

# Friends of West Norwood Cemetery



NEWSLETTER NO.13: JANUARY 1993

## Chairman's Report - Bob Flanagan

We are still awaiting sight of the long-promised Lambeth report on the future of the cemetery - we have been asked unofficially to comment on the report without having seen it but have politely declined! We understand, however, that English Heritage have been consulted and have replied at length asking for major changes in the draft report supplied to them. We will keep our members informed of progress on this important document as best we can. We have been assured by Lambeth that it will be presented as a consultation document in the first instance and that we will have full opportunity to read and to comment on the report in due course.

On a positive note the Cemetery Superintendent, Mr Mackay, has kindly offered to display posters advertising our events in the cemetery. Secondly, Mr Mackay has agreed to undertake a short programme of clearance of vegetation from important monuments which should be completed by the end of January. This includes removal of the sycamore saplings from the Appold and Dollond monuments, the birch tree from John Lawson Johnston's tomb and the remains of the tree stump from in front of the Mantell monument. Thirdly, it has been agreed that FOWNC will offer guided tours of the cemetery on the official Open Day on Sunday 20 June. We look forward to reporting continued improvement in our relations with Mr Mackay and his staff in future Newsletters.

## The FOWNC Committee

We are very pleased to welcome Nicholas Long as our Vice-Chairman. Nicholas, who lives in Clapham, is the grandson of the well-known West Norwood estate agent of former years, Montague Long, and is a plotholder in the cemetery. Nicholas brings a wealth of experience in local history and conservation matters to the committee - he is Secretary of the Clapham Antiquarian Society, Hon. Treasurer of the Twentieth Century Society and a council member of the Victorian Society - and we are grateful that he has found time in his busy schedule to give us the benefit of his counsel. We are also very grateful to his wife, Anna Long FCA, who audits our accounts.

Jill Dudman has successfully completed her post-graduate diploma in Information Studies and returns to the committee as General Secretary and Newsletter Editor. Rosemary and David Comber continue in their vital roles of Membership Secretary and Hon. Treasurer, respectively. Our founder Nicholas Reed remains an active member of the committee and has offered to take on the very important role of fund raising coordinator. Tom Easton and Celia Smith also continue their work as ordinary members of the committee. Our former Minutes Secretary, Margaret Jackman, although no longer a committee member, will continue in her important tasks of liaison with Chatsworth Baptist Church and provider of refreshments at our meetings there.

If there is an envelope addressed to our Membership Secretary, Rosemary Comber, enclosed with this newsletter, this indicates that we have not yet received your subscription renewal for 1993. We hope you will wish to continue your membership; if so, please place your subscription (minimum £2) in the envelope and return it to Rosemary. Remember to include your name and address!

Also enclosed is a spare membership form; please pass this on to an interested friend or relative, and hopefully thereby gain a new member for us.

## FOWNC Officers - 1993

### Chairman & Publications Officer:

Bob Flanagan, 79 Durban Road, London SE27 9RW  
(Tel: 081 670 3265).

### Vice-Chairman:

Nicholas Long, 58 Crescent Lane, London SW4 9PU  
(Tel: 071 622 7420)

### General Secretary and Newsletter Editor:

Jill Dudman, 119 Broxholm Road, London SE27 0BJ  
(Tel: 081 670 5456)

### Membership Secretary:

Rosemary Comber, 170 Knights Hill, London SE27 0SR  
(Tel: 081 761 3996)

### Hon. Treasurer:

David Comber (address and telephone as above)

## FOWNC Events - October/December 1992

Our talks by Winifred Murphy (on Parnell and Kitty O'Shea) and by Prof Michael Slater (on Charles Dickens and his Circle) were both attended by about 30 people and were both very successful. Winifred Murphy was almost evangelical in her encouragement of groups such as ours to care for monuments to our more illustrious forbears. At present these may be strictly in law private monuments, but in time those which survive will become acknowledged public monuments in same way as features such as Stonehenge. Our AGM was held after this talk - copies of the minutes are available from Jill Dudman on request. Michael Slater was both entertaining and erudite - his talk took on the aspect of a 'dramatic reading' much as Dickens' own presentations must have done. Note that there is a walk on Saturday 10 July specifically to complement this latter talk. The 'Military Connections' walk in November was not well attended but this was more than compensated for by the wealth of new material discovered. This includes the tomb of Sister Eliza Roberts, Florence Nightingale's principal assistant in the Crimea, which survives intact near the tomb of Sir Horace Jones, just off the 'Ship Path'. We now know of some 60 notable soldiers, sailors, etc. who are buried in the cemetery, many of whose tombs still survive.

