



*Tombstone
Trail*

**BATH
ABBEY**

Cemetery

**RALPH
ALLEN
DRIVE**

Tombstone Trail

Please take the small path immediately to your right after entering the cemetery.

1 John Monk Lambe

A fine obelisk with a coiled rope and phoenix, appropriate to a naval man who served as a paymaster on HM ship Phoenix. Could this be the same Phoenix that Jane Austen's brother commanded?

Did Jane Austen know him?



1 HMS Phoenix



2 Charles Richardson

Read the inscription on this attractively draped urn to see how popular this draper's assistant was.

Drowned at Bath

He was sadly drowned in the river at Bath in 1850.



Pacifier of the Aborigines

3 George Augustus Robinson

This unassuming tombstone boasts George Augustus Robinson was "Chief Protector of the Aborigines of Australia and Pacificator of the Tasmanian Aborigines"

Born in London in 1791 he was a poor uneducated bricklayer with a wife and seven children when, in 1823, a financial scandal



forced him to flee justice to Tasmania, there he quickly gained power in

Government service as an intermediary with the natives. He learned the Aboriginal language and over five years of expeditions into the bush he gradually gained their confidence and convinced them all-the whole Tasmanian population, an entire race of human beings to agree to be shipped out to Flinders Island, forty miles off the



mainland, where he as “governor” presided over their decay. He claimed his aim was benevolent, to bring the aborigines to love of the one true God, but such was his regime- the floggings, the enforced wearing of European clothes, the lack of any useful activity-that the Aborigines sank into listless apathy, brooding over their homesickness and dying by the dozen. In 1850 there were only 44 of them left alive. The government abandoned the scheme and shipped the survivors back to Tasmania, where they found their ancestral lands had all been annexed by the new white settlers. “Black Robinson” as his detractors called him, was paid off handsomely and having arranged all things to his divine satisfaction returned to Britain to wealth and gentility. He married a second wife nearly 40 years his junior and settled in Bath in 1859 in a house called Fairstowe, which can be seen from this spot, behind you high above Macaulay Buildings.



4 Tyrone Power

No, not the 1940s film star, but a very famous and handsome Irish actor *Message in a bottle* in the early 19th century. Born at Waterford, he joined a group of strolling players when he was only 14, toured Britain, married an heiress (who put up the memorial) and had seven children.

On 11th March 1841 he set sail from New York bound for Liverpool on the wooden paddle steamer “The President” which was the



largest steamship in the world. She was never seen again. 135 passengers and crew were assumed drowned. Queen Victoria sent a message of sympathy to Mrs Tyrone Power.

No wreckage was ever found. But in the autumn of 1841 an Irish fisherman near Cork picked a bottle out of the sea. Inside was a piece of paper and written on it in handwriting that was recognisable as the actor’s were the words: “The President is sinking. God help us all. Tyrone Power.”

You will also see that one of Power’s sons is also commemorated. He died of cholera during the severe outbreak of 1849. A plaque at Upper Borough Walls near the Mineral Water Hospital tells us that the graveyard there was closed in 1849 “from regard to the health of the living”.

5 Plim Bellamy

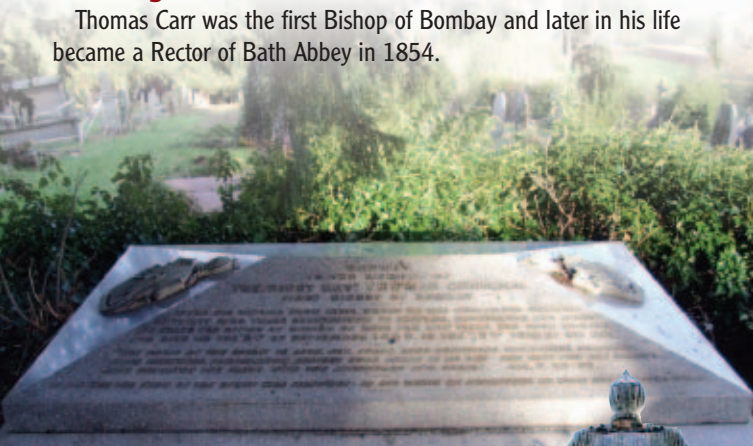
Bellamy was one of the later "Masters of Ceremonies" of fashionable Bath who organised entertainment at the Assembly Rooms in the tradition of Beau Nash.

