appeared in minor parts at the Surrey from 1836-9 under the name of Mrs Parker, but may also have appeared in the West End under the name Mrs Pearce.

Davidge was not thought a notable actor save that he 'excelled in the representation of testy and imbecile old men'. Whatever his attitude to his writers and actors Davidge must in the end be judged a success as a manager. He left over £30,000 in his will - after allowing for benefactions to numerous hospitals and other charities - when many contemporaries became bankrupt. His name lives on in Davidge Street SE1, near to the site of the Surrey Theatre at St George's Circus, although the fact that several of the street name boards have been painted over does not bode well for the future. Davidge Terrace, an imposing Georgian edifice, also survives on Kennington Road SE11 to the west of the present-day junctions with Bishop's Terrace and Wincott Street. A further terrace built by Davidge, Bolwell Terrace off Lambeth Walk, was damaged in the Second World War and subsequently demolished.

Davidge's miserliness became legendary even in his own life-time, Davidge himself perhaps 'acting-up' to this interpretation of his character. Whatever his true self Davidge remained Douglas Jerrold's *bete noir* and, his death occurring late one afternoon (early evening admission being more expensive than late evening in those days), Jerrold remarked 'I didn't think he'd go before the half-price came in!'

Robert William Ogden (1904-1935)

by Colin Fenn

As you walk down the stepped footpath to the north-west of the crematorium, you might well notice a small stone just a few inches from your feet that reads 'Pilot RWH Ogden son of the above who crashed in the Channel 3rd July 1935, Aged 31'. In a strange twist of fate, this man's death indirectly helped bring about the technology that allows modern aircraft to travel around the globe using air-to-air refuelling.

In the aftermath of the Great War, Alan Cobham, a 24-year-old pilot from Streatham, was demobbed from the RAF with few vocational skills, but a knowledge of flying machines. He entered the public gaze when he became lead pilot with the aircraft builder Geoffrey de Havilland and in the 1920s flew outrageously long distances all over the Empire, the newsreels

famously reporting his arrival in India, Australia and South Africa. When he returned home – his floatplane landing in front of the House of Commons – he was immediately knighted by King George V. His antics eclipsed de Havilland, and he parted company to found a 'Flying Circus' with aerobatics, wing-walkers, and parachutists, who toured the country and sold joy rides to thousands of people for 5 shillings. "It's a full time job being Alan Cobham!" he was quoted as saying.



Sir Alan Cobham



*Cobham Air Routes
luggage label*

The mid-1930s saw aircraft technology go through a dramatic transition, the fabric airships and clumsy biplanes of the previous decades being replaced by streamlined, metal-skinned monoplanes. The post-war rules that had created Imperial Airways' monopoly were expiring and it was now possible for private companies to operate new air routes.

Cobham took this opportunity to invest £30,000 in his own airline, Cobham Air Routes. He offered two services a day, hopping from Croydon airport to Portsmouth, Bournemouth, and finally landing on the beach at Guernsey, flying one Airspeed Envoy and three eight-seater Westland

Wessex monoplanes bought second-hand from Imperial Airways. Cobham recruited a number of local pilots, including 31-year old Robert William Ogden from Camberwell. Barely in his teens in the Great War, Ogden had nonetheless been smitten with the ‘air-mindedness’ that Cobham had sought to inject into the British public with his publicity-seeking exploits.

On Monday, 6 May 1935 Cobham Air Routes flew its first passengers to Guernsey. As visitors to Guernsey can testify, the Channel Islands are frequently fog-bound, requiring modern aircraft with their powerful engines and sophisticated instruments to divert or postpone their flights. Yet seventy years ago safety was not given the same consideration as it has today, travel was expected to be daring – every month of that year *The Times* ran stories of deaths and injuries from train crashes, while air crashes were even more frequent. It would be another two decades before seat belts were even considered for regular fitment on motorcars.



Westland Wessex ca. 1935

So when Pilot Ogden prepared his engines for his return flight from Guernsey on the afternoon of the 3rd of July he probably felt no major concern when the starboard engine on his Westland Wessex airliner had difficulty starting. After all, he had just one City businessman to carry as a passenger, the airliner had two other 140 horse power radial engines, and the weather was clear, even if the wind was gusting. Eventually the third engine cackled into life, and he took off in the late afternoon towards Bournemouth, aware that he would have to hurry if he was to get to his new home in Bognor Regis that night.

