

# Highgate Cemetery and the Undertakers



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## Introduction

Although not the 'oldest or biggest of London's cemeteries it is by far the best known and probably the most visited...' much has been written about Highgate cemetery from a number of perspectives including biographical research concerning those who have been buried, its landscape and architecture.<sup>1</sup> Curl and Woollacott examine the operations of the founding organisation, The London Cemetery Company, but the paucity of material had restricted more in-depth investigation.<sup>2</sup> This research considers Highgate from the perspective of the undertaker arranging and carrying out burials in the cemetery. To facilitate this study, the hitherto largely unexplored source of business records have been utilised as the primary source of information for this paper.

This material is presented sequentially commencing with contact to secure a date for the burial to the committal of the coffin. Occasional activities such as the burial of ashes and exhumation are included along with two brief case studies.



## Highgate Cemetery

The establishment of London's proprietary cemeteries, dubbed by Meller the 'Magnificent Seven' commences with the first burial taking place at Kensal Green in 1832.<sup>3</sup> Sequentially, then followed Norwood (1837), Highgate (1839), Abney Park, Nunhead, Brompton (all 1840) and the City and Tower Hamlets Cemetery (1841). Frequently overlooked but also from this period is the privately-owned Victoria Park Cemetery at Bethnal Green, which was closed in 1876 and subsequently cleared of memorials. Despite the attempt by the short-lived Metropolitan Interment Act 1850 to nationalise joint-stock cemeteries, only



Brompton was transferred into Government ownership. The Burial Act 1852 permitted the formation of local burial boards to raise a loan for opening a cemetery and in the area around Highgate can be found Islington and St Pancras (1854), Paddington (1855), Hampstead (1876) and St Marylebone (1854). This move did not deter further private companies re-entering the market with Great Northern at New Southgate (1861), Chingford Mount (1884) and Hendon (1899). All private cemeteries offered purchased and public graves, but unlike burial board cemeteries did not distinguishing between location of residence through penalising those not living in the board's area.

Opened by the London Cemetery Company (LCC), the 17 acres forming what is now termed the western section of Highgate Cemetery were consecrated by 20 May 1839 by the bishop of London, the Right Reverend Charles Blomfield, an occasion that was widely reported in newspapers.<sup>4</sup> The chapels designed by Stephen Geary and assigned an invented and meaningless description of 'Undertakers Gothic'.<sup>5</sup> The first burial was carried out on 26 May 1839 and there were 204 interments in the first year.

Advertisements for the cemetery appeared regularly in the press, such as in *The Globe*:

HIGHGATE CEMTERY is Consecrated by the Bishop of London. Interments may take place in these Vaults, Catacombs and Graves. Apply at the Office, 22 Moorgate-Street, behind the Bank of England.<sup>6</sup>

And

The NOBILITY and GENTRY are respectfully invited to inspect the North London or KENTISH TOWN and HIGHGATE CEMETERY.<sup>7</sup>

Or

CEMETERY, the NORTH LONDON or HIGHGATE, established by Parliament and the London Cemetery Company is CONSECRATED. Many are interred. Armed patrols all night. The tombstones and locked parchment burial registers are secured, to prevent the surreptitious alteration of either...<sup>8</sup>

84 1.] QUARTERLY MISCELLANEOUS ADVERTISER. 47

## LONDON CEMETERY COMPANY.

INCORPORATED BY ACT OF PARLIAMENT,  
TO ESTABLISH THREE CEMETERIES OF FIFTY ACRES EACH, FOR BURIALS  
IN CONSECRATED AND UNCONSECRATED GROUND.

CEMETERIES:  
HIGHGATE, near Kentish Town;  
and NUNHEAD, between the Kent Road and Peckham Rye.

For interment in Common Grave . . . . .	£1 5
„ Private Grave, fees included . . . . .	5 5
„ Interment in Public Vault, fees included . . . . .	6 6
„ Ground for Vault or Brick Grave, exclusive of Brick Work and Fees . . . . .	15 15

Vaults and Graves purchased are granted under the Seal of the Company, and become the private property of the purchaser.

Parties making interments are not liable to any fees to parishes, and may, if they prefer, appoint the Officiating Minister. A Register of Burials, both in the consecrated and unconsecrated ground, is kept at the office, from which certificates can be obtained.

The Cemeteries may be viewed daily, but on Sundays by tickets only; which, with terms and all other information, may be had at the office, 22, Moorgate Street.

CHARLES BURLS, Jun., Clerk of the Company.

