

Friends of West Norwood CEMETERY

Newsletter No. 61 - January 2008

Price £1 (Free to Members)

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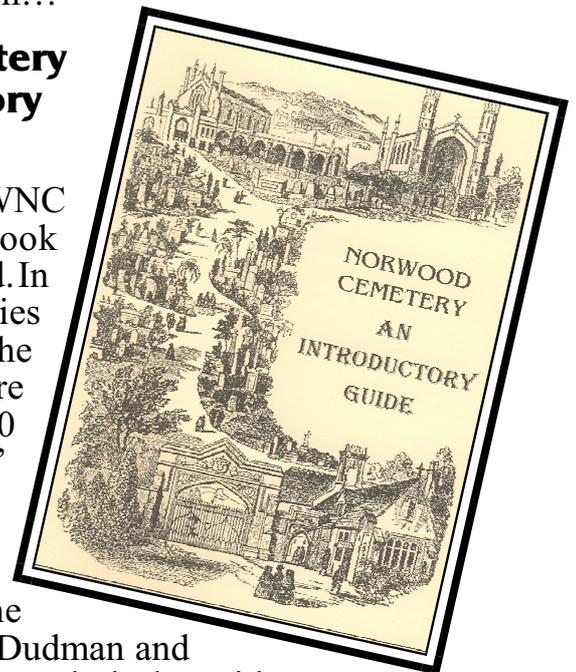
Chairman's Report

by Bob Flanagan

Every time I go to the cemetery I see something new. And more information on those buried or otherwise commemorated at Norwood continues to come to light and never ceases to amaze. Normally I am following up information from others, but on my way to inspect progress on the new Memorial Garden I happened to notice the name Sir William Dunn highlighted in the December sunshine atop a marble sarcophagus. In the papers inherited from Geoffrey Manning and Eric Smith there is mention of Sir William Dunn, banker and merchant, based upon his entry in *Who Was Who*, but this gives no clue as to why his name is remembered today, and I had failed to make the connection...

Norwood Cemetery - An Introductory Guide

The long-awaited FOWNC introductory guide book has now been published. In addition to short histories of the cemetery and of the Greek section, there are brief notes of 60 'Norwood notables' contained within its 28 pages. In essence the book is designed as a complement to the general tours that Jill Dudman and her team of guides host regularly, but with some added information and illustrations of (i) the demolished original gatehouse and mortuary chapels, and (ii) portraits of some of the 'notables'. In all there are 39 monochrome illustrations and a map detailing the



locations of the monuments featured as well as showing the locations of the lost chapels. Good value at £2.50 from our bookstall (£3.00 by post). Order from Jill Dudman or me – details on the back page – cheques payable to FOWNC please!

Events in the Cemetery

There is progress with the new Memorial Garden, but completion still seems some months away. Secondly, Council officers are still in negotiation with the developers over the reinstatement of the section of the boundary wall that was taken down during the summer as noted in the September Newsletter. An issue that has also come to my notice is that some monuments inserted in the cemetery in recent years have differed from the dimensions specified on the corresponding paperwork. This has been pointed out to the families concerned and we await developments. Finally, some members may know that Lambeth in the form especially of Neil Isaacs facilitated the production of a short film about the cemetery in the summer. This was produced by a US company, Engellentertainment, as part of a series called *Dead Art*, hence the emphasis is on the surviving art and architecture in the cemetery, but I think they have done a really good job. Provided I can master the technology involved, I plan to show this and some other films in the series at the March FOWNC meeting (see FOWNC Events, page 15).



Progress with the Memorial Garden

Christmas Service

A recently introduced annual event that is becoming very popular, the Christmas Service took place on 12 December. The Crematorium Chapel was completely full, despite the scheduling on a weekday afternoon. The service was conducted by Rev. David O'Connell from St Matthew's Church, and the Mayor of Lambeth, Cllr. Andrew Gibson, gave an introduction. Audience participation carols were interspersed with Bible and poem readings and prayers, and a highlight was a performance by the choir from St Joseph's Junior School accompanied by their clarinet players. A retiring collection was made in aid of Cruse Bereavement Care.

FOWNC Committee

During 2007 the FOWNC committee said goodbye to two of its long serving officers. In the spring Rosemary Comber, our Membership Secretary since our foundation in 1989, decided it was time to hand over the reins. Her duties have been split between Jill Dudman and new committee member Rose Fenn. Rose has created a membership database from Rosemary's records, and will also undertake the thrice-yearly task of enveloping and posting the Newsletter. Subscription renewals, however, should be sent to Jill Dudman – for those members due to renew now, there will be a renewal form with this Newsletter.

Later in the year, at the AGM, George Young, our Treasurer for a dozen years, retired after presenting the 2006-7 accounts. Anna Long, a qualified accountant, was elected to succeed him, and George has now handed over all our meticulously kept financial records.

We are immensely grateful to both Rosemary and George for their huge amount of work for FOWNC, and retirement gifts have been presented to both of them. In turn, we welcome Anna, Rose, and also the election at the AGM of Colin Fenn as Vice-chairman, a post that has long lain vacant.

