

Friends of West Norwood Cemetery



NEWSLETTER NO 6: MAY 1991

THREAT OF WHOLESALE CLEARANCE AT NORWOOD RECEDES

We are pleased to say that, in the middle of March, a meeting was held down at the Cemetery, attended by representatives from the Friends, English Heritage, Victorian Society, Norwood Society, and Lambeth's Public Works and Planning Departments. The involvement of Lambeth Planning is particularly important: they should always have been involved in the management of what Lambeth itself has designated an "outstanding Conservation Area".

As a result, there will now be a monthly meeting on site, at which all these parties will come to an agreement as to what is to be retained, what fragments can be removed and, equally good news, which interesting but anonymous architectural fragments should be moved for safety to the edge of the cemetery, rather than being smashed and used for landfill, as before.

As one of Lambeth's officers admitted afterwards, "If we stick to that plan, we will be keeping a lot more of the memorials than we would normally do during clearance"! The agreed work will be monitored by all parties, and should result in a tidier cemetery, but keeping all historic memorials, and making safe any regarded as "dangerous". We are delighted that sense has finally prevailed: and while we are still worried at damage caused by mechanical equipment used to dig new graves (see overleaf), we can now go back to researching on the many historic individuals buried here.

NEW THREAT TO ANOTHER SOUTH LONDON CEMETERY

Just when we thought councils were taking a less destructive attitude generally towards old cemeteries, we were told about notices now visible in Camberwell Old Cemetery, Forest Hill Road SE22. These read roughly as follows: "Southwark Council hereby gives notice that the following squares in this cemetery will be cleared of all memorials, headstones, tombs etc: nos....etc.": followed by a total of 33 different squares!: in effect, the whole of the Victorian cemetery. This is the Cemetery in which the first half hour of "Entertaining Mr Sloane" was filmed in 1972, with Beryl Reid and Peter McEnery. The first 15 minutes were filmed among the memorials, and the next 15 were in the conservatory then attached to the Cemetery Lodge, which is still there, though now bricked up.

The Council has said it will take note of objections from relatives, but apparently has no intention to keep historic memorials, such as the ten (which include Mrs Horniman, of Museum fame) listed by Hugh Meller in "London Cemeteries." Nor do they intend to photograph or record them. If anyone is interested in helping in a campaign to save or record the historic memorials in this Cemetery, please contact our Chairman, Nicholas Reed, in the first instance.

RESTORING MONUMENTS IN THE CEMETERY

Our Vice-Chairman Robert Flanagan has drawn up a four-page report on the current state of conservation work. The full Report is available from Bob either at meetings, or by post, price 50p. Below, we reproduce the first page and extracts of later ones.

A Conservation Programme for West Norwood - Stage I

Despite more than a decade of indiscriminate destruction, West Norwood Cemetery remains one of the most important Victorian cemeteries in the world. The designation of the whole cemetery as a 'conservation' area in the late 1970s (it was then termed 'outstanding') seems cynical in retrospect since even the listed monuments were not spared. As members will be well aware there were once 44 such monuments but only 40 now remain and many of these have suffered damage of one sort or another. Neglect is a further problem. The tomb of Alexander Berens, for example, possibly the finest example of a Victorian High Gothic tomb in the country, was described as needing urgent repairs in 1968 yet still nothing has been done.

However, all is now set to change thanks initially to the efforts of the Friends, but now with excellent support and help from English Heritage, the Norwood Society, the Victorian Society, SAVE Britain's Heritage, and numerous other bodies and individuals. The involvement of the Friends, English Heritage and others in recording and advising on a conservation policy in areas of the cemetery undergoing 'lawn conversion' has been described by Nicholas Reed (p.1). Incidentally, such involvement is all we asked for last summer before the autumnal orgy of destruction was embarked upon! Nevertheless, the need for a conservation management policy for the cemetery as a whole remains urgent since damage is still being caused to existing monuments by the use of mechanical diggers and other machinery. In addition, the visual effect of continued placing of modern grave-stones around isolated but nevertheless important Victorian monuments can be seen in several areas of the cemetery.

