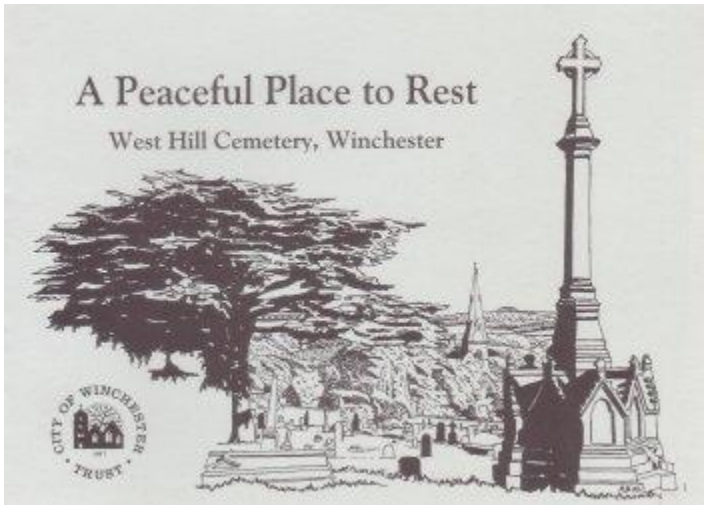
A Peaceful Place to Rest

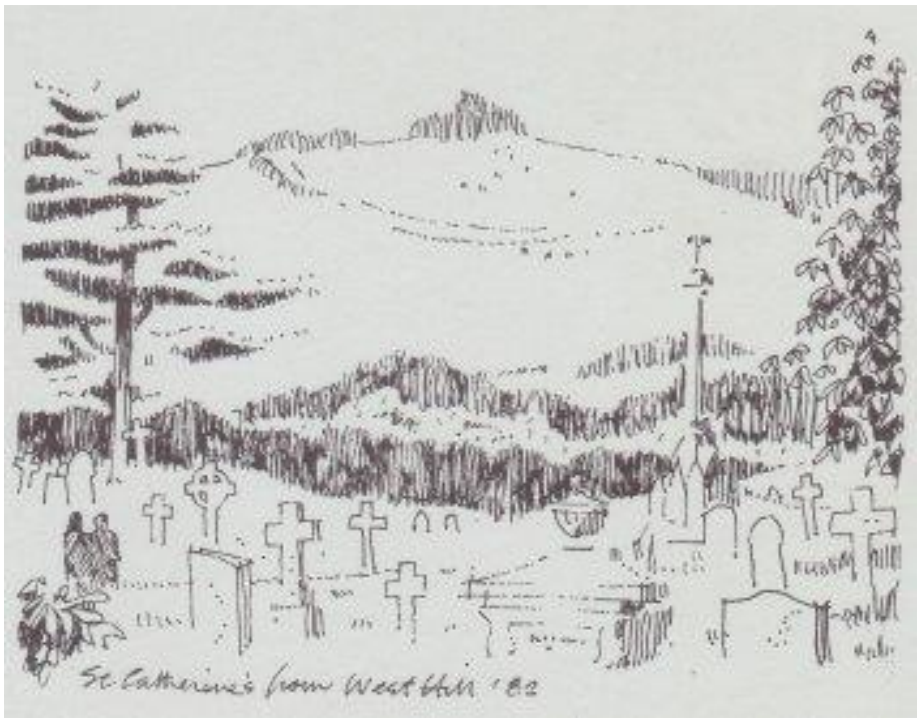
West Hill Cemetery, Winchester



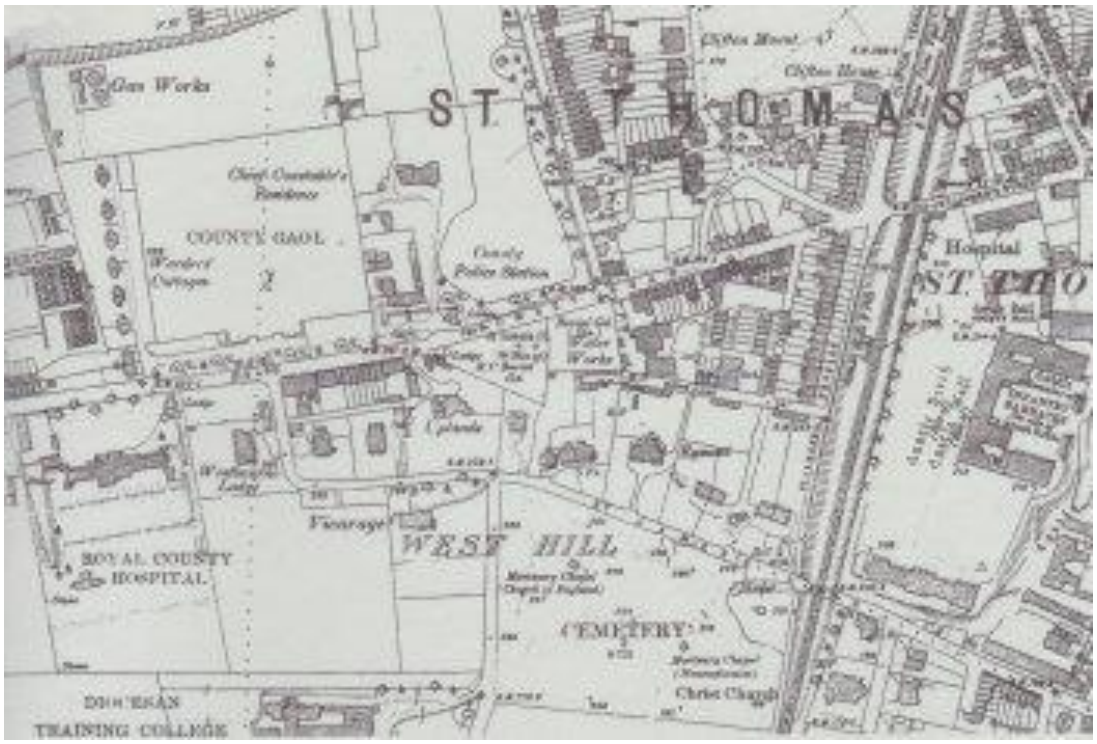
View from the Gosling Memorial looking southeast.
By kind permission of Mr Richard Baker.

This booklet has no pretensions to being a definitive history of the Cemetery. It is intended to heighten the awareness of what a gem the City has in this wonderful green and open space and to act as a stimulus for its continued conservation for the benefit of all in the years ahead. It would be a huge bonus if a group of "Friends" could be formed to keep an eye on this wonderful place and act as unofficial wardens.

