

Friends of West Norwood CEMETERY

Newsletter No. 74 – May 2012

Free to members

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Chairman's Report

Bob Flanagan

On 15 March the cemetery was honoured by a visit from HRH the Duke of Gloucester KG GCVO in his capacity as Patron of the *Heritage of London Trust* (HoLT). As far as I am aware this was the first official Royal visit to the cemetery in its 175 year history, a fitting celebration of this anniversary. We were also pleased to welcome our local MP, The Rt Hon Tessa Jowell, and other visitors. We are grateful to the Chief Executive of HoLT, Diana Beattie, and her board for arranging the visit.

It was a genuine pleasure to welcome His Royal Highness to Norwood. After walking from the main gate to the Crematorium via the Gilbert memorial and Ship path, visiting the Beeton grave en route, HRH asking questions all the while, we were then driven via the Spurgeon monument, the Tate mausoleum,



*HRH The Duke of Gloucester with
Nikolas Skinitis (back to camera),
Bob Flanagan, and Colin Fenn*

and the Reuter monument to the Greek Necropolis. There we were met by Colin Fenn and Nikolas Skinitis, Chair of the Greek Trustees. They proceeded to show HRH St Stephen's

Chapel (the Ralli Chapel) and some of the other remarkable tombs in this section of the cemetery. A slow drive along Lower Road then brought us to the cemetery office where I introduced Ken Dry, Keith Lucas, and other members of the Lambeth management team, and HRH had opportunity to view the cemetery records.

In conversation with HRH, I pointed out the significant progress that has been made by FOWNC in making the cemetery more accessible to visitors through conservation work including monument restoration, and by publishing guides to the more notable people buried here. Since 1989 FOWNC has been active in campaigning to prevent Lambeth Council from continuing their policy of memorial clearance and seeking to ensure the cemetery's treasures can be seen and enjoyed by the public, a stance we will maintain.

The Duke commented: *I am pleased to see West Norwood Cemetery looking so well on this lovely spring day. It is clearly a site of great historical interest, reflecting as it does the growth and development of much of London as we know it today. I wish you well in your continuing negotiations with Lambeth Council that aim to secure the future of this wonderful place*.

So all-in-all a most enjoyable if all too brief encounter – my first and likely my last with a member of the Royal Family! Thanks again to Diana Beattie and HoLT for organizing the visit and for their unwavering support of FOWNC over the years.

Mrs Patricia Anne Spencer-Silver (1920–2012)

I am saddened to record the death on 17 April of Patricia Spencer-Silver. Patricia was a good friend to me, to FOWNC, and to the cemetery. She was a descendant of George Myers (1803–1875) (grave 3,114, square 37; monument destroyed). Her book about his life and work (*George Myers – Pugin's Builder*) was well received (the updated edition was reviewed in FOWNC Newsletter 68, May 2010). She was also descended from Sir John Jackson (1851–1919) (grave 21,994, square 33), who had married Ellen, daughter of George Myers in 1876. Her book about Sir John Jackson's life, *Tower Bridge to Babylon* (2005), was reviewed in Newsletter 57 (September 2006). Over the years Patricia gave fascinating talks to us that often featured unpublished family photographs. In earlier times she was usually accompanied by her husband Peter, who sadly pre-deceased her.

A long-term aim has been to reinstate a memorial to George Myers, a project now nearing fruition with assistance promised from HoLT, and one that will be a further reminder of her determination to record part of her family's history and a fitting monument to her endeavours.

Mrs Jean Bower Pateman MBE (1921–2012)

It is also with regret that I formally record the death of Jean Pateman, a pioneer of the cemetery conservation movement, who died on 11 February. Although best known for her work in helping save Highgate Cemetery in the 1970s (she chaired the Friends group there 1985–2009), Jean was also a co-founder of our umbrella organisation, the National Federation of Cemetery Friends, and a great supporter of individual Friends groups, including FOWNC. Formal obituaries were published in the *Daily Telegraph* (7 March 2012, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/obituaries/9126966/Jean-Pateman.html>) and the *Times* (18 February 2012). We will all miss her.

The Rt Hon Sir Richard Baggallay QC MP (1816–1888)

Work by Ellen Barbet, Colin Fenn, and the scrub clearance team has uncovered the grave of Sir Richard Baggallay (see Newsletter 73). Those recorded on the tombstone in addition to Sir Richard himself and his wife Lady Marianne Baggallay (1824–1890) are his son Richard (1847–1872) and Vera (1882–1883), infant daughter of Henry Charles and Evelyn Baggallay. Marian Baggallay (d. 16 August 1914, aged 64),



Baggallay family tombstone (grave 13,875, square 33)

an unmarried daughter perhaps, also lies in the vault. Sir Richard's father, also Richard (d. 1870), lies near Ship Path (grave 2,052, square 76). He was Treasurer of St. Thomas' Hospital 1845–1864 and thus involved in negotiating the move from London Bridge. It was he and not his son who was an original shareholder in the Cemetery Company (1836). He died at Kingsthorpe House, Upper Tooting, and was buried on 11 January 1870, aged 80. He left some £30,000 in his will. I do not know if a gravestone survives.