## Forthcoming FOWNC Publications

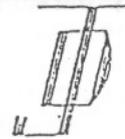
As members will see from the 1993 events list we hope to have at least two 'theme' tour guides published by the end of the year, 'Entertainers' written by Bob Flanagan and 'Authors' written by Paul Graham. These will include a map and descriptions and/or drawings of surviving monuments as well as biographical notes and where possible portraits or other illustrative material. Bob is also writing a general guide to all notable people buried or otherwise commemorated in the cemetery. This will consist of a map, very brief biographical notes arranged in alphabetical order and a brief description of surviving monuments. It is anticipated that there will be some 400 entries initially.

*If you are a plotholder in the cemetery then please ensure that details of your family grave (grave and square number, biographical details of the deceased, including published obituaries, copies of photographs, etc. if possible, and a note of the monument, if any) are sent to Bob as soon as possible so that the details are on file for possible inclusion in this publication.*

It is hoped to have a draft of this publication available for consultation by interested members early in the New Year. Finally, if you have any suggestions for possible sponsors for any of these publications then please get in touch with Bob.

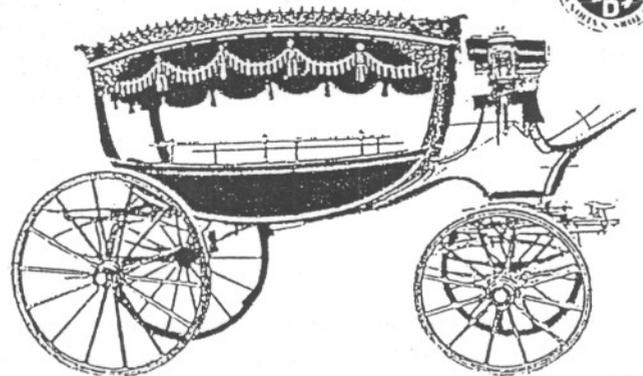
## Contributions to Future Newsletters

We hope you approve of the new typeface and layout adopted for parts of this Newsletter. If you would like to submit news items, feature articles and/or photographs for possible publication in future issues (we plan to produce Newsletters in January, April, July and October each year) then please get in touch with Jill Dudman. Although we appreciate that most members are too busy or live too far away to help with stalls, etc. at weekends, preparation of short features on items relevant to the cemetery is an alternative and no less rewarding way of helping with the running of the group and hopefully will add to our fund of knowledge about the cemetery and its 'residents'. If possible please submit articles as an IBM-readable ASCII file on floppy disk, but Jill would be happy to receive material in manuscript rather than not at all!



## DOWSETT & JENKINS LTD.

Funeral Directors & Monumental Masons  
Private Chapels of Rest at each office  
Specialists in Repatriation



*Using a Horse Drawn Hearse?*

7 SUNNYHILL ROAD, STREATHAM SW16  
Telephone: 081-769 3181

Branches:  
1507 London Road, Norbury. 081-764 2912; 2 Streatham Vale. 081-679 3806

CHOSEN HERITAGE LTD. FUNERAL PLANS  
FOR PEACE OF MIND

## FOWNC Meetings - 1993

Since posters advertising our tours and meetings are now to be displayed in the cemetery we have decided to offer general tours of the cemetery on the first Sunday of each month. Although primarily designed for those unfamiliar with the cemetery, existing FOWNC members will always be welcome on these tours - please come along when you can as there is always something new to see or learn. One practical way members could help in the running of FOWNC would be to join the rota of guides for these tours as at present this task falls on Rosemary Comber, Jill Dudman, Tom Easton, Bob Flanagan and Nicholas Reed, all of whom are committee members and are heavily involved with FOWNC in other areas. Tour notes could be provided if there are volunteers for this task - at least the volunteer(s) would be certain of themselves learning more about the cemetery!

As in previous years we have organised a programme of lectures and specialized tours to supplement the more general tours. An outline of the year's programme is given in the enclosed sheet. Additional details about the January-March events are given below. Note that we have booked the lecture room until 17.00 on meeting days in order to allow time for discussion of items of general interest.

