

MMMT NEWS

Newsletter No 11 March 2005 The Mausolea & Monuments Trust



The Eyre Mortuary Chapel, Bath

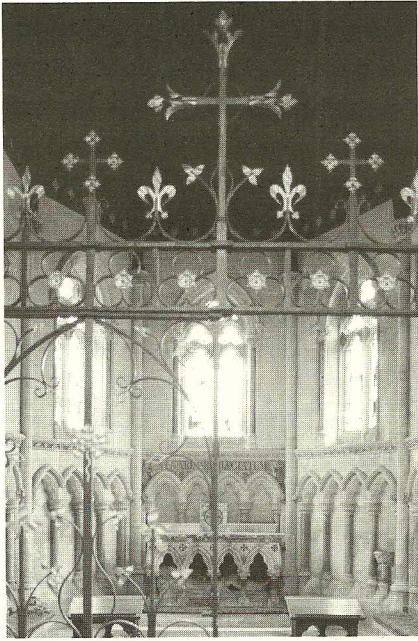
Bath Abbey Cemetery, on the road up to Prior Park, is celebrated as the finest cemetery laid out by John Claudius Loudon (1843-44). It rises up the hill in terraces. Less well known is Perrymead Roman Catholic Cemetery, adjoining it on the hillside above. The land was bought in 1856, as the vaults beneath the Orchard Street church were full, and it was consecrated in 1858. Its charming chapel (attributed to 'Mr Hill', but surely more likely to be by Charles Hansom) was consecrated in 1859.

The cemetery is dominated by the striking Gothic chapel built

as the burial place of the Eyre family in 1859, and consecrated by Bishop Clifford of Clifton in 1863. The Eyres were a recusant family from Derbyshire. In the late Middle Ages they established themselves at Hassop Hall, where they remained until the line failed in 1853. The Perrymead chapel was built by John Lewis Eyre (1789-1880). His uncle Fr Thomas Eyre, first president of Ushaw College, the seminary near Durham, seems to have been the great-grandson of Rowland Eyre of Hassop. His mother, Mrs Catherine Eyre, of Bath, on her death in 1840 left £3,000 for the building of Catholic churches in Cardiff and

Swansea, and his elder brother Thomas (1786-1866 - buried in the chapel) ensured that her wishes were carried out.

In 1817 John Lewis was living in York, married to Sara (1790/91-1825), daughter of William Parker of Kingston-upon-Thames. They had five sons (of whom four became priests) and six daughters. After Sara's death, John Lewis married in 1828 Augustine Pulcherie (1797-1876), daughter of Armand Dumesniel, Marquis de Sommerey, of Bath (buried in the cemetery). All that is known of John Lewis's occupation is that he became a director of the



Interior of the chapel

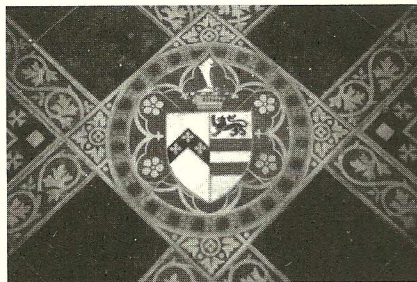
South Western Railway Company. In 1843 he was created a Count of the Lateran Hall and Apostolic Palace by Pope Gregory XVI, and in 1847 Pius IX made the title hereditary. It was inherited on his death by his third son, Charles Petre Eyre, first Archbishop of Glasgow.

The Eyre family had acquired in 1570 the estate of Newbold, in Derbyshire. This included a medieval chapel, which was restored in the 1850s to serve as a burial chapel. It is sometimes said that the Bath chapel was built because the vault at Newbold was full, but this is unlikely: Newbold continued to be used for family burials until 1928.

John Lewis Eyre's architect at Perrymead was Charles Francis Hansom (1817-88). He is less well-known than his elder brother Joseph Aloysius, whose pupil he was, but he was at least as good an architect, if less adven-

turous. He began practice in Coventry, where the parish priest, Dom Bernard Ullathorne, OSB (later first Archbishop of Birmingham) made a point of recommending him in preference to Pugin, whom he thought extravagant. He used to say that he 'could do all that Mr Pugin could'. In 1846 or 1847 Hansom followed Ullathorne to Bristol, where he practised for the rest of his life. He was in fact one of Pugin's most devoted disciples, and often commissioned stained glass, tiles and metalwork from him.

Hansom did a good deal of work for the Benedictines. This included the new church of St John the Evangelist in South Parade, Bath, which was a Downside mission. Built in 1861-63, it marked Hansom's turn to High Victorianism. The splendid spire was added in 1867. The Eyre chapel is still



The tiles in the porch

thoroughly Puginian, though its tall proportions and canted apse give it a French flavour.