Dead Art

The Memorial Awareness Board 'Dead Art. Then and Now' photographic competition closes on 2 July. It is again being sponsored by StoneGuard Memorial Insurance, with a prize of £1000 for the winner. This year, short-listed photographs will be placed on the MAB website www.rememberforever.org.uk for the public to have the final vote. Full terms and conditions can be found at <http://memorialawarenessboard.wordpress.com/>.

FOWNC Website

I'm pleased to report that our Webmaster James Slattery-Kavanagh has been working to upgrade our website. One feature will be that all our Newsletters right back to issue no 1 (January 1990) will be accessible in searchable format, complete with illustrations. This will give not only a complete record of our trials and tribulations with Lambeth, but also mean that search engines will index the articles so that relatives and other interested parties will be able to find them. The website address will stay the same (see p. 16).

Postscript: Ronald Reed (1916–1995)

Ronald was the father of FOWNC founder Nicholas Reed (see p. 4) and a very early member of FOWNC. I well remember Mr Reed snr as I knew him, and was always impressed by his calm, courteous interest and his quiet nature. His funeral at Camberwell Crematorium was restrained and dignified. I knew nothing about his achievements until I read his obituary (see Newsletter 22, April 1995). Nicholas too it seems did not know much about his father's role in World War II until just before he died. Now he has published a book: *My Father - The Man Who Never Was* (Paperback, 190 pp. Lilburne Press, 2011. £9.95. www.lilburnepress.co.uk) to formally record his father's achievements.

West Norwood Cemetery's Monumental Architecture

by Colin R Fenn and James Slattery-Kavanagh (FOWNC, 2012. £2.50)

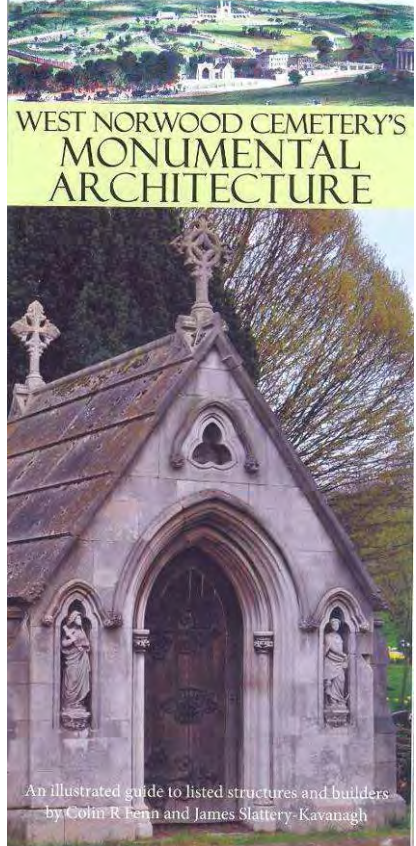
Review – Bob Flanagan

Following the success of their guide to the Greek Necropolis published last year, Colin and James have been as good as their word and produced a companion guide that concentrates on the listed memorials outside the Greek section.

This new publication is intended not only to complement their existing guide, but also as a successor to *In Loving Memory of West Norwood Cemetery* by the late Geoffrey Manning (Norwood Society, 1989). This latter booklet, long out of print, was the publication that drew wider attention to the plight of the cemetery in general, and to the loss of a number of listed memorials in particular. In turn this prompted Nicholas Reed to found FOWNC in 1989, the event that led to the 1994 action in the Consistory Court and the ensuing 18 years or so of stand-off with Lambeth over the future of the cemetery.

Colin and James are again to be congratulated on their achievement. Details of the 47 listed memorials in addition to those in the Greek Necropolis are brought up to date and their locations plotted on Colin's excellent perspective plan of the cemetery. In addition, brief information on a further 30 notable architects and builders buried in the cemetery are documented. There is also a brief history of the cemetery, a guide to funerary symbolism, and even a note as to the number of graves (208) in the cemetery denoted as war graves and managed by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. All this plus many full-colour illustrations in one folded A2 sheet!

The research behind this leaflet has already proved valuable in that it has helped English Heritage to identify a dozen or so monuments 'at risk' that may be eligible for grants for stabilization/repair this year. Monuments in need of urgent stabilisation are the vaults of Israel Thomas (grave 429, square 34), Thomas Letts (249, 33), John Stevens (3,817, 47), and Annie Sparenborg (31,119, 81). We still hope for a photograph of the Grane monument (*A Bit of Mystery*, FOWNC Newsletter 71, May 2011). And of course reinstatement of the Gilbert railings is still awaited (see Newsletters *passim*).