### **January 16 - The Greek Community in England: The Aegean Connection by Paul Calvocoressi**

This year we plan a more detailed study of the Greek Cemetery than has been possible hitherto. To set the scene we are very pleased that Paul Calvocoressi of English Heritage has agreed to come to talk to us about the origins of the Greek Community in England. Paul is well qualified for this role - his family have a vault at Norwood and his grandfather - who married a Ralli - is buried in St Stephen's Chapel, otherwise known as the Ralli Mortuary Chapel. To complement this lecture there will be a Special Tour of the Greek section at Norwood on 16 May which will be led by Don Bianco, who is the English Heritage staff member with special responsibility for Norwood. The Greek Section at Norwood is especially important as it is by far the largest of the two areas in the cemetery which have not suffered some loss of monuments over the years - the other is in the consecrated area by the Pond mausoleum (square 88).

### **February 20 - Alexander Parkes (1813-1890): Creative Genius by David Leaback**

Those who attended the Lambeth Archives Open Day last September may have heard David Leaback's fascinating talk on the dyestuff pioneer Edward Chambers Nicholson. In later life Nicholson lived at the erstwhile home of Elhanan Bicknell, The Cedars at Herne Hill. However, it is known where he is buried - it seems that he does not lie at Norwood. Alexander Parkes, however, is buried at Norwood - his grave is near the wrought iron canopied tomb of Mrs Ann Farrow by the east wall of the cemetery.

However, his tombstone is no more - it may even have been one of those destroyed in the clearance operations a couple of years ago. Parkes was an inventor in the same league as Sir Henry Bessemer and Sir Hiram Maxim. According to the Dictionary of National Biography he 'took out 46 patents extending over 46 years, most of them connected with the deposition of metals by electricity; discovered the method of using zinc for the desilverization of lead (1850) and invented celluloid'. I leave you to ponder which of these inventions has been of the most lasting import...

### **March 13 - Entertainers Commemorated at Norwood by Bob Flanagan**

Norwood has many connections with the stage and the sporting arena. Given the growth of theatres and of other places of entertainment on the South Bank and in the area to the south of Waterloo Bridge in Georgian and early Victorian times this is perhaps not unexpected. Indeed, Sir Joseph Barnby, Willert Beale, Lionel Brough, George Conquest, George Davidge, Frederick Gye junior, David Webster Osbaldiston, Philip Phillips, Fred Robson (himself acknowledged as the greatest actor of his generation), John Saunders and Harriet Waylett all managed theatrical or musical enterprises here or in the West End. Moreover, David Roberts began his career as a theatrical scene-painter and became recognised as one of the leading figures of his profession. William Clarke and Charles Alcock, amongst the most important figures in the development of professional cricket and of association football, respectively, are also buried at Norwood. A recent article on Charles Alcock is reproduced later in this Newsletter.

### **Events at Other Societies**

The following Norwood Society meetings will be of interest to FOWNC members, since they relate to some of the most eminent Victorians buried in the Cemetery, who are always included in our tours:-  
**Tuesday 26 January:** 'The Life and Work of Charles Haddon Spurgeon' - a talk by the Rev. J. J. Brown about the famous Baptist preacher (this is a different speaker from the FOWNC lecture on the same subject last year).