Be that as it may, progress can be reported in another area, namely the conservation of some important monuments. English Heritage (London Division) and the Friends have together initiated a 'rolling programme' of repair and conservation with the aim of reinstating some 10 to 20 monuments per year. Lambeth seem to have accepted this idea in principle and we hope for their continued cooperation. The aim of this article is to inform members of the monuments nominated for action in Stage I of this programme. Comments, criticisms, and offers of help (!) will, of course, be welcome. The numbering system adopted is purely for convenience and does not indicate individual priority. Please note especially those monuments where photographs/line drawings of the intact tombs are still needed.

1. Stevenson/Hodgson Mausoleum

The work envisaged includes replacing the fallen column and generally making the whole structure safe. The adjacent willow will also be 'pruned' to minimise the risk of further damage to the roof. The Heritage of London Trust have promised £650-00 towards this project. Work is now in progress under the supervision of English Heritage.

Further extracts from the Report:

2. Gideon Mantell (Manning booklet no 5)

The Geologists Association have now raised some £1760 to reinstate this tomb.

3. William Marsden (Manning No 11)

We are still looking for a good photograph or drawing of the decorative urn missing from the top.

6. William Brande (1788-1866) (Square 98)

Brande was a principal colleague of Michael Faraday for 20 years, yet he is unjustly forgotten. The inscription is badly weathered and we need a photograph or other record of the inscription to restore it.

8. Alexander Berens (d. 1860). (Grade II*)

This monument, designed by EM Barry, has been placed on the 'Buildings at Risk Register'. Restoration is planned to include the entrance passage to the tomb, railings, etc. as well as conservation work on the monument itself. Clearly a long-term project, but money should be forthcoming from the 'Buildings at Risk' fund.

9. Sir William Cubitt (Manning page 2)

A photograph or other record of the inscription would be useful to restore this grave slab, missing since listing in 1981.

12. John Garrett (Manning page 1)

We need a photograph or drawing of this unusual wooden memorial.

13. William Crane (not Crane) (Manning no 20)

We likewise need a photograph or drawing of this.

14. Anne Farrow (Manning no 17)

The metal inscription plate appears to have been stolen: is there any record of it?

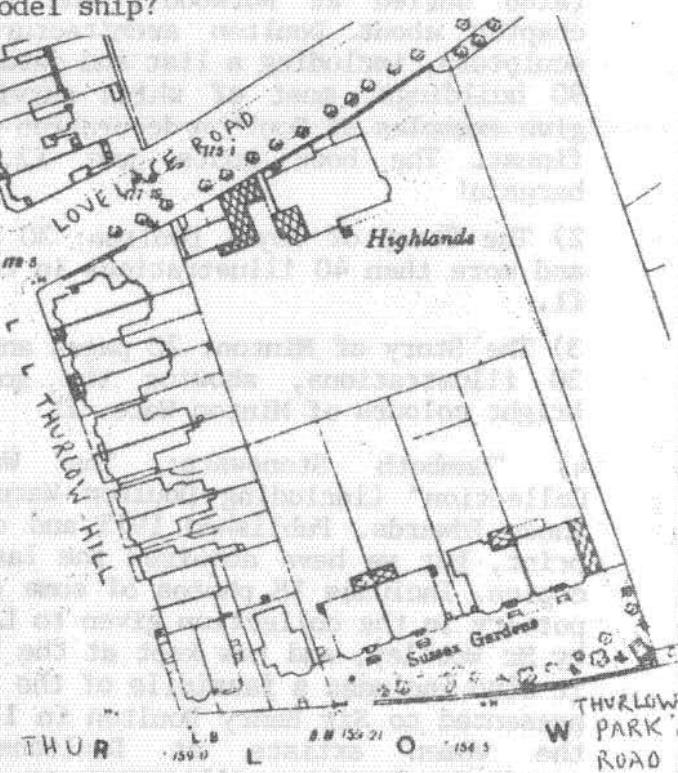
15. John Wimble (Manning no 7)

Is there a photo or drawing of the iron masts and rigging which apparently originally stood on top of the model ship?