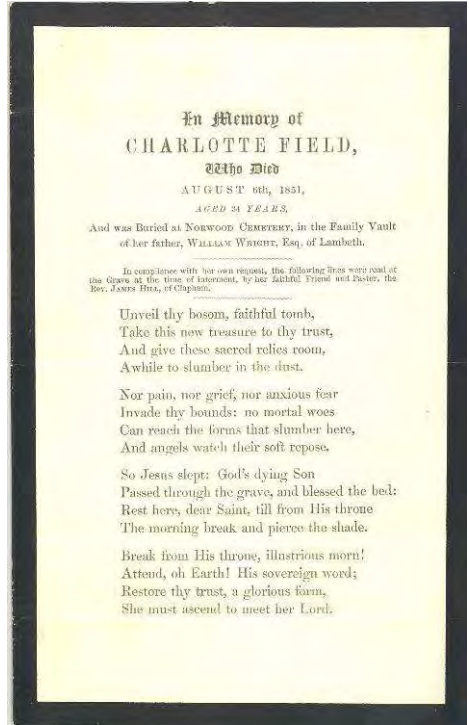
In Memory of Charlotte Field

Bob Flanagan

From time to time items of memorabilia appear that are related to the cemetery. This note of the burial service held for Charlotte Field (d. 6 August 1851) was discovered in a museum archive in Bedfordshire recently and was kindly sent to me at the suggestion of long-time FOWNC member Peter Clayton.

The note reveals that ‘her faithful Friend and Pastor, the Rev. James Hill, of Clapham’ officiated at the committal service. The family memorial, a Portland stone chest tomb surmounted by a draped urn, is one of the few that survived the brutal clearance of the area around the Dissenters’ chapel that was instigated almost as soon as Lambeth acquired the cemetery in 1966. Why this one escaped when so many others were destroyed we will never know.

The memorial rests on a York stone ledger above a brick vault. Inscriptions recording the names and other details of those interred in the vault are carved on the tombstone panels, although they are now barely readable.



The first burial in the vault (grave 1,604, square 51) was that of Mary E. Wright (d. 1847), followed by Sam Wright (d. 1837, likely a reinterment), Mary Wright (d. 1843), George Wright (d. 1848), Charlotte, wife of William Field (d. 1851), Susan Young (d. 1852), William Wright himself (d. 1857), Sarah Wright (d. 1860), and finally Margaret Wright (d.1867). The head of the family, William Wright, was clearly a man of means, and a Dissenter to boot, but we have no further information about him.

Alberto Napoleon Mezzetti: The 10-Hole Ocarina

Bob Flanagan

Alberto Mezzetti (1843–1906) (grave 24,168, square 12; monument destroyed) was one of my ‘also rans’ in *West Norwood Cemetery’s Musicians* (FOWNC, 1998). He achieved only a mention because I could not find out much about him! However, Colin Fenn has discovered that the Mezzetti brothers Ercole and Alberto were promoters of the 10-hole ocarina (Italian: ‘little goose’). This is one of the smallest wind instruments. Its origins lie in the prehistoric clay whistles and flutes excavated in many parts of the world.

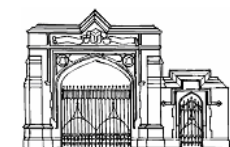
The standard Western ocarina was invented and named in about 1853 by Giuseppe Luigi Donati (1836–1925) in Budrio, near Bologna. Donati’s ocarina was a transformation of the simple clay whistle, having up to 10 finger- and thumb-holes and tuned to a full Western scale. By 1863 Donati had joined with the Mezzetti brothers and others to perform five-part harmony on ocarinas of different sizes. Appearing as the *Mountaineers of the Apennines*, they played traditional tunes and arrangements of popular themes from Italian opera.

In 1870 the Mezzettis began to make ocarinas in Paris. Their ocarinas won prizes in Paris and other exhibitions. In 1874, the *London Daily News* reported that at the Crystal Palace the *Mountaineers of the Apennines* ocarina consort had ‘played a selection of operatic morceaux with a perfect skill and execution’. Alberto it seems settled in England

to patent and make ocarinas in Stafford, publish ocarina tutors, and spread ocarina playing in Britain, leaving Ercole’s Paris workshop to do the same in France. See: www.ocarina-vale.com/History1.html for more information.