Soon into the flight the starboard engine spluttered and, after thirty minutes, it cut out totally. Ogden’s attempts to restart it failed, but he knew he had two more engines which would get the plane past the Needles. From there he could put down on the Isle of Wight, otherwise he would have to turn back or divert to France.

After 30 minutes a second engine failed and the Wessex lost power and height. The headwind had strengthened, and Ogden realised he would never make landfall. He was over the Channel 10 miles south of Swanage when he ditched into the sea. His last actions before impact were to put out a distress signal on his radio and to warn his passenger to put on a cork lifebelt. After a crash landing in the rough swell, passenger C.F.H. Grainger was able to force open the rear exit door and jump out. At 20.00 Grainger was spotted 22 miles from the Needles by the London steamer *Stanmore*, and was fished out of the sea. He had been in the cold water for two hours and had suffered badly from exposure and exhaustion. He required resuscitation for an hour and a half before he was revived and was conveyed to Fowey harbour in Cornwall.

Grainger told his rescuers that Ogden had been incapacitated by the crash and remained at the aeroplane's controls strapped to his seat for the fifteen minutes that the airliner took to sink. He was never seen again. At the subsequent Air Ministry investigation, the Inspector of Accidents concluded that Ogden could have turned back safely, but that he took an 'unnecessary, but not wholly unjustifiable risk' in choosing to continue his journey after the first engine failed.

Ogden's death gave Cobham cause for reflection. He halted his plans for the Cobham Air Routes and sold it to Captain G.P. Olley. (Olley Air Service was merged into British European Airways after WW2). Cobham withdrew a little from publicity and turned his energies towards industry and the technologies that would make flight both

possible and safe. Among his countless innovations, the best known is probably in-flight refuelling, which drew the interest of the USAAF and RAF in the later years of WW2 as they tried to fly longer distances. Both the British 'probe and drogue' method and the American 'boom' system were pioneered by Cobham, and are now commonplace in all the major air forces of the world.

Sir Alan Cobham died in 1977. Cobham Plc, the company he founded after Ogden's death, is now valued at £2.5 billion on the London Stock Market.

Ogden's memorial at Norwood lies at the foot of that of his mother Susannah Ellen Ogden (1877-1943) (grave 39,595, square 67).



Ogden Family grave at Norwood

Norwood and the New DNB

by Paul Graham and George Young

New Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, Edited by Professor Brian Harrison. Oxford University Press, 2004. £7,500, 60 volumes (also available online).

The statistics alone are staggering: 60 printed volumes taking up eleven feet of shelf space containing 50,000 individual biographies (45 million words) from 10,000 contributors. The new DNB builds on and extends the original brainchild of Victorian publisher George Smith that was edited successively by Sir Leslie Stephen and Sir Sidney Lee and published between 1895 and 1901, followed by later supplements. All the original entries have been re-written or revised and 13,500 new lives have been added, including 3,000 women who were rather neglected in the original. A major innovation is the inclusions of illustrations of 10,000 of the subjects.

In Newsletter 21 (January 1995) Bob Flanagan recorded that the late Eric Smith FSA had published the names of 142 people buried in the cemetery and commemorated in the original DNB. There then followed a list of a further 66 burials that had been discovered, principally due to the researches of George Young. The total of those buried or otherwise recorded (George Robert Stephenson, Frank Talfourd, and Dennis Wheatley are only commemorated on family headstones) at Norwood was gradually increased until it stood at 221 (September 2005).

A further 76 additional people, commemorated in the cemetery and included in the new DNB, are listed below. We have indicated (*) where an entry appeared in the original DNB, but was overlooked in our searches. In addition, although the new DNB states they are buried at Norwood, John Hughes, Charles Wicksteed, and Henry Schutz Wilson cannot be found in the burial records or on the Cemetery office computer and have thus been omitted. Many of those recorded below were already known to us, and further details of those marked (#) can be found in either our published booklets, or in Newsletter articles (an index to past Newsletter articles is available on our website). Where monuments, memorial plaques, cremation urns, etc. are known to exist this is indicated (‡).