The whole building is detailed with the greatest care. The Bath stone masonry has alternate smooth and hammer-headed bands, which produces a rich texture. The roof is covered with fish-scale tiles. On the

south side rises an octagonal turret with a spirelet above the bell stage. Within the turret a spiral staircase goes down to the crypt. The south porch is approached up a flight of steps. Over it is carved the family coat of arms, with supporters and the motto 'Neminem metue innocens' ('Fear no one if you are innocent'). The gutters drain through carved lions' heads (characteristic of Hansom). The porch is paved with magnificent Minton tiles, as is the whole chapel; they include tiles with the family arms and monograms.

Around the whole interior runs an arcade with Derbyshire marble columns, which also flank the traceried windows above. The mouldings over these terminate in carved heads. All the windows are of two lights except the west window which is one of three lights. Over the door is a recessed blank window. The roof has arch-braces supported on stone half-columns, and diagonal boarding. The western bay is divided from the eastern three by a fine, tall screen of iron, made by Hardman and Co. It incorporates flat floral pieces, and is crowned by crosses, based on those in the family arms.

The altar is of alabaster; in the centre of its gradine is a panel painted with similar crosses. Beneath the altar four open arches, with colonnettes of Irish serpentine, reveal a stone figure of the dead Christ, carved by Boulton of Cheltenham. Behind is a panel of black and white marble. Above the altar is a



The family group

scroll; it is inscribed ALTARE PRIVILEGIATUM, and held by angels, prettily painted on metal.

The stained glass is by Hardman and Co. In the west window are St Peter and two other popes, above a family group. The side windows represent the saints after whom members of the family were named. Left of the east window are St John the Evangelist and St Pulcheria (a Byzantine empress). The only furniture consists of a pair of prie-dieus and an empty vestment-chest.

The crypt has a remarkable series of three transverse arches and groin vaults, supported on slender shafts which look like stone, but are said to be cast iron. The effect is aptly compared by Rory O'Donnell with the work of Viollet le Duc. Each bay has shelves for coffins on either side. There is a flight of steps (for coffins) on the north side, blocked by a glazed iron grille. Further light comes in through rows of three glazed circular holes on either side.

The earliest burial is that of Thomas Eyre (died 1866).

Others include Monsignor Vincent Eyre, Rector of Hampstead (died 1871), a son of the Count, who, with his brother Fr William Eyre, SJ, assisted Bishop Clifford at the consecration, and the Count's grandson Monsignor John Grainger (died 1898). The most recent burial is that of Allan Carruthers (died 1995). The chapel belongs to a trust administered by his widow, Mrs Belinda Carruthers, of Walton Cardiff Manor, Tewkesbury. It was restored in 1992 with grant aid from English Heritage and Bath City Council.

An open day will be held at the chapel on Thursday 7 July, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Peter Howell

The Birmingham Visit, Part II: The Cemeteries

Toni Demidowitz, Conservation Officer for Parks, Gardens and Cemeteries for Birmingham City Council proved an expert and enthusiastic guide for our tour round Key Hill and Warstone Lane Cemeteries.

Both were built in the early 19th century as private cemeteries following the acute burial problems in churchyards following the nine-fold rise in the population of Birmingham before 1831. Both slope down to Icknield Street and were laid out to be seen from there.

Key Hill

Key Hill was built in 1832 by gentleman dissenters, to provide secure and permanent plots for all, although it was used almost exclusively by dissenters. The Birmingham General Cemetery Company looked at three sites; Edgbaston, Aston and Key Hill and chose Key Hill as it was dry (to aid rapid decomposition of bodies) and close to the town although in the country near the famous Guinea Gardens. It was laid out in a sand quarry and the burial plots advanced as the sand quarry was worked out by the Guardians of the Poor. Quarrying ceased in the 1930s. The sand is of an excellent quality for casting - very valuable as it adjoins the Jewellery Quarter.