‘Mountaineers of the Apennines’



The St Mary-at-Hill Plot

Bob Flanagan and Jill Dudman

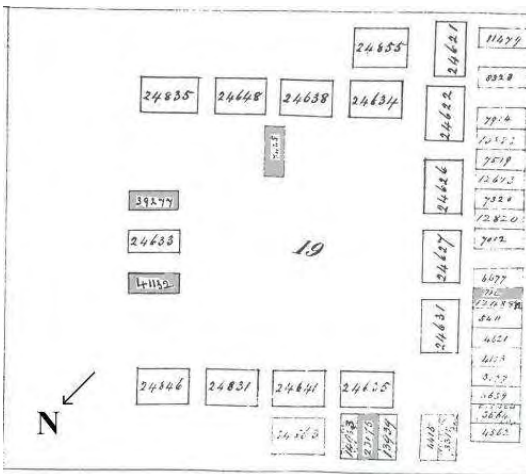
The City Church of St Mary-at-Hill acquired exclusive rights of burial in a plot in consecrated ground in the SE corner of the cemetery (in the middle of and wholly within square 19) in 1847. Originally delineated by iron railings on limestone kerbs, some 350 bodies were moved here from the church vaults in 1892-3 (common graves 24,621/22/26/27/31/33/34/35/38/41/48 and 24,831/35/46/55/63).

The bodies reinterred here in 1892 included that of the Reverend John Brand (1744–1806) (grave 24,633, square 19). Brand had been apprenticed as a cordwainer¹ in Newcastle in 1758. Granted the perpetual curacy of Cramlington, near Newcastle, in 1774, he graduated BA from Lincoln College, Oxford, in 1775. He was made Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries in 1777, and was presented by the Duke of Northumberland, in whose family he lived as secretary and chaplain, to the rectory of St Mary-at-Hill and St Mary Hubbard in 1784. He was resident secretary to the Society of Antiquaries, 1784–1806. He died suddenly at the Rectory House of St Mary-at-Hill on 10 September 1806. Commemorated in the *Dictionary of National Biography* and memorably described as ‘an amiable muddler’, he published *The History and Antiquities of the Town and County of the Town of Newcastle upon Tyne* (1789) and other works.



Rev J Brand (engraved title to his History of Newcastle upon Tyne)

Unfortunately, time has not been kind to the plot. The posts and railings were removed, presumably illegally, when Lambeth narrowed the road in front of the plot in the late 1980s, and 12 new graves were inserted in the plot in violation of the exclusive rights granted in 1847. Be this as it may, study of the cemetery registers shows that there are a further 26 pre-Lambeth era graves dating from 1852–1959 within the plot, five of which are designated as private graves. [N.B. A short sequence of grave numbers in the 12,000s was set aside and used out of date order by the Cemetery Company, for what reason we know not.]



Private graves (in grey), St Mary-at-Hill plot

The legal status of these private graves is unclear. Presumably burial rights will have been purchased from the Parish of St Mary-at-Hill, or could it be that the rights were repurchased by the Cemetery Company? Were the burial rights sold in perpetuity? Perhaps one day documents will emerge to clarify the situation. There are also common graves for which some of the names of those buried there are recorded. We are informed that Lambeth have been corresponding with the Parochial Church Council with the aim of buying back the burial rights and hence using the remaining space for new burials.

¹ A shoemaker/cobbler who made fine soft leather shoes and other luxury footwear

Whilst we cannot object to the repurchase of the burial rights where there is no existing burial, we would strongly object to the desecration of this historic plot that would result from simply filling it with new burials and the accompanying modern headstones. Whilst the illegal burials can't be removed, surely an attempt to recreate a special enclosure must be made based on what is left of the original, which was a noted feature of the cemetery for some 150 years.



St Mary-at-Hill Plot at Norwood, to the SSE, c. 1930. The stone in the centre marks the grave of the Rev John Brand

St Mary-at-Hill Plot at Norwood (Square 19): Private and Common Graves*

<i>Grave number</i>	<i>Date of 1st burial</i>	<i>Name of 1st burial</i>	<i>Grave number</i>	<i>Date of 1st burial</i>	<i>Name of 1st burial</i>
3,312	1852	William Hopper	7,519	1861	Charles Bagge
3,564	1853	Arthur French	7,914	1862	Thomas Willin
3,639	1853	Elizabeth Shields	8,323	1863	Samuel Taylor
3,777	1854	John Orton	11,479	1868	Eleanor West
4,118	1854	Arthur Packer	12,613	1870	Major Brown
4,415	1855	Ann Hart	12,820	1870	Mary Ward
4,562	1855	Henry Orton	13,822	1872	Thomas Lewellen
4,621	1855	Samuel Cordell	13,939	1872	Sarah Powell
5,272*	1857	Benjamin Hornby	14,983	1874	Edgar Reeves
5,411	1857	Mary Lockhart	23,175*	1890	Ellen Forster
6,677	1859	Eliza Cordell	12,488*	1891	Dorcas Packer
7,012	1860	John Hayes	39,277*	1940	Robert Halton
7,320	1861	Elizabeth Clarke	41,132*	1959	Arthur Forster

Samuel Powell Beeton (1804-1854)

Eric Graham

'Samuel Beeton showed untiring zeal, unwearied perseverance and absolute obstinacy in the good cause' (*Era*, 2 April 1848). The 'cause' was the inauguration of the *Great Metropolitan Handicap*, first run at the Epsom Spring Meeting on Friday 3 April 1846.