R.B. Merton May 2003



A view of St Catherine's Hill.
By kind permission of Mr Michael Carden MBE



Detail from the Ordnance Survey 1897 Second Edition.
By kind permission of the Ordnance Survey

I take delight in history, even its most prosaic details, because they become poetical as they recede into the past. The poetry of history lies in the quasi-miraculous fact that once, on this earth, once, on this familiar spot of ground, walked other men and women, as actual as we are today, thinking their own thoughts, swayed by their own passions, but all now gone, one generation vanishing after another, gone as utterly as we shall shortly be gone like a ghost at cockcrow.

G.M. Trevelyan - Autobiography of an Historian
By kind permission of Pearson Education

A Peaceful Place to Rest

West Hill Cemetery, Winchester

History

In The Beginning

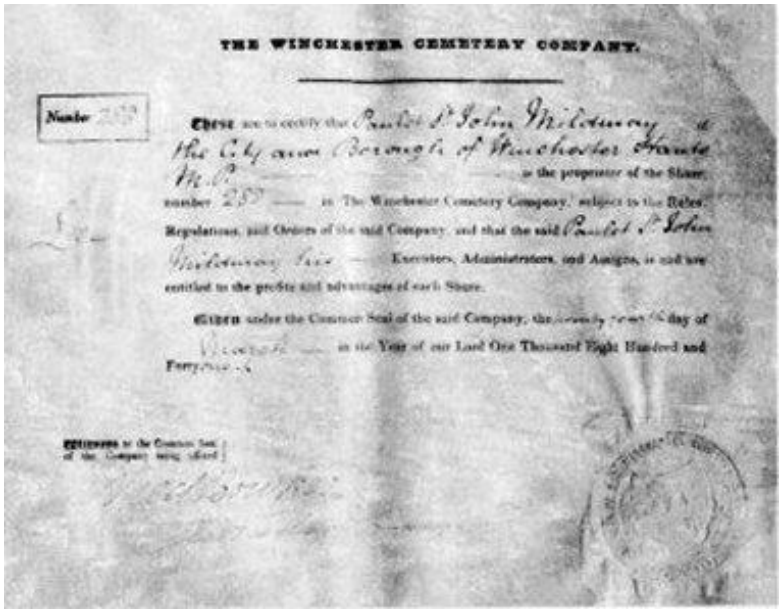
Writing of the early years of the 19th century Alderman Thomas Stopher recalls that little had been built in the western environs of the City and that the open chalk down was almost devoid of trees. A major technological advance was about to change all this.

The advent of the railway, after an initial reluctance by the citizens to use this noisy, smelly and novel form of transport, brought a new prosperity to Winchester. It was not long before those with an entrepreneurial instinct saw great opportunities for making money. Much speculative building was put in hand (good solid dwellings by any standard that still form a great part of the present housing stock) and the City started to expand beyond its former boundaries. And with the railway and all this development came the trees that are such a feature of the City as we view it today.

The Cemetery

In the 1830's Winchester did not have a cemetery and the graveyards of the City's churches were overcrowded and in some cases had reached their capacity to accord burials for the citizens.

Mr. C.W. Benny, a Portsmouth grocer and a man of substance, saw here an opportunity for a sound investment by providing a cemetery. After all, in the natural order of things, people died and had to be buried, cremation not being a popular option at this time. Accordingly in 1839 Mr. Benny formed The Winchester Cemetery Company with a capital of £5,000 in £10 shares. In 1840 the Company was incorporated by Act of Parliament. The Act contained the usual powers for the construction of a cemetery and associated chapels. Two Chapels were built; one for members of the Church of England, the other for "Dissenters", but were demolished in the 1930's. Also specified were the maximum charges for interments. For every person buried in the open ground (common grave) the sum of 12/-; for every person buried in a purchased or private grave the sum of two guineas; for every person buried in a vault, catacomb or brick grave the sum of four guineas. One section of the Act, combined with other circumstances, was going to cause problems for the City Council at a later date.


THE WINCHESTER CEMETERY COMPANY.

Number 288

These are to certify that Paulet St John Mildmay of the City and Borough of Winchester Esquire is the proprietor of the Share number 288 in The Winchester Cemetery Company, subject to the Rules Regulations, and Orders of the said Company, and that the said Paulet St John Mildmay his Executors, Administrators, and Assigns, is and are entitled to the profits and advantages of such Share.

Given under the Common Seal of the said Company, the seventeenth day of November in the Year of our Lord One Thousand Eight Hundred and Forty-six.

Witnesses to the Common Seal of the Company being affixed

Share Certificate No. 288 in the name of Paulet St. John Mildmay
By kind permission of Mr C.J. Webb

Mr. Benny took a keen interest in the running of the cemetery and amongst other provisions insisted that the Keeper who lived in the Lodge had a large and vociferous

dog to protect the graves of recently buried people from the attentions of grave robbers. He was well aware of the problem, as his sister's body had been taken from its burial place, much to the grief and consternation of her family.

The site chosen was on the southern slope of West Hill with its northern boundary on St. James' Lane, then known as Barnes Lane. The land belonged to the Dean and Chapter of Winchester Cathedral. Alderman Stopher records that the appointed architect was Owen Brown Carter who designed the Lodge and the two chapels and the perimeter wall with its elegant pillars and railings. The Lodge still stands at the northeast entrance just above the St. James' Lane railway bridge, but both the chapels have been removed. Although the Cemetery is now closed, occasional burials in family plots and vaults do still take place.

In "The History of Hampshire" the Cemetery is described as "a piece of ground about 7 acres in extent, delightfully situated on the sunny slope of West Hill, and laid out with the greatest taste". The grounds were, as now, open to the public and "afforded a very agreeable promenade with a charming view of the valley beyond St. Catherine's Hill and St. Cross as far as Twyford and Brambridge". It must have been a beautiful sight in those days and even today, in spite of much building and the many mature trees, there are still wonderful views to be had out of the City to the east and southeast.

By the beginning of the First World War the Cemetery was nearly full and by 1918 the Cemetery Company was virtually defunct. At a meeting held in the Guildhall on 28th January 1921 the position of the Company was put before the public and as a result a Committee was appointed to assist the extant directors in the maintenance of the Cemetery. This Committee was known as the West Hill Cemetery Society and they ran the Cemetery from 1924 to 1928.

In the following years matters went from bad to worse and a resolution of the problem became imperative. On the 15th December 1946 the Town Clerk, Mr. R.H. McCall, presented a brief on the matter to the City Council. It was a model of clarity and commonsense and an admirable and lucid explanation of a complex situation.

He explained that in 1924 the Directors had sought Counsel's advice on the feasibility of transferring the undertaking to Trustees appointed by the Society. Counsel, a Mr. Neville Tebbutt, had made a number of comments. The first was that the Cemetery Company was prohibited from selling or transferring its undertaking or the cemetery to other persons. He further advised that the Cemetery was not one to which the Burial Acts applied, in the sense of requiring the Local Authority to maintain the same when disused. He also drafted a Declaration of Trusts that was adopted by the Cemetery Society. But due to the rule against perpetuities (the Society not being a charity) the Trust was confined to the period of the lives of the issue of His Majesty King Edward VII and for a further period of 20 years from the death of such survivor! In this case the Trust would have expired in 1958 following the death in 1938 of Princess Maud, the wife of King Haakon VII of Norway.