The leading architect, Charles Edge (1) laid out the Birmingham General Cemetery in a formal layout with picturesque planting and a Greek revival mortuary chapel on a platform surmounting the Registrar's house, so it provided a focus and could be seen from Icknield Street. Plans for an Egyptian style building are lodged in Birmingham Library but this proved too expensive for the company. In addition there are gate piers, built in the local sandstone, and railings. The chapel had decayed and been repaired with cement but in 1952 it was bought by the City Council who demolished it in 1966. The cemetery itself was closed to further burials in 1982. The range of catacombs cut back into the sandstone were built in



Key Hill: The catacombs

four stages; 1835-40 (2-storey), 1852, 1857 and 1862 (these are 3 deep with passageways). These were gas-lit, as at Warstone Lane, by the 1820s. Until 1857 there was a series of hairpin bend paths leading up the cliff above. These cliffs have now been cut back and an informal layout with meandering paths laid out above the catacombs. An exedra built of brick to match the original walls, with slate name stones, commemorates those whose graves were moved to Handsworth when the Metro Railway was built in 1995 over the gate to the sand quarry. Planes complete the exedra.

The first phase of planting was deciduous and evergreen shrubs but by the 1860s and 70s planes were introduced. Their leaves flutter in the breeze and produce a flickering light very suitable for this situation. Weeping ash, weeping birch and weeping elm - all funereal trees - also were planted.

The informal layout has views to St Michael's church, Soho, where Matthew Boulton had his house and manufactory. It was

laid out by Luke Pope in the late 1830s with the grandest monuments being placed along the walks. The walls at the back of the cemetery have been built to shore up the sandstone cliff which is very friable and liable to collapse, although the wall along Key Hill Drive was rebuilt in the 1935 style to match that on the opposite side.

Key Hill is not locked at night so it is very heavily vandalised - many gravestones have either been pushed over or lowered for safety by the council. Funding is being sought to maintain the planting and remove the planes planted on top of the catacombs, to repair the gate piers and replace the gates.

Warstone Lane (2)

This 1848 Grade II cemetery was built by an Anglican Cemetery Board formed in 1845. The mortuary chapel was Gothic Perpendicular built above the rim of the sandpit in a Derbyshire stone, by Hamilton and Medland of Gloucestershire. It had two long wings either side and formed the focal point for

the cemetery. It served as a parish church (1858-74), was bombed in World War 2 and demolished by the City Council in 1958, six years after it was acquired by them. The railings also disappeared at around this time.

The 2-tiered semi-circle of catacombs in the sandpit have a castellated parapet and a central passage back to the centre from whence a Bramah lift operated to lower the coffin from the chapel (cf. Kensal Green Cemetery). There was a mix of columbaria and vaults but by the time the catacombs were completed in 1888, fashions had changed and not many of them were taken up. One that was belonged to John Baskerville, of 'Baskerville' typeface fame, who eventually was laid on a shelf here, after being kept at home - it is said he did not want to be buried below ground.

The garden in front of the catacombs, now graced by a cluster of trees, was laid out by Richard Vertegans (3) with concentric paths and low planting so that they could be seen from Icknield Street. There is very little original planting, although there are plenty of poplar trees from the 1930s poplar mania in Birmingham. Amongst the unwelcome new plants are Giant Hogweed and Japanese Knotweed, which is damaging the graves.

Above the catacombs there are the remains of a lime avenue curving from the Tudor Gothic gatehouse, now closed, to the chapel. The gatehouse has been



Key Hill: view from top of catacombs

restored and is used as offices. It is surrounded by the only railings in the cemetery - an unfortunate visual intrusion.

Funds are available to restore the grounds fronting the catacombs, removing the trees and reinstating the paths. The catacomb entrances, which are prominent due to their dead white colour, are to be muted with slate or other material. The businesses in the neighbourhood have also asked for the railings to be reinstated as the open cemetery provides a very convenient escape route for local burglars.

The future looks promising for Newman's, but there will be little cause for celebration at Key Hill and Warstone Lane cemeteries, until adequate funding is secured to conserve, and perhaps restore these repositories of collective memory.

Kate Harwood

1. He was also involved with the layout of Birmingham Botanic Gardens.
2. Warstone means boundary stone. Warstone Lane was the boundary between the cultivated land and Birmingham Heath on which the two cemeteries are situated.
3. Richard Vertegans also laid out West Park, Wolverhampton.



Two views of Warstone Lane Cemetery

THE TOMB OF SILENCE AND ENDLESS PEACE: THE MAUSOLEUM OF THE FACTEUR CHEVAL at Hauterives-Drome-France

I recently visited, with a group of friends, this amazing structure in the cemetery at Hauterives. The history of Ferdinand Cheval, a postman in this district from 1869 to 1896 is quite fascinating. Cheval was born in 1836, and as a child he experienced strange visions of a dazzling palace which he recorded at the time but forgot about until, at the age of 42, he stumbled upon a strange stone whilst delivering mail on his 32km postal round.