From its inception the race was known as the *Publican's Derby*, with some of the money raised going to the Licensed Victuallers' School. The first race was over the last mile and a quarter of the *Derby* course. The winner was Mr Matthew's three-year-old *Chamois*, who received a hefty 44 lb handicap from Mr Gully's classy *Weatherbit*, which came 2nd.

Samuel Powell Beeton was born on 28 December 1804 in the City of London, almost certainly at *The Globe* public house. He had seven siblings, including a sister Thomasin, b. 1816, who married William Stagg on 7 March 1837, and Caroline, b. 1820. Samuel Powell's parents Samuel (a Cripplegate Within Ward member of the Pattenmakers' Company, a member of the Licensed Victuallers, and Chairman of the Friendly Society of Licensed Victuallers) and Lucy may have married at Hadleigh, Suffolk, in 1803.

SP Beeton first comes to note on 15 February 1829 when he married 'the daughter of W Smith of London Wall' as it was reported in the press. She was in fact Helen Orchard, whose late father, Thomas Orchard, had carried on business as a baker at 100 Wood Street, City. She bore him a son on 2 March 1831 (who became the well-known publisher Samuel Orchard Beeton), but sadly died in 1832 soon after another confinement.

SP Beeton married again on 24 September 1834. His new bride was Eliza Douse of Stratford, Essex at Little Ilford. At this time Samuel Powell was almost certainly landlord of *The Dolphin* in Milk Street, Cheapside. The freeholders were the Merchant Taylors' Company. *The Dolphin* was a 'list house'. Lists of odds on forthcoming horse races were displayed and the 'little man' could bet his fancy with mine host. The publican would then either act as a bookmaker or pass on the bets, receiving the customary 10 % of the takings. In addition, sweepstakes were organised on the major races when a goodly sum could be won for a shilling.

SP Beeton built up an excellent reputation and in 1845 approached the Clerk of Epsom Racecourse, Mr Henry Dorling, about having a new race sponsored by London publicans. The race would not only increase betting in early spring when there were not many races of note, but would prove a great attraction to racegoers. Beeton suggested that he could raise some £300 to be added to the sweepstake element of the race, £10 per horse. Dorling was in favour and Beeton set out with great enthusiasm to raise the 'added' money. In the end he personally collected £150 and the remainder was quickly found. The first race had 61 subscribers and 29 runners and was worth some £825 to the winner, a very large prize for the time.

For the second running of the race in 1847 Beeton set his sights on raising £500. To this end he donated the £100 accumulated on sweepstakes at *The Dolphin* in 1846 and set about collecting contributions from other landlords. The race was now over two and a quarter miles starting in front of the stands, and then running the 'wrong' way down the course. It then made a serpentine route across the downs, rejoining the course at the mile

IN
AFFECTIONATE MEMORY OF
SAMUEL ORCHART BEETON
AUTHOR EDITOR PUBLISHER
BORN 1830 DIED 1877
AND HIS WIFE AND FELLOW WORKER
IN MANY OF HIS LITERARY ENTERPRISES
ISABELLA MARY (MAYSON)
BORN 1836 DIED 1865
ALSO OF THEIR TWO ELDEST SONS
WHO DIED IN INFANCY 1857 1863
THIS STONE WAS ERECTED BY THEIR
TWO SURVIVING SONS IN 1933
IN REPLACEMENT OF THE ORIGINAL
HAVING FALLEN INTO DECAY

*Inscription on Samuel Orchard
Beeton's family grave at Norwood*

post, and thus back to the stands. So it was to remain until 1985, when the owners of the racecourse could not find the pittance needed to maintain the running ground and the race then became just another mile-and-a-half handicap.²

Although SP Beeton was noted for his pleasant manner he found cause for complaint over the 1850 *Great Metropolitan* when the horse he 'nominated', *John Cossor*, a four year old, was given 7 stone 9 pounds in the handicap, an impost that Beeton considered unjust. He immediately scratched the horse.

With the increased publicity for *The Dolphin* and Beeton himself his business took off. In order to accommodate 'betting men' he fitted out a special room which quickly gained the name *The Dolphin Club*. By March 1851 the establishment was referred to as the *City Tattersall's*, a huge compliment bearing in mind that '*Tatts*' was the centre of the betting world.



Obelisk marking the grave of Samuel Powell Beeton and family at Norwood

Isaac Wyatt sold the lease, 12 years remaining, on 26 July 1875 and retired to Hornsey. He died aged 63 at Campsbourne Road on 30 May 1888. *The Dolphin* itself was demolished in 1891.