Sir Thomas Stevenson (1838-1908)

Sir Thomas (grave 26,543, square 95) was a major figure in the development of analytical chemistry and of forensic science. He died at Sandhurst Lodge, Streatham High Road on 27 June 1908. To mark the centenary of his death the British Academy of Forensic Science are holding a one-day meeting at Guy's Hospital on 27 June. Stevenson, lecturer in chemistry at Guy's Hospital (1870-98) and forensic medicine (1878-1908), was a pupil of John Collis Nesbit (1818-1862), who had in turn studied chemistry under John Dalton (1766-1844) in Manchester – see FOWNC Newsletter 32, May 1998. Stevenson's most famous pupil was Sir Frederick Gowland Hopkins (see article on Sir William Dunn, page 4).

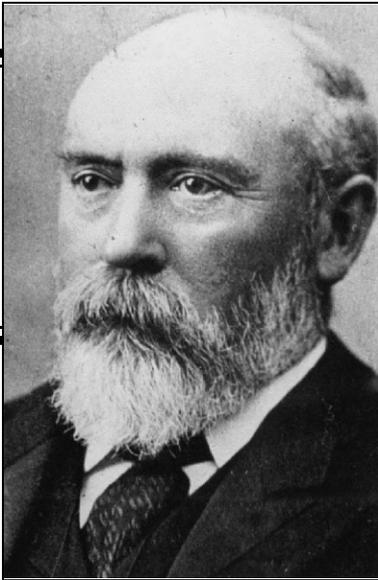


Sir Thomas Stevenson

Association of Significant Cemeteries in Europe

Mauro Felicori, the founder President of ASCE, stepped down this year. We wish him well in his new job in Bologna. He is succeeded by Maria Luisa Yzaguirre of Cementiris de Barcelona S.A., Spain. The new Steering Committee is now made up of: Luigi Ballardore - City Council of Milano; Olivera Milijanovic - City Council of Beograd; Gunnar Wik - Church Council in the City of Bergen and Cemeteries Association of Norway; Ilme Maesalu - National Heritage Board of Estonia; Michele Gaeta - City Council of Bologna; John Moffat - Friends of Flaybrick, Eastham, Wirral, Merseyside; Lidjia Plibersek - City Council of Maribor; Martin Ernerth - Federation of Significant Cemeteries in Berlin-Brandenburg.

Bob Flanagan



Sir William Dunn Bt (1833-1912)

by Bob Flanagan

The Dunn Laboratories at Cambridge and at Oxford are forever associated with major discoveries that have helped alleviate human suffering, facts that would surely have pleased Sir William and his trustees. His family origins were modest; born in Paisley, near Glasgow, on 22 September 1833, to John Dunn and Isabella Chalmers, he died on 31 March 1912. His estate was valued at £1.3 million. As with William Knight (see page 6), as a young man he emigrated to South Africa and made his fortune from a large worldwide trading empire with roots in South Africa, but later controlled from London. In 1859 he married Sarah Elizabeth (1 May 1830-2 February 1919), daughter of the late James Howse of Grahamstown, South Africa.

William was senior partner in the firms of William Dunn and Co., Broad Street Avenue, London EC; Mackie, Dunn, and Co., Port Elizabeth, South Africa; W. Dunn and Co., Durban; Dunn and Co., East London, South Africa. He was a Director of the Royal Exchange Assurance Co. and of the Union Discount Co. He was Alderman for Cheap Ward in the City of London and also MP for Paisley, 1891-1906. He was Consul General of the Orange Free State, and was created Baronet in 1895. He lived at 34 Phillimore Gardens, Kensington and at The Retreat, Lakenheath, Suffolk. Both he and his wife are buried at Norwood (grave 33,242, square 43).

William Dunn had no direct connections with medicine. He had no heir and in his will, dated 4 November 1908, the key clause was 'to advance the cause of Christianity, to benefit children and young people, to support hospitals and alleviate human suffering, to encourage education and promote emigration'. After making provision for about half the total, including founding a Dunn Chair of New Testament Theology at Westminster College, Cambridge, he left the remainder in the hands of trustees. They allotted about 120 small sums to hospitals, nursing homes, orphanages and like institutions, but then decided that larger projects would be more likely to be permanent memorials. After consulting the President of the Royal Society, Sir William Hardy, and the Secretary of the Medical Research Committee, Sir Walter Fletcher, the trustees gave £210,000 in 1920 to Sir Frederick Gowland Hopkins (1861-1947) in biochemistry in Cambridge and



Lady Elizabeth Dunn (1830-1919)

£100,000 in 1922 to Professor Georges Dreyer (1873-1934) in pathology in Oxford. Between them, these two laboratories have yielded nine Nobel Prize winners. The Dunn Trustees also endowed the Dunn Nutritional Laboratory at Cambridge, which opened in 1927.

Sir Thomas Stevenson had recruited Fred Hopkins in 1883 from his evening chemistry class at University College, and he remained his assistant until he enrolled in the medical school at Guy's in 1888. Later he became the first lecturer on the chemical and nutritional aspects of hygiene at Guy's. Given a lectureship at Cambridge in 1898 at a salary of £200 a year, he added to his income by supervising undergraduates and giving tutorials, and undertaking forensic toxicology case work for the Home Office for a few years after Stevenson's death. Subsequently Hopkins predicted the existence of vitamins (1912), worked on proteins, studied xanthines and haem pigments, and helped Sir Archibald Garrod FRS (1857-1936) develop his concept of inborn errors of metabolism. His most famous work was in discovering the existence of vitamins, for which he shared the Nobel Prize for Physiology and Medicine (1929).