This stone reminded him of his childhood dreams, he popped it into his pocket and decided to build his fantastic castle, now known as The Palais Ideal. The countryside around his home yielded stones of unusual shapes, worn and eaten away by time, and although he had no building knowledge whatsoever, he proceeded to collect these stones, carefully placing them in small piles along his postal route, returning at night with his wheelbarrow to collect them. And so, over a period of 33 years, in his "spare" time, he built in his back garden his wondrous castle. In 1905 he said, "I want to live and die as a son of the country, to prove that there are geniuses and energetic men in my class also. I have been a rural postman for twenty-nine years. Work is my only glory



The Mausoleum of the Facteur Cheval

and honour, my only joy, here is my unusual story, where a dream became reality forty years later".

Neighbours in the village must have thought him quite mad, for it is difficult to see its purposes or design (if there was ever an overall plan). It is a fusion of so many styles Hindu, Arab, Greek, Roman, and so on, covered with carvings of animals, birds, and poetic texts. It is impossible to describe, one needs to go to see it for oneself, and probably more than once to appreciate all its details.

When it was finished in 1912,

and following the death of his second wife in 1914 he went on to build his own tomb in the local cemetery. The Tomb of Silence and Endless Peace reveals the full achievement of his art. It is in form much like the fantasy castle but with a marvellous intertwining of forms and motifs, figures and friezes. Several members of the family are buried within, and although considered an eccentric, or even a madman, the village obviously had some admiration for him by allowing him to erect this most unusual tomb in what is, after all a small, very ordinary French cemetery. It stands just inside the gate and dominates all the other graves,

and has, along with the Palais Ideal now become a heritage attraction. Facteur Cheval would surely have approved.

For more information on opening times and how to get there: www.facteurcheval.com.

John St Brioc Hooper

BOOK REVIEW

Italian Memorial Sculpture
1820-1940: A Legacy of Love
by Sandra Berresford
Binding: Hardback
ISBN: 071122384X
List price: £ 40.00

"There are tableaux almost vivants in which marble angels of consolation emerge from bronze gates to whisper to the kneeling bereaved." (Evelyn Waugh)

Since moving to live on the doorstep of a great London cemetery, I have embarked on a personal exploration into cemeteries, becoming a Guide at one of them and visiting many other of the necropoli of the metropolis. More recently, I have branched out, visiting, inter alia, the English Cemetery in Florence 3 or 4 years ago, the Monumentale in Milan last summer and the Staglieno in Genoa last month.

Italian Memorial Sculpture is, therefore, particularly welcome: nothing like it exists, certainly not in the English language, and certainly in Italian there is no publication covering so wide a geographical range and historical period. The book has an

impressive introduction by Prof. James Stevens Curl giving the European historical and cultural/literary context plus a masterly analysis by Fred Licht of Italian funerary sculpture since Antonio Canova (d. 1822). Sandra Berresford's text summarises her original researches into funerary sculpture and sculptors in Italy over the past 10 or so years in her review of all aspects of the movement from classicism through romanticism, realism to symbolism & art Deco, but also taking in aspects of the iconography such as the Death-Bed, Portraiture, Magnificent Widows, Egyptian imagery, the Ethos of Work and the Mystery of Death.

The historical approach to the subject, an account of the development of cemeteries and funerary sculpture in Central and Northern Italy, is complemented by this iconographical approach which allows a wide range of material to be published. Taking her cue from Licht, in *Italian Memorial Sculpture*, Berresford provides an account of the development of C 19th sculpture is applied to a specific examination of the development of cemeteries in this part of Italy.

Several of the monuments have been identified by Berresford for the first time on the basis of archival research. Some have never previously been published.

The book covers not just the history of funeral sculpture but also the sculptors' careers plus a wide range of subjects which might also have come under history (the *Risorgimento*) and social history. Berresford also briefly

touches upon architecture, painting and literature where relevant.

Throughout, the book is enriched by hundreds of terrific colour photographs by Robert Fichter and Robert Freidus - chosen to document and illustrate, rather than poetically interpret, the text and the sculptures.

Sandra Berresford has a particular interest in the leading Italian Symbolist sculptor Leonardo Bistolfi and her account of his memorial works gives him the recognition that is rarely accorded to funerary monuments of this period.

The gazetteer, bibliography and list of museums and gipsoteche round off an excellent work with a vade-mecum for those wishing to visit Italian cemeteries and explore them for themselves.

"The Legacy of Love" is a free translation of Proto-Romantic poet Ugo Foscolo's "eredità d'affetti" (*I Sepolchri* 1807), the notion being that, going against the Rationalist attitude towards Death imposed by the French Revolution, there was a continuum between the Living and the Dead and a renewed desire to record human deeds and emotions. The "legacy" also refers to the huge amount of (often top quality!) sculpture in Italian cemeteries which Posterity has left us to conserve.