The family grave at Norwood (grave 3,956, square 63) is a brick vault 9 ft x 4 ft, purchased by Eliza for £15.15.0 on 4 July 1854. Others buried there are Edward Douse (1863, Eliza's only brother), Helen Grisdale Lowden (her 3rd daughter, 1863),³ and finally Eliza herself (1864). The tombstone is a Portland stone obelisk just to the north of the Grissell family vault (grave 1,669, square 63; see Newsletter 72, September 2011).

² *Aiken* won the latest *Investec Great Metropolitan Handicap* at Epsom, 25 April 2012

³ Samuel Orchart's half-sister Helen (Nelly) had married Thomas Lowden in 1863

As is well known, Samuel Orchard Beeton married Isabella Mary Mayson in 1856. Their 1st child Samuel Orchard died when they were staying in Newmarket, and was buried there. On 2 January 1863 Eliza and his Uncle Tom purchased a 6 ft 6 in x 2 ft 6 in plot at Norwood for £5.5.0 on his behalf for the burial of their 2nd child, also Samuel Orchard (b. 1859), who died on 31 December 1862 when they were staying in a hotel in Sussex. The plot, explained Eliza in a letter to her stepson, was ‘about 3 graves beyond Staggs’ and is only a few feet from SP Beeton’s grave (see *A Bit of Mystery*, p. 16).

‘Staggs’ (grave 85, square 63) was purchased by William Stagg on 2 September 1839. It was enlarged on 28 June 1851 to give a plot 9 ft 6 in x 3 ft in all, at a total cost of £8.1.0. It contains the remains of his daughter Caroline Stagg (d. 1839), Thomasin Stagg née Beeton (d. 1851), Jessie Minchener née Beeton (d. 1894), and finally her husband and first cousin Alfred Minchener (d. 1925). Their fine monument, which was stabilized by Lambeth on our initiative a few years ago, records that William Stagg himself is buried in Westmoreland.



Norwood: Stagg family tombstone



The Magnificent Seven

London’s First Landscaped Cemeteries

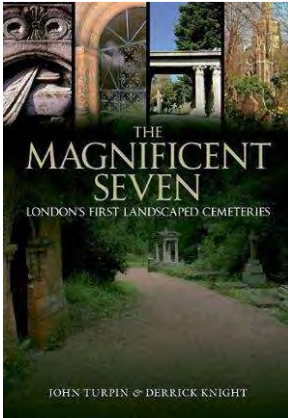
Book Review – Paul Graham

John Turpin and Derrick Knight. 2011. Amberley Publishing. 158 pp. £14.99.

Books about London’s cemeteries are often reviewed in these pages. As the authors of this latest offering acknowledge, extensive surveys are available, most notably the standard work by Meller and Parsons (see Newsletter 63, September 2008). The selling point of the current work is that it concentrates on the ‘Magnificent Seven’: Kensal Green (1833), Norwood (1837), Highgate (1839), Nunhead (1840), Abney Park (1840), Brompton (1840), and Tower Hamlets (1841).

A chapter devoted to each of these cemeteries constitutes the bulk of the work. Each begins with basic, factual information displayed in a standard format. Regrettably this information is not presented consistently. Whilst the tours conducted in most of the Seven by the various Friends groups are detailed, those for Norwood are inexplicably absent.

Each cemetery chapter has a ‘Hall of Fame’ in which brief biographies of those adjudged to be the most famous persons interred there are recorded. Norwood is accorded nine entries, as are Brompton and Abney Park, two less than Nunhead. Clearly any such list is subjective, and the precise criteria for selection unclear, but I would have thought that if fame alone were decisive then the names of Norwood’s de Reuter and Marsden, for example, were sufficiently renowned for them to have merited inclusion.



Unfortunately there are several instances where names and achievements are recorded, but the final resting place is not. In the chapter on scientists and engineers – Percy Pilcher, Sir Francis Pettit Smith, and John St John Long all share this fate (p. 126). We are told that the latter has ‘an extravagant memorial’ and there is a photograph to prove it, but we are not told where it is! In the chapter on music hall and theatre performers it is gratifying to see details of Paul Cinquevalli’s remarkable stage act (p. 129), but again there is no clue as to where his monument is to be found – at Norwood of course!

The volume is generously illustrated with monochrome photographs of important monuments from all seven sites. It is the photographs rather than the letterpress that constitutes the volume’s chief attraction. The Norwood chapter includes a photo of the monument to Thomas de la Garde Grissell; described as a ‘supplier of iron for bridges and major London landmarks’. Members will recall from Newsletter 72 (September 2011) that it was not Thomas, but his sons Martin and Henry who were the iron founders. More importantly, what is not recorded is that the monument itself is constructed, in part, of cast iron, this being its chief distinguishing feature.