#‡ Charles William Alcock (1842-1907) sports administrator and writer (grave 14,689, square 86)

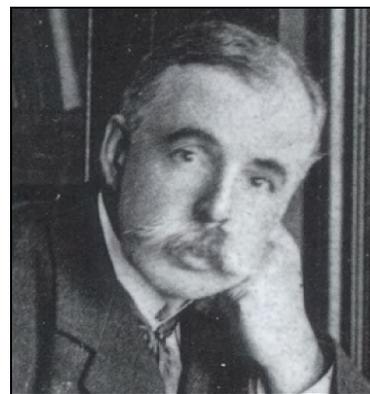
‡ Mary Jemima Alger (1838-1894) headmistress (25,780, 98)

William Allan (1813-1874) trade unionist (11,488, 88)

‡ Arthur Anderson (1792-1868) shipowner (9,186, 41)

Mary Bannister, Mrs. Thomas Wilson (d.1877) equestrienne (16,702, 15 - common grave)

¥ Hannah Bolton Barlow (1851-1916) ceramicist for Doulton's (31,050, 100)



Charles William Alcock

#John Henry Barrow (1796-1858) journalist and writer (5,815, 17 - common grave)

Thomas Barry (ca. 1810-1857) clown at Astley's (5,027, 110)

‡#Ernest Belfort Bax (1854-1926) Marxist theoretician and activist (cremated at Norwood)

‡Samuel Orchart Beeton (1831-1877) publisher and journalist (8,348, 64)

John Marriott Blashfield (1811-1882) terracotta manufacturer (13,442, 74)

Sir Edward William Brabrook (1839-1930) civil servant (26,537, 83)

‡#William Hardwick Bradbury (1832-1892) publisher (24,774, 21)

John Cargill Brough (1834-1872) science journalist (10,978, 108)

James Lumsdaine Bryden (1833-1880) surgeon and medical statistician (18,344, 99)

Demetrios Capetanakis (1912-1944) poet and literary critic (39,710, 29)

‡David Chadwick (1821-1895) accountant and company promoter (16,636, 36)

#‡Paul Cinquevalli (1859-1918) juggler (32,152, 82)

#William Clarke (1798-1856) cricketer (5,078, 65)

Peter James Clayton (1927-1991), radio broadcaster and author, cremated at Norwood

John Colam (1826/7-1910) campaigner for animal welfare (13,162, 88)

John Thomas Cooper (1790-1854) chemist (1,200, 90)

‡Peter Brusey Cow (snr) (1815-1890) rubber manufacturer (23,417, 106)

‡John Dibblee Crace (1838-1919) interior decorator and author (10,657, 33)

‡John Gregory Crace (1809-1889) interior decorator and author (10,657, 33)

Edward Cross (bap.1774-1854) zoo proprietor (3,014, 92)

#William Hayman Cummings (1831-1915) singer and musical antiquary (444, 112)

George Drysdale (1824-1904) free thinker and advocate of contraception (31,040, 25)

Henry Dunn (1801-1878) educationalist (10,491, 41)

Tom Walford Grieve (1841-1899) theatrical scene painter (25,457, 100)



Samuel Beeton



William Clarke

Eleanor Key Grove (1826-1905) educationalist (4,881, 85)

‡#George Hackenschmidt (1877-1968) wrestler and philosopher, cremated at Norwood

*‡Charles Haghe (d.1888), lithographer, brother of Louis Haghe (22,173, 88)

‡William Higgs (1824-1883) building contractor (8,520, 52)

*Sir William Houston, baronet (1766-1842) army officer (Catacombs 16H)

‡James Imray (1803-1870) hydrographer and stationer (12,720, 34)

‡#Sir John Jackson (1851-1919) civil engineer and contractor (21,994, 33)

*Ebenezer Evans Jenkins (1820-1905) Wesleyan minister and missionary (11,915, 41)

‡John Lawson Johnston (1839-1900) nutritionalist and food manufacturer (29,462, 38)

*James Fitzmaurice Kelly (1857-1923) historian of Spanish literature, cremated at Norwood

‡Alexander Frederick Henry Kleinwort (1815-1886) merchant and merchant banker (6,981, 49)

‡James Thomas Knowles (1806-1884) architect (8,643, 75)

‡#Katharina Josefa Lanner (1829-1908) dancer and choreographer (21,835, 40)

Henry Leach (1836-1879) physician (17,778, 79)

William David Lewis (1823-1861) legal writer (7,391, 73)

‡Mary Moffat (1795-1871) wife of African missionary (13,026, 56)

#George Myers (1803-1875) builder and craftsman (3,114, 37)

(James Edward) Lesslie Newbigin (1909-1998) missionary and theologian, cremated at Norwood

John Augustine Overs (1808-1844) author and cabinet maker (576, 8 - common grave)

‡Charles Pearson (1793-1862) lawyer and urban reformer (5,534, 52)

Charles Penfold (1798-1864) surveyor and valuer (9,185, 76)

Henry Pether (1801-1880) landscape painter (17932, 30 - common grave)

