

# Friends of West Norwood CEMETERY

Newsletter No.90 – September 2017

Free to members

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## Chairman's Report

Bob Flanagan

Work on the HLF bid continues apace, although the appointment of an Activities Coordinator is still awaited. The advert was blocked because of Lambeth's freeze on new appointments even though it is an externally-funded post! Be this as it may, after much debate the project logo shown below has been adopted and the project has now entered a public consultation phase. Views are sought on key project elements: (i) Conservation and Management and Maintenance Plans; (ii) a Master Plan for the cemetery; (iii) repairing and restoring historically-significant monuments; (iv) new volunteering opportunities; (v) an activities programme, (vi) provision of a visitor centre, and (vii) improved accessibility to the cemetery. This latter could involve reopening the long-blocked Hubbard Road entrance to pedestrians and cyclists, although in my opinion this would increase the risk of accidents/vandalism in the cemetery.

The Project Team will be available at the Portico Gallery, Knight's Hill on Wednesday 13 September: 18:30–20:00 and again on Saturday 16 September: 10:00–16:00. Alternatively you can: (i) complete an online questionnaire at [www.lambeth.gov.uk/consultations](http://www.lambeth.gov.uk/consultations); (ii) complete a questionnaire available from the Cemetery office; (iii) e-mail



the Project Team at [norwoodhlf@lambeth.gov.uk](mailto:norwoodhlf@lambeth.gov.uk); or (iv) visit the Project's web page at [www.lambeth.gov.uk/norwoodhlf](http://www.lambeth.gov.uk/norwoodhlf).

On other fronts, discussions continue with the Trustees of the Greek Enclosure re. their responsibilities as regards St Stephen's Chapel and the boundary wall of the enclosure. The southern portico of the chapel, which is clearly the Jewel in the Crown of Norwood, has started to lean quite dramatically away from the chapel itself, and many portions of the boundary wall are also in urgent need of attention.

#### *The South Metropolitan (West Norwood) Cemetery: Grave Searches*

There is increasing interest in locating the graves of relatives buried at Norwood. In order to explain the searches needed in more detail, Jill Dudman and I, in conjunction with Lambeth, have prepared a short guide on this topic and this is now available on our website (<https://www.fownc.org/search/>).

#### *A Green Flag for Norwood*

The Green Flag Award® scheme recognises and rewards well managed parks and green spaces. It aims to (i) ensure that everybody has access to quality green and other open spaces irrespective of where they live, (ii) ensure that these spaces are appropriately managed and meet the needs of the communities that they serve, (iii) establish standards of good management, (iv) promote and share good practice amongst the 'green space sector', and (v) recognise and reward the hard work of managers, staff and volunteers. It is a pleasure to report that the work of Lambeth employees and of FoWNC has now been acknowledged in this way. Where to site the flagpole to fly the flag was difficult, however, and in the end a site in the forecourt was chosen.



#### *FoWNC News*

In the interests of safety we have decided to suspend Catacomb tours once the backlog of applications has been cleared pending improved access arrangements. These will hopefully include straightening the steps and installing a handrail as well as clearing the vegetation that has accumulated in that area. In time of course the scaffolding over the catacombs will be removed further simplifying access to the site.



Secondly, we are very pleased to welcome Professor Sir Colin Berry as an FoWNC Trustee. Colin is not only a distinguished pathologist and toxicologist (he is Emeritus Professor of Pathology, Queen Mary, University of London), but also Knight Principal of the Imperial Society of Knights Bachelor. Despite this he MUCH enjoyed our scrub clearance sessions, and one of his favourite stories was being asked one day whether he did work in private gardens. On replying 'No, I'm just a volunteer here' he was told 'That's a pity. You are very well spoken – I'm sure you could do better for yourself if you tried...!'



Finally, Deputy Chairman John Clarke continues to monitor e-Bay. This has again borne fruit in the discovery of this (undated) photograph that shows the Grade II listed Gilbert memorial (grave 8,659, square 115) and parts of squares 114/5 before Lambeth largely cleared the area. So much for the claim that only damaged, dangerous, or fallen monuments were destroyed!

The provenance of the photograph is unknown, but it appears similar in quality and composition to those taken by Eric de Maré in the late 1960s, some of which featured in the booklet produced by Lambeth at this time. Whilst paying lip-service to the importance of the cemetery, in the event this booklet presaged the clearances that continued sporadically until stopped by our protests and the Consistory Court in 1992.