EDITH O'GORMAN: Competition Result

We are pleased to announce that Miss Rosa Davis won our competition, by identifying 1 Sussex Gardens for us: the house from which Miss O'Gorman could see her husband's monument. Sussex Gardens consisted of two blocks of semi-detached houses on an eminence just north of Thurlow Park Road, not far from Thurlow Hill. Sadly, they were bombed in the blitz, but have been replaced by four new ones. Miss O'Gorman's was the one on the west. The Protestant Truth Society has kindly sent us an attractive picture of her and her husband, sadly not quite clear enough to reproduce here, but his moustachios are quite recognisable to those of us who have seen the portrait bust on his monument!

On the right is part of the 1894 O.S. Map which shows Sussex Gardens.



NEW PUBLICATIONS

In addition to those mentioned in Newsletter 4, we also stock the following:

"David Roberts", by Guiterman and Llewellyn (1986). A wonderfully illustrated book about this famous artist buried at Norwood. 128 pp, 40 illustrations in colour; numerous others in b&w. Large paperback: £12.

Turner Studies, Vol 7 No 1, includes an excellent 11-page article by a descendant of Roberts, about Elhanan Bicknell's art collection kept in his Herne Hill home until 1863. It includes two photos from 1859, of the house and garden, which stood at the corner of Herne Hill and Danecroft Road, where the shops are now. This magazine would normally cost £8.50; from us, they are £2 each.

"Memorials by Artists", by Harriet Frazer. An attractive booklet illustrating different styles of headstone over the last 200 years, and 15 photographs of different types of modern headstone, produced by professional artists. 40 pages, 20 photos; £2.50.

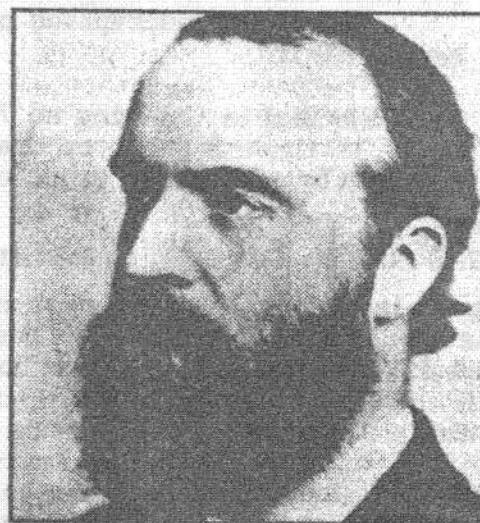
We've also now acquired four illustrated books about Doulton Ware. In addition to the biography of Sir Henry Doulton (£3), we now have:

- 1) The Doulton Story, by Atterbury and Irvine. 100 pages and at least 300 photographs. Tells the story of Doulton at Lambeth and later; photographs of George Tinworth, their most distinguished artist (also buried at Norwood), and a long chapter about Doulton architecture and sculpture, including a list and details of 90 buildings, most of which survive to give examples of Doulton decoration at its finest. The book costs just £2.50: a bargain!
- 2) The Story of Royal Doulton: 30 pages, and more than 40 illustrations in colour. £1.
- 3) The Story of Minton. 20 pages and over 30 illustrations, showing the gorgeous bright colours of Minton Ware. £1
- 4) "Lambeth Stoneware: The Woolley Collection" (including Doulton Ware), by Rhoda Edwards. Published 1973 and out of print, but we have acquired the last ten copies. Includes 18 photos of some of the pottery in the collection given to Lambeth by Mr Woolley, and now kept at the Minet. It also includes a facsimile of the volume presented to Sir Henry Doulton in 1882 by the women artists at Doultons, in gratitude for his willingness to employ women as well as men in his works! £5

NB: Alderman Charles Woolley was buried in Norwood Cemetery in 1922; despite his generosity to the Borough, his grave was destroyed without trace by Lambeth in the 1970s. Perhaps we should not be surprised: the Norwood tomb of Frederick Nettlefold, who gave the Nettlefold Library and Nettlefold Halls to the Borough, was destroyed by Lambeth in the 1960s. But at least one can still see his name on the old foundation stone outside the former Nettlefold Library building opposite the Cemetery entrance, in Knights Hill.