It is regrettable that such a visually attractive volume should be marred by all too many mistakes in the accompanying text. Unfortunate as these are, they do not altogether undermine the stated object of the book; to convey pictorially the natural and man-made beauty of the sites and encourage visitors to seek out the monuments depicted.



The Marvellous Mrs Beeton

Review – Bob Flanagan

Presented by Sophie Dahl, BBC 2, Thursday 29 September 2011

‘Could someone have a quiet word with Sophie Dahl? Cheekbones like Sabatier knives and a smile as wide as a Bath Oliver biscuit do not a great presenter make, and last night’s effort – The Marvellous Mrs Beeton – was as damp as undercooked pastry’.

So wrote Kylie O’Brien in the *Daily Telegraph*. Having seen the programme, who could argue with that assessment? The whole focus was Ms Dahl (who she?) and her acolytes, including Jilly Cooper of all people, rather than Mrs Beeton. I’m allergic to TV ‘foodies’ anyway (it’s all in the name of cheap TV as with chat shows, game shows, and the like), but this offering was especially vacuous. And despite making much play of visiting the Beeton family grave, the cemetery itself was not mentioned either by Ms Dahl, or in the credits. As Ms O’Brien put it, a lot of gush and twaddle got in the way of a great story.

Isabella Beeton’s first articles in her husband’s *Englishwoman’s Domestic Magazine* were published in April 1857. Her *Book of Household Management* appeared in 30 monthly parts from 1859, and in book form in 1861, when she was only 23. It sold

60,000 copies in its first year, outselling *Great Expectations*, and was avidly read by the burgeoning middle-class wives and mothers who wanted to learn how to cook, choose servants, budget, and dress.

Mrs Beeton's Toast Sandwich

To commemorate the 150th anniversary of the *Book of Household Management*, the Royal Society of Chemistry (RSC) last year made play of recreating the toast sandwich (featuring bread, toast, salt and, pepper) described in the book. They offered £200 to the first person who could produce a more economical - but edible - lunchtime meal. I don't know if anyone took up the challenge!

'Toast a thin slice of bread. Butter two slices of bread and sprinkle with salt & pepper to taste. Place the slice of toast between the slices of bread-and-butter to form a sandwich'

'You simply put a piece of dry toast between two slices of bread and butter, with salt and pepper to taste. I've tried it and it's surprisingly nice to eat and quite filling. I would emphasise that toast sandwiches are also good at saving calories as well as money, provided you only have one toast sandwich for lunch and nothing else' said an RSC spokesman. You could also omit the butter of course!

On another tack, practices such as adding alum to bread and dilution of milk with water, for example, were widespread in the 1850s. I think the RSC missed a trick in a way though, by not discussing the work of chemists such as Henry Minchin Noad (1815–1877) (grave 16,626, square 21; monument destroyed), Alphonse René le Mire de Normandy (1809–1864) (grave 9,170, square 18), and Sir Thomas Stevenson (1838–1908) (grave 26,543, square 95) in detecting food contamination/adulteration thereby giving a means of monitoring food quality.



Recent FOWNC Events

Jill Dudman

On 18 February, appropriately close to the bicentenary of the birth of Charles Dickens, Leonee Ormond, Professor Emeritus of Victorian Studies at King's College London, talked to us about George Cattermole (1800–1868), artist and book illustrator.

Cattermole was a specialist in scenes of chivalry and medievalism. When a youth he was employed as a draughtsman by John Britton. Moreover, he was related by marriage to Dickens, for whom he contributed illustrations for *Barnaby Rudge* and for *The Old Curiosity Shop*.



Cattermole family tombstone (grave 8,071, square 23)

Leonee kindly provided everyone with copies of illustrations by Cattermole from these novels, as well as from books by Britton and others. She described the process by which Dickens would tell Cattermole and his other illustrator Hablot Knight Browne ('Phiz') what scenes would be required at particular places in the text; it seems that Cattermole drew mainly the architectural views while Phiz worked on the scenes of people.

On 17 March FOWNC chairman Bob Flanagan gave an illustrated presentation on the pure zinc memorials of North America, an unusual cemetery feature that seem to be peculiar to that part of the world. The main manufacturer of these memorials was the Monumental Bronze Company (founded 1874) of Bridgeport, Connecticut. Bob explained how the casting process was carried out, and showed views of some of the zinc monuments he has found. Many tended to be of similar design with an upright structure having interchangeable side panels carrying either inscriptions, or funerary motifs, which could be replaced to carry additional inscriptions as other family members were buried in the grave. The base of the monuments was often made to look like rough stone, and all rest on stone or brick base. The durability of these so-called 'white bronze' monuments (thanks to the protective coating of zinc oxide that quickly develops) is very noticeable, though they were often thought of as inferior to stone monuments in their day. Manufacture was more or less halted with the outbreak of the First World War, when it seems that supplies of zinc were diverted to the war effort.