*John Loughborough Pearson (1817–1897)*

The definitive biography on this distinguished architect by Anthony Quiney (Yale University Press, 1979) records that a monument designed in 1855 by Pearson for George Field in memory of his parents (grave 2,565, square 64) could not be found. However, Colin Fenn has pointed out that it is still there, although part of the kerb of an adjacent memorial has collapsed onto it. The Field monument consists of a Yorkstone ledger atop a brick vault.



*Anne Field (1787–1850)*

The only inscription is to Anne, wife of James Field (27 February 1787–18 March 1850). However, others buried in the grave are James (–1853), George himself (–1858) and Herbert (–1861) Field. Assuming the attribution to Pearson is correct, this is a very early work by him, the interest being in the ornate ‘Christogram’ IHS, a contraction of ΙΗΣΟΥΣ (Jesus) in Greek capitals.



## *Mausolea and Monuments Trust AGM*

On Saturday 8 July the MMT held its AGM in the burial chapel (small chapel) of the Crematorium. In anticipation of the event I produced a 20-page booklet with colour photographs and short notes on Norwood's 32 surviving mausolea, 15 of which are listed Grade II and 3 (the Berens, John Peter Ralli, and Tate mausolea) Grade II\*, as well as the 5 we know we have lost. Copies of the booklet are available from the FoWNC Bookstall, price £5.

Research for the booklet prompted proper consideration of the unlisted mausolea, including that of John Johnston Hamilton (1804–1866) (grave 9,829, square 20), a wealthy African merchant of Aratrum Villa, Ventnor, Isle of Wight (his estate was valued at £25,000 at his death). This neat building lies on Doulton Path. Its exterior gives no clue as to who lies within.



*The Hamilton Mausoleum*

As to the day itself, after lunch some 20 MMT members joined a tour that took in the Johnston, Tate, Tapling, Doulton, Hamilton, Harris, Stevenson/Hodgson, Berens, and Beyer mausolea. The tour concluded with visits to the Greek Enclosure and to the Catacombs. Thanks to Jackie Landy and Lambeth for allowing use of the burial chapel, the Greek Trustees for access to St Stephen's Chapel, and to Ron Knee for facilitating access to the mausolea under his care, including those of the Doulton and Tate families.



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## Norwood's Mausolea

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Bob Flanagan



However, the cemetery register reveals that the mausoleum also contains his Mexican merchant brother Robert Horatio Hamilton (1802–1864), removed from St. Boniface Churchyard, Bonchurch, Isle of Wight, 16 August 1867, and their sister Mary Johnson Hamilton (1808–1881). All were born in Jamaica. The brothers are commemorated on a very long plaque in St Luke's Chapel, Ventnor, Isle of Wight. The chapel forms part of the National Cottage Hospital for Consumption and Diseases of the Chest site (founded 1867).



*The MMT tour party on Doulton Path*

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# A Blue Plaque for Sir Henry Bessemer FRS

Bob Flanagan

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On 16 May the Mayor of Islington, Councillor Una O'Halloran, accompanied by the Vice-Chancellor of City University, Professor Sir Paul Curran, unveiled a Blue Plaque to Sir Henry Bessemer (grave 27,463, square 99) to mark his residence on the site of what is now the main entrance to City University.



*The newly-unveiled plaque*

Bessemer lived for some time at 15 Northampton Square in a Georgian house that was demolished after World War II for the construction of the university's current main building. When the entrance was reconstructed recently, archaeological investigation confirmed that Bessemer's home had been directly on its site. After the ceremony, Dr. Susan Mossman from the Science Museum delivered a lecture on Bessemer, based to an extent on her talk to us in 2014 (see FoWNC Newsletter 80, May 2014).

An accompanying exhibition outlined the history of Northampton Square, and gave some details of Bessemer's life including of course the invention of the revolutionary Bessemer process for steel manufacture and his continued impact on the engineering community. The event featured a gathering of the Bessemer clan that had been coordinated by Sir Henry's great great great grandson Paul Bessemer. In conversation, Paul commented that Bessemer burials at Norwood in addition to that of Sir Henry included his son, Alfred George Bessemer (1840–1918; grave 19,570, square 99) and his daughter Elizabeth Wright (1835–1915; grave 15,155, square 88/89) and their families. He also remarked on Sir Henry's friendship with the engineer and metallurgist Alfred Longsdon (c. 1828–1893; grave 22,185, square 119), who lived opposite him on Denmark Hill, and also with Alfred Krupp (1812–1887) of Essen, a member of the famous Krupp dynasty.