Lastly, we are happy to say Hugh Meller's book "London Cemeteries" (1985) turns out to be still in print. 327 pages, numerous illustrations, and a fascinating checklist of famous people buried in every London cemetery (7 pages for Norwood alone!): plus an excellent index. We are still trying to negotiate terms for us to sell this book; meanwhile, it should be available from your local bookseller, now priced £17.50.

All publications are on sale at our meetings or at the end of tours. Orders by post should be sent to the Publications Officer at 79 Durban Road, SE27 9RW (081-670 3265), accompanied by a cheque allowing for p. & p.: normally 50p.



CHARLES STEWART PARNELL

Parnell of course is not buried in Norwood, but in Ireland. Meanwhile, at Westminster, David Winnick MP is trying to get Parnell's statue given a more important position. He has also pointed out that it will be the centenary of Parnell's death on 6th October this year. We have written to Mr Winnick and hope to arrange a talk about this fascinating political figure some time around this date.

BURIED AT NORWOOD

LORD HANNEN. Those of us who were watching "Parnell and the Englishwoman" in February this year may have been intrigued to notice that one character in Episode 3 was called Sir James Hannen, who presided over the Parnell Commission. This was set up in 1888 to examine the genuineness of letters published in *The Times*, which purported to show that Parnell had secretly supported Irish terrorist outrages. It was Hannen's skilful cross-examination of Mr Pigott which revealed that Pigott had forged them.

Hannen was born in Peckham in 1821, and spent his childhood in Kingswood Lodge, Dulwich (later the home of John Johnson, also buried at Norwood, who made his fortune by inventing Bovril). Hannen was called to the Bar in 1848, and eventually became a Lord of Appeal in 1891, being created Baron Hannen of Burdock, Sussex. He died in 1894, and his headstone stands not far from the Stevenson mausoleum. Hannen Road, next to West Norwood Station, is named after him.

The headstone was saved at the request of David Wells, now Chairman of the Dulwich Forum, who is a descendant. He tells us that Hannen was the eldest of 13 brothers; another was the Hannen of Cubitt, Hannen and Holland (now subsumed in Tarmac Construction: see Newsletter 5). The youngest brother was Sir Nicholas Hannen, whose son is the actor Nick Hannen, who was married to Athene Seyler. The main mausoleum for the Hannen family stands in the Cemetery at Wargrave, and was designed by Lutyens.

PUBLICATIONS available from FOWNC:

- "In Loving Memory of West Norwood Cemetery", by G Manning, 1989. £2.25.
- "On the Trail of Iguanodon", by Ken Woodhams, 1990. £2.95 paperback.
- "Murder at the Priory", by Bernard Taylor, 1988. £3.99 paperback.
- "John Ruskin's Camberwell", by James Dearden. £3.95 paperback.
- "Robert Browning's London", by Mairi Calcraft, 1989. £5 paperback.
- "Kingswood House", by the Dulwich Society, 1985. £1 paperback.
- "Spurgeon", by Arnold Dallimore (1984). 252 pp, 8 ill. £5.95.
- "The Forgotten Spurgeon", by Iain Murray (1973). 254 pp, 5 ill. £3.25.
- "David Roberts", by Guiterman and Llewellyn (1986). 128 pp, 40 illustrations in colour; numerous others in b&w. Large paperback: £12.
- The Doulton Story, by Atterbury and Irvine. 100 pp, 300 photos. £2.50.
- The Story of Royal Doulton: 30 pages, 40 illustrations in colour. £1.
- The Story of Minton. 20 pages and over 30 illustrations. £1.
- "Sir Henry Doulton", by Edmund Gosse, 1970. 218 pages; £3.50 hardback.
- "Lambeth Stoneware: The Woolley Collection" by R Edwards. £5.
- "Memorials by Artists", by Harriet Frazer; £2.50.
- "The Story of Norwood", by J.B Wilson (reprinted 1990). £8.95.
- "Clapham Saints and Sinners", by Eric Smith. 62 pp; £8.95.