Other relevant facts were that the Company had not held a meeting since 31st December 1920, the last Director of the Company had died on 29th October 1936 and the Secretary and Treasurer, Mr. Alfred Bowker, had died on 18th March 1944. There were other problems too numerous to list here.

In 1948 a further Opinion of Counsel was sought with a view to transferring the Cemetery Company and the assets of the Cemetery Society to the City Council. In this opinion, Mr. J. Mills, agreed with the previous opinion and said that to do this a Private Act would be necessary. He also said that if the Council declined the offer then the Society was under no obligation to continue to maintain the Cemetery. He also stated that if the work of the Society ceased it must remain for local opinion or local effort to prevent the Cemetery from becoming derelict. The Town Clerk advised that it was quite certain that the City Council had no legal power to spend money on a Cemetery that did not belong to them.

He also advised them that if the Council did not take over then the state of the Cemetery might deteriorate and that it was "notorious that any property kept in reasonable repair is less expensive in the long run than letting the same property get into a very bad state and then have to put matters right". The point was also made that it would be wrong to disregard the fact that pressure on the Council to take responsibility would increase in line with the state of dereliction. It was close to the City centre and would always be regarded as something of importance and that it would be considered as a credit to the City or a disgrace, depending on its state. That opinion would probably hold good today.

Another factor to be taken into consideration was that any contribution by the Local Authority must be measured against the value of the site to the City's reputation and the maintenance of the rateable value of the surrounding district that would certainly deteriorate if the Cemetery became a place of desolation. Telling words in any age!

In conclusion he advocated a Bill in Parliament so that the Cemetery could be taken over by the Council and in the event the Winchester Corporation Bill, all 64 pages of it, was passed in 1952.



The Lodge and Gates,
By kind permission of Winchester City Council Museum Service

In the Hampshire Chronicle of 12th December 1964, the Town Council gave notice that they intended to remove memorials, tombstones and railings on 200 burial plots. Certain headstones were to be placed against the side-walls of the Cemetery. Objections had to be registered by 18th January 1965, after which the work was to be put in hand. It is not known how many objections, if any, were made but the work was certainly put in hand. In the1980's the Council, as a matter of policy, commenced the destruction of some of the gravestones to facilitate the work of the gang-mower. They were also using chemical sprays to inhibit growth that the mower could not deal with. After many years of effort by the Landscape Committee of the Trust (then the Preservation Trust) and others, the Council was persuaded to alter its policy of destruction and the use of sprays and to treat the Cemetery as a managed area promoting the proliferation of flora and fauna.

A Peaceful Place to Rest

West Hill Cemetery, Winchester

Fauna and Monuments

Fauna and Flora

The population of fauna and flora, with the exception of the trees, is much as it was when sheep grazed there. It is host to a thriving colony of the Marbled White butterfly (Melanargia galathea) that is fairly common on the chalk downs around Winchester and beyond, but this urban colony is probably unique in the British Isles. The flora is composed of many of the species that you would expect to find in chalk grassland with the interesting addition of a number of domestic flowering plants that have self-seeded from the floral tributes placed on the graves over the years. There are one or two fine trees in the cemetery and some modern planting that is far too close together. There are also a number of self-seeded trees that need to be removed together with ivy, and other climbers that are smothering one of the trees and some of the memorials.

Monuments and Archaeology

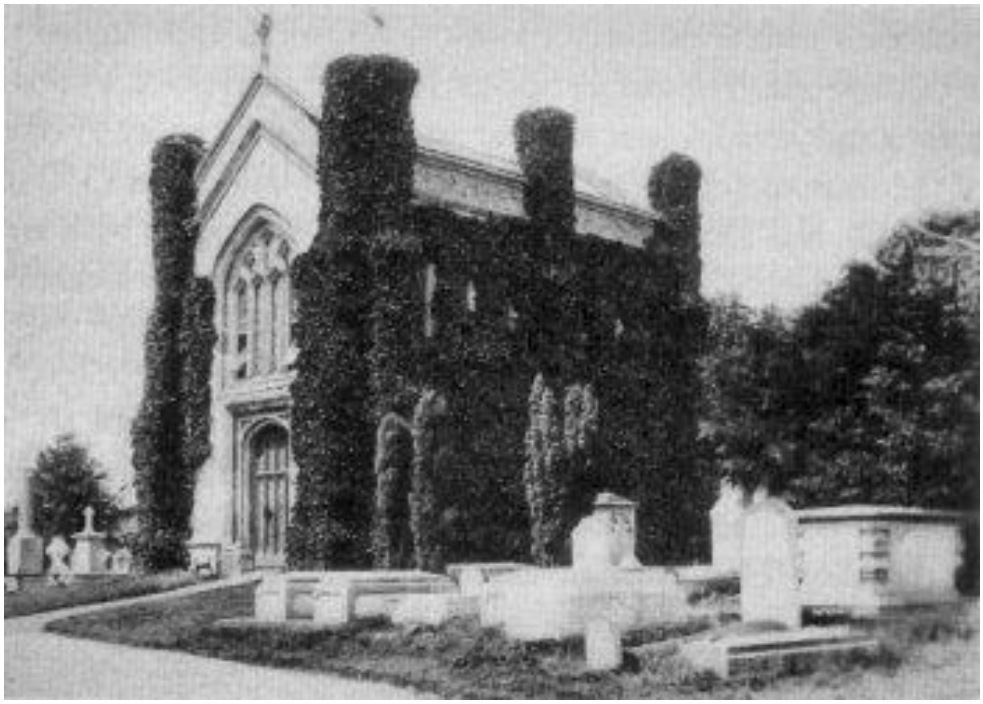
The boundary wall with its railings and the wrought iron gates are classified as a Grade II listed structures but the lodge is not. Despite past damage to the lodge, this appears to be a serious omission since it is very important to the ambience of the Cemetery, and is by the same architect as the listed wall. The cemetery itself is recorded as an archaeological site.

During the preparatory work on the St. James' Lane entrance, a cremation and burial site of Roman origin was discovered. Five cinerary urns of coarse workmanship and containing cremated human remains were uncovered, the largest being three feet in diameter. The burials were more numerous and stretched for more than 100 yards east and west "into the adjoining pastures". The graves had been cut into the chalk and backfilled with a mixture of loam, small stones and fragments of burnt wood. The burials appear to have taken place without coffins and were laid out without any regularity or order. A coin of the usurping emperor, Flavius Magnus Magnentius (350

to 353 AD), was found nearby but cannot be associated with any of the burials. These finds were recorded in the Gentleman's Magazine 1840 Part II, p.644.