In 1933 Hopkins recruited Ernst Boris Chain (1906-1979), who had recently escaped from Nazi Germany. In 1935 Chain moved to the Sir William Dunn Institute at Oxford where he was joined in 1936 by another Hopkins protégé, Howard Florey, Baron Florey (1898-1968). There the work that led to the discovery of the penicillin and cephalosporin antibiotics was undertaken.



Dunn Family Monument at Norwood (grave 33,242, square 43)

William Knight (1843-1900) and his Family

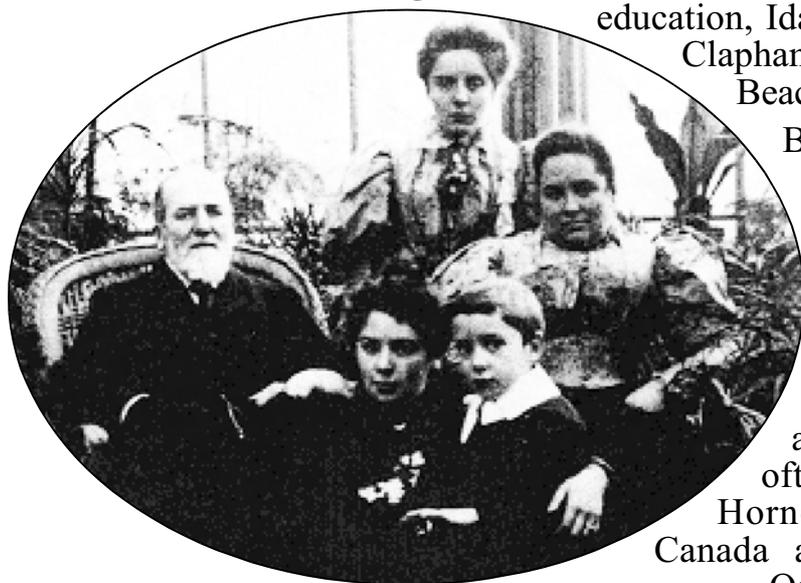
by Sheila Sanders

Articles in Newsletters 51 (September 2004) and 57 (September 2006) discussed William Knight's gold and diamond mining interests in South Africa, but I have been looking into his early life before leaving for South Africa in 1861, and what happened to him and his children when they returned to England in the early 1880s.

William Knight was born in Spitalfields on 17 February 1843. Although I have read that he came from a poor family, it appears from the 1851 and 1861 census returns that his father Charles was a carpenter employing two men and a boy, although he had his wife, six daughters and two sons to feed. The family were living in Devonshire Street, Bishopsgate in 1851, but by 1861 William's mother had died, two of the children – one girl and one boy – had left home, and the family had moved to London Wall. So William, aged 18, left his widowed father and five sisters, and prospered in South Africa, through hard work and determination accumulating a vast fortune in diamond and gold mines.

Whilst in South Africa, William married Annie Penton. They returned briefly to England due to his ill health in the early 1880s. He commissioned a new home, and in 1883 the cornerstone of Horner Grange was laid in West Hill, Sydenham. The mansion was furnished with antiques, works of art, and expensive *bric-à-brac*, and contained a ballroom, stables and a conservatory. There was a cook, a nurse, and kitchen, parlour, and house maids. In addition, William had an unusual pet, a baboon who wandered the park-like grounds. Also within the grounds of Horner Grange lived the head gardener and his wife and 4 children, and at the stables lived the coachman with his family.

William and Annie had four children: Arthur Albert who was born in Kimberly, South Africa; Ida Florence, born in South Africa; Bertha Alice, known as Birdie, born in South Africa; and Otto Algernon, born 1891 in Lewisham. The children had a private education, Ida and Bertha attending a school in Clapham, and Arthur a boarding school in Beaconsfield.



*Knight Family in the Winter Garden
at Horner Grange ca. 1900
(from left William, Ida, Birdie, Otto, Annie)*

Both daughters married into wealthy families. The eldest, Ida Florence, married Colonel Harold Arthur Clements Machin, the youngest son of the Reverend Charles Machin, a missionary living in Canada. Harold attended the same school as Ida's brother Arthur, and was often a guest at social events at Horner Grange. Harold returned to Canada after his schooling and entered Osgoode Hall Law School in the early 1890s. Obviously his connection with the Knight family and their gold mining interests wore