Henry Vivian-Neal

Henry Vivian-Neal is Chief Guide for the Friends of Kensal Green Cemetery

A new phase for the Trust **MEMBERSHIP** **SCHEME** **LAUNCHED.....**

Since its inception in 1997, the trust has existed on voluntary donations and the support it has received in the past has been of enormous value. It now feels that it needs the security of a regular, guaranteed annual income, so the Trustees decided the time is right to set up a formal subscription scheme, and I would like to record our thanks to Miss Carolyn Young, one of our avid supporters, for her help and advice in getting this project off the ground and to Mr Brian Martin who has written and installed our new members' database.

In November our Chairman, Tim Knox, wrote to all those listed on our database, some 650 names, inviting people to sign up for membership. Response at a time of many other charitable demands has been very encouraging. Many, many thanks to those of you who have already signed up. We still need many more of you to join in order to continue with the restoration work we are already committed to. This includes the final stages of the restoration of the Sacheverell Bateman mausoleum at Morley in Derbyshire, (see p 8) and commencement of work on the Heathcote mausoleum at Hursley in Hampshire, where we are planning to hold an open day on Saturday 16 July when you can visit and actually see the state of play for yourself.

If you have not yet got around to sending in your application please do so soon otherwise we will not be able to continue sending you this Newsletter, or other important information.

Maybe you tucked Tim's letter behind the mantel clock for action later on, or perhaps you did not receive the original. If you have sent it in and not received an acknowledgement, then please let me know. I will then deal accordingly.

PLEASE continue to support our work. Restoration and conservation are costly items. We will be enormously grateful.

J St Brioc Hooper

EVENTS & LECTURES 2005

Enclosed in this mailing is a leaflet setting out the events already planned for this year. We hope very much that you will be able to attend at least some of them. If anyone has any ideas or suggestions for gatherings, or is willing to assist or even organise an event, then please get in touch with the Secretary. We are also always looking for articles for this Newsletter so if you think you can write something for us, then please do.

ALSO in this mailing you will find flyers advertising the visits to Farnborough and Winchester. We look forward to seeing as many as possible of you on these occasions.

FREE LECTURES: This year our Spring Lecture series takes a

monumental theme and will be FREE to members, although we will ask for a donation of £3.00 each for members' guests and non-members - bring as many as you like. These illustrated lectures at 7.00 pm on Tuesdays 12 and 19 April will be held in The Gallery at 70 Cowcross Street, EC1, just two minutes from Farringdon Station.

Tuesday 12 April at 7.00 pm
Peter Howell: Monuments for Posterity: the Triumphal Arch

Triumphal arches have a long history, dating back to antiquity. They enjoyed a long afterlife and were redeployed by the Victorians and Edwardians for celebrating people and special occasions. Sometimes permanent, sometimes not, but always intended to imbue people and major events with a sense of honour and importance.

Peter Howell taught Classics in the University of London for 35 years and is a former Chairman of the Victorian Society. He is working on a book on triumphal arches from Roman times to the present.

Tuesday 19 April at 7.00 pm
Richard Barnes - The Obelisk: a Monumental Feature in Britain

Richard Barnes is a keen member of the Public Monuments and Sculpture Association and has written about sculpture and monuments in books and articles. History was always a favourite subject when at

school since when he has pursued interests in photography, writing and publishing. His book, "The Obelisk" was published in November 2004.

A DATE for THE DIARY

A celebration to mark the completion of the restoration of the Sacheverell Bateman mausoleum will be held on Saturday July 2nd. Members who would like to attend should arrive at Morley church in Derbyshire at about 1 p.m. bringing a picnic lunch. Hot drinks will be served in the church, and we can eat there should it rain. The ceremony will take place at 2 p.m.

NEW EMAIL ADDRESS:

Everyone please note our email address has changed slightly to: mausolea@btconnect.com.

Editor's corner

Professor Emeritus James Stevens Curl wishes us to publish the following correction: "In MMT News 10, it is reported that 'it turns out that Vanbrugh drew on his own experience of India in making his suggestions about mausoleums and cemeteries', quoting Ridgeway and Williams' *Sir John Vanbrugh and Landscape in Baroque England* (2000) as the source.

In my *A Celebration of Death* (1980, pp. 358-59) the Vanbrugh-India-mausolea-cemeteries link was clearly explained, twenty years before your correspondent claims all was revealed."