The same source also records that the finds were sent to "a gentleman in Blandford". It would seem that he never returned them to Winchester, as they are not in the Museum Collection in the City. The Assistant Curator of the Dorset Museum in Dorchester (there is no museum in Blandford) suggests that `the gentleman' in question might be either William Shipp, an antiquarian and bookseller (1809-1873), or more likely Henry Durden, another antiquarian and collector (1807-1892). There is no trace of these finds in the Dorset Museum nor are they in The British Museum, where Durden's Collection is housed. However his Collection does contain a pot found in Winchester described as "red ware" and possibly of Samian origin.

Conservation and the future



The Episcopal Chapel
By kind permission of Winchester City Council Museum Service

The title to the cemetery passed to the City Council in 1953 and it is they who are now responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of the site that is an important open green space in the setting of the City's built environment and valued by those who live in Winchester. A cemetery is first and foremost a place to commemorate the dead and is very important to the living relatives of those who are buried there. At the same time it is a pleasant and peaceful place for leisure and for the study of the natural environment and local history. It is therefore most important that adequate resources are earmarked for its continued care in order to ensure that it remains so.

In 2001 a Parliamentary Select Committee of Inquiry examined the current national provision of burial sites, discussed the question of maintaining existing cemeteries and looked at options for the future. The Government subsequently asked English Heritage and English Nature to provide guidance on the conservation and

management of cemeteries. The first such paper entitled 'Paradise Preserved' is shortly to be published. It can be found on the English Heritage website (www.english-heritage.org.uk) together with details of much other useful information on the subject. 'Paradise Preserved' is well worth a read by those interested in the subject.

At the moment all is well but the pressure on budgets is great and unrelenting. If the citizens of Winchester want to keep the cemetery the way it is then they must take up the matter with their elected representatives if they see things going wrong. In that way it can be brought to the attention of the City Council. It would be a huge bonus if a group of 'Friends' could be formed to keep an eye on this wonderful place and act as unofficial wardens.

A Peaceful Place to Rest

West Hill Cemetery, Winchester

Burials 1

Burials

Over the years of the cemetery's active life many people were buried there. Most of them were citizens of, or had close ties with the City. A search in the Hampshire Genealogical Society's excellent record of the monumental inscriptions that were readable at the time the record was made has revealed much of interest. It is not possible to record them all here so a handful have been selected whose brief details recorded on their graves promised to be of interest and merited some research. The Cemetery Register is of little help, except to confirm date of burial, as the entries consist only of name, initials and the date. Some details of their lives and in some cases the circumstances of their death are recorded here. These short biographies are not complete, but time was not available for more detailed research.

Robert Collis
d. 15 October 1881

Shortly after six o'clock on the morning of 15th October 1881 Mr. Collis, a porter employed by the South-Western Railway Company, was helping to shunt goods wagons. While attending to a number of trucks he failed to notice the approach of another group that knocked him down occasioning severe and fatal injuries. Mr. Collis, a man of advanced years had long worked for the Company, commencing when the line was being constructed, and in various other capacities up to the date of his death. He lived in North Walls and left a widow and two sons, the latter also employed by the Company.
(Hampshire Chronicle 15 October 1881 p.4)

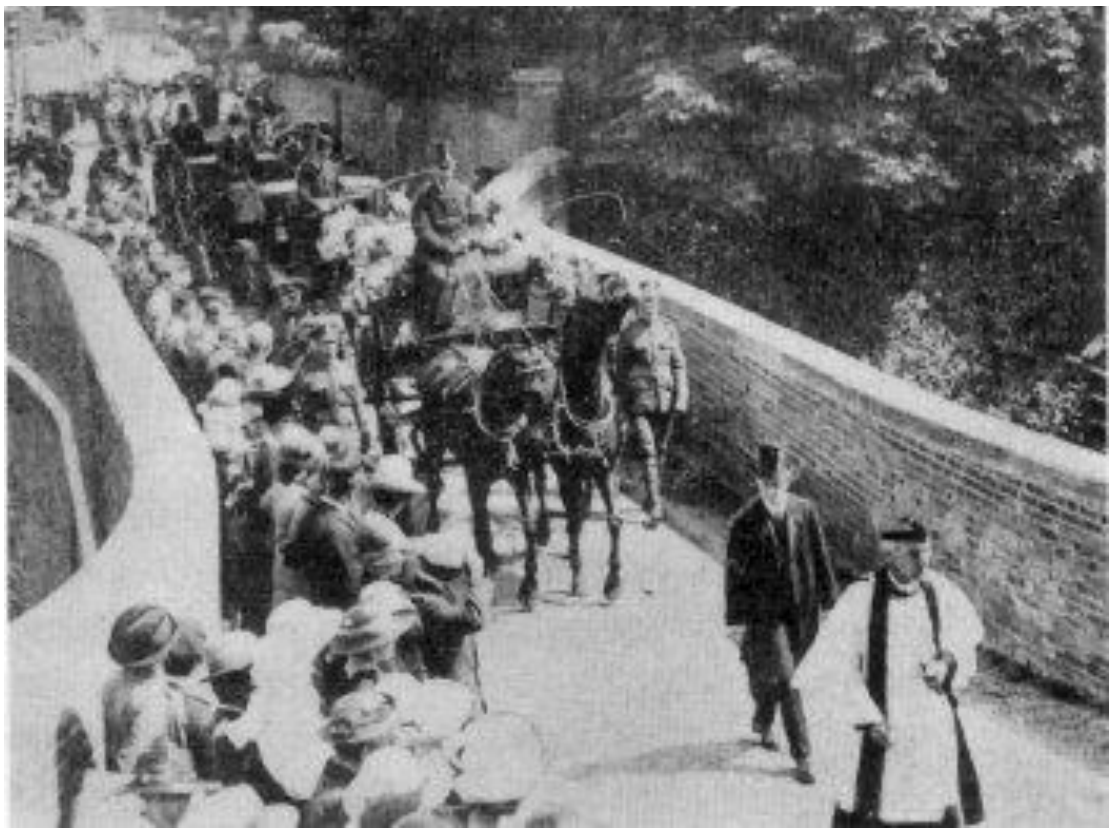
Miss Maria Eleonora Rivers
d. 10 January 1907

Miss Rivers, who died in her 90th year at No 3 Clifton Terrace, was a daughter of the Reverend Sir Henry Rivers Bart. of Chafford, Kent and Beacon Hill, Bath. He was Rector of Martyr Worthy and Prebendary of Winchester Cathedral. Miss Rivers, as one of the oldest inhabitants of the City, had witnessed many changes in her lifetime. She well remembered the old coaching and posting days, and with the coming of the railway the reluctance of people to use this modern form of transport. She was sadly missed by her nephews and nieces and by the poor people of the City to whom she was a great benefactress. She was buried at West Hill on the afternoon of Tuesday 14 January, the service being conducted at the cemetery.
(Hampshire Chronicle 12 January 1907)