*Paul Bessemer (centre) and other family members at the ceremony*

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# National Federation of Cemetery Friends 2017 AGM

Bob Flanagan

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This year's AGM was held in the Dissenters' Chapel at Kensal Green on Saturday 10 June, hosted by the Friends of Kensal Green Cemetery (FoKGC). The day began with a talk on the cemetery by NCF Chair and FoWNC Trustee Robert Stephenson. Tours of the cemetery led respectively by Robert, Dr Brent Elliott and Dr Jennifer Freeman ensued, with Henry Vivian-Neal giving a commentary on the planned future use of the Anglican Chapel once current restoration work is finished,



*Dr Jennifer Freeman and her tour party*

Jennifer and Henry explained that restoration projects at Kensal Green were usually a collaboration between FoKGC and the General Cemetery Company (GCC), with help from Historic England and other grant-giving bodies, and sometimes also from families as opportunity arises. As at Norwood, there is a tremendous backlog of work including the reconstruction of the long-collapsed Northern boundary wall, and although the monuments are largely intact FoKGC do not own the cemetery and the owners, the GCC, do not seem to have a conservation-minded plan either as

regards grounds maintenance, or as regards the insertion of new burials/memorials. The end result is a bit of a mess in all honesty. Even the gravel paths are in very poor repair.

As to the AGM itself, 23 groups were represented and in total there were 49 people present. NCF vice-chair Colin Fenn reported on the success of the CWGC initiative last year, *Remembering 1916*. Such commemorations seem entirely appropriate to me since they are about honouring the dead. Another aspect relating to the proper use of cemeteries was raised by Jeff Hart (Nunhead). The owners of the cemetery Southwark Council allow dogs unrestricted access to the cemetery and professional dog-walkers sometimes let loose up to 8 dogs at a time to simply roam free. There has been at least one attack on a visitor, let alone the inevitable deposits. A warning to us to monitor the dog-walking policy at Norwood: no dogs except guide dogs in the cemetery.

NCF Association of Significant Cemeteries in Europe (ASCE) representative John Moffat (Flaybrick Cemetery) reported on the ASCE AGM held last year at Glasnevin (Dublin). I did get the impression that the attendance was not as large as expected, perhaps because of the cost of accommodation. Glasnevin I find very sad despite its new Visitor Centre. For one thing there has been wholesale clearance of large tracts of the cemetery in the last few years, paying scant respect to much of the social history of the area, let alone the inevitable political story given to visitors nowadays.

As to other matters, Dave Morris of the National Federation of Parks and Green Spaces made a passionate appeal re. protecting public parks, cemeteries, etc. from governmental budget cuts and Jeff Hart drew attention to some workshops held by Historic England on the theme of protecting historic cemeteries. The seminars had not been widely advertised as it was feared they would be oversubscribed (!), but apparently more are planned.

The controversy over the works underway at Camberwell Old Cemetery was also discussed in the context of nature conservation and of grave re-use. Emotive and difficult topics both and the subject of much debate at NCF AGMs over the years. Yet in the end the same conclusion: it all depends on the particular circumstances faced by each local burial authority and each cemetery. There is no 'one size fits all' solution, although those intimately involved must make sure that whatever works are planned in a particular cemetery are carried out lawfully and with proper consultation. Our own approach to this dilemma was discussed in detail in our May 2017 Newsletter.

Finally, it was announced that the next NCF AGMs are to be held in the North of England (2018: Jesmond Old Cemetery, Newcastle; 2019: Lister Lane Cemetery, Halifax), reflecting the much enhanced NCF membership as compared to the early days.

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## George Walter Bray (1880-1954)

Bob Flanagan

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From 1913-7 George Walter William (Wassilievich) Bray was Vice-President and Director of the Russian-English Bank, St Petersburg. He was a notable lawn tennis player, and was the first Tennis Champion of the Russian Empire (1907). His ashes and those of his wife Alice Augusta (d. 17 August 1934, aged 47) are buried in a family grave at Norwood (grave 33,384, square 93) originally purchased on the death of his father William Henry Bray (d. 9 November 1912, aged 59).



*George Walter Bray*

George Bray was born in St Petersburg on 4 July 1880. He became treasurer of the Krestovsky Lawn-tennis Club in St Petersburg and won many singles and doubles tennis championships between 1902-14. He left Russia for London in 1922 and became naturalized in London in 1927. He was Vice-President of the Anglo-Russian Sports Club in the 1930s. He died in South Kensington on 1 September 1954 and was cremated at Norwood on 3 September. His son Reginald G.A. De Bray (1912-1993) became an authority on Slavic languages. He held professorships at English and Australian Universities and published *Guide to the Slavonic Languages* (London: Dent, 1963). Decorated by Poland, Macedonia & Serbia, he died in Melbourne, Australia, but is commemorated at Norwood on a marble plaque at the foot of the landing.