*a Successor
to Beau
Nash*



6 The Right Reverend Thomas Carr

Thomas Carr was the first Bishop of Bombay and later in his life became a Rector of Bath Abbey in 1854.



You will see that his wife is buried here too and his daughter Mary. There is a fourth interment here Jessie Northcott thirty years Lady Hobart's maidservant, who died the day after her ladyship (See inscription). This is not as odd as it sounds today as long-standing servants were sometimes considered family and included in the family burial space.

*The bishop
and the maid*



7 Richard Brooke

Richard Brooke was Rector of the Abbey 1874-1895. He is said to have ruled Bath with a moral rod of iron. He was particularly diligent against the evils of strong drink and set up coffee houses in the city as an alternative to pubs.

Brooke retired to Bournemouth to live with his two unmarried daughters. There for

*A coffee
house
campaigner*



seaside holidays would come his three grandsons, the children of Brooke's son William, a housemaster at Rugby School. When Brooke died, his body was brought by train from Bournemouth to Green Park station for the funeral at the Abbey and on the coffin was a floral tribute from those three grandsons "From Dick, Rupert, and Alfred". Have you guessed yet?

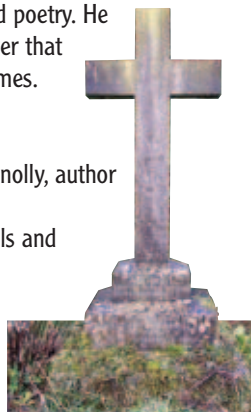
Yes, our Reverend Brooke's grandson was the poet Rupert Brooke. It is documented that it was at his Grandfather's house when he was nine years old he picked up a copy of Browning and discovered poetry. He later said that it was a profound shock to discover that verse could be other than hymns or nursery rhymes.

8 Matthew Connolly

Matthew Connolly was the father of Cyril Connolly, author and journalist.

He was always an eccentric. He collected snails and wrote "learned" treatise on potted meat and fish paste. He died of hypothermia in a South Kensington hotel room in the exceptionally cold weather of 1947.

Snail collector freezes to death!



Cyril arranged the funeral and he wrote a vivid description of the cortege getting stuck in the heavy snow on Prior Park and having to be shouldered to the graveside.

9 The Williams Memorial

This magnificent memorial was repaired by Bath City Council in 1992. It cost £4000 which demonstrates the difficulties and expense of maintaining Victorian cemeteries.

An elaborate inscription commemorates Jane Williams. One side of the base commemorates 17 year old Henry Williams "who by accidentally falling off the West India docks in a dense London fog was unfortunately drowned" in 1853.

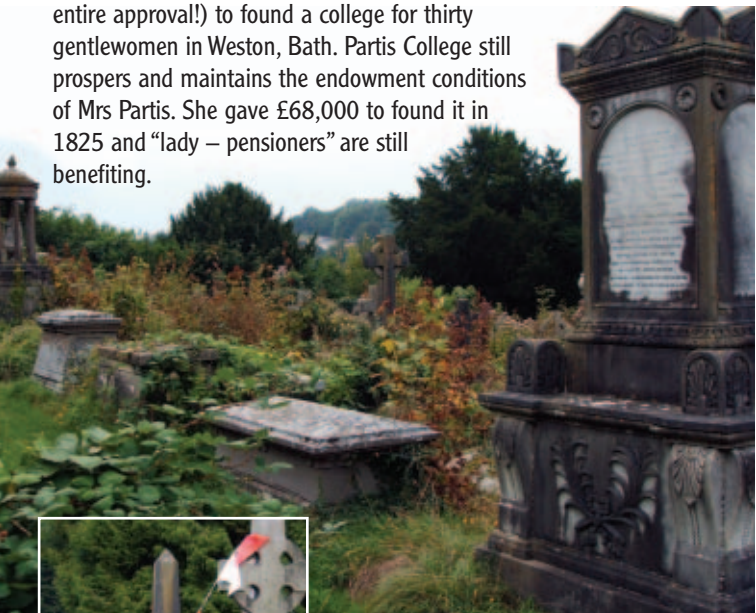
He fell to his death in London docks



10 The Partis Monument

On this white marble Greek Revival pediment only one face of the inscription is still legible but it explains how and why Anne Partis used her husband's money (with his entire approval!) to found a college for thirty gentlewomen in Weston, Bath. Partis College still prospers and maintains the endowment conditions of Mrs Partis. She gave £68,000 to found it in 1825 and "lady – pensioners" are still benefiting.

