

# Friends of West Norwood CEMETERY

Newsletter No. 42 - September 2001

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## Chairman's Report

by Bob Flanagan

First the good news. The reinstatement of the de Normandy memorial has been completed and the new memorial, as far as we can judge a faithful recreation by Rowland Brothers of the original demolished by Lambeth in 1990, looks splendid (grave 9,170, square 18).

Thanks especially to Don Bianco (English Heritage), but also to the Council officers who accepted responsibility for the project, and Mrs Panourgias-Morrison, a relative of de Normandy, who gave us much support in the early days, and the Archdeacon's Official and Diocesan Registry for sanctioning the reinstatement.

We plan a rededication ceremony and will publish an article on de Normandy (or rather Dr Normandy as he preferred to be known) and the restoration project in due course - details in the next Newsletter.

### Maddick Mausoleum

The restoration of the doors to the Maddick mausoleum (grave 37,450, square 124), long an invitation to vandalism in the most prominent part of the cemetery, has also been completed successfully.

Thanks again to Council officers, especially Jane Warrener, for progressing this project, and to Don Bianco and Ivan Coffey (building surveyor) for advising and managing the works.

Also in hand are works to the Martin (grave 29,671, square 124) and Thomas (grave 12,801, square 8) monuments - we are a bit worried that scratches have appeared on the surface of the Thomas monument but hopefully this can be cleaned up in due course. Works to the Stagg monument (grave 97, square 63), which lies between the listed Grissell monument and the Beeton tomb, were completed some months ago.

These items and others reported and acknowledged in previous Newsletters, notably the successful cleaning and restoration of the main gates and surrounding railings, have shown just what can be achieved with goodwill on all sides. Unfortunately, the strengthening of the Robson Road wall has not proceeded smoothly, the inconspicuous strengthening inserts we were promised having been transformed into prominent and unsightly steel "pipes" acting as buttresses on the south-facing side of the wall. This change of plan was not authorized by either English Heritage or the Scheme of Management Committee, and we are trying to find out who allowed this deviation from the agreed plan.

Despite the completion of the strengthening, the scaffolding in Robson Road is only just being (12 August) dismantled. This has cost a fortune to rent during the year it has been there and its prolonged presence might be seen as a clear case of mismanagement of public funds. No doubt the District Auditor will be invited to investigate.

### **Landscape Management Survey**

And so to other matters. The Landscape Management Survey commissioned under the management of Jane Warrener has been published and is a very thorough and welcome document. It is far too long to attempt to summarize here (over 200 pages), but I have a copy which members are welcome to consult.

Some members of the Management Advisory Group and the Scheme of Management Committee (myself included) spent long hours helping with this project and it is good to see it finally appear.

Hopefully this will not only provide the basis for an agreed Scheme of Management for the cemetery, but also for applications for grant applications to external bodies to fund long-term conservation/restoration projects.

Although beyond the scope of the survey, the Group felt that clear proposals/recommendations for the medium/long-term future of the cemetery and crematorium, including its management structure, were needed as part of the Land Management Strategy. The acceptance by all parties of a guaranteed integrated land management and burial/cremation strategy was thought to be crucial to the success of any bids for external funding, for example. Note that FOWNC still maintain a reserve in the hope that one day this will be available for match-funding, an important requirement these days.

Whilst welcoming the report, the Cemetery Management Advisory Group, which I chair, felt that the Executive Summary contained many relatively trivial points, and a number of key issues such as the need for a survey of all existing monuments and a rolling program of scrub clearance and monument restoration in key areas were not

emphasised sufficiently, a view endorsed by the Scheme of Management Committee. An interesting point is the recommendation for reinstatement of public rights of way across the cemetery from the Robson Road area, a view the Group supported with the caveat that security/public safety must remain paramount.

In respect of the planting of new trees, the Group was concerned that Tite's strategy of mixed deciduous and other trees suited to deep clay should be followed. All agreed that a thorough drainage survey should be carried out as a matter of priority. This should include guttering and downwater pipes/local drains from individual structures as appropriate. It was also thought that a survey of the unrestored portions of the boundary wall and railings was needed as this might serve to prevent emergencies such as had occurred at the Robson Road portion of the wall.