## *George Bray's Tennis Championship Titles*

- Singles: 1902–1909: Moscow  
1904–1906: St Petersburg  
1907: Russian Empire  
1908: St. Petersburg  
1909: Russian Empire
- Doubles: 1901, 1907: Moscow, with A. Petrokokino  
1904: St. Petersburg, with A. Petrokokino  
1906: St. Petersburg, with G. Bears,  
1906, 1907: St. Petersburg, with A. Petrokokino  
1908, 1909: Moscow, with brother V.V. Bray  
1908–1911: Russian Empire with V.V. Bray,  
1914: Moscow, with Robert A. Macpherson<sup>1</sup>

The Bray family grave at Norwood has been refurbished recently.



*The Bray Family grave*

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## William Garrow Lettsom FRAS (1805-1887)

Bob Flanagan

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Having noted the name Lettsom in a list of *Norwood Notables* produced by George Young many years ago, it took the BBC in the form of the popular TV series *Garrow's Law* to alert me to the full significance of the name William Garrow Lettsom.

John Coakley Lettsom (1744–1815) was an English physician and philanthropist. He married an heiress, Anne Miers (1748–1830), in 1770. They lived for many years in some style on the large Grove Hill estate in Camberwell. He died at Sambrook Court, Basinghall Street, on 1 November 1815, and was buried in the Friends' burial ground, Bunhill Row. Amongst many other activities, Lettsom founded the Medical Society of London (1773), convinced that a combined membership of physicians, surgeons, and apothecaries would prove productive. The society remains the oldest medical society in the UK, possibly in the world.

The Lettsoms had three daughters and two sons, John Miers (1771–1799), a 'physician of promise' and father of William Nanson (1796–1865), and Samuel Fothergill (1779–1844). William Nanson inherited a large fortune and became well known in literary circles. He was executor to the barrister, politician, and judge Sir William Garrow KC PC

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<sup>1</sup> On 6 June 1916 2nd Lieutenant R.A. Macpherson, 8<sup>th</sup> Cameron Highlanders, was on Lord Kitchener's Staff on board *HMS Hampshire*, which was lost with all hands off Orkney after striking a mine. He was aged 19

FRS (1760–1840), the subject of the TV series. The family connection to Garrow was more fundamental though in that Samuel had married Eliza Sophia Garrow (1784–1857) in 1802. Eliza was the daughter of Garrow and his mistress (later wife) Sarah Dore (d. 1808), who when she met Garrow had been the mistress (not wife as vouchsafed in the TV series) of Arthur Hill, 2<sup>nd</sup> Marquess of Downshire (1753–1801). Samuel himself inherited a large interest in his mother’s family’s iron works in Merthyr Tydfil, which he managed in partnership with his cousin John Nathaniel Miers.



*William Garrow Lettsom*

William Garrow Lettsom was born to Samuel and Eliza at Fulham in March 1805. He was educated at Westminster School and at Cambridge, and in his youth lived much of the time with his grandfather Sir William Garrow. Lettsom was well acquainted with Cruikshank, Thackeray, and other celebrated artists and writers, and was a contributor to various periodicals, including George Cruikshank’s *Omnibus* (London: Tilt and Bogue, 1842),<sup>2</sup> for which he wrote as ‘Dr. Bulgardo L.S.D. Treasurer of Several Learned Societies and Professor of Asparagus at the University of Battersea’.

Lettsom was called to the Bar by Lincoln’s Inn, but entered the diplomatic service. After serving as Attaché to the British Legations at Berlin, Munich (1831), Washington (1840), Turin (1849), and Madrid (1850), he became Secretary to the Legation in Mexico (1854), and was soon appointed Chargé d’Affaires. Britain suspended diplomatic relations with Mexico for a time on Lettsom’s recommendation. It is said that Lettsom survived an assassination attempt at this time. The *New York Times* (1 January 1858), however, carried this version of events:

‘The night previous to the coup d’état, as Mr. Lettsom, H.B.M. Chargé in Mexico, was passing from the City to his house in Taenbaya on horseback, he was attacked by a band of robbers, and came near losing his life by a pistol-shot. The ball providentially missed him, but so near was the ball to his face that several grains of powder were blown into his eyes, and quite a number lodged into the skin of his face. The *Extraordinary* says: Mr Lettsom was blinded by this discharge, but retaining his self-possession, he threw his pistol over his shoulder into the ditch, in order to prevent it from being used against him by his assailants.