*Bath Lady
saves
pensioners*



11 Rear Admiral John Bythesea VC CB CIE

Bythesea was the youngest son of the Rector of Freshford. He won his Victoria Cross in the Crimean



War. It was discovered that important dispatches from the Russian Tsar were being dropped off at Waldo Island in the Baltic Sea for delivery to Bomarsand. Bythesea and one other man, Stoker William Johnson, who could speak Swedish, set off to intercept the dispatches. The two men waited on the island for two days dressing as local peasants. They successfully managed to ambush the five couriers on the third day. Two ran away, the remaining three surrendered. The Russians were then forced to row the two British crew back to their ship.

*VC awarded
by Queen
Victoria*

Both men were awarded the Victoria Cross by Queen Victoria herself. It was only the second and third time the award had been won!

12 The Circle of Grass in front of the Chapel

This in 1844 was the grave of the writer, art collector and aesthete William Beckford. He died at his home in Lansdown Crescent and had requested that he be buried (next to his dog!) at the base of his Tower on Lansdown Hill.

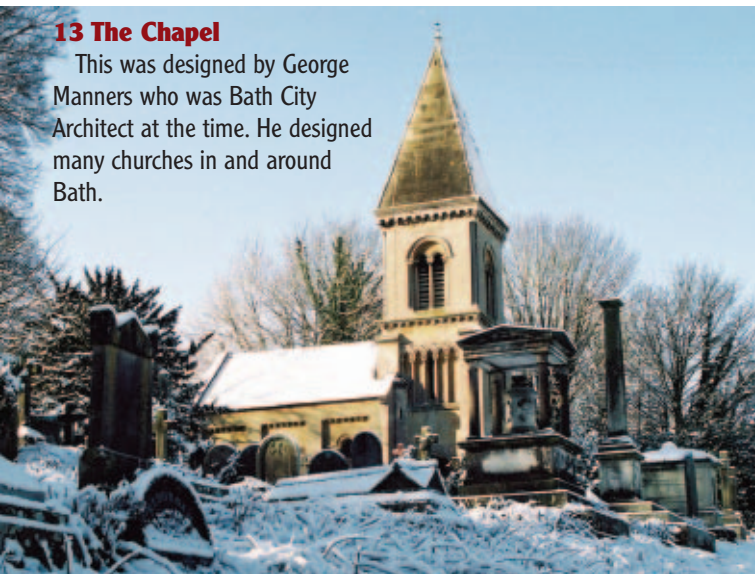
However, the land there was not consecrated and so what was probably the longest and grandest funeral procession that Bath had ever seen made its way here. He was not buried but contained within an Aberdeen red granite sarcophagus above ground. William Beckford was convinced he was descended from Saxon Royalty and as such was interred above ground. Subsequently he was moved to Lansdown Cemetery and the railing used to surround the grave here can now be seen there in the perimeter wall by the entrance arch.



*Britain's
richest man
buried in
Bath*

13 The Chapel

This was designed by George Manners who was Bath City Architect at the time. He designed many churches in and around Bath.



This Chapel is rather unusual in that Manners chose a “neo-Romanesque” style for it in preference to the then more acceptable gothic. Look at the zigzag design round the entrance arch.

14 Lt General George Dick

General Dick was the third burial to take place in the new Abbey Cemetery.

He was a wealthy man, owning large tracts of Clifton, Bristol and he lived with his two daughters in Bath. When he died, his son, also called George, had been living for several years in Calcutta with a wife and eight children. George sailed home and was shocked to discover that a new will had been made just before the General's death which entirely cut him out and favoured only those living with the General. Angry and suspicious, George demanded the exhumation of the body, a post mortem and a public coroner's inquest. A huge scandal broke out, fuelled by the letters which George and his sisters wrote to the press, accusing and counter-



accusing each other. It became a "tabloid sensation".

George accused his sisters of poisoning their

father; bribing a doctor to issue a death certificate citing apoplexy as cause of death (and thereby avoiding an inquest); forging the new will; and

intercepting and destroying his letters home from India to his father. The sisters counter-accused George of having abandoned his father and now trying to extort money from them by ruining their reputations in public.