There were other concerns over proposals to encourage visitors to the cemetery. The issue of site safety (danger from possibly unsafe memorials/ subsidence on existing graves; unpatrolled areas of dense scrub with consequent risk of attack; possible theft/vandalism of memorials) would have to be addressed before more visitors (adults let alone children) could be encouraged. It was not felt that the existing lodge (near to the cemetery gate as it is) could easily be adapted to provide a visitor centre/toilet facilities since (i) there was a sitting tenant on the first floor and (ii) there was very little space available of the ground floor given that space was needed for the cemetery clerical staff. Any visitor centre would have to provide disabled access/toilet facilities.

On the publications side, there was concern that a proper vetting/consultation process was needed to ensure the accuracy of any publications, information packs, etc. produced as a result of the survey (there are a few historical inaccuracies in the report itself despite our best efforts to minimize such occurrences). However, the possible appointment of a part-time Education Officer was to be strongly supported once the site security issues were addressed. The Group felt that the Southwark Park Ranger scheme (there is no equivalent in Lambeth at present) had much to recommend it. The Group was also concerned that the report made no comment on vehicular access to the cemetery. There is no parking provision in the existing cemetery for private cars other than on the roadways; coaches had to park on busy and relatively narrow public roads. The need to control vehicular access on some of the very narrow paths in the cemetery should be emphasised.

The Group thought that more emphasis was needed on the proposals to open up fresh vistas and expand existing views in the cemetery. The importance of maintaining existing grass paths and opening defined grass paths if possible where old roads had been used for burials was also emphasised. The Group suggested that names should be sought for all grass paths in the cemetery to complement the existing named paths (Ship Path, Doulton Path). The importance of the conservation of the listed monuments especially must be emphasized in the Scheme of Management. The provision of accurate costings was important here to enable proper budgeting.

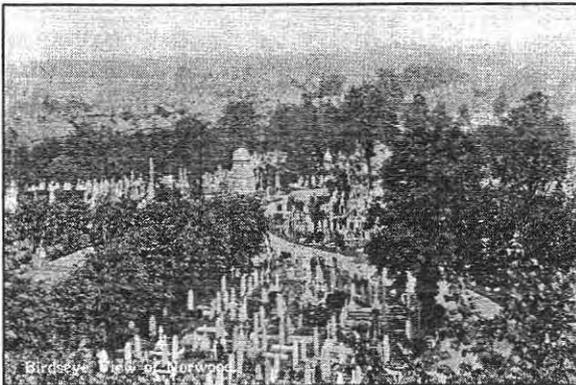
Finally, the Group felt that a major omission was the absence from the summary of emphasis on the proposed area-by-area scrub clearance and detailed survey of existing monuments, a topic of much current concern in that much of the cemetery today looks like a wilderness again emphasizing the management/budgetary problem in the cemetery at the moment. A further major omission was the lack of comment on the need to plan for alternative siting of the works/maintenance area and the spoil dump, and concealed parking for the cemetery's vehicles/excavators, etc.

## Vale Street

In the context of the problem of where to accommodate the works/maintenance area, etc. as discussed above, I am sad to report that we have received no support from Council officers over the possible extension of the cemetery onto this site, and there has been little sign of support amongst the local community for party political and other reasons. Clear strategic direction from officers and Executive members is needed here - let us hope something is forthcoming before it is too late. I have commented on the draft Unitary Development Plan along these lines. In the meantime I am somewhat amazed to report that Mr Niall Bolger has promised to bring proposals for the relocation within the existing cemetery of the works/maintenance area, the oil tank, and the spoil dumps, etc., to the next Scheme of Management Committee! Before the Vale Street option came along we have never created a fuss about this problem as we could not see anywhere else in the cemetery where these eyesores could be accommodated, but Mr Bolger is obviously seeing the problem with fresh eyes...

## FOWNC AGM

Finally, note that the FOWNC AGM is to be held on Saturday 20 October before the lecture by Julian Litten (see Forthcoming Events). All your officers are willing to stand again, but we would welcome alternative nominations/offers of help. We are most conscious that we are very much an "Old Guard" and would willingly either step down or preferably help train new volunteers to begin to take over some/all of our tasks. Nominations/thoughts to me please before 20 October (address on back page).



Footnote: Further to the article on Mrs Beeton in Newsletter 41, thanks to Leslie Grout who has pointed out that Sir Mayson Beeton was cremated at Woking and his ashes are in the columbarium there.