The suggested route through Kentish Town thus avoiding Highgate Hill would have been helpful for all horse-drawn vehicles and not just those on a funeral whose weight-bearing load would have been considerable. Much media coverage was given to the purchase of a catacomb by the Duke of St Alban's that occurred during the year of opening.<sup>9</sup>

Newspaper advertising would frequently be employed by the cemetery companies to advertise their availability; the high level of newspaper readership would have been the principal media of communicating with prospective clients. Features about Highgate also appeared in illustrated periodicals. Proprietary cemeteries would continue to advertise in newspapers and journals in some cases well into the twentieth century; *The Times* regularly carried a classified announcement for the London Necropolis at Brookwood, while the cemeteries owned by the Abney Park Cemetery Company (Abney Park, Chingford Mount, Hendon Park and Greenford Park) generally appeared in local titles until the 1950s.<sup>10</sup> Undertakers would have been aware that Highgate was receiving burials not only through newspapers coverage but also conversation with colleagues. It's also possible that the LCC wrote to firms announcing the opening of the cemetery, enclosing a price list and offering commission, but no correspondence can be located.

The interval between 1839 and the opening of the burial board cemeteries in north London in the 1850s enabled Highgate to attract a level of patronage that to some degree provided a buffer in the face of municipal competition. Whilst newspaper advertising would have reminded prospective users of the availability of the site and its attributes, recommendation by an intermediary - the undertaker - would have assisted in promoting the cemetery, particularly when giving instructions for the funeral.

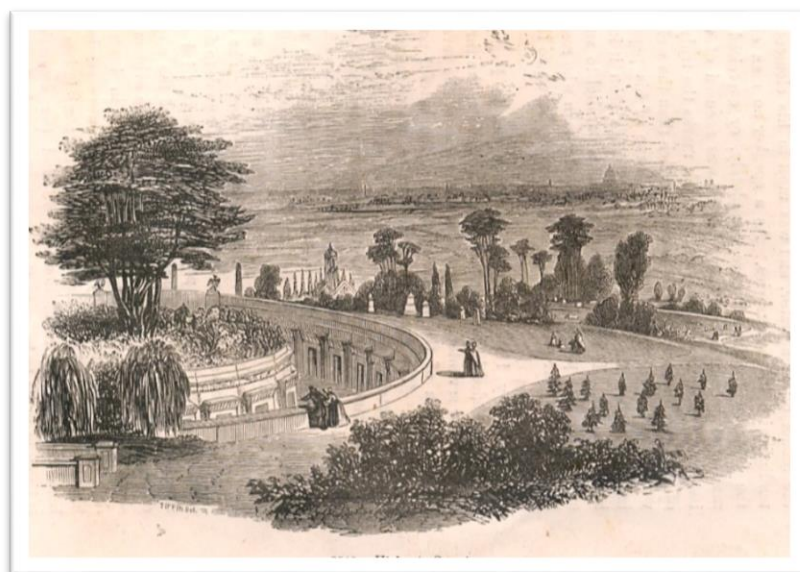


As a cemetery without link to any denomination (despite part being consecrated by the bishop of London) or associated with any district in the metropolis, burials were welcome from people living or dying in all parts of London, or indeed the country. Matthew Pridham's work on the occupants of the catacombs reveals that a significant number of deposits took place of those residing in the St Pancras and Islington areas – see table 1.<sup>11</sup>

From this data it can be assumed that burials in vaults and earth graves came from similar areas in the metropolis. However, the diversity of residence is reflected in the location of undertaking firms arranging funerals at Highgate, with a number coming from South London/North Surrey. It is likely to be the case that although the first person to be interred in a grave lived in the local or contiguous area, some families subsequently relocated. Following death, it would be expected that the deceased would be buried in the family grave, necessitating transportation of the coffin to Highgate. This would be particularly the case for what is detailed in funeral records as the ‘owner’s burial’.

Table 1

Area	Deposits
St Pancras	166
Islington	118
Marylebone	49
Hampstead	22
Clerkenwell	14
St Giles	14
Holborn	14
Edmonton	12
Barnet	6
Gray’s Inn	0
Kensington	58
Westminster	20
St Martin	4
Strand	4
TOTAL	501



(Source: Pridham (2012) p46)

## The Undertaker

The nineteenth century witnessed the expansion of the undertaking industry in London, a situation reflecting the increase in population and corresponding level of mortality. The function of the occupation was to provide the essential obsequial requirements: the coffin, transport to the place of burial and logistical arrangements. Additionally, accoutrements associated with mourning would also be supplied, such as gloves, scarves, hatbands, mutes and palls, etc. The first London *Post Office Directory* was published three years after the opening of Highgate cemetery and the 1842 edition identifies 243 undertaking businesses in the London postal area. All would have been sole traders. (Today, the only names that would be recognisable are John Nodes and France). Undertakers would have constructed their own coffins or purchased them from undertakers or supplier, such as Dottridge Bros.<sup>12</sup> Similarly, many firms would hire horse-drawn hearses and broughams from a carriagemaster. By 1860 the directory shows that the industry had expanded to 454 undertakers. There were many examples of firms trading with the same surname in a small radius of each other, such as Burridge, Jeffreys and Nodes, which can be interpreted as being members of extended families, but sometimes operating in competition. There were also firms trading under a descriptive title (such as the Economic Funeral Co at 28 New Bridge Street and the Economic Extramural Funeral Co located in nearby Farringdon Street, and later the Reformed Funerals Co Ltd). The London Necropolis & National Mausoleum Company operated an undertaking service as did the Great