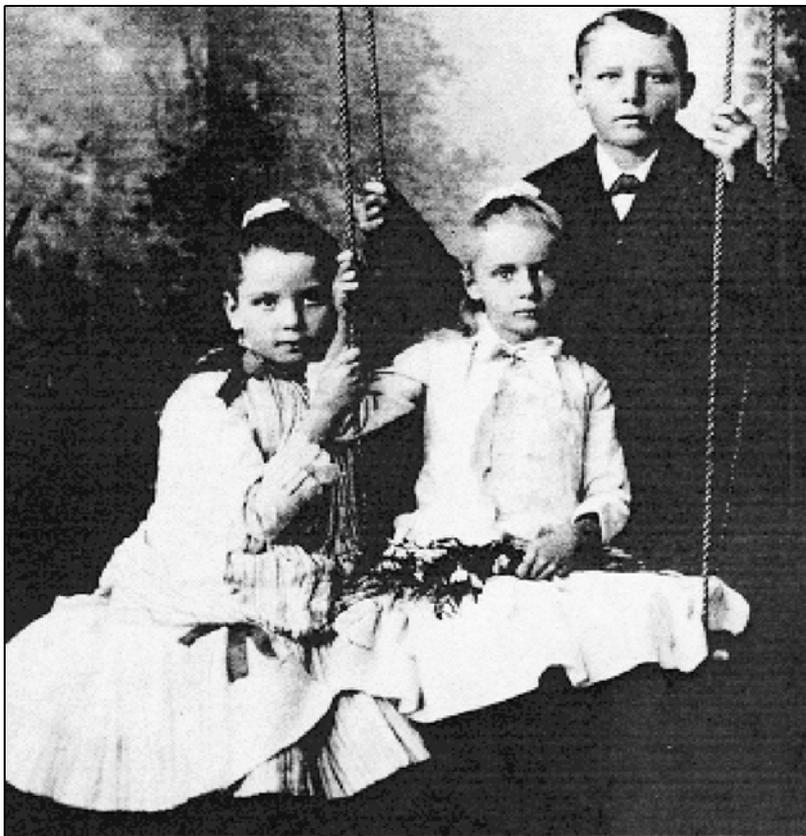
off on him because he became involved in the 1896-1900 Canadian gold boom. He left Canada as part of the first Canadian Contingent to fight in the Boer War and became a Captain in the African Constabulary. Whilst serving in the African Constabulary he married Ida in Cape Colony. The couple returned to Canada, where Harold established a law practice and eventually became a Member of the Canadian Parliament. Ida and Harold carried on their mining interests in Canada, owning a large, profitable gold mine. Machin, Ontario, is named in his memory.



Horner Grange, West Hill, Sydenham, ca. 1890

When Horner Grange was sold and demolished, the contents – draperies, linen, silver, china, fireplace mantles, furniture, and even the cornerstone from the house – were sent to Ida and Harold’s house in Canada. The unique collection arrived in three box cars at a special siding constructed by the Canadian Pacific Railway in Kenora. The contents were then moved again in 1936 after Harold’s death to Ida’s new home in Shoal Lake. They were transported by barge, a trip that included a nightmare passage through rapids in a sixty foot barge.

Ida and her two daughters, Barbara and Ida Ann, carried on with their mining interests in Canada, and when Ida died in 1950, her daughter carried on prospecting. Barbara held her miner’s licence from 1 April 1932, and on 1 April 1971 she was presented with an Honorary Permanent Miners Licence. Some of the collection from Horner Grange was sold over the years, but the remaining articles are now in the Victorian Parlour, Lake of the Woods Museum, Kenora, Ontario.



Ida, Birdie and Arthur Knight, 1887

William’s second daughter Bertha married Henry John Littleton in 1900. Henry John was the son of Henry Littleton who, after serving Alfred Novello in a humble capacity, rose to become the head of the great music publishing business. The Littletons were neighbours of the Knights in West Hill, living in Westwood House, a fantasy renaissance palace. The house had started life modestly ca. 1720 as an inn. When Henry Littleton purchased the house in 1874, he commissioned John Loughborough Pearson to re-design the house. The redevelopment was completed in 1881. Westwood House and its Music Room played host to the musical stars of the Crystal Palace: both Dvorák and Liszt stayed, and played, there.

Westwood House was sold as a Home for Orphans of School Teachers in 1889 and by 1901 Bertha and Henry John were living in Albany Terrace, Regents Park, with their first child Dolly, two servants and a cook. Henry John had followed in his father's footsteps and his occupation is described as 'music publisher' in the census return. Bertha and Henry John had two more children, Iris and William. Henry John died in 1914, and some time afterwards Bertha married Spencer Thompson.

William Knight's eldest son, Arthur Albert, did not go into mining, but became a civil and mechanical engineer. He married Ida Hirsch (born Cape Colony) in Sydenham in 1898. William Knight died 12 February 1900, and in 1901 Arthur and Ida were living with Arthur's widowed mother and their first daughter Rosa in Horner Grange. They had a second daughter, Rita. Arthur married Doris Greggs after the death of his first wife in 1928; and they had two children, Ida and Richard.

William's youngest son, Otto, went to St Andrew's School in Grahamstown, a small town in the Eastern Cape situated between East London and Port Elizabeth. He married Annie Calcraft in Bloomsbury in 1915. Otto, who has been mentioned in an earlier article, spent a fair amount of the fortune accumulated by his father. He and Annie had one son, James. By 1930 Otto and his family were living at The Common, Ealing. In 1934 Otto, Annie, and their son James visited Otto's sister Ida in Canada. On the ship's list Otto's occupation is described as 'General Merchant'. How long they stayed in Canada I do not know but their son James did serve in the Canadian Army in World War Two.