*Bob Flanagan*

*Birdseye view of  
West Norwood Cemetery  
c.1905*

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# Centenary Ceremony for Richard Henry Brunton (1841-1901)

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by George Young

Richard Henry Brunton (the “Father of Japanese Lighthouses”) was a Scottish civil engineer who went to Japan in 1868 where he was commissioned by the Meiji government to plan and supervise the construction of over 30 lighthouses around 1500 miles of uncharted coastline. Whilst in Japan, he was also consulted on the construction specifications (and in some cases the actual design and project management) for railways, bridges, roads, drainage, land reclamation, harbour works, and telegraph lines. The work helped to progress Japan’s quest for modernization to open up trade routes to the West.

After returning to England in 1876 aged 35, he worked as an architect designing theatres and hotels. He then spent three years managing Young’s Paraffin Oil Company in Glasgow, and then went into partnership with a friend in a business manufacturing architectural ornaments.

An obituary was published in The Times (20 May 1901, p 11) nearly four weeks after his death. The present gravestone was erected in 1991 to commemorate the 150th anniversary of his birth as reported in our April 1992 newsletter. The original gravestone was cleared away in the 1970s or thereabouts.

A memorial service was held at Norwood on 24 April 2001, the centenary of his death. The service was arranged by the Inubohzaki Brunton Association, who have members in Britain and in Japan.

*The new Brunton Memorial  
at Norwood  
(line drawing by Don Bianco)*



Inubohzaki is the site of one of Brunton's lighthouses some 60 miles east of Tokyo. The service was conducted by the Rev. Stuart Meyer, Senior Chaplain to King's College Hospital, and was held in the main Crematorium chapel rather than at the graveside (it was raining). Fiona Wauchope Miles, great, great grand-daughter of RH Brunton, and Hiroshi Nakata of the Inubohzaki Brunton Association, Japan both paid tribute to Brunton during the service. Afterwards each person present was invited to place a single carnation on the grave (no. 29641, square 77).



*Hiroshi Nakata of the Inubohzaki Brunton Association (4th from left), Fiona Wauchope Miles (4th from right), and others who attended the service.*

Little is known of Brunton's private life. He was born at Muchalls, Kincardineshire, and he married Elizabeth Charlotte Wauchope in Edinburgh in 1855. His elder daughter Mary was born in Pimlico in 1857. The younger daughter, Harriet, was born in Japan in about 1870 inferring that the whole family traveled to Japan. In the 1880s they lived at Claremont House, 162 Norwood Road, West Norwood, a semi-detached house located where the present B&Q store is today (Norwood Road was renumbered in 1927). In the 1880s they lived at 3 Gipsy Road, a semi-detached Georgian house which is still there, covered in ivy and with door and windows painted red. It must be one of the oldest houses in West Norwood. Brunton died at 45 Courtfield Road, Kensington and left just £813 in his will. His is the only interment in the grave.



*3 Gipsy Road, West Norwood where the Brunton family lived in the 1880s.*

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# George Jennings (1810-1882)

## Sanitary Engineer

by Don Bianco

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In London up until 1847, domestic foul sewage was discharged directly into main watercourses - "nauseous and abominable stinks of nastiness" - until it became compulsory to connect drains into sewers, although the latter still ran into the Thames. Use of the river as a source of drinking water led to major outbreaks of cholera in 1831, 1848, and 1854. Dr John Snow's famous Soho experiment which, by disabling a water pump, saw the cessation of an outbreak of infection, showed that bacterial diseases were not air-borne via a "miasma", but water-borne.

By the 1850s the muddy Thames foreshore at low tide reeked so badly that it resulted, in the hot summer of 1858, in the "Great Stink" when the "insupportable and pestilential atmosphere" around the newly built Houses of Parliament became so overpowering that MPs, who were unable to breathe without retching, spoke seriously of leaving London. Although in the end they resorted to the expedient of covering the windows of the House with sheets soaked in chloride of lime in order to reduce the nuisance, the next step was clear. The polluted river had to be dealt with and a solution to London's sewage problem had to be found.

Thus Parliament was spurred to set up the Metropolitan Commission for Sewers, later replaced by the Metropolitan Board of Works, with Sir Joseph Bazalgette leading the enormous task of laying over 1000 miles of sewers under London: three main routes to the south of the Thames lead to the east via Deptford to Crossness Pumping Station where the raw sewage was discharged into the river, and three to the north converged at Abbey Mills for discharge at Beckton. The grand scheme was completed by 1865, opening the way for the sanitary-ware manufacturers to enter the scene.