The robbers took from him his horse and wallet, and also the horse from his servant. The number of the robbers are not exactly known, but Mr Lettsom believes there were about a dozen. He likewise thinks that some of the party followed him from this city. Among them there was one who was well dressed and looked as if he might claim to belong to respectable society. The balance appeared as if they were from the lower order of society.

Mr Lettsom returned to the city at once, after he was allowed to leave the brigands, and the best medical aid was immediately procured for him. We hear that Dr Van Der Linden called upon him

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<sup>2</sup> Samuel Laman Blanchard (1804–1845) was a contributor and editor. His grand tomb at Norwood (grave 1,051, square 98; see Newsletter 38, May 2000) has sadly been lost

and offered his services in the name of the President. The powder has been taken from his eyes, and the greater part removed from his face. Yesterday, we are glad to hear, he was enjoying himself very well, and that ever since the occurrence he has been in the very best spirits. The effects of the powder and smoke in his face will likely continue to be felt by him for some time.

Some seem to think that the attack upon Mr Lettsom was premeditated, and that he was signaled out for the victim of a bloody tragedy. This opinion we cannot think has any foundation, nor do we believe that Mr. Lettsom at all participates in it. The circumstance is one that might have happened to any gentleman, and the fact that several others were attacked the same evening, shows that robbers were out in great force on the different roads about this city.

The Government has expressed a strong willingness to arrest the perpetrators of this villainous attack upon the representative of Her Majesty, but we consider it extremely doubtful if the efforts of the Government turn out successful.'

In 1859 Lettsom was appointed Consul-General and Chargé d'Affaires in Uruguay and remained at Montevideo until 1869, when he retired from the diplomatic service. In 1864 and early 1865 Paraguayan forces under the orders of Francisco Solano López seized Brazilian and Argentine shipping and invaded the provinces of the Mato Grosso and Rio Grande do Sul (Brazil) and Corrientes (Argentina). On 1 May 1865 Brazil, Argentina and Uruguay signed the Treaty of the Triple Alliance against Paraguay. By Article XVIII of the Treaty its provisions were to be kept secret until its 'principal object' should be obtained. One of its provisions concerned the acquisition by Argentina of large tracts of territory then in dispute between it and Paraguay. Lettsom, however, obtained a copy of the Treaty from the Uruguayan diplomat Dr Carlos de Castro. He forwarded it to London and the British government ordered it to be translated into English and published to Parliament, causing consternation when the news reached South America.

Lettsom had been elected Fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society in 1849 and was perhaps best known in his day as the co-author of the *Manual of the Mineralogy of Great Britain and Ireland* (London: John Van Voorst, 1858), 'the most complete and accurate work that had appeared relating to the mineralogy of the British Isles'. He was much interested in spectroscopy and wrote several papers on geological, electrical, and spectroscopic subjects. In 1857 while on diplomatic service in Mexico he sent to the Royal Entomological Society of London some seeds which, when put in a warm place, became 'very lively'. These were the celebrated Mexican jumping beans.

Lettsom died of acute bronchitis on 14 December 1887 at his home, 142 Norwood Road according to his will, but 126 Norwood Road according to the cemetery register, and was buried at Norwood (grave 22,115, square 102) on 20 December. Probate was granted on 21 March 1888: personal estate £11,973. Sadly, his gravestone was damaged by bombing in May 1941 and no trace now remains. There is no other burial in the grave.

MANUAL  
OF THE  
MINERALOGY  
OF  
GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

BY  
ROBERT PHILIPS GREG, F.G.S.,  
AND  
WILLIAM G. LETTSOM.



LONDON:  
JOHN VAN VOORST, PATERNOSTER BOW.  
MDCCCLVIII.

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# William Field (1801-1868): Sculptor and Mason

Ann Stilwell Griffiths

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William Field, the contractor for the Grade II\* listed Berens Mausoleum (see Newsletter 83, May 2015), was a builder, master marble mason, and statuary merchant. He came to my attention when I found a wall tablet, erected about 1860 in St Faith's Church, Havant, which was marked FIELD, PARLIAMENT, ST.