So at 3pm on 13th August 1845 there assembled in this corner of the Cemetery, George, the Bath and Bristol coroners, various solicitors and doctors and a jury of twelve good men and true, plus Joseph Cuff, the General's butler, who had the unpleasant duty of identifying the body. The tomb was removed, the lead coffin raised and the General's body carried into the Cemetery chapel where the post mortem was carried out. Everyone expressed surprise at how little decomposed the body was after seventeen months underground.

The following Saturday Bath Guildhall was packed with excited spectators for the inquest, the Duke of Hamilton presiding. The evidence went on all day and centred on the post mortem's finding of inflammation in the general's digestive tract: could it have been caused by poison? Great debate as to the various symptoms of arsenic, prussic acid and strychnine. Who was with the General

when he drank his last cup of chocolate? Why did his daughter give him peppermint water (a flatulence remedy) when she knew he hated it? Joseph Cuff the butler caused great drama by fainting in the witness box when asked an awkward question.

What did the butler see?

Then, to everyone's disappointment, the jury returned an ambiguous verdict: "died from an inflammation of the stomach and bowels but how such inflammation was produced there is no evidence to show".

Anticlimax. The press lost interest. The sisters retired to Budleigh Salterton. Poor George scuttled back to Calcutta, and the General was once more laid to rest here.

15 Captain Thomas Pit Robinson

Robinson was the only son of Mark Robinson, Admiral of the White, and grandson of Rear Admiral Mark Robinson, who Nelson described as "my old Captain with the wooden leg".

The inscription on the monument, removed for safekeeping, states:

"At an early age he entered the Navy as a volunteer of the First Class. Was present on board the Royal Sovereign bearing the flag of Lord Collingwood at Trafalgar; and after much intermediate active service at the Battle of Navarino on board HMS Genoa in 1827."

Midshipman Robinson was only fourteen when he sailed on the lead ship, the Royal Sovereign into the Battle of Trafalgar. Although the battle was won, after being pounded until she was dismantled and unmanoeuvrable, the Royal Sovereign had to endure the horrors of a gale the next night while being perilously near the shoals of Trafalgar.

He survived Trafalgar



16 The Crimean War Memorial

Crimean war memorials are relatively rare and this one is unusual in that it lists "other ranks" as well as officers who went from Bath and died in the Crimean War.

It was designed and built by Samuel Rogers, a local stone and monumental mason. It cost £62.2s. 6d. and was paid for out of a subscription list.



It was unveiled in May 1856, on the day of national celebrations of peace. There was a grand parade and the Bath Chronicle estimated that 15- 20,000 people attended.

17 Henry Gratton Guinness

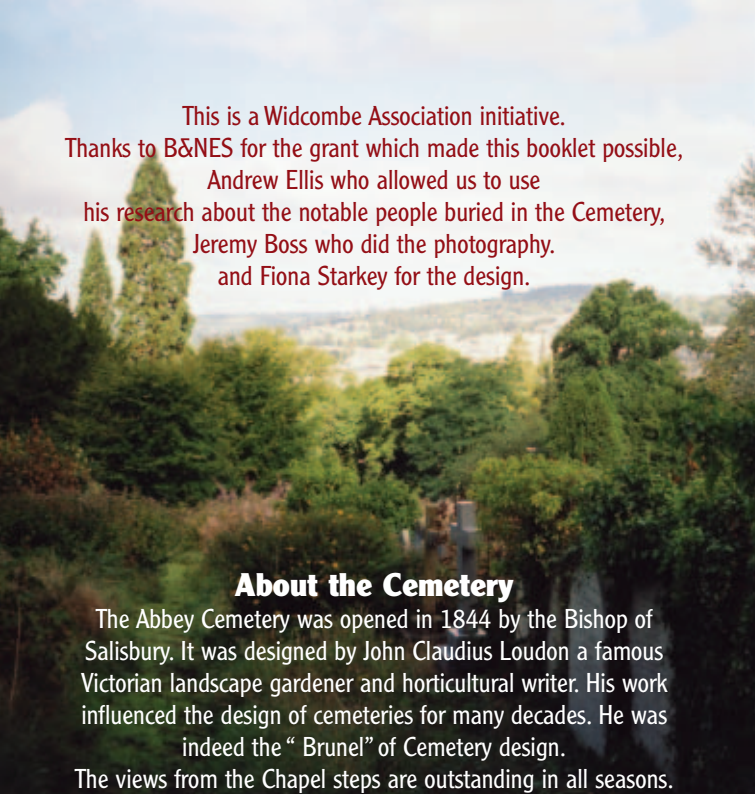
He was the grandson of the founder of the famous brewery in Dublin but turned his back on the family firm. On his

*Evangelist
marries girl
41 years
junior*

21st birthday he wrote in his diary: “My ambition is to live preaching and to die preaching: to preach to perishing sinners till I drop down dead.” He had talent as a barnstorming evangelist and attracted huge crowds throughout Britain, Europe, the USA and Canada. He set up two colleges for missionaries. His wife, Fanny, a local girl from Widcombe and later their grown up children accompanied him on his long tours through every continent.