Josiah George Jennings was born on 10 November 1810 in Eling, a small Hampshire village on the borders of the New Forest, the eldest of six children of Joseph Jennings. The neighbourhood academy run by his uncle Withers provided him with a sound education, and the countryside association, his knowledge and liking of country life, was to be a strong characteristic throughout his career. At 14 years of age, following the death of his father, he was taken into his grandfather's glass and lead merchandising business, then later apprenticed in his uncle John's plumbing business at Southwick, near Southampton.

*Memorial to George Jennings at Norwood  
(line drawing by the author)*

In 1831 he made for London, finding work as a plumber with Messrs. Lancelot Burton of Newcastle Street, where his father had been one of the leading foremen. He was always adept and most skilful at his craft.

He married Mary Ann Coates Gill at St Katherine Cree church, Leadenhall Street, London in 1836 and they had 4 children before she died in 1844, age 31 and was buried in the churchyard of Christchurch, Blackfriars Road. Fourteen years later he married 16-year-old Sophia Budd and together they had 11 children. In 1838, funded by a small inheritance from his grandmother, Jennings took the opportunity to set up his own business in Paris Street, Lambeth, then later in Great Charlotte Street, Blackfriars. By 1847 he was well-established in the manufacture of quality earthenware at premises in the Parkstone Pottery in Dorset. Concentrating initially on industrial items and terracotta goods, he later turned to basic items using a number of other potteries to manufacture many types of water closet.

### **The first public conveniences**

Already having won a public award for his “indiarubber tube taps and tube” for water supply, Jennings was the first to apply the new sanitary technology to public conveniences. He introduced his ideas at the 1851 Great Exhibition at Hyde Park, with his “Monkey closets”, forerunners of the wash-outs, in the “Retiring Rooms” of the Crystal Palace where 827,280 visitors paid to use this facility. When the Palace was transferred to Sydenham there was a move to dispense with the convenience, but Jennings’s belief that “the civilization of a people can be measured by their domestic and sanitary appliances” prevailed over the strongest objections that “visitors are not coming to the Exhibition merely to wash”, and his installation went on to produce a revenue of £1000 a year. Jennings was awarded a gold medal for this pioneering and essential work, when by the 1890s he had enriched public thoroughfares all over Britain.

His firm’s catalogue of 1895 listed 36 towns and “many others” where these public conveniences were installed, including Paris, Florence, Berlin, Madrid, and Sydney as well as in South America and the Far East. He also supplied water closets to 30 railway companies in Britain, one in America, and others in Buenos Aires, Cape Town and Mexico.

Jennings’ ideas for the public convenience were revolutionary - all were made of slate, mostly built underground in order to avoid offending delicate minds, and gracefully marked with ornate cast iron superstructures, distinctive with finials, pillars and decorative panels, all lit by elegant lamps. An outstanding example survives today in the Gentleman’s Convenience at Wesley’s Chapel in the City Road. Jennings also devised a central column with urinals around it, which, visually resembling an open-petalled flower, was also functionally efficient and economic in terms of space and water usage.

All sanitary manufacturers were to follow suit, but using ceramic instead of slate, though people were not easily persuaded of the advantages of public conveniences.

*The Metropolitan* of 1882 pleaded on their behalf, delicately leading its readers into such a difficult subject:

“While matters are always to be found of which it is not usual to speak in aesthetic society, there are some to which attention must occasionally be drawn, even at risk of offending our prude propriety. Our readers however, presumably have to deal with things that do not strictly fall under the “Lily and Dado” category, and they will readily agree with us that the lieux d’aisance, conveniences or urinals, of the Metropolis are of the greatest public utility. London, however, is by no means oversupplied with them, and a stranger may walk miles along leading thoroughfares without meeting with one.... The structure may not... call forth rapture upon prolonged contemplation - none of these things do, but if there be an objection, it is one sanctioned by necessity and which has been reduced to a minimum by Mr Jennings, who appears to have a name extending “from Zembla’s shores unto the far Peru.”

The firm’s catalogues illustrate urinals in their town setting, usually with a shadowy, elegantly dressed gentleman emerging from the convenience adjusting his trousers. These beautifully enhancing structures often provoked writers to pen poetry such as the following from *The Good Loo Guide* (George Young, 1854) written to commemorate the opening of the first underground convenience at the Royal Exchange:

I’front the Royal Exchange and Underground,  
 Down Gleaming walls of porcelaine flows the sluice  
 That out of sight decants the Kidney Juice,  
 Thus pleasuring those Gents for miles around,  
 Who, crying for relief, once piped the sound,  
 Of wind in alley-ways. All hail this news!  
 And let the joyous shuffling queues  
 For Gentlemanly Jennings’ most well found  
 Construction, wherein a penny ope’s the gate  
 To Heav’n’s mercy and Sanitary waves  
 Received the Gush with seemingly, cool obedience,  
 Enthroning Queen Hygeia in blessed state  
 On Crapper’s Rocket: with rapturous ease men’s cares  
 Shall flow away when seated at convenience!