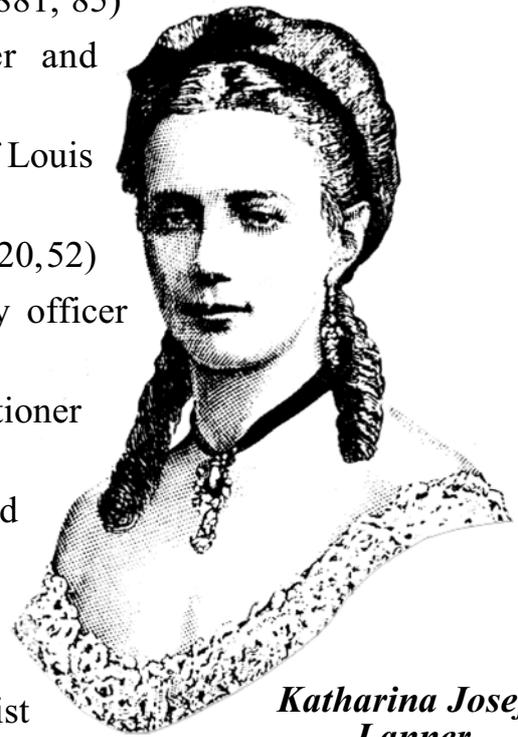
#Anna Pigeon (1832-1917) mountaineer (30,190, 123)

#Ellen Pigeon, Mrs Abbot (1836-1902) mountaineer (30,190, 123)

Arthur Beresford Pite (1861-1934) architect and educator (31,852, 23)

*Harry Quilter (1851-1907) art critic (27,582, 77)

William Quilter (1808-1888) accountant, father of Harry Quilter (14,879, 77)



*Katharina Josefa
Lanner*



*Marie Terpsithea Zambaco
(née Cassavetti)
tomb at
West Norwood Cemetery
(line drawing by
Don Bianco)*

Pantia Stephen Ralli (1793-1865) merchant (866, 28)

‡Stephen Augustus Ralli (1829-1902) merchant (14,564, 41-42 - Greek Chapel)

#William Pett Ridge (1859-1930) novelist and short-story writer, cremated at Norwood

‡Emmanuel Michael Rodocanachi (1855-1932) banker and financier (28,411, 28)

‡Michael Emmanuel Rodocanachi (1821-1901) merchant and banker (6,415 + 28,411, 28)

‡Pandia Peter Rodocanachi (1865-1936) merchant and banker (29,183, 28)

‡Peter Pandia Rodocanachi (1831-1899) merchant and banker (29,183, 28)

Edmund Henry Faucit Saville (1811-1857) actor (5,658, 36)

†Christian Augustus Siebe (1788-1872) engineer (4,522, 24)

Menella Bute Smedley (1819-1877) poet and novelist (16,536, 92)

*John Southward (1840-1902), printer and writer (24,468, 57)

Edward Steane (1798-1882) Baptist minister (8,210, 53/66)

*Sir Henry William Stisted (1817-1875) army officer (15,722, 67)

‡Thomas Wilberforce Stoughton (1840-1917) publisher (26,778, 56)

William Richard Sutton (1835/7-1900) entrepreneur and housing philanthropist (28,100, 82)

‡Panajjis Athanase Vagliano (1814-1902) merchant and shipowner (27,142, 42)

*Thomas Wheeler (1754-1847) apothecary and botanist (1,765, 18)

‡Edward Yates (1838-1907) builder (22,804, 36)

‡#Marie Terpsithea Zambaco (née Cassavetti) (1843-1914) pre-Raphaelite model and lover of Sir Edward Burne-Jones (1,971, 28)

† Replacement memorial

¥ Sister, Florence Elizabeth Barlow (d.1909; age 54) in same grave; brother, Arthur Bolton Barlow (d.1879; age 33) in adjacent grave (17389, 100); both ceramicists for Doulton's