A Peaceful Place to Rest

West Hill Cemetery, Winchester

Burials 2



Bandsman Burke's funeral procession crossing
the St James Lane railway bridge
By kind permission of The Trustees of the
Royal Hampshire Regiment Museum

Bandsman F. Burke
2nd Bn. The Hampshire Regiment
d. 17 May 1921

On 17 May 1921 'X' Company and the Band of the 2nd Battalion The Hampshire Regiment while on detachment at Youghal, Co. Cork, were marching to the local rifle range for firing practice. About half a mile from the range and where the road entered a glen, the IRA detonated an off-route mine. Three young members of the Band were killed instantly and four more subsequently died of their wounds. Of these, three came from Winchester; Bandsman Burke was one.

The funerals of these three young men took place in Winchester on 6 June 1921 with full military honours and the citizens, who wished to pay their last respects to three of their number, lining the City streets. Boy Evans' funeral took place at the Church of The Holy Trinity and his burial at 'the New Cemetery' at Morn Hill. The service for Lance-Corporal McCall was held at St. Peter's and the subsequent burial was in the Roman Catholic Cemetery on the Romsey Road. In the meantime the funeral of Bandsman Burke had taken place at St. Maurice Church before proceeding to West Hill Cemetery. It was a very sad day for the relatives of these young men, The Hampshire Regiment, the County and the City.
(Hampshire Chronicle 4 June 1921 p.5 & 11 June p.6. The Hampshire Regimental Journal June 1921 p.89-91 & 115-116. Note: The title "Royal" was not added to the name of the Regiment until 1946.)

Brigadier C.C. Foss VC DSO
Late The Bedfordshire Regiment
b. 9 March 1885
d. 9 April 1953

Charles Calveley Foss was born at Kobe, Japan. His father was the Right Reverend Hugh James Foss D.D. Bishop of Osaka. His mother, Janet, was a daughter of Dr. William McEwen M.D. of Chester. After Marlborough and Sandhurst he was commissioned in 1904 to The Bedfordshire Regiment. He was Adjutant of the Second Battalion in South Africa who were returned to England at the outbreak of the First World War and subsequently formed part of the 7th Division in Belgium.

On 18 October 1914 he took part in the Battalion's first action of the campaign on the Menin Road between Becelaere and Gheluvelt. When the Commanding Officer was killed that day, Captain Foss took command as the most senior surviving officer. The Battalion came out of the line on 5 November; Foss was the only surviving combatant officer, together with 350 of the 900 men who had started the action. For his conduct he was made a Companion of the Distinguished Service Order.

He was awarded the Victoria Cross on 12 March 1915 for "most conspicuous bravery at Neuve Chapelle". The citation continues "after the enemy had captured a part of one of our trenches, and our counter-attack made with one officer and 20 men failed (all of the party being killed or wounded in the attempt). Captain Foss, on his own initiative, dashed forward with eight men, under heavy fire, attacked the enemy with bombs, and captured the position, including the 52 Germans occupying it". Between 1915 and 1917 he was Mentioned in Dispatches four times.

Having graduated from the Staff College in 1920 he held various command and staff appointments, retiring from the service as a Brigadier in December 1937. In the

Second World War he was very active in the Bedfordshire Home Guard and after the war became Commandant of The Bedfordshire Arm Cadet Force.

He married, first Vere Katherine Collard, nee Ovans, daughte of J.Lambert Ovans, and widow of Captain J.M.M. Collard, 90th Punjab Regiment. She died in 1947 and he married secondly Phyllis Ruth Howie, nee Bendyshe-Crowther, and widow o Arthur Howie of Ceylon. She died in 1968 and he died in London on 9 April 1953. Research has failed to show that there were any children of either marriage, nor why his ashes were buried in Winchester.
Bedfordshire and Luton Archive and Record Office: www.chapter-one.com: www.stuart.prestel. co. uk
vcresearch &austarnet.com.au

A Peaceful Place to Rest

West Hill Cemetery, Winchester

Burials 3

Julia Caroline Mary Mocatta
Matron Royal Hampshire County Hospital 1894-1900
b. 1861
d. 12 January 1932

Miss Mocatta was the only daughter of Reverend William A. Mocatta, Vicar of St. Helens, Lancashire, and a great-niece of Reverend W. Menzies formerly of Winchester.

She trained as a nurse at London University College Hospital. After a spell as Matron at the Charing Cross Hospital she applied for and was appointed to be the Matron of The Royal Hampshire County Hospital at a salary of £100 per annum. She served the Hospital well and made several innovations, the most notable of which was the introduction of a 'Cottage Nurse Instruction Course' aimed at giving untrained women working in Cottage Hospitals a grounding in basic nursing skills. This was subsequently dropped when she resigned in 1900. Reading between the lines she was a stickler for discipline and well understood the need for good hygiene. On leaving she was given an illuminated address signed by the Chairmen of the Governors and the Committee "expressing in fitting terms the high appreciation of the governors for her work for many years as Matron and Lady Superintendent of Nurses".



The Matron, Miss Mary Mocatta and an unknown doctor with the nursing staff circa 1897
By kind permission of The Royal Hampshire County Hospital Archives

Subsequently she opened a private Nursing Home at No. 20 St. Peter Street, Winchester and some five years later took charge of the Sarum Road Nursing Home when it opened in 1911. A few years later she started the Grosvenor House Nursing Home in Southampton. She was active in the affairs of St. Michael's Church in Southampton and interested herself in other religious activities, serving as Hon. Treasurer of the Society for the Propagation of The Gospel. She was an active worker at the Southampton Refuge.

She died at her home at No. 5 Winn Road, Southampton after a short illness, aged 71. Her funeral took place at St. Michael's Church, Southampton before interment at West Hill.
(Hampshire Chronicle 15 January 1932; Healthcare Library, Royal Hampshire County Hospital, History of the Royal Hampshire County Hospital by Barbara Carpenter-Turner)

Captain P.H.T. Fellowes
The East Surrey Regiment (31st Regiment of Foot)
Chief Constable of Hampshire
b. 7 November 1851
d. 31 November 1893

Captain Fellowes was the only son of Major-General Fellowes of the Royal Marine Light Infantry. He attended the Royal Military College (now the Royal Military Academy) Sandhurst from February to December 1872. Gazetted to The East Surrey Regiment in June that year, he joined them in March 1873 and was appointed Adjutant in April 1880. He resigned the post of Adjutant in September 1883 and for the next five years served chiefly in Melbourne with the Victorian Military Forces where his services were highly praised. He held several administrative posts rising to the local rank of Lieutenant—Colonel in 1888. On his return to England he took command of his former Company then stationed in Co. Tipperary. He succeeded to

the post of Chief Constable on 1 May 1891 having been selected from a field of 74 applicants.