*The Honorary Testimonial and MEDAL of the SOCIETY OF ARTS and the EXHIBITION PRIZE MEDAL of 1851, were awarded to GEORGE JENNINGS, for his various PATENTED SANITARY INVENTIONS*



JENNINGS’  
 PATENT TILT-UP AND LIPPED LAVATORY,  
*For Hospitals, Barracks, Asylums,  
 Schools, Stations, Unions,  
 and Buildings of every Class.*

## Spending a Penny

As well as inventing the first public convenience, Jennings was one of the greatest of all the revolutionary inventors named amongst Hellyer (the Wash-out), Daniel Thomas Bostel (the Excelsior, 1875), Thomas Twyford (the National, 1881), Edward Johns (the Lion Pedestal, 1896), John Shanks (the No.4, 1864), and Henry Doulton (Simplicitas, 1897). As early as 1847 Prince Albert had presented him with the Medal of the Society of Arts. In 1897 *The Sanitary Record* proclaimed:-

“The Prince Consort greatly encouraged this indefatigable Engineer. In sanitary science he was *avant coureur* in his day and generation, and was among the first Engineers to practically carry out the theories of the wise men of the time. “Sanitas sanitarium” was Mr Jennings’s motto before Disraeli adopted it as his political maxim.... and he implored a shocked city of London to accept his public lavatories free, on the condition that the... attendants whom he furnished were allowed to make a small charge for the use of the closets and towels.”

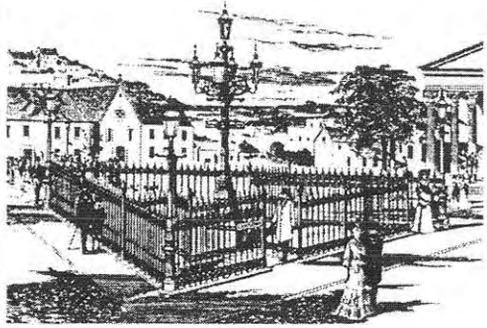
The small charge referred to, adopted at the Crystal Palace, was one penny, hence the euphemism “spending a penny”, for which you got a clean towel, a comb, a clean seat after each use and a shoe shine. Jennings’s output was immense. He fitted out Scutari hospital near Sebastopol, where Florence Nightingale had worked during the Crimean War, unable to prevent the huge death toll until she realised why so many soldiers had perished, and was able to instigate sanitary improvements there and in other hospitals. At St Paul’s Cathedral he supervised the sanitary arrangements for the thanksgiving service for the Prince of Wales’ (Albert Edward) recovery from typhoid in 1872. He provided the Empress Eugenie of France with a copper bath, and supplied the former Khedive of Egypt with a great multi-showered contraption with a mahogany canopy. For hospitals and asylums he devised a bath with a lever-action supply valve that ensured hot water could never be let into the bath unless the cold was first and proportionately turned on. It was Jennings who patented the popular “tip-up” basin that swivelled round on an axle to be emptied, and also his syphonic Closet of the Century. J R Mann had already patented the syphonic system in 1870, but this proved an unsuccessful design in practice.

Jennings’ improvements made the syphonic model one of the most prestigious lavatories of its time and it became a major milestone of development. The design won his firm the Grand Prix at Paris in 1900.

The pans were made by Sharpe Bros. of Swadlincote, Derbyshire, and cost 6s 11d in 1903, and various refinements of the design were produced, including high level cisterns with glass faces, a cradle with armrests and a wicker back like an armchair.