Book Review

by Bob Flanagan

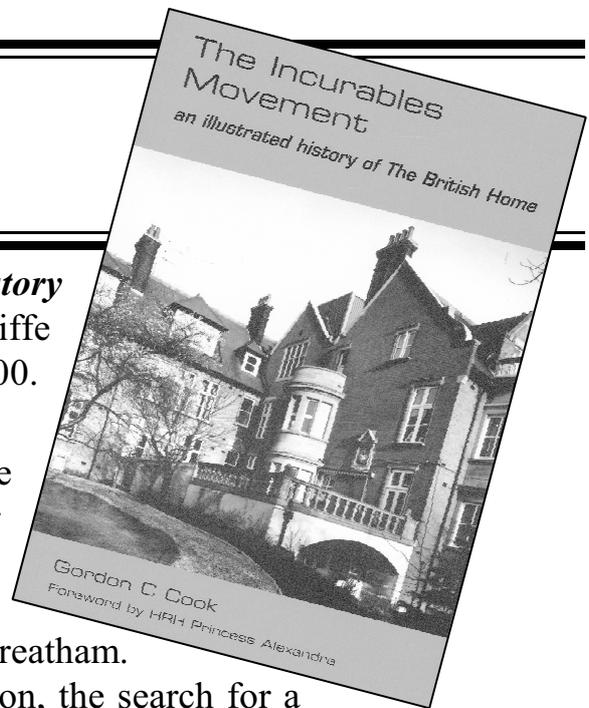
The Incurables Movement - An Illustrated History of the British Home by Gordon C Cook. Radcliffe Publishing, 232 pp, 2006. Paperback. £35.00. ISBN-13 9781846190827

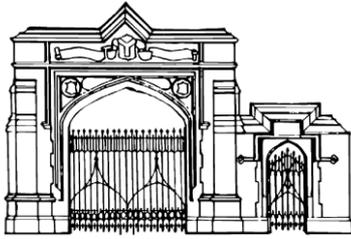
This relatively expensive volume records the history of the British Home (and Hospital) for Incurables (BHI), now the British Home, which opened in 1861 in Clapham Rise. In 1894 it reopened at its present site in Crown Lane, Streatham.

The book documents: The origin of the institution, the search for a first 'home', medical staff at Clapham Rise, a royal patroness extraordinaire: Alexandra, the 'home' in early years, and alterations to the Clapham Rise building, first patients at the BHI, the move to Streatham, a seaside house at Margate, later buildings at Streatham, and additional property, the home's Royal Charter of Incorporation, and strained relations with the Royal Hospital for Incurables (RHI), now the Royal Hospital for Neuro-Disability, Putney. Later chapters cover the BHI in two world wars, and the impact of the National Health Service Act (1946), amongst other topics.

The history of the relations between the BHI and the RHI is of especial interest as this had always puzzled me – it seems that the philanthropist Andrew Reid (1787-1862), the founder of the RHI, was an autocratic individual, and upset several co-founders of the RHI leading indirectly to the foundation of a rival organization, the BHI. Only 1 of 13 members of the initial BHI committee (1861) had not served previously on the RHI committee of management.

Despite the 'cemetery representation' on the local reception committee at the laying of the Foundation Stone at Streatham (1892) (see Newsletter 57, September 2006), I have struggled to find further cemetery connections whilst perusing this book. James Peek, and indeed other Peeks, are mentioned, but not William Peek himself (1791-1870) (grave 12,872, square 89). Perhaps other FOWNC members will take up the challenge?



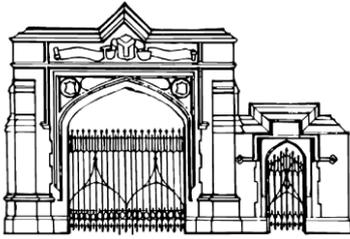


Recent FOWNC Events

by Jill Dudman

On 10 February I repeated the talk I had given at last year's Lambeth Archives Open Day (but at a more leisurely pace, having plenty of time compared with the half-hour into which I had to cram it there!) - a survey of people of foreign birth buried at Norwood. Included were many notables who have already been written about in FOWNC books or newsletters: American inventor Sir Hiram Maxim, South African engineer James Greathead, Australian artist Adelaide Ironside, Polish juggler Paul Cinquevalli, Austrian ballet dancer Katti Lanner, German musician Sir August Manns, French chemist Alphonse de Normandy, and German news pioneer Baron Paul de Reuter. I also spoke about West Indian Joe Hunte, highly regarded in Lambeth as a campaigner against racism. Another interesting German musical connection came to light from George Young's research: the Benecke family were relatives of the composer Mendelssohn, whose wife Cecile was a cousin of Frederic Benecke. They lived in a house on Denmark Hill, by the corner of Ferndene Road, the site of which is now covered by Ruskin Park. Mendelssohn made numerous visits to England, sometimes staying with the Beneckes. On one visit about 1842, he composed one of his *Songs Without Words*, originally called *Camberwell Green*, but the name was later changed to *Spring Song*. A sundial in the garden, now part of the park, commemorates his visit. Frederic died in Germany, but his wife Henriette (d.1893) and three children are buried at Norwood in a group of graves with matching pink granite crosses (grave 25,018 and others, square 106).