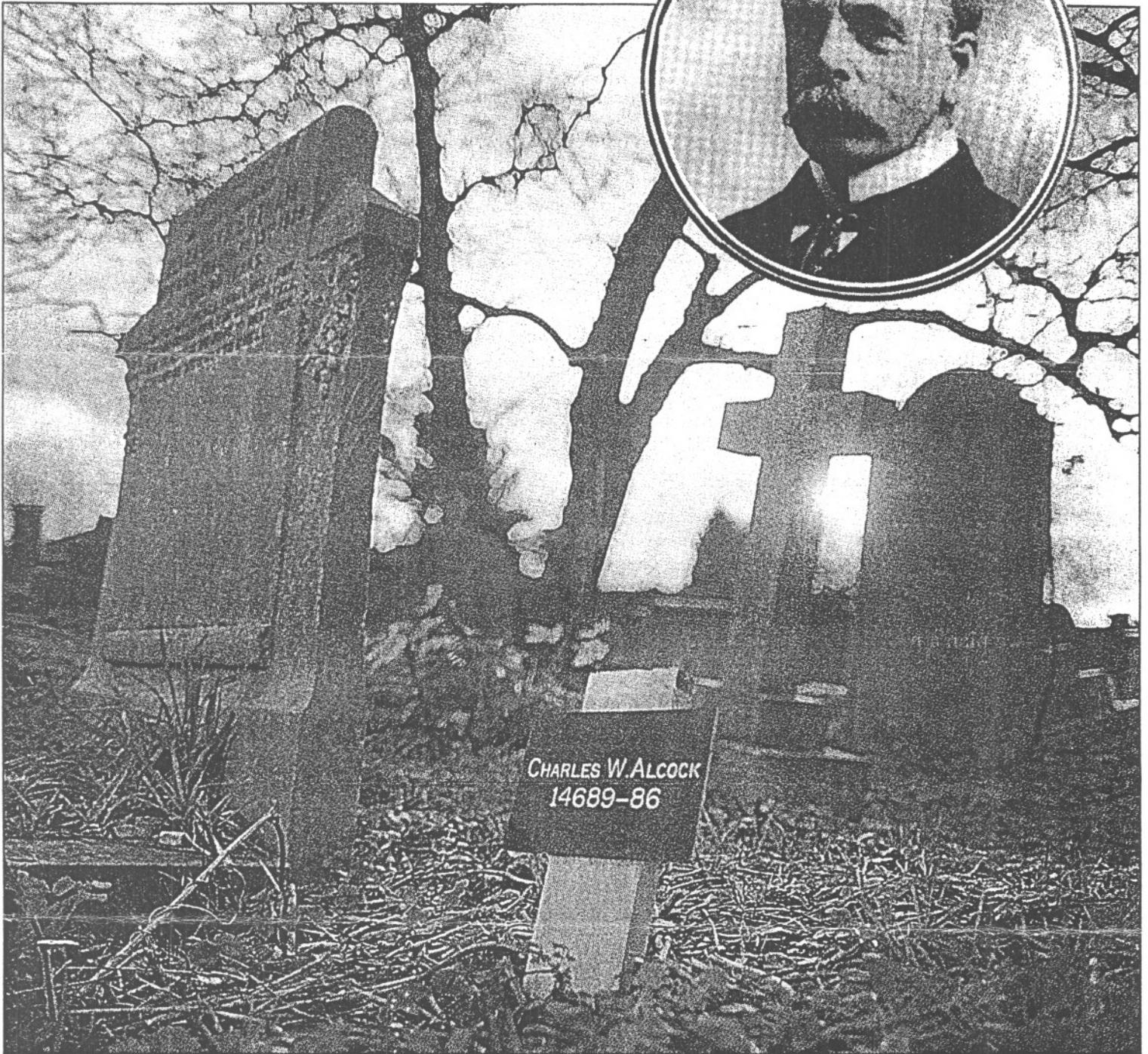
**Tuesday 23 February:** 'Artists and Art Galleries of South London' - a talk by Brian Bloice, which will include the contribution made by Sir Henry Tate to the nation's art collection.

**Tuesday 30 March:** 'Belgravia: its Buildings and its People' - a talk by John Gardner about the great estate laid out by the building contractor Thomas Cubitt.

All meetings are held in All Saints' Parish Rooms, Beulah Hill, Upper Norwood, SE19, at 8.00 p.m. (entrance along a path to the left from All Saints' Church).

THE DAILY TELEGRAPH

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 1992



A small sign is all that shows C W Alcock's grave in West Norwood; the FA are to pay for a headstone. Picture: Tony Henshaw

# FA pay homage to forgotten father of English sport

Reproduced by kind permission of the *Daily Telegraph*

## Bryon Butler on the debt football and cricket, among others, owe to C W Alcock, whose part in shaping the modern era is being recognised 150 years after his birth

**A** GRAVE in a corner of West Norwood cemetery — number 14689 in one of Victorian London's most fashionable burial grounds — will soon have a headstone. It will be inscribed "Charles William Alcock, 1842-1907".

The Football Association have just agreed to adopt the grave and pay for the stone, which coincides neatly with the 150th anniversary on Wednesday of Alcock's birth. But if his memorial is to carry even an outline of his contribution to late 20th Century leisure, it will need to be a monument of almost Centre Point proportions. He might, on the other hand, be simply described as "the father of English sport".

There may be other contenders for this rhapsodic title, but, before rival names are banked, consider Alcock's claims.

The FA Cup, football's first and best-loved national tournament, was his idea; and so was international football. The World Cup itself is an extension of his two priceless notions — and, of course, his concept of a sudden-death knock-out tournament is now used by most other sports. Someone had to be first with the idea: it happened to be Alcock.

Alcock championed and proposed the acceptance of professionalism in football, and worked obsessively hard for his own living. He was secretary of the FA for 25 years (1870-95 but only paid from 1887) and secretary of Surrey County Cricket Club for 35 years (1872 until his death in 1907) — combining the two posts for more than 20 years.