As an innovator Jennings utilised India rubber to produce the endless elastic band, hermetic gaskets and seals, and rubber products of every type. He originated a patent bonding brick, structural terracotta and facing blocks that were used experimentally for the first time in conjunction with concrete huts at Hounslow Barracks. His contribution of uniquely designed decorative terracotta elements to enhance the exteriors of

buildings clustered around Clapham were just as stunning, where those still existing include 49-52 Clapham Common Southside, c. 1875, a large terrace with highly decorative stucco mouldings and ironwork; no.50, Ben Lomond, being the home of Noel Coward from 1913-17; 70-82 The Chase, designed by Mark Chamberlain, c. 1875; 53-63 Bedford Road designed by Thomas E. Colcutt, c. 1870, profusely decorated with terracotta dressings to the windows and porches;



*Cast iron superstructure  
of underground lavatory*

Nightingale House (also Oak Lodge at 101), c. 1865, once the home of Jennings, displaying his talents on the façade, and also 81-95 Nightingale Lane, a commercial developers terrace, c. 1870, of barley sugar twist columns all by Jennings; 69-79 Ramsden Road, c. 1879, part of a group of Arts & Crafts-inspired houses by Colcutt with unusual French Renaissance terracotta detailing - Jennings lived at no. 79, Ferndale, until his death; 73-83 Rush Hill Terrace by Chamberlain, c. 1874, which were mortgaged to Jennings to pay for the stonework because money had run out during their construction; and 33-41 Stormont Road, again by Chamberlain, c. 1875.

## **Death and Funeral at Norwood**

Jennings' death on the 17 April 1882 was reported in the *South London Press*: "It is with feelings of regret, which will be joined in by all who knew him, that we have this week to record the death of Mr George Jennings of "Ferndale" Nightingale Lane, Clapham, universally known as the celebrated engineer of Palace Wharf, Lambeth. Mr Jennings' death occurred under the following painful circumstances: On Thursday evening, according to his usual custom, he, together with his son George, drove home in his gig. The horse, of a very restive character and hard in the mouth, whilst crossing over the Albert Bridge, shied and threw Mr Jennings and his son against a dust cart. Mr Jennings jnr. escaped with only a shaking, but Mr Jennings' collar bone was fractured. He was conveyed home and attended by Dr Edmonds and two other physicians. His recovery from the injuries proceeded favourably up until Sunday, when against his doctors' order, he would get up. On Sunday night a relapse and congestion of the lungs set in, and he expired on Monday evening, about 6 o'clock. He was 72 years of age."

The funeral took place on 23 April 1882, and was attended by large numbers of friends, employees and mourners acknowledging Jennings' kindness and thoughtfulness of the interests of the labouring classes, and marking the respect of the community in which he lived. He is buried (grave 19,077, square 34) at West Norwood along with other pioneers in the field of public health: Thomas Cubitt, Sir Henry Doulton, James Stiff, John Sutherland, and others.

Jennings' personal estate amounted to £76,721/7/6d. The family firm of Jennings continued in business until 1967. The family headstone still survives, recently cleaned and repaired. The inscription reads:-

In loving remembrance of  
George Jennings of Stangate, London; Clapham, Surrey and Parkstone, Dorsetshire  
born November 10th 1810, died April 17th 1882  
in the 72nd year of his age

"They rest from their labours" Rev. XIV.13  
Life's race well run; Life's task well done; life's crown well won; Now comes rest!  
"Thou hast made him most blessed for ever" Ps. XXI.6

Also of  
Frederick Herbert Jennings  
Fifth son of the above  
born Feby 26th 1858, died Feby 15th 1894

Also of  
Sidney Neville Jennings  
9th London Regt. Q.V.R.  
grandson of the above and dearly loved only son of  
Sidney and Margaret Jennings  
born May 3rd 1887, died August 9th 1915  
For King and Country

Also of  
Sophia Jennings  
The dearly loved wife of the above  
born August 5th 1832, died February 15th 1919  
"Her children arise up and call her blessed" Prov. XXXI.28

Also of  
Sidney Jennings  
Fourth son of the above  
born June 12th 1856, died February 26th 1928

And of  
Margaret Wright Jennings  
died February 23rd 1935  
and their daughter  
"Daisy" Gladys Margaret Gowing  
born 16.5.1885, died 4.9.1967

Sources: *The Builder* (29 April 1882); Stephen Halliday, *The Great Stink of London* (Sutton, 1999); Adam Hart-Davies, *Thunder, Flush and Thomas Crapper* (Michael O'Hara Books Ltd, 1997); Julie Horam, *Sitting Pretty* (Robson Books, 1998); Lucinda Lambton, *Temples of Convenience* (Pavilion Books Ltd, 1998); Michael Stratton, *The Terracotta Revival* (Gollancz, 1993); Lawrence Wright, *Clean and Decent* (Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1960); Ed. Alyson Wilson, *The Buildings of Clapham* (Clapham Society, 2000); *The Metropolitan* (1882); *Sanitary Record* (1897).