My own connection to this family is rather vague – Colonel Harold Arthur Clements Machin's mother Emma Louisa Biddlecombe was my great-grandfather's half sister. I always felt sorry for Emma because on her mother's death her father remarried a younger woman (my great-grandmother), and after her marriage to Reverend Machin in Salisbury Cathedral, I could find no trace of her. However, last year I discovered that she and her husband had moved to Canada as missionaries and seemed to have had a long happy life. Their youngest son Harold Machin married into the Knight family, as described above.



Base of William Knight's grave at Norwood (grave 29,020, square 94)

Regimental Sergeant Major Spencer John Bent VC MM (1891-1977)

by Bob Flanagan



In my review of *Monuments to Courage: Victoria Cross Headstones & Memorials* by the late David Harvey (Newsletter 38, May 2000), I was sad to relate that I thought Norwood was alone amongst the major London cemeteries in no longer being the last resting place of a VC holder, the body of Colonel Joseph Petrus Hendrick Crowe (1826-1876) (grave 15,950, square 79), being disinterred and re-buried at Uitenhage, South Africa, in 1976, his surviving relatives being appalled at the state of the cemetery at Norwood at that time. The Norwood tombstone has since disappeared. A further VC holder, Captain (Temporary Major) Stewart Walter Loudon-Shand (1879-1916) is commemorated on his family memorial at Norwood (grave 23,120, square 108), although he is actually buried in Norfolk Cemetery on the Somme. Well, we have now discovered that RSM Spencer Bent VC was cremated at Norwood and his ashes scattered in the old Rose Garden. Site manager Avril Kirby is kindly arranging a memorial plaque in his memory.

Early Years

Spencer John Bent was born, it is thought, in the Pickeral Inn, Station Yard, Stowmarket, Suffolk on 18 March 1891, son of Spencer Bent and Gertrude Baker. His father was killed in the Boer War whilst serving with the Royal Horse Artillery. Spencer junior was thereafter brought up by his aunt and uncle, Mr and Mrs William Baker, who lived at Verandah Cottage, Witnesham, near Ipswich.

In July 1905 Bent decided to enlist, signing on in Ipswich as a Drummer with the 1st East Lancashire Regiment. As a youngster he seems to have enjoyed boxing and football. He quickly obtained the nickname 'Joe' during the early part of his army service. He was stationed with the East Lancashires at The Curragh, near Dublin from 1905-1908, followed by four years at Woking. His battalion then moved to Colchester, where they were based until mid-August 1914.

Mons and Le Cateau

Bent's battalion was part of the 11th Brigade, 4th Division and took part as a reserve unit at Mons and in the fighting at Le Cateau on 26 August. Later it was involved in the retreat towards Paris, the retreat of the German Army at the Marne, and subsequently in the Battle of the Aisne. At the end of September, the French Army took over the Aisne front and the British units entrained for Flanders and the First Battle of Ypres, which lasted from 19 October to 22 November.

On the eastern edge of Ploegsteert Wood was the small village of Le Gheer, in which there was a convent. On 21 October the village was captured and the Germans took up positions to the west of it facing Ploegsteert. The 11th Brigade re-took the village and the position was furiously fought for during the next few days, with ammunition running short. Bent brought ammunition up to the trenches in this advanced position.

The trenches gave very little cover or protection to the men using them as they were merely scraped out of the ground. Bent was in constant danger of being hit by bullets or shellfire.

Near Le Gheer, Belgium, 1-2 November 1914

On the 27th the village was the centre of renewed attacks by the enemy on the seven mile line between Messines and Armentières. The brigade was heavily shelled but managed to repel the German infantry attack. The night of 1/2 November was a crisis time for the East Lancashires and at one point word was passed down the line to withdraw. Drummer Bent was interviewed for *The Suffolk Chronicle and Mercury* dated 18 December 1914 and said of the incident:



‘We were as usual taking our hourly turns alternately watching for the enemy, and I had snuggled down into my hole. We had no officer in our trench and my platoon leader had gone to visit a post, when someone passed the word down the line that the battalion was to retire. This was being done when I woke up. I started to follow them, but remembered a French trumpet which I had found, and carried with me for some long time. I did not want to lose it and went back for it, chancing a bullet. When I got into the trench I saw someone just coming round the corner. Thinking it was a German, I waited for him till he crawled up to me and then poked my rifle into him and asked him who he was. It was Sgt. Waller, who told me that it was a wrong order. I at once jumped out of the trench and ordered the men back. Whilst doing this an officer came up, and after I had told him what had happened he told me to get the men back whilst he went after some others. We all got back to the trench safely and waited. In the early morning the Germans evidently thought we had left the trenches, for after bombardment they attacked. The Germans came on, doing a sort of goose step. Our officers kept our fire back, and in the meantime Lt. Dyer brought up a machine gun. When the Germans were about 400 yards off the order was given to fire, and the Germans went down in hundreds, very few getting safely back to their own trenches.