Winchester College archives show that William was the son of Joseph Field, a local labourer, and that William was a *College Quirister* from 1811–4 and a *Bursar's Quirister* from 1813–4. The quiristers at this time were educated at the free school in St John's Chapel. The College funded their apprenticeships and in January 1815 William signed a seven-year apprenticeship with James Gillingham, a Winchester stonemason.

In 1827 William married Naomi Ayling at St Pancras Parish Church. They had two daughters, Naomi and Mary Jane. By 1837 the family was living in Wilton Street, Westminster and in the 1851 census they were at No. 55, with William described as a master marble mason. Naomi married William George Thorpe, a merchant, and Mary Jane married Benjamin Jutsham Read, a mason, both of whom were involved in William's business.

By 1853 Field's offices were at 13 Parliament Street. His accounts show that he had a 'Statuary, Alabaster and Stone Works', the manufactory being at nearby Johnston Street. He executed 'Monuments, Tombs, Fonts, Vases, Chimney Pieces and Floors at the Shortest Notice'. Being both a skilled marble mason and a building contractor he came to the attention of the architect Edward Middleton Barry (1830–1880), who continued the rebuilding of the Palace of Westminster after the death of his father, Sir Charles Barry (1795–1860).

Tiling for the floor of the Chapel of St Mary Undercroft was supplied by William Field during restoration work. In his *Buildings of England* series Nikolaus Pevsner states that the elaborate alabaster dado to the East, North and South walls, the marble and tile floor and Purbeck columns were provided by William Field, who was the chief contractor used at Westminster by E.M. Barry. Field also worked on the laying-out of New Palace Yard, the then inferior west face of the Clock Tower, and a subway beneath Bridge Street designed to enable members to cross safely to the Houses of Parliament.



*Ipplepen Pump. The inscription reads: 'William Field died 21<sup>st</sup> Feb 1868. May he rest in peace'*

Eight years after being widowed William died, aged 67. He was described as being of 13 Parliament Street; Johnston Street, Millbank; *The Bartons*, 2 Stockwell Place, Clapham Road; and Ipplepen, Devon. His obituary in the *Hampshire Chronicle* of 22 February 1868 reported the very sudden death of a gentleman, well-known in this city:

‘Three days before his death he had been in Winchester, where he was completing the purchase of a house in Cheesehill Street. More than half a century ago he had been engaged as a chorister and he was subsequently employed in the restoration of the altar screen at the Cathedral. From that time he has frequently been engaged in the restoration of some of the city’s chief public buildings, the last occasion being the rebuilding of the College Tower’



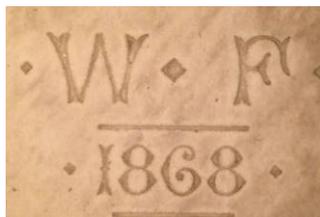
*Barton House, Ipplepen*

foreman, Edward Metherell, receiving one share for life, although he died two years later.

William and his wife lie buried at Norwood not far from the Berens mausoleum (grave 5,408, square 63), and although their headstone has collapsed it may be possible to reinstate it. Naomi’s grave was purchased on 16 January 1860. At Ipplepen there is a Grade II listed village pump by S. Owens & Co. of London, which was erected and inscribed in memory of William Field. The quarry records do not seem to have survived, but there is a stone in the floor of the entrance hall of *Barton House* marked ‘W·F 1868’ and the house has several fireplaces made with marble from the now disused quarry at the bottom of the garden.

In 1872 the family business was merged with that of Henry Poole and his two sons, to become Field, Poole and Sons. At about the same time Benjamin Read left the firm of marble masons and sawyers he had been running with his two brothers from Buckingham Palace Gate. However, in December 1872 a row with Poole over an ambiguous 14-year lease regarding Ipplepen Quarry culminated in March 1873 in a court case in Exeter. Poole argued, successfully, that the lease included the whole six-acre estate, with the house, and not just the one acre fenced quarry. William Thorpe decided on a change of career and trained to become a barrister, although he appears to have continued to occupy *Barton House*, as well as his London home.

At his death William’s estate was valued at £18,000. His freehold estate at Ipplepen went to his daughter, Naomi, with his two sons-in-law acting as trustees. He had commenced building *Barton House* on the six-acre Devon estate and this was completed after his death by William Thorpe at a total cost of £2,000. The freehold London house went to William Field’s other daughter Mary Jane, and the leasehold workshops and stock-in-trade at the end of Johnston Street, Westminster, were divided into five shares, with William’s



*Barton House: stone in the entrance hall*

On 18 April 1873 the *London Gazette* recorded that:

The firm of Field, Poole, and Sons, as Stone Masons, was, on the 25<sup>th</sup> day of December last dissolved, by mutual consent, so far as regards the said William George Thorpe; and the business will in future be carried on by the said Benjamin Jutsham Read, Henry Poole, and William Church Poole.