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# Book Review

by Paul Graham

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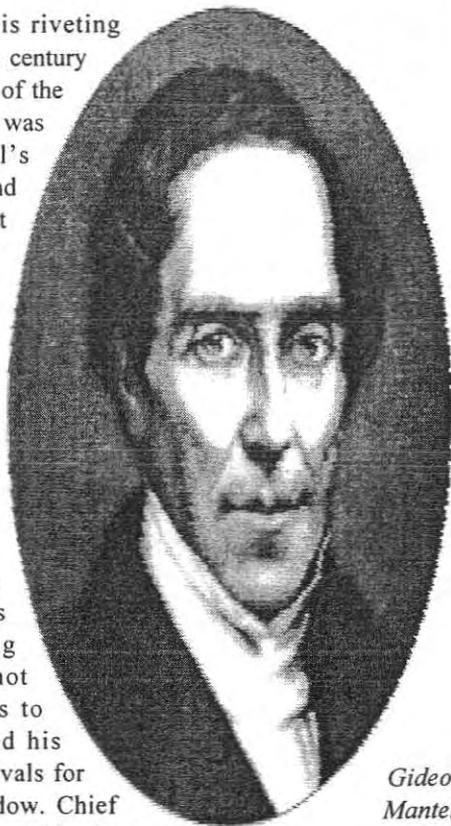
**Deborah Cadbury, *The Dinosaur Hunters*.**

**Fourth Estate, London, 2000, Hardback, ISBN 1 85702 959 3, £15.99.**

Gideon Mantell is the tragic hero of this riveting account of the rivalries between nineteenth century scientists who were seeking to make sense of the fossil record of long extinct creatures that was almost daily being uncovered. Mantell's struggle to overcome his humble origins and modest education to win a place amongst the scientific elite, whilst fulfilling a heavy workload as a doctor, is sympathetically told. To this end he sacrificed his marriage, by filling much of the marital home with prehistoric bones, his health, his finances and his peace of mind. Even the discovery and naming of a giant herbivorous lizard, Iguanodon, failed to earn Mantell the recognition he deserved from the metropolitan learned societies.

If Mantell is the hero, the arch villain is undoubtedly the brilliant but ruthless Richard Owen. He is described as being "instinctively predatory" and he was not above appropriating the work of others to further his own reputation. Owen used his position of influence to ensure that his rivals for scientific eminence remained in his shadow. Chief amongst these was Mantell, who described his rival as "dastardly and envious". T.H. Huxley observed "with what an intense hatred Owen is regarded... with Mantell the arch hater".

Science is mixed with the tragic story of Mantell's private life. His fossil museum in Brighton failed and he had to sell his unique collection to the British Museum, where it eventually fell into the hands, and aided the work, of Owen. In 1839 his wife finally left him and his favourite daughter, Hannah, died and was buried at West Norwood. In 1841 occurred the carriage accident beside Clapham Common that severely damaged Mantell's spine and left him with excruciating back pain that could only be allayed by recourse to increasing amounts of opiates. *Continued on back page.*



*Gideon  
Mantell*



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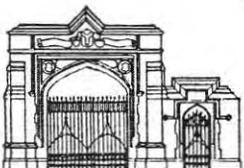
## Recent FOWNC Events

by Jill Dudman

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Our only events in the past few months have been the explorations of the Ship Path on 20 May and the Doulton Path on 17 June. These were informal strolls around each area, based on information about notable persons and monuments researched mainly by George Young and myself - and also, for the Ship Path, by Archdeacon's Official Nicholas Long, who has made a detailed study of this area. A number of monuments have already disappeared, of course, but many still remain in these areas of Victorian cemetery landscape ... if only one could actually see them. With vegetation clearance seemingly being reduced year-by-year, ever more monuments have been swallowed up by the encroaching jungle of brambles, sycamores, etc., whilst in more open areas waist-high grass hides all but the tallest stones. Health and safety considerations preclude trying to take tour parties anywhere off these two paths, thus missing the tombs of many notable persons.



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## Forthcoming FOWNC Events September - December 2001

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General tours will be held on the first Sunday of each month (2 September, 7 October, 4 November and 2 December). September and October tours start at 14.30, and November and December tours start at 11.00, at the Cemetery main gate off Norwood Road, and they last for 1½-2 hours. There is no formal charge, but we welcome donations of £1 per person (£0.50 concessions) towards conservation projects.