*Lake View Cemetery,
Seattle: Colman
Memorial*



Forthcoming FOWNC Events

May–September 2012

Introductory tours will be held on the first Sunday of each month (6 May, 3 June, 1 July, 5 August, 2 September), starting at the cemetery main gate off Norwood Road at 14.30, and lasting for about 2 hours. There is no formal charge, but we welcome donations towards conservation projects. We also offer quarterly members-only tours of the Anglican Catacombs (advance bookings only). More information at www.fownc.org. Additional events may be offered at short notice – please register an e-mail address with us (chairman@fownc.org or secretary@fownc.org) to receive notification of such events.

Saturday 9 June, 11.00–17.00: West Norwood Cemetery Open Day – London Open Garden Squares Weekend

Tours of the cemetery at 11.30 and 15.00, and a tour of notable sporting personalities, for this Olympic year, at 14.30 (leader Colin Fenn). The FOWNC bookstall will be present. Visit <http://www.opensquares.org> for information on the wide range of private communal, commercial, and institutional gardens in London open during the weekend.

22 June–20 July: Curious – A Trail of Artworks in the Cemetery

FOWNC member Jane Millar is the curator for an exhibition of work by 26 artists. They have each created items that focus on a particular burial. Ceramicists Robert Dawson and Julian Stair have worked with Doulton/Lambeth pottery connections, and Brendan Jamison's work for the Tate mausoleum is made from sugar cubes. Other works will emphasise birds or plants, or different cultural groups. The architectural and overgrown areas of the cemetery will be used to theatrical effect. An animated film by Jo Lawrence will glow from inside a mausoleum. There will be a live event after hours on 7 July. See www.fownc.org for more information.

Saturday 23 June, 14.30: Walk the World – Paul Graham and Jill Dudman

The 2012 Cultural Olympiad campaign, *Discovering Places*, in association with the Royal Geographical Society, have encouraged all areas of the UK to discover as many local links as possible to the 206 participating Olympic nations. This tour details the links to the 65 Olympic countries FOWNC have found in the biographies of those commemorated in the cemetery. They include 'The Father of Japanese Lighthouses'; a Polish juggler billed as 'The Human Billiard Table'; an Estonian strongman; the Welsh founder of a Ukrainian city; a Minister in the Government of Mauritius; and a New Zealand victim of the Great War. Find the RGS walk at www.walktheworld.org.uk.

Sunday 1 July, 18.00: Special Event: Euripides' Medea

A new version of this classic Greek tragedy by Stevie Hughes. Reading in English by members of the South London Theatre Company in St Stephen's Chapel. Tickets £8 – to include a pre-performance drink – from <http://medeainthegreektemple.eventbrite.co.uk>.

Saturday 18 August, 14.30: Dickens Connections – Paul Graham

Joint tour with the Dickens Fellowship. Charles Dickens (b. 1812) visited the cemetery a number of times; many of his friends, relatives and colleagues are buried here, including Douglas Jerrold, Richard Bentley, Thomas Talfourd, George Cattermole, Laman Blanchard, and John Britton. Paul will relate stories of the great author and his employers, publishers, illustrators, and even the man who taught him to write shorthand.

Saturday/Sunday 22–23 September: Open House London Weekend

FOWNC will be opening the Greek chapel and running tours on the Sunday afternoon. Visit www.openhouselondon.org.uk or look for the booklet in libraries for details of many places of architectural interest to see for free in London during the weekend.

Other forthcoming events

Sunday 24 June, 14.30: Beckenham Cemetery tour – John Hickman

Meet at the main entrance, Elmers End Road, BR3 4TD. Formerly known as Crystal Palace District Cemetery, the graves to be found here include cricketer WG Grace, sanitation pioneer Thomas Crapper, motor car designer Frederick Wolseley, William Walker ('the diver who saved Winchester Cathedral'), and engineer William Stanley.

Sunday 1 July, 11.00–17.00: Brompton Cemetery Open Day

Fulham Road, SW10. Displays, guided tours of the cemetery and catacombs, refreshments (Friends of Brompton Cemetery).

A Bit of Mystery – Bob Flanagan

Mrs Beeton's grave is one of the most visited in the cemetery. She was buried in 1865 in her family plot (grave 8,348, square 64), near that of her father-in-law Samuel Powell Beeton (see p. 8). Her husband Samuel Orchard Beeton, who died in 1877, of syphilis ('large pox') it is said, is also buried with her, as is their second son, also Samuel Orchard (d. 1862). Ownership of the plot was transferred on 19 June 1933 to their surviving sons Orchard and Mayson when they replaced the headstone, 'the original having fallen into decay'. I suspect, however, that the kerbs are from the original monument. I've always wondered what the original headstone looked like – perhaps there is a drawing or photograph out there somewhere?



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