His sojourn in Winchester was not to prove a happy one. Soon after coming to Winchester he contracted a long and serious illness caused by the defective drainage arrangements at the Constabulary Quarters where he lived. Worse was to follow when he had recovered sufficiently to return to work.

At about 10 o'clock on the morning of 2nd October 1893, Mr. and Mrs. Best were driving from Chilland to Mottisfont on the Romsey Road. Near the first milestone, their horse took fright at a frisky cow being led to Winchester Market, threw out the Bests and bolted back down the hill towards the City. Some constables outside the Headquarters formed a line across the road in an attempt to stop the runaway. At that moment Captain Fellowes walked out of the gateway and seeing what was going on joined the line with his men. The horse swerved towards Captain Fellowes and he was struck by the off-side shaft, the horse fell, the trap overturned and as an eye-witness stated the Captain, the trap and the horse seemed to be "all mixed up together". He suffered multiple injuries including a fracture of his right thigh and dislocated kneecap, a broken right collarbone and a bruised liver. For two weeks his condition gave grave cause for concern and then his general health started to improve. Then suddenly his condition worsened and at about 2 o'clock in the morning of 31st November he died. As his death had occurred within "a year and a day" of his accident an Inquest had to be convened. Having heard the evidence the jury found that the Captain had died from the internal injuries caused in the accident. Many attended his funeral. He left a widow and six children; two sons and four daughters.
(Hampshire Chronicle 2.December and 9 December 1893; The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment Museum).

A Peaceful Place to Rest

West Hill Cemetery, Winchester

Burials 4

Wilfred Andrews
Captain of the Cathedral Bell-ringers
b. 1873
d. 22 July 1949

Mr. Andrews was born in Cirencester and was already a skilled ringer when, at the age of 19, he came to Winchester in 1892 to work in a dispensary. Early the next year, he responded to an appeal from the Dean in the Hampshire Chronicle for experienced ringers, and thus began his long association with the Cathedral and its bells. With the confidence of youth he accepted the post of tower captain, but found the pressures of his apprenticeship and the egos of the older, less able, ringers too great a challenge and resigned. By 1899 the Dean had become concerned about the drinking habits of the tower captain and his cohorts, who had been recruited from Eastleigh where they were employed at the South Western Railway Carriage Works.

Having rejoined the Cathedral band in July 1896, Andrews was re-appointed captain in 1899.

In the same year he established St. Swithun's Mineral Water Works in Culver Close (in competition with some five other suppliers in the city). For forty years he supplied a variety of soft drinks to domestic and business customers in the area, and was also a coal factor. With his distinctive Edwardian beard and in his riding leathers, he must have cut quite a dash as he travelled the local highways and byways on his motorcycle in pursuit of business. In 1903 he married Miss Minnie Welch who had a millinery business in Jewry Street. The couple lived for some fifteen years in South Wonston, moving in 1933 to Stanmore Lane.



Portrait of Wilfred Andrews by William Linten
By kind permission of the Archives of the Winchester Cathedral Bellringers

His life-long interest in ringing, and his extensive knowledge of the 'exercise' was much in demand, and his activities were not confined to Winchester Cathedral although the bells there were always his first love. Having joined the Diocesan Guild of Bell-ringers in 1896, he held a number of posts during the next half century and, as a member of the Bishop's Advisory Committee, was instrumental in promoting the rehanging and augmentation of many peals of bells in the surrounding villages. His experience was of great importance to the Chapter when he lobbied Dean Selwyn (no lover of bells!) in 1933 for the old and tuneless peal of twelve to be re-cast. The re-dedication service on 20 March 1937 probably marked the pinnacle of his achievements in Winchester, when some four hundred ringers from the Guild sat down to tea after the ceremony in the Guildhall.

Throughout his life he spent his evenings training and encouraging young ringers in local towers, and his obituary notes that 'even towards the end of his life, he could still bring such grace and ease of action to the physical side of the art [of bell-ringing]

that it marked him out as a real master of his craft'. For fifty years as tower captain at the cathedral, he ensured that every appropriate state, religious, and celebratory occasion was appropriately marked, from half-muffled ringing for the loss of the Titanic in 1912 and knells for the death of kings, to joyous 'Royal Salutes' for coronations and victory celebrations. 'Royal Salutes' involve all twelve bells being sounded simultaneously for twenty-one blows with 'Queens' intervening, repeated twice, the noise being akin to that of the Royal Artillery salutes that we still see enacted at the Tower and in Hyde Park today. An oil painting of him by William Linter hangs in the ringing chamber.
(Hampshire Chronicle 30 July 1949 and 4 January 2003; Colin Cook, Archivist and Publicity Officer, Winchester Cathedral Bellringers.)

Colonel F.D. Brown VC
1st European Bengal Fusiliers, Indian Army
b. 7 August 1837
d. 21 November 1895

Francis David Millest Brown was born at Bagalpur, Bengal, probably the youngest of three brothers and three sisters. His father was a Magistrate employed by the Honourable East India Company who, at the time of his birth, was Officiating Commissioner of Revenue and Circuit at Bagalpur. His mother was Catherine Jemima Gane. His eldest sister Hannah married, secondly, Field Marshal; Sir Neville Chamberlain GCB GCSI who died on 18 February 1902 and is buried in the churchyard at Rownhams near Southampton.

He was educated privately and at Grovernor College, Bath and was gazetted Ensign in the Bengal Army on 8 December 1855. He was promoted 2nd Lieutenant in the 1st European Bengal Fusiliers on 7 March 1856. On 16 November 1857 he was awarded the Victoria Cross "for great gallantry at Narrowly at the imminent risk to his own life, rushed to the assistance of a wounded soldier who he carried off, under heavy fire from the enemy whose cavalry were within forty or fifty yards at the time". He was subsequently presented with the medal by the C-in-C India, Sir Hugh Rose at Moultan in December 1860. After various regimental and staff appointments he retired in the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel on 9 August 1894.

He married first, Jessie Rind Russell. They had two sons; the eldest, Lieutenant Frank Russell-Brown was killed in action near Bloemfontein on 30 March 1900. The second son, Claude Russell-Brown, who after distinguished service with the Royal Engineers in South Africa and in WW1, was subsequently appointed Professor at the Royal Military College, Canada from 1905 to 1910.

He married, secondly, Jessie Doris Childs with whom he had four sons and a daughter. The sons all joined the Army. The two eldest served with the 6th Gurkha Rifles, the youngest of the pair being killed at Gallipoli. Of the younger two, one was a Colonel in the Royal Marines and the other retired as a Major-General in the Royal Engineers.