On the following morning, after we had had breakfast, Private McNulty went out of the trench, and on returning was hit in the pit of the stomach. He fell, and the Germans were trying to hit him again; you could see the earth flying up all around him. I said 'Why doesn't someone go and help him?' and I got the reply, 'Why not go yourself?' I went, and to make it difficult for the Germans to hit me I zig-zagged to him. They did not snipe at me whilst I was advancing, but as soon as I got hold of McNulty's shoulder something seemed to take my feet from under me, and I slipped under McNulty. This took place close to the wall of a ruined convent, and just as I fell several bullets struck the wall, sending a piece of plaster against my left eye. I thought I was wounded, and started to rub the blood away, as I thought, but fortunately the skin was only grazed. I felt it was time to get out of it, and knowing it was impossible to stand up, I hooked my feet under McNulty's arm, and using my elbows I managed to drag myself and him back to the trenches about twenty-five yards away. When I got him there safely I went for a doctor and stretcher bearers. As far as I know he is still alive, at any rate it was the last time I heard of him. On November 10th I got a bullet through the flesh of my right leg and had to be taken to hospital.'



Drummer Bent's gallantry under fire for which he won the Victoria Cross

The opponents of the 11th Brigade had been the German 40th and 26th Divisions from their Sixth Army. Afterwards, Bent was first sent to Oxfordshire and then to the 15th Northern General Hospital at Leicester. He then returned home to Suffolk. When interviewed he could only walk with the aid of a stick. His Victoria Cross was gazetted on 9 December 1914. He received his medal from the King at Buckingham Palace on 13 January.

Return to the Western Front

Bent spent several months helping with recruiting while he was still convalescing and was promoted Sergeant. In 1916 he returned to the front with the 1st East Lancshires, but was invalided home in November after the Battle of the Somme. In the spring of

1917 he was back in the Le Gheer region where he had won his VC in 1914. In June 1917 he took part in the battle for the Messines Ridge with the 7th Battalion and at the same time was promoted to the rank of Company Sergeant Major. In February 1918 Bent returned once more to the 1st Battalion and at the end of October commanded a successful patrol in the Mons area. He was awarded the Military Medal on 3 November 1918 for 'bravery in the field'.

Bent left France in December and decided to stay in the Army. Initially he served in the United Kingdom and in March 1920 he was appointed to the role of recruiting officer in Blackburn, Lancashire. He stayed in the town in lodgings with his wife Alice. Later he served with his regiment in the West Indies. During this time he attended the funeral of Sgt. W.J. Gordon VC of the 1st West India Regiment and had the honour of carrying his medals. Bent was also part of the Guard of Honour for the funeral of the Unknown Warrior at Westminster Abbey in November 1920.

In 1923 Bent received the Long Service and Good Conduct Medal. He was finally discharged in Malta in July 1925. In 1927 he was present at Mons for an Armistice Service – he was after all one of the 'Old Contemptibles'. After leaving the Army he became a janitor at the Paragon School on the New Kent Road. In the Second World War Bent again served with his regiment. On 1 July 1950 he was present when new colours were presented to the 1st East Lancshires in Chester. In 1956 he attended the Centenary of the Victoria Cross celebration in Hyde Park. In the same year he retired from the Paragon School and became a commissionaire.

Commissionaire

In August 1968, when Bent was employed as a commissionaire with Courage the brewers, he was invited to open a public house in Lords Wood Lane, Chatham named the *Victoria Cross*. The ceremony of hoisting the traditional ale garland, which signified that the beer was in good condition, was duly carried out by Bent. The inn sign was a Victoria Cross, and a raised terrazzo in the shape of the medal was built for use as outdoor seating. Inside, the VC motif was continued in the saloon bar with a photo-mural and the walls were decorated in the VC colours. In addition a three and a half foot fibre-glass model of the award in bronze was also on display. Prints illustrating VC deeds were hung on the walls.

Bent attended many functions and reunions, both in connection with his former regiment and the Victoria Cross and George Cross Association. He worked with Courage, the brewers, for thirteen years and finally retired in 1976 aged 85. In the same year he and Alice attended what was to be their last Somme Sunday Service together, on the 60th anniversary of the battle. The following year on the occasion of the couple's Diamond Wedding, they were given a special dinner by the East Lancashire Regimental Association.

Bent died in Hackney on 3 May 1977, aged 86. His funeral was held at West Norwood Crematorium two days later. On 15 June a service of thanksgiving took place at the Chapel of the Royal Hospital, Chelsea and his ashes were strewn in the Rose Garden (Bed 41) on 12 July. His wife Alice died on 7 December 1984 aged 90. They had three children: Spencer Powell Bent, born on 18 June 1920, Beryl Helena Bent, born in Jamaica on 13 November 1922, and Pauline Patricia Bent, born on 5 September 1929. His medals were displayed at the Imperial War Museum in 1978 and remained there until purchased by a former member of the East Lancashire Regiment for £11,000 on 27 June 1985 at Sotheby's.

Acknowledgement: Much of the information in this article is from *VCs of the First World War 1914* by Gerald Gliddon (Sutton, 1994).

Theatre Review

by Paul Graham

Black Eyed Susan by Douglas Jerrold. The Theatre Royal, Bury St Edmunds

The restored Theatre Royal celebrated its re-opening in September 2007 by staging a rare professional production of Douglas Jerrold's most successful melodrama, *Black Eyed Susan*.