### **Sunday 23 September: London Open House Weekend**

For this London-wide event in which buildings normally closed to the public open their doors, there will be tours of the cemetery starting at the main gate at 14.00, 14.30, 15.00 and 15.30, lasting 1½ hours and finishing at the Greek Chapel, which will be open for viewing, with the FOWNC bookstall on display. Volunteers to help will be most welcome!

### **Autumn Lectures**

Talks will be held at Chatsworth Baptist Church, Chatsworth Way (off Norwood Road), SE27 (enter by second door on right in Idmiston Road) as detailed opposite, starting at 14.30. There is no formal charge, but we welcome donations of £1 per person to help cover the hall hire.

**Saturday 20 October: AGM and Lecture - The necropolis of the metropolis: the emergence of the garden cemetery movement in late Hanoverian London - Dr. Julian Litten**

This year's AGM will be honoured by the presence of one of the most distinguished scholars of historic cemeteries. Julian will be speaking about the period that saw the establishment of the early metropolitan cemeteries, including Norwood.

**Saturday 17 November: Lecture - The Talfourds, father and son - Michael Slater**

We are very pleased to welcome again Professor Slater, a long-time supporter of FOWNC, to speak about Sir Thomas Noon Talfourd, writer, playwright, MP, barrister and judge (and great friend of Charles Dickens), and his son Frank, also a playwright and barrister.

## **Other forthcoming events**

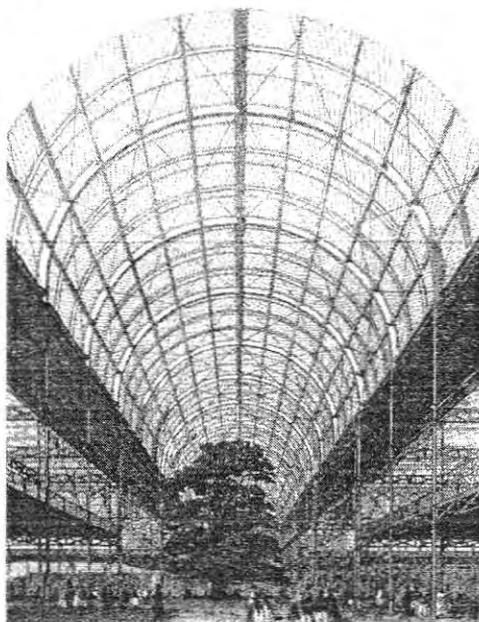
**Saturday 29 September, 10.00-17.00: Lambeth Archives Open Day**

Minet Library, 52 Knatchbull Road, SE5. This year's theme is "A cabinet of curiosities: collectors and collections in Lambeth". Some of the most notable collectors in the area, including Sir Henry Tate and Charles Woolley, are buried at Norwood. The FOWNC bookstall will be present - volunteers please!

**Wednesday 17 October 9.15-17.30:**

**Iron & Glass: the Crystal Palace and its influence.**

A conference to be held at the Institution of Civil Engineers, 1 Great George Street, SW1 to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the construction of the Crystal Palace in Hyde Park. The conference will concentrate on the history of the building and its significance. Many of those connected with the building and the 1851 exhibition are buried at Norwood, including Douglas Jerrold who coined its popular name. Registration: £35 including refreshments. Applications (+ cheque payable to Victorian Society and SAE) to: Victorian Society, 1 Priory Gardens, London W4 1TT, from whom more details can be obtained.



In 1852 Mantell was invited to oversee the recreation of models of dinosaurs in the grounds of the Crystal Palace. His illness forced him to decline the offer and the prestigious task, inevitably, fell to Owen. After a fall at his Clapham home, Mantell overdosed on opiates and died. He was buried next to Hannah in West Norwood, or at least most of him was. A post-mortem revealed the extent of his spinal deformity. In a final irony, the damaged lower spine was sent to Owen's Royal College of Surgeons where it was preserved in a bottle and displayed for almost a century until presumably destroyed in the Blitz. Mantell died a bitter and disappointed man. At his express request, no one was invited to his funeral.

Being selected as a Radio 4 book of the week in October last year will justifiably enhance the sales of this splendid work. The book will be found on the popular science shelves of the bookshop. Ms Cadbury wears her learning lightly and no detailed knowledge of the science is necessary to enjoy what is essentially the compelling story of a bitter struggle between two brilliant men for intellectual dominance in a fledgling subject.

### **Friends of West Norwood Cemetery**

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

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