He was also a prolific sports writer, a pioneer in the field. He wrote the first history of football, edited its first annual, as well as a highly-acclaimed cricket annual, started several magazines and contributed regularly to *The Sportsman* and *The Field*. He made history, then recorded it with insight and style.

Kennington Oval, the Wembley of the time, was his home from home. Here he captained The Wanderers to victory in the first FA Cup Final in 1872; captained England against Scotland in a first single unofficial football international; instigated and organised cricket's first Test match in England in 1880; and was the presiding official two years later when Australia beat England for the first time and The Ashes were born. He was also instrumental in giving shape and order to the county cricket championship.

Alcock was heavily involved, too, in organising the first Rugby Union international in England, and provided the Varsity match with its first neutral home. Hockey and even baseball also took place at the Oval — which Alcock promoted with sharp business acumen.

Alcock, in short, led the way in the standardisation and development of team-games during the Industrial Revolution. It was the birth-time of modern sport — and Alcock, with his vision and energy, was its father figure.

He was one of five sons of a wealthy Sunderland shipping man and left Harrow School in 1859 as a tall, straight figure, a talented footballer ("excellent dribbler and goal-getter, very hard to knock off the ball"), a useful cricketer who played for the Gentlemen of Essex, a willing organiser and a natural leader.

Alcock was not quite 30 years old and had been the FA secretary for little more than 12 months when he had his vision of a national knock-out tournament in 1871. He remembered playing in an inter-house sudden-death competition at Harrow, and recognised that the format could be employed on a national scale.

Now, 500 clubs enter the tournament each year; but only 15 entered the first, three scratched without playing a game, and Alcock led the famous Wanderers (a club he helped form) to victory by 1-0 over the Royal Engineers in the final.

Alcock led England to victory in an unofficial international against Scotland at the Oval, and, but for injury, would have captained them in the first official one in Glasgow in late 1872 — which he arranged "to further the interests of the Association in Scotland". He captained England in 1875, though, and a week later, refereed the FA Cup Final. He became the first president of the Referees' Association.

As an administrator, Alcock was liberal, catholic, a perceptive judge of character, a calm man who used words sparingly yet tellingly, but who could also be caustic and stubborn. William Pickford, an FA contemporary, described him as "lovable and genial". But he also moved with the times and adjusted smoothly to the quickening tempo and broadening democracy of football.

The balance of power in the game swung away from the universities and public schools of the South, with their cherished concept of amateurism, towards the clubs of the North, who saw nothing wrong in profit and success.

**A**LCOCK said he objected "to the argument that it is immoral to work for a living", and, on his proposal, professionalism was legalised in 1885. He believed it would be better to control it than drive it underground.

Surrey County Cricket Club, with Alcock at the helm, became the country's most successful club. In nine seasons, 1887-95, they won the county championship seven times and shared it once. By this time, too, Alcock had moved English cricket on to a new, higher plateau: the international game.

The second Australian team to visit England, in 1880, had a modest, rather messy fixture list. But Alcock somehow persuaded Sussex to call off their game with W L Murdoch's men at Hove, and arranged instead the first Test between England and Australia. At the Oval, of course, W G Grace, a close friend of Alcock's, duly scored the first Test century for England.

Alcock's Oval was also the scene of Australia's first triumph over England, in 1882, which led to the birth of The Ashes. N L 'Pa' Jackson, the founder of the Corinthians, remembered seeing the Surrey secretary in his office afterwards, "sitting down on a huge iron safe, burying his head in his hands, oblivious to everything".

Alcock, though, had missed nothing, and wrote a perceptive account of that turning point in cricket history. "Men who were noted for their coolness at critical moments were trembling like a leaf," he wrote. "Some were shivering with cold; some even fainted. At times there was an awful silence."

Now the FA have agreed to adopt his grave — a plot Alcock purchased in 1874, 33 years before his death in Brighton. He is in illustrious company: with him, among 40,000 graves in the 42-acre cemetery, are Mrs Beeton, Baron de Reuter, Henry Doulton, Edward Coleman of the mustard family, artist David Roberts, William Wyon, who engraved the image of Queen Victoria for the Penny Black, prizefighter Tom King, the last of the bare-knuckle champions, and such cricketing luminaries as Lord Hawke and William Clarke.