Samuel Poole, Henry Edward Poole, and Hubert John Poole etc. 10<sup>th</sup> April, 1873.

The *Morning Post* of 3 September 1874 describes the sumptuous Albert Memorial Chapel at Windsor, converted on Queen Victoria's instructions to a memorial chapel to Prince Albert, who died in 1861. The architect was Sir Gilbert Scott (1811–1878), and the work had begun in 1864, four years before William Field's death.

'The completion of the embellishments has devolved upon Messrs Field, Poole and Sons, the cathedral masons of Westminster, who have been employed almost since work commenced. They have laid a handsome coloured marble pavement in which numerous varieties of marble have been used, the principal materials being Ipplepen, a Devon marble of red and grey'.

In January 1880, the Devon press announced that the trustees of Messrs Poole and Son had instructed estate agents to auction the whole of the stock-in-trade of the Bartons Quarries, as the firm had gone into liquidation. However, an 1882 London directory has Henry Poole at 32 Smith Square, Westminster as an 'ornamental, ecclesiastical and monumental mason and medal winner at the International Exhibition 1862'.



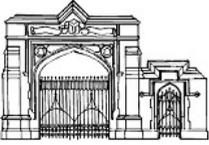
*Field family vault (grave 6,808, square 62)*



*Thorpe Family monument (grave 9,392, square 49)*

When William's son-in-law, William George Thorpe, died in 1903 *The Times* described him as 'a bon viveur and raconteur', of Middle Temple, The Reform Club, and Ipplepen. In his will he stated that he desired to be cremated as simply and cheaply as possible with *WGT Implores Peace* on the earthenware casket. One of his sons and the great-grandson of Joseph Field, the Winchester labourer, was Sir Jocelyn Field Thorpe CBE FRS (1872–1940). He had a distinguished career as a chemist, becoming President of the Institute of Chemistry from 1933–6.

The Thorpe family vault at Norwood is located just to the east of the site of the Anglican chapel. The vault was purchased on 3 October 1864 and contains Mary Alice Naomi Thorpe (1864), George Field Thorpe (1864), George Thorpe (1867), William George Thorpe (1903, cremated remains) and Naomi Thorpe (1912). The monument has likely lost its cross.



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## Spurgeon Conference 2017

Bob Flanagan

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On 1 August, Spurgeon's College on South Norwood Hill helped celebrate the publication of three new books, *The Lost Sermons of C. H. Spurgeon*, *The Spurgeon Devotional Bible*, and *Steal Away Home: Charles Spurgeon and Thomas Johnson*. The event was organized by Christian George, curator of the Spurgeon Library, Kansas City, Missouri ([www.spurgeon.org/spurgeon-center](http://www.spurgeon.org/spurgeon-center)) in collaboration with Spurgeons Children's Charity<sup>3</sup> and B&H Publishing of Nashville, Tennessee. In his talk, Dr George pointed out that Spurgeon had written more words in English than any other preacher!



*Tomb of C.H. Spurgeon: Susannah Spurgeon and Christian George*

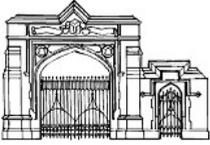
Next day some 20 delegates travelled to Norwood to visit the Grade II listed tomb of Charles Haddon Spurgeon (1834–1892) and his wife Susannah (–1903) (grave 24,395, square 38). Christian George had a photograph of the tomb taken after World War II bombing that showed that the door to the vault had been blown off, which explains the cement repair visible today.

There was much support for a proposal to renovate the tomb and also to reinstate a monument to Spurgeon's son Thomas (1856–1917; grave 34,727, square 52), who lies nearby. Tom became Minister at the Metropolitan Tabernacle at the Elephant and Castle after his father's death. It was a great pleasure to meet Tom's great great granddaughter Susannah Spurgeon, who was also attending the conference.

Other tombs visited included the printer and publisher Joseph Passmore (1822–1895; grave 21,841, square 52), who actively assisted in building Spurgeon's Tabernacle and in founding the Stockwell Orphanage. His firm printed and published the whole of Spurgeon's works, 1855–95. He also suggested the weekly issue of Spurgeon's sermons in 1855 and continued to print them for 36 years. Near to Passmore lies building contractor William Higgs (1824–1883; grave 8,520, square 52). His firm, which became Higgs & Hill in 1874, built the Tate Gallery, the Clerkenwell Sessions House, University College, Gower Street, the Natural History Museum, and Spurgeon's Tabernacle. Higgs also helped found the Orphanage at Stockwell.