After 38 years of marriage Fanny died and five years later he married again. He was 67 and his new wife was 26. They embarked immediately on a world preaching tour which had particular success in the USA and China. In his seventies he returned to Bath and continued to preach locally until as he had predicted more than fifty years earlier, he “dropped down dead”.





This is a Widcombe Association initiative.
Thanks to B&NES for the grant which made this booklet possible,
Andrew Ellis who allowed us to use
his research about the notable people buried in the Cemetery,
Jeremy Boss who did the photography.
and Fiona Starkey for the design.

About the Cemetery

The Abbey Cemetery was opened in 1844 by the Bishop of Salisbury. It was designed by John Claudius Loudon a famous Victorian landscape gardener and horticultural writer. His work influenced the design of cemeteries for many decades. He was indeed the “Brunel” of Cemetery design.

The views from the Chapel steps are outstanding in all seasons.

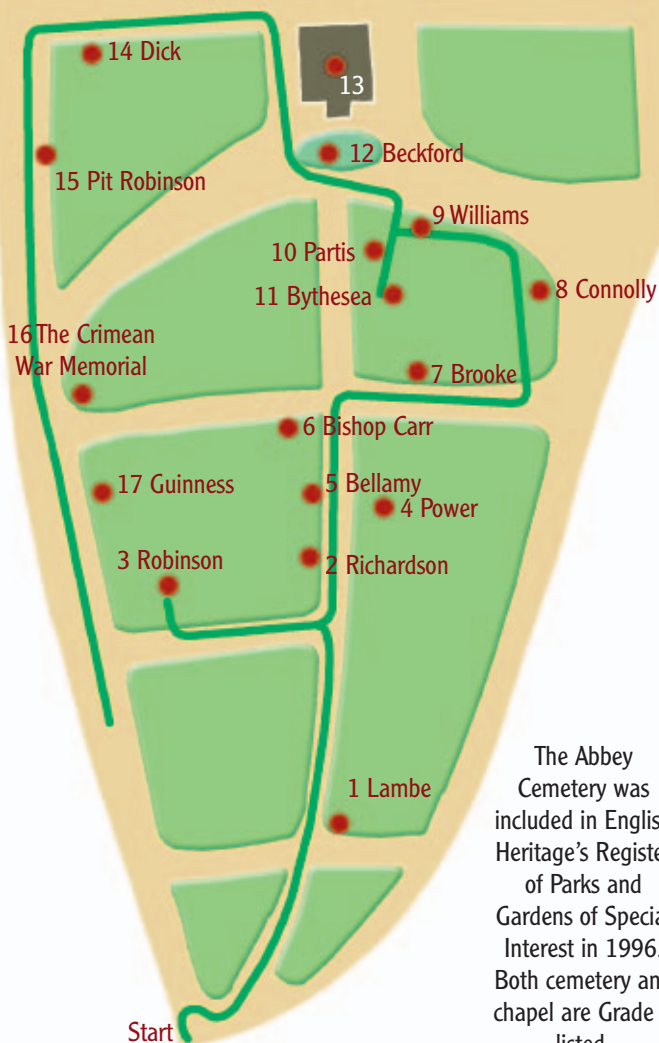
Whatever the season, if you have enjoyed your visit to the cemetery and would like to become more involved with its future, Widcombe Association would be delighted to talk to you.

Volunteers for **working parties** should contact Brenda Beeton on 01225 317026. To join the **research group**, contact Alastair Durie on 01225 310236. **Donations** of course, are always welcome. Please contact Brenda Beeton on 01225 317026.

Please see our website for further information
www.widcombeassociation.org.uk



BATH ABBEY CEMETERY Tombstone Trail



The Abbey Cemetery was included in English Heritage's Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Interest in 1996. Both cemetery and chapel are Grade II listed.

*A state of quiet and repose
is an important ingredient in
the passive sublime.*

Loudon