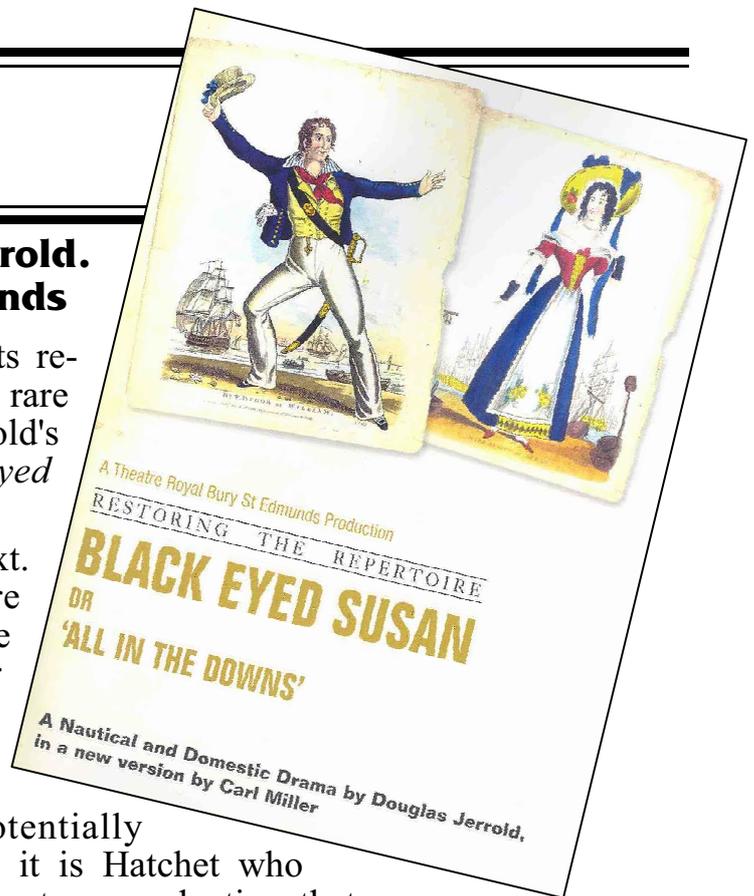
Some liberties were taken with the text. The smugglers scenes in Act 1 were removed, as regularly happened in the nineteenth century according to Professor Michael Slater's informative programme notes. With the smugglers went the secondary villain Hatchet and his henchman Raker. This had some potentially disturbing consequences as, in the text, it is Hatchet who poses the sexual threat to Susan. In this stage production that role was transferred to Doggrass, Susan's uncle, which raised the spectre of incest that was not (and could not have been) in Jerrold's original. Fortunately, the pantomimic nature of the production, in which audience participation was encouraged in the form of hissing and cheering, meant that this threat could not be taken at all seriously and none of the enthusiastic, capacity audience seemed remotely uncomfortable.

Jerrold's most popular theatrical piece (it played for an unprecedented 300 nights at the Surrey Theatre) was revealed as a rumbustious romp, complete with liberal amounts of singing, dancing, and stage 'business'. Some of the latter was added before the curtain rose after the interval when Dolly (Janet Greaves) brought the house down with her comic song. It is to the credit of the company that they did not produce a musty museum piece of a bygone age, but a lively and amusing spectacle that swept their audience along all the way to the unlikely, but satisfying, happy ending.

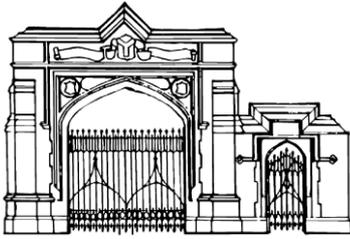
Philip Ralph was an appropriately energetic and dashing William, who indulges in a continual flow of nautical metaphor. His wife's bewitching eyes remind him of nothing so much as 'a frigate, with marines firing from the tops' and her face was 'as red and rosy as the King's head on the side of a fire bucket'. The eponymous heroine (Sophia Linden) was spirited and convincing as the girl who creates such unconscious havoc amongst every man who encounters her.

The production also boasted some magnificent scenery that David Roberts and Louis Haghe would have been proud of. The captain's cabin, where William's court martial took place, below decks amidst the cannons, Susan's cottage, and a view of the rolling waves, complete with both ships and seagulls in motion, were all lovingly recreated.

The Theatre Royal first opened in 1819 and claims to be the only Regency theatre left in the country. *Susan* was first staged in 1829 at the Surrey Theatre, and is one of several Georgian plays being revived in the opening season at Bury St Edmunds (see the website - <http://www.theatreroyal.org/PEO/site/revisit/index.php?nav=restoringfordetails>).



***Black Eyed Susan* Programme Detail**



Review of Recent FOWNC Events

by Jill Dudman

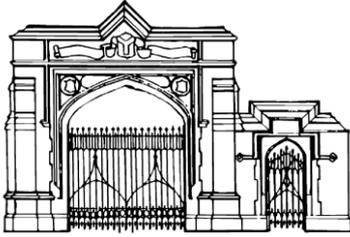
We made our usual contribution to Open House London Weekend on 16 September. About 50 visitors in total attended the series of tours of the notable monuments, finishing at the Greek Chapel, which was open for viewing. The FOWNC bookstall was open all afternoon in the Maddick mausoleum. Thanks to everyone who helped with leading the tours and staffing the bookstall, and especially to Don Bianco for his talks about the Greek Chapel.