We were pleased to welcome Fabian Robertson on 10 March, having kindly made the lengthy journey from his home in Northamptonshire to speak to us about his ancestor Felix Slade. He had previously written the article on Slade that was published in FOWNC Newsletter No. 55, January 2006, and this talk was an opportunity to enlarge on the material therein with many more pictures. A substantial audience was present, including a number of other Slade relatives. Fabian related his genealogical research journey, describing how internet searching led him to FOWNC and thus to the monument, the extensive inscriptions on which provided him with information about hitherto unknown ancestors. Lambeth Archives also played their part, the baptismal records of St Mary's Church showing that all previous writings about Slade gave a wrong date of birth for him. The illustrations shown ranged from views inside the Slade School of Art at University College London to locations in Slade's Yorkshire estate, and of course items from Slade's collection bequeathed to the British Museum. We were shocked to hear that less than a week later Fabian suffered a heart attack, but are pleased to learn that he is recovering in hospital, and we send him our best wishes.



Forthcoming FOWNC Events

May - August 2007

General tours will be held on the first Sunday of each month (6 May, 3 June, 1 July and 5 August). All tours start at 14.30, at the Cemetery main gate off Norwood Road, and last for about 2 hours. There is no formal charge but we welcome donations of £1 per person (£0.50 concessions) towards conservation projects. There is also a regular non-FOWNC event that deserves a mention: Activity Walks in the cemetery start from West Norwood Library every Wednesday at 12.30.

Saturday 9 June, 11.00-17.00: West Norwood Cemetery Open Day

This event will include an exhibition of photographs and artefacts, talks on nature and genealogy, a birdbox trail for children, historic hearses, tours of the crematorium, refreshments, and the FOWNC bookstall. FOWNC guided tours will start from the main gate at 12.30 and 14.30. [Note that there will not be a memorial service on this day - the success of the newly-introduced Christmas service last December has prompted the moving of the annual service to that time in future.]

Advance notice: Open House London Weekend, 15 & 16 Sept

FOWNC will be opening the Greek Chapel on the Sunday afternoon - visit www.openhouse.org.uk or look for the booklet in libraries, nearer the time, for details of this and much else to see around the capital.

Other forthcoming events

On now until 10 June: Photographic Exhibition: An Introduction to Italian Memorial Sculpture 1820-1940 Watts Gallery, Down Lane, Compton, Guildford, Surrey. Tel. 01483 810235 or visit www.wattsgallery.org.uk for details.

Saturday 19 May, 11.00-17.00: Nunhead Cemetery Open Day Linden Grove, SE15. A very popular annual event by the Friends of Nunhead Cemetery, including displays, stalls, guided tours, refreshments, and many children's activities.

Saturday 2 June, 10.00-16.45: Symposium: Aspects of Listed Monuments in Public and Private Cemeteries. Brompton Cemetery Chapel, Fulham Road, SW10. Speakers include Tim Briden, Don Bianco, John Hoath, and Julian Litten. Cost: £25, including lunch and refreshments. Details from Robert Stephenson (020 7602 0173).

Sunday 15 July, 11.00-17.00: Lambeth Cemetery Open Day Blackshaw Road, SW17. Historic hearses and other vehicles, demonstrations of memorial masonry, stalls, exhibitions, rides in a motorcycle/sidecar hearse, organ recitals, and tours of the crematorium.

Saturday 21 July, 11.00-17.00: Brompton Cemetery Open Day Fulham Road, SW10. Guided tours, organ recitals, displays of funerary items, stalls, refreshments, children's activities (Friends of Brompton Cemetery).

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FOWNC Committee

Rosemary Comber has been our membership secretary since we were founded in 1989, but understandably now feels that she deserves a rest!

We are very grateful to Rosemary for all that she has done for us over the years.

Her duties will be absorbed by committee members with help from Rose Fenn.

George Young too has intimated his desire to resign from the post of Hon Treasurer.

George has done this invaluable task for many years and understandably also feels that he is due a rest.

Fortunately, George has indicated his willingness to stay on as Acting Treasurer until a replacement treasurer is found.

We owe both Rosemary and George a deep debt of gratitude for all their hard work over the years.

Friends of West Norwood Cemetery

The annual subscription to the Friends of West Norwood Cemetery is £3. For further information please contact the Secretary.

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