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<sup>3</sup> Founded in 1867 as the Stockwell Orphanage for 'fatherless boys', the Children's Charity celebrates its 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2017. The foundation was enabled by a donation of £20,000 from widow Ann Hilliard. Within 10 years girls were also welcomed and over 500 children lived there.



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## Forthcoming Events

### September 2017–January 2018

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Introductory tours will be held on the first Sunday of each month, starting at the cemetery main gate off Norwood Road at 14:30 (3 September, 1 October) or 11:00 (5 November, 3 December, 7 January), and lasting for 1½–2 hours. There is no charge, but we welcome donations. For notifications of additional events please register an email address or a telephone number with the Secretary (see p. 16). FoWNC Lectures are held in the lounge of Chatsworth Baptist Church (access by the Family Centre entrance), Idmiston Road, SE27, as detailed below, starting at 14:30. There is no charge, but we welcome donations to cover refreshments and room hire.

#### **Saturday 21 October – AGM and Lecture: Sir Horace Jones – Dr Jennifer Freeman**

As architect to the City of London, Horace Jones (1819–1887; grave 12,335, square 89) designed the Guildhall Library, Smithfield market and reconstructed Billingsgate and Leadenhall markets. He also designed Tower Bridge in collaboration with the engineer Sir John Wolfe Barry. He was President of the Royal Institute of British Architects, 1882–3. Dr Freeman is President of The Friends of Kensal Green Cemetery.

#### **Saturday 18 November – The Music Hall Guild of Great Britain – Matthew Neil**

Matthew Neil is Chairman of the Trustees of The Music Hall Guild of Great Britain and America and the Theatre and Film Guild of Great Britain and America, a registered theatre charity and non-profit making theatre organisation based in London. At Norwood they have recently restored the monument to the comedian R.H. Kitchen (1830–1910) and his son, the music hall entertainer Fred Kitchen (1872–1951; grave 32,791, square 68/80 – see FoWNC Newsletter 86, May 2016). Other restorations are planned.

#### **Saturday 20 January 2018 – The Mabeys: Sculptors and Modellers – Philip Young**

James Mabey (c.1812–1871; grave 13,205, square 43), his son Charles Henry (1835–1912; grave 20,220, square 43), and his grandson Charles Henry jnr (1867–1965) were highly successful architectural and monumental sculptors and modellers in the period 1842–1933. Philip Young is the great-grandson of C.H. Mabey jnr.

#### **Lambeth Heritage Festival**

This event will be taking place throughout September this year. The Festival brochure lists more than 60 talks, walks, workshops, exhibitions and entertainments. Copies are available in Lambeth Libraries, and a PDF can be downloaded from a link on the webpage <http://www.lambethlocalhistoryforum.org.uk/home/news>.

#### **Saturday 16 September: Open House London**

Tours will be starting at the cemetery main gate at 14:00, 14:30, and 15:00. Visit <https://openhouselondon.open-city.org.uk/> or pick up their brochure in libraries, for details of many places of interest to see for free during the weekend, including the Clockworks Museum in West Norwood.

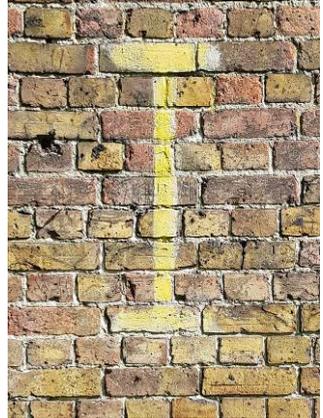
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## A Bit of Mystery – Bob Flanagan

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At various points the inner side of the cemetery boundary wall has been marked with letters of the alphabet in yellow paint. The letter 'I' illustrated is adjacent to square 106 on the Northern side of the cemetery, for example. The other letters are on columns. The sequence starts at 'A' on a column adjacent to square 44 and continues west along Robson Road with every 3<sup>rd</sup> column being marked until 'I' is reached. The letters then pick up again next to square 121 on the South side of the cemetery with 'L', 'M', and 'N' in an easterly sequence (presumably 'J' and 'K' have faded). Thereafter only 'P' (square 111), 'U' (square 85) and 'D' (square 16) remain visible. These markings have been there since at least 1989. Did these markers indicate areas to be cleared of monuments one wonders?

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