Postcards:

Bedhead designed by William Burges (large card) 50p

William Wyon, R.A., medallist: 30p; The Bessemer Steel Process at work: 30p
Publications are sold at our meetings, after tours, or from Robert Flanagan.



CHARLES
HADDON
SPURGEON
(1834-1892)

(Manning no 28)

Spurgeon was really the Billy Graham of his day, where popularity is concerned, though he has probably been far more influential on the doctrine of the Baptist Church. We are paying a visit to Spurgeon's College in Upper Norwood on 31st May (see Events page), but the centenary of his death falls in January next year, and we hope to mark it with a talk. We would welcome suggestions for a suitable speaker.

FLORA AND FAUNA IN THE CEMETERY

There are clearly some members who have an interest in this: one lady rang the Chairman to complain about the removal of primroses from the Cemetery: but sadly his Ansaphone did not pick up her name or number!

Our member Rosa Davis is herself quite a horticulturalist: the garden she had in Dulwich used to be a regular visiting spot for members of the Dulwich Society. Anyway, if any of our members who have a particular interest in these matters would like to contact Miss Davis (including the lady just mentioned!), we might try to organise some relevant activities, or perhaps a Wildlife tour sometime. Rosa Davis is on 081-650 1383.



Friends of West Norwood Cemetery

FORTHCOMING EVENTS:

Saturday 11th May at 2.30 pm: "Who killed Charles Bravo?". We start from the Cemetery gates to visit, for the first time, the tomb of Charles Bravo, murdered by persons unknown in 1876. After the visit, we shall adjourn to St. Luke's for a talk and discussion about this case. On the same date (it now turns out) Nunhead Cemetery are having their Open Day. Lots of stalls, tours etc., starting at 11 am. So visit them in the morning, then come to our tour in the afternoon! Nunhead Cemetery is approached from the entrance in Linden Grove, Nunhead SE15.

Sunday 19th May, at 2.30 pm:

Crystal Palace Worthies: a repeat, with additions, of our very successful tour, first held last September, held with the Crystal Palace Foundation.

Friday 31st May, at 7 pm:

A visit to Spurgeon's Theological College in South Norwood Hill, SE25, where we shall be shown round by one of the students. The entrance is immediately next to the Esso garage near the top of South Norwood Hill: buses nos 68 and 196 pass the entrance.

Sunday 2nd June, at 2.30 pm: Usual monthly tour of the Cemetery, this time with a slight bias towards the eminent scientists and engineers.

Wednesday 19th June, at 8 pm:

Illustrated talk by Louise Irvine, expert on Doulton Ware, about the Royal Doulton Potteries and their main potters in Lambeth. To be held in the Upper Hall at St. Luke's Church, West Norwood SE27 (at the junction of Norwood High Street and Knights Hill), which is approached up the steps at the back of the church.

We apologise to those of you who froze during our last talk in the Upper Hall: we have been promised this will not recur! But this Hall has three large Doulton tile murals which we shall be able to inspect in detail after the talk. In view of the expertise of our speaker on this occasion, there will be charge of £1 per person.

Saturday 6th July, from 2 pm onwards:

Open Day at Kensal Green Cemetery, off Harrow Road, London W10. It sounds as if it will be quite a lively affair, to mark the launching of the new Friends of Kensal Green Cemetery. Come and join us there!

Saturday and Sunday, 20th and 21st July:

Lambeth Country Show in Brockwell Park, Herne Hill SE24. The biggest and best of all the South London outdoor shows: we hope to have a stall there.

30th July: Talk about Emile Zola's stay in Norwood in 1894. Norwood Soc.

FOWNC OFFICERS

Chairman and Newsletter Editor: Nicholas Reed, 26 Hichisson Road, SE15 3AL; tel: 071-732 7778. Vice-Chairman and Publications Officer: Bob Flanagan, 79 Durban Road, SE27 9RW; tel: 081-670 3265. Membership Secretary: Rosemary Comber, 170 Knights Hill, SE27 0SR; tel: 081-761 3996. Rosemary's husband David is our Treasurer, but the Annual Subscription of £2 should be sent to Rosemary.