The FA's attention was drawn to Alcock's grave by Dr Bob Flanagan, chairman of the Friends of West Norwood Cemetery, who revealed that Lambeth Council intend to take possession of private graves more than 75 years old and place other coffins in them. Dr Flanagan hopes the FA's adoption will allow the grand old man to rest in peace.

As a contemporary wrote of Alcock: "When the flashing meteors have come and gone, when the league tables are full and complete, and when the present fades into the past, the name of C W Alcock will stand out all the more prominently like a rugged rock in a sea of bubbles."

**Publications News - Bob Flanagan**

**Postcard (30 p):** Isabella Mary Mayson, Mrs Samuel Beeton (1836-1865). Hand-tinted albumen print. Maull & Polyblank, 1857. National Portrait Gallery.

Isabella was born in Cheapside. In 1856 she married the journalist and publisher Samuel Orchart Beeton (1831-1877). She published her first articles in *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* published by Samuel in April 1857. In July of that year her first child Samuel Orchart died and she began planning her *Book of Household Management*. This appeared in 30 monthly parts from 1859 and in book form in 1861. Much altered, it is still in print. Sadly Isabella's second child, also Samuel Orchart, soon died and Isabella too died aged only 28 shortly after the birth of her fourth child. Isabella, Samuel and their first two children all lie at Norwood (grave 8348, square 64) - remember that this lady with the haunting face twice stood where we can stand today to watch her children's coffins being lowered into the vault. The tombstone which remains was restored by their surviving children Orchart (1863-1947) and Mayson (1865-1947) in the 1930s, the 'original having fallen into disrepair'.



**Book Review: Step-by-Step Guide to Tracing Your Ancestors** by D.M. Field. Treasure Press, 1987. 64 pages (hardback) £4.25. Illustrated.

We now have a few copies of this practical guide to the use of census returns, parish records, wills, etc. in family history and other biographical research projects. First published in 1982, this new edition has been reprinted four times since 1987 which gives some idea of its popularity. It is packed with useful information for the genealogist and cemetery historian!

**Book Review: Seventeen Stations to Dingle - The Liverpool Overhead Railway Remembered** by John W. Gahan. Countywise, 1982. A5, 88 pages (softback) £3.50. Illustrated.

I found this fascinating little book which tells the story of Britain's only overhead railway on a recent trip to Liverpool. Little did I think that two months later I would find that James H. Greathead (1844-1896), designer and engineer of the Liverpool Overhead with Sir Douglas Fox, lies at Norwood (grave 27,103, square 83). Greathead of course is best known for his adaptations of Sir Marc Brunel's tunnelling shield which facilitated the driving of the Tower Subway in 1869 and the deep 'tube' railway lines under London towards the end of the nineteenth century. His experience in providing electric traction for City and South London Railway (now part of the Northern Line) was in all probability a major factor in his commission for the Liverpool Overhead once the decision was made to install electric traction for the 'dockers' umbrella' which opened in 1893. Greathead's premature death at his home in Streatham in October 1896 cut short his involvement with several other major projects, including the Central London Railway. Unfortunately, Greathead's monument, which was recorded by Eric Smith in the late 1970s, has disappeared. I plan to write to London Regional Transport to see if they will pay for a replacement.

**Book Review: Transit Circle - The Story of William Simms, 1793-1860** by Eleanor Mennim. William Sessions, 1992. A5, 316 pages, £9.50 (softback) - 26 monochrome illustrations.



This book tells the story of William Simms and other members of his family. After being apprenticed to a goldsmith William worked with his father and later with the well-known optical instrument maker Edward Troughton in Fleet Street. Elevated to partnership with Troughton in 1826, William embarked on the construction of a series of major optical instruments. His most notable works were executed in collaboration with the Astronomer Royal, George Airy, for the Royal Observatory at Greenwich. His four principal instruments still survive there in their original positions, including the Transit Circle which defines the Meridian. Troughton and Simms also made astronomical instruments for observatories in other parts of the world and also telescopes, surveying equipment, standard lengths, etc. William's descendants carried on the family tradition until 1936. The Simms family memorial at Norwood (grave 79, square 64), one of the earliest in the cemetery, was demolished 10 years or so ago.

However, Dr Mennim, the great, great grand-daughter of William, has erected a new headstone. The Simms grave is not far from that of another famous optical instrument maker, George Dollond FRS (grave 2,205, square 62). The Dollond name of course lives on as the opticians Dollond & Aitchison whilst the names of both Simms and of Dollond are commemorated in terracotta on the New Physical Observatory built at Greenwich in 1899.