He died at Sandown, Isle of Wight, and was buried in West Hill Cemetery after a service in Winchester Cathedral. His VC was presented to Wellington College by his youngest son where it remains to this day.

(Hampshire Chronicle 23 November 1895 p6; Nicholas Ritchie, Wellington College VC research www.chapter-one.co/vc/award
www.stewart.prestel.co.uk/vcross.htm

A Peaceful Place to Rest

West Hill Cemetery, Winchester

Burials 5

Mr. William Whiting LRCP
Master of the Quiristers 1842 – 1878
b. 30 July 1823
d. 5 October 1878

William Whiting was born in Kensington and came to Winchester in 1841 aged 18 to enrol as a student at the Winchester Training School, one of the precursors of Pilgrims' School. The latter was not established until much later in 1931. The Census of 1841 records his age as 15; it also records that he was boarding at No.27 St. Swithun Street. His training was brief as in 1842, at a very early age, he seems to have taken sole charge, as Master of the Quiristers, of the boarding and education of these boys at No.5 College Street.

Mr. Whiting was a poet of some repute, his principle works being titled 'Rural Thoughts and Scenes' and 'Edgar Thorpe', but the writings by which he is best remembered are his hymns of which 'Eternal Father, strong to save' will be the most familiar. He was a frequent contributor to Church publications, and for many years held the post of Honorary Secretary of the Winchester and Hursley Branch of the English Church Union.

His death at the comparatively early age of 53 precipitated a crisis for the education of the Quiristers. William's daughter, Mary, taught them for a short time until other arrangements could be made. After a period of some turbulence the school eventually settled down in a new house at 64 Kingsgate Street. It was not until 1978 that the Quiristers were formally incorporated into the Chapter's Pilgrims' School, where they are instructed to this day.
(A History of The Pilgrims' School, John Crook 2n4 Edition 1991 p.21. Phillimore; The Wykehamist No. 121 - May 1878, p.167)

Colour Sergeant George Kilburn
20th Regiment of Foot, The Lancashire Fusiliers
b. 29 July 1816
d. 24 June 1897

George Kilburn probably enlisted in 1837 or 1838 aged about 22. He retired after more than 22 years service on a pension of 1/6d a day circa 1864. Where he was born and his connection with Winchester has not been revealed in the research carried out so far. What we do know about his military service is culled from the Medal Rolls of The Lancashire Fusiliers held in their Museum at Bury.

He was a well-travelled and much decorated soldier. His served in the United Kingdom, Ireland, Turkey, the Crimea, Egypt, India, Hong Kong and Japan. While in the Crimea he was taken ill with a fever and was hospitalised at Scutari, possible in the tender care of Florence Nightingale, who saved the lives of so many soldiers. He was probably in hospital at the time of the Battle of Inkerman because his Crimea Medal only has the clasps for Alma, Balaklava and Sevastopol. The full set would have included Inkerman. He also was awarded the Turkish Crimea Medal, The Indian Mutiny Medal with clasp 'Relief of Lucknow'. He also had the Long Service and Good Conduct Medal. In barrack room lore this is awarded for "21 years undetected crime". For some obscure reason the qualifying period for the cavalry at the time was 24 years.

He died at No.15 Upper High Street aged 81.
(Lancashire Fusiliers Museum, Bury: Hampshire Chronicle)

General W.C. Forrest CB
Colonel 11th (Prince Albert's Own Hussars)
b. 22 March 1819
d. 1 April 1902

Charles Forrest was the second son of Colonel William Forrest, an officer in the Bengal Army and The Honourable East India Company. Charles was educated at Eton and on 11 March 1836, at the age of 17, was gazetted Cornet in the 11th Light Dragoons, a precursor Regiment of the 11th Hussars (Prince Albert's Own). He was promoted to Captain in 1841. At this time he commanded the escort of the 11th Light Dragoons that accompanied The Prince Consort from Dover to Canterbury on his way to London for his marriage to Queen Victoria. There is a coloured print of this event in the Museum of The King's Royal Hussars in Peninsula Barracks.

On 1st March 1844 he exchanged into the 4th Dragoon Guards. In 1854 his new Regiment was ordered to the Crimea, and with them he took part in the Charge of the Heavy Brigade at the Battle of Balaclava and was slightly wounded in this action. He was present at the Battle of Inkerman, the Siege of Sevastopol and the action at Tchernaya. On the night of 19th February during the siege of Sevastopol, and in command of his Regiment, he was mentioned in despatches for his distinguished service in the action against the Russian outposts. He was awarded the Crimean Medal, with clasps for Balaclava, Inkerman and Sevastopol, the French and Sardinian Medals, and the Turkish Order of Medjiie.

In 1860 he was promoted Colonel and commanded the 7th Dragoon Guards with whom he went to India. Here he remained for several years, becoming a Major-General in 1868 in command of Cawnpore and Jubbalpore. His active military service ended in 1871. On his return to England he came to live at Uplands, now designated No. 42, Romsey Road opposite the prison, which was his residence until his death. He was appointed Colonel of the 8th Hussars in 1880, Colonel of the 11th Hussars in 1886. In 1877 he was promoted Lieutenant-General and in July 1881 was placed on the retired list with the rank of General. He was a Justice of the Peace and for a short period represented the Ward of St. Thomas on the Town Council. He was Deputy Chairman of the Royal Hampshire County Hospital.

He was twice married, firstly to Ann, daughter of William Penfold, of Loose Court, Kent, and secondly to Tempe Eleanor Mary, eldest daughter of Sir Frederick Falkiner, Recorder of Dublin. There seems to have been no issue from either marriage. His funeral took place at St. Thomas' Church, Southgate Street where he worshipped regularly. His memorial, a Celtic cross, is under a large tree and beside the railings on St. James' Lane. Two of his cousins served in The Royal Hussars (PWO), a successor Regiment of the 11th Hussars, between 1969 and 1982.
(Lummis Papers, The King's Royal Hussars Museum in Winchester; The Hampshire Chronicle)

A Peaceful Place to Rest

West Hill Cemetery, Winchester

Burials 6

Captain Edward Lawrence MC DCM
16th The Queen's Lancers
The Royal Northumberland Fusiliers
Killed in Action 28 March 1918

The award of the Military Cross and the Distinguished Conduct Medal to the same person, while by no means unique, usually indicates a man of some interest and stature. The DCM was awarded to soldiers, non-commissioned officers and warrant officers and the MC, at that time, to commissioned officers of junior rank. Since 1993 it can be awarded to all ranks.