After our AGM on 20 October we were pleased to welcome John Clarke, who gave an illustrated presentation about the Brookwood Necropolis Railway. John is not only founder of the Brookwood Cemetery Society, but also the author of the classic history of this railway service, now into its 4th edition (Oakwood Press - see review in FOWNC Newsletter 58, January 2007). John took us on a journey down the line, starting with many pictures of its London terminus building adjacent to Waterloo Station. There followed views of the trains, including the special coffin carriages (1st and 3rd class), and finally the station buildings within Brookwood Cemetery itself.

Just after Remembrance Day, on 17 November, Hilary Rosser, a FOWNC member and a lecturer and guide at Dulwich Picture Gallery, gave an illustrated talk on war memorials. She surveyed the basic forms and designs that have been used for these memorials, starting with the Cenotaph in Whitehall, and moving through the standard cross of sacrifice and sword of honour pattern, to a variety of styles of figuration. A particularly interesting example is a large memorial in Croydon, which has either side of its base two bronze figures, not at all of a standard style: one is a wounded soldier tying on his own bandages, the other a woman with anguished face crumpling in her hand presumably a death notification telegram (see illustrations below). For further reading Hilary recommends the Shire Publications book on this subject (stocked by the FOWNC bookstall at £5.99). She concluded with a look at some modern memorials - she is not impressed with the monument in Whitehall to the women of World War II, both in its location (there was not supposed ever to be another monument in the vicinity of the Cenotaph) and its design (a lot of coats and hats hanging on hooks).



Croydon War Memorial



Forthcoming FOWNC Events

January - April 2008

General tours will be held on the first Sunday of each month (6 January, 3 February, 2 March and 6 April). January to March tours start at 11.00 and the April tour starts at 14.30, 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.

Spring 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 below, starting at 14.30. There is no formal charge but we welcome donations of £1 per person to help cover the room hire.

Saturday 16 February: Lecture - Notable sportsmen at West Norwood Cemetery - Bob Flanagan

One of FOWNC Chairman Bob Flanagan's fields of research has been the sportsmen buried at Norwood, and this will be an extended presentation of the short talk that he gave at last year's sport-themed Lambeth Archives Open Day. It was particularly timely in that 2007 was the centenary of the death of Charles Alcock, dubbed the father of modern sport.

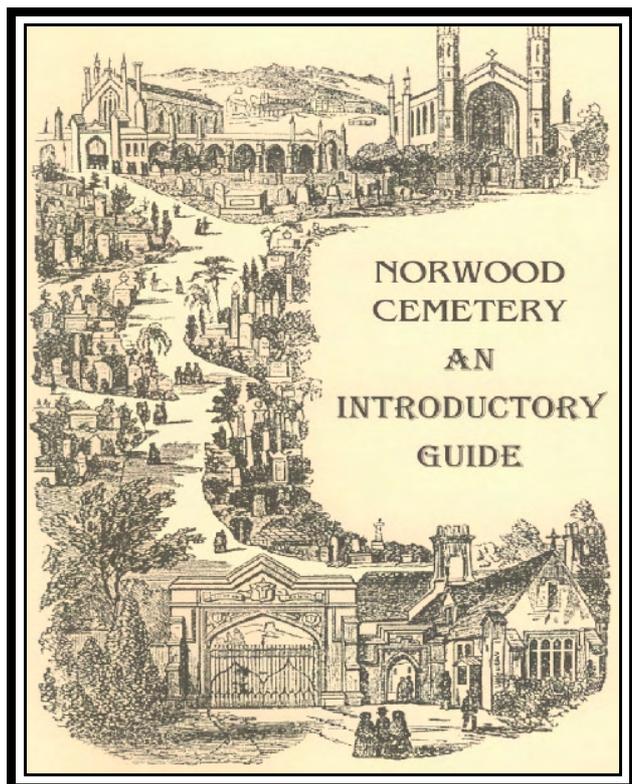
Saturday 15 March: Dead Art - A DVD Extravaganza

An unusual event for FOWNC - a UK Film premiere! Last summer a US company, Engelentertainment, visited Norwood. Brent Elliott, Avril Kirby, and Bob Flanagan spent some 3 days in total with them in the cemetery. The result is a very well produced programme giving something of the flavour of the cemetery and of its history. The programme is part of a series with the running head: 'Dead Art' and three further episodes: New Orleans; Greenwood, New York; and Sleepy Hollow, New York, will also be shown.



Charles W. Alcock

NEWLY PUBLISHED



Norwood Cemetery An Introductory Guide

£2.50 from FOWNC bookstall
£3.00 by post from Jill Dudman
or Bob Flanagan.

Cheques payable to FOWNC.

Friends of West Norwood Cemetery

The annual subscription to the
Friends of West Norwood Cemetery
is £3. For further information please
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©FOWNC January 2008

The FOWNC Newsletter is published three times a year by
the Friends of West Norwood Cemetery, 79 Durban Road, London SE27 9RW.
Registered Charity No 1063450. Member of the National Federation of Cemetery
Friends (NFCF, <http://www.cemeteryfriends.org.uk/1.html>) and of the Association of
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