Lawrence started his military service in the 16th The Queen's Lancers but few details of his early service have been traced. His regimental number was '302' and by the beginning of WW1 he was a sergeant. The records of the 16th Lancers show that he was awarded the Medaille Militaire on 17 August 1914, Mentioned in Despatches 11 October 1914 and that he was wounded on 21 February 1915. He is not mentioned in the War Diary for this date when there was intense fighting and the detonation of three large German mines causing many casualties. His award of the DCM was made as the result of this event. His citation says "For gallantry and ability in command of his troop before and after being wounded". He was obviously not seriously wounded as he remained in the line with his regiment.

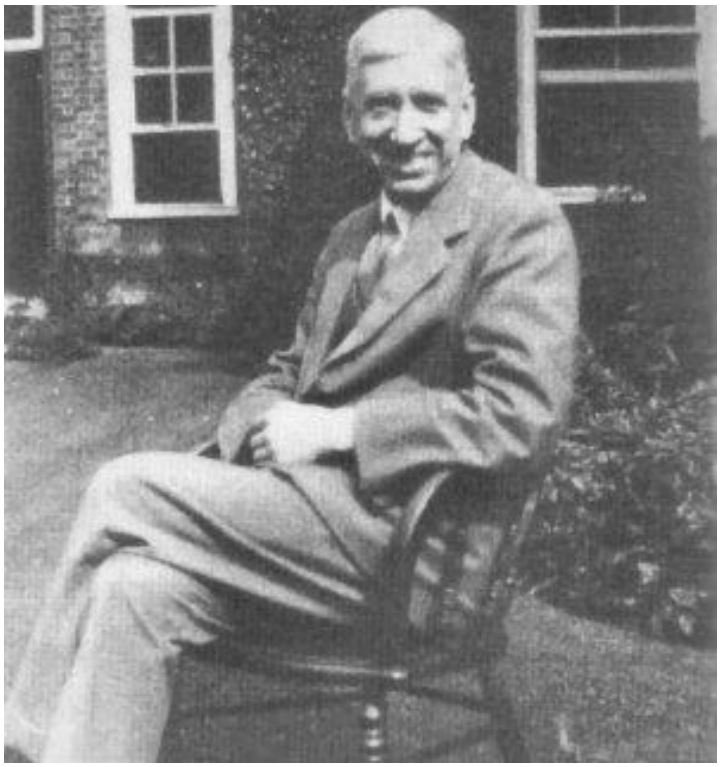
On 6 February 1916 he was commissioned as a Second-Lieutenant in The Royal Northumberland Fusiliers and on 13 February joined their 10th Battalion. The battalion War Diary of this period is a vivid record of events in the front line near Armentieres, from whence came the eponymous mademoiselle. On the night of 30/31 August 1916, two officers and 35 men carried out a raid on enemy trenches, the raiding party having been rehearsed by Lawrence. The other officer was Second-Lieutenant J.P. Loraine.

After some delay the raid commenced at 3.15 a.m. The left hand party led by Lawrence reached the wire undetected, but on getting through the gap in the defences, came under heavy fire. Lawrence was hit by a small shell splinter but was

able to continue in command of his party who, "the enemy being very thick" he withdrew to their start point. The right hand party under Loraine had fared rather better and inflicted much damage on the enemy in their sector but were eventually driven off. After a second attack had failed, Lawrence ordered the whole party to withdraw. For their actions on this night both officers were awarded the MC. Lawrence's citation reads "for conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty when leading a successful raid on the enemy's trenches. Though earlier wounded in the head he stuck to his command and assisted to remove the wounded under heavy fire".

He was subsequently transferred to the Battalion and was killed while serving with them. The circumstances of his death are, for the moment, a mystery. His name is recorded on the Arras Memorial (Bay 2-3) in the Faubourg-d'Amiens Cemetery on the Boulevarde de General de Gaulle in the western part of the town. Why he has a memorial in West Hill Cemetery is not known. According to the Commonwealth War Graves Commission he has `no known grave'.
(The Queen's Royal Lancers Regimental Museum, Grantham; The Fusiliers Museum of Northumberland, Alnwick; Commonwealth War Graves Commission, Maidenhead; The Archives of the DCM League.)

William Prendergast Mus. Doc. (Oxon) Cathedral Organist and Master of the Choristers 1902-1933
b. 4 November 1868
d. 20 February 1933



William Prendergast
By kind permission of Desmon Farley

He was born at Burneston, North Yorkshire, and was educated at Wem Grammar School, in which town his father was the organist at the parish church. William's musical skills became apparent at an early age when he played the harmonium and trained the choir in a neighbouring parish. In 1886, aged 18, his father apprenticed him to Dr. George Arnold at Winchester Cathedral. The following year, conducted by Arnold, he played the organ in the Cathedral at a Jubilee Service for Queen Victoria. By 1888 he was the organist at St. Baldred's Church in North Berwick and In 1891 he was appointed to St. Paul's, Edinburgh where he set about reconstructing the musical scene and introduced a full Cathedral Evensong on Sunday afternoons. By 1902 he had moved to the Royal Blind Asylum School as senior music master, and also taught at Fettes College. By this time he had graduated B. Mus. from Queen's College Oxford and in 1904 gained his Mus. Doc.

In 1902 Dr. Arnold died suddenly. Prendergast was appointed as his successor, a post that he held for 31 years. He and his family lived at No. 5 The Close. He was an excellent Choir Master and composed much music, but was ever mindful of the precept of his illustrious predecessor, Samuel Wesley, who had said that "there was too much bad music written for the Church". It is much to his credit that a collection of attractive Antiphons written in 1931 are still sung today before most Choral Evensongs.



He was a strict disciplinarian and nothing less than perfection would suffice. He insisted that the choir should always " Get it right, what ever it is!" Those who worked under "The Doctor", as he was called, remember him with some awe and affection and were ever grateful to him for the early influence he had on their lives. Former Choristers who knew him were of the opinion that "Dr. Prendergast not only taught us how to play, but taught us how to live." Not only was he renowned for his expert musicianship and devotion to the Cathedral, but also for his active support of other choirs and charities concerned with the musical profession. In 1927 his contribution to music was marked by a reception at Abbey House at which the Mayor presented him with an inscribed Testimonial and a cheque equal to two thirds of his annual salary.

He died suddenly of pneumonia. His funeral service was held in the Cathedral, and although the Choir was present and robed, they did not sing. Too many of them were sick and it was thought that their depleted numbers would not manage to reach the high standards set by their former Master. His wife and their married daughter survived him. His grave in West Hill Cemetery is near the main path and halfway along it. His greatest legacy was to leave the Cathedral music in a sound and stable state, thus enabling it to grow under the guidance of his illustrious successors. *(Compiled from material provided by Mr Desmond Farley, a former Cathedral Chorister 1930-1935. See the Winchester Cathedral Record No. 71, 2002, for a full appreciation of this acclaimed Choir Master and musician.)*

A Peaceful Place to Rest

West Hill Cemetery, Winchester

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