Northern Cemetery Company that possessed a mortuary and funeral station at King's Cross.<sup>13</sup> By 1899 the number of firms listed in Post Office Directory had decreased to 344, but it is unclear why.

The undertaking industry was given a poor image by Charles Dickens and others, although the accuracy and widespread nature of allegations of manipulation and financial irregularity requires greater weight of evidence.<sup>14</sup> It is unclear whether undertakers deliberately encouraged the purchase mourning accessories or high-grade coffins or if these were requested by clients. The fact that many firms continued to trade inter-generationally and that owners lived and worked in the same area as their clients questions whether their reputation would have survived if they have been accused of fraudulent activities and pressure-selling.

*The Undertakers' Journal* (TUV) was founded in 1885 and in the absence of any other periodical dealing exclusively with cemetery matters, covered the opening of new burial grounds and legislation, in addition to publishing advertisements for cemeteries. For a short period, the publication also featured 'Funerals of the Month', with those appertaining to Highgate including Lord Strathcona (January 1914) and Bernard Quarich, the bookseller in (August 1913). Much coverage was also extended to the Druce case; in April 1898 the undertaker, Messrs Glazier & Son of Tottenham Court Road, provided TUV with details of the coffin (see below). Changes in staffing at Highgate Cemetery were also deemed worthy of mention, such as the retirement in 1901 of Mr Ta Bois, the superintendent.<sup>15</sup>

During the twentieth century the role of the undertaker morphed into that of funeral director through a combination of changes such as gaining custody of the deceased, the introduction of arterial embalming, the adoption of motor transport, the mechanisation of coffin production, and the increasing complexity and diversity of funerals.<sup>16</sup>

There's no evidence to indicate that any undertakers were directors of the London Cemetery Company, although Edward Day Boddington, manager of W Garstin funeral directors in Marylebone from 1906-1929 was a shareholder.<sup>17</sup> In 1898 he suggested building a crematorium at Nunhead Cemetery.<sup>18</sup>

### **Funeral records as sources of data**

The principal source of information for this article are the records of undertakers/funeral directors. Although Litten notes that '...undertakers are not known for their archival habits...' a number of collections of registers survive for those trading in central London and that regularly used Highgate cemetery, such as JH Kenyon, William Garstin and William Tookey.<sup>19</sup> The first two have been utilised for this research. Registers also exist for the Kensington firms of CG Hatt and G Hunt. As the analysis has identified that funerals were brought to Highgate from all over the London area (and elsewhere), it is not unsurprising that material held by firms in south west London and north Surrey have yielded a considerable amount of information. These include, G Gamble (Fulham), FW Paine (Kingston), C Farebrother (Kingston), Maxwell Bros (Streatham) and TH Ebbutt (Croydon)<sup>20</sup> The data recorded is not standardised and varies in detail; helpfully, the most historic tend to be the most descriptive. Typically, the following is noted: name of deceased and person arranging the funeral, address, date of birth and death, coffin and furnishings, transport, place of burial and grave details, and sundries such as mourning wear. Costings



1084 **LONDON CEMETERY COMPANY.**  
Incorporated by Act of Parliament 6 & 7 Wm. IV. c. 136.

**HIGHGATE CEMETERY OF ST. JAMES.**  
Office, 29, NEW BRIDGE STREET, BLACKFRIARS.

Mr. *J. Henryon* for the

**BURIAL** of *Lady Clara Somers* Aged *24*

Residence *120 Inverness Terrace, Paddington*

at *12 1/2 o'clock, on Friday the 24th of July* 189*1*

	£	s.	d.
Catacomb Compartment, Tablet			
Public Vault (size )			
† Ground for Brick Grave			
Brickwork (Undr. <i>6.5</i> )			
Excavating <i>2.2</i>			
Step Entrance to do.			
Cutting or rubbing Landing or Stone Facings			
† For a Private Grave, 7 feet deep . . .			
Extra Depth of Grave to feet			
Extra Ground to a			
Entry of Grant in the name of			
Opening and re-closing <i>10</i> Cons. Square <i>23</i> feet No. <i>12078</i>	-	7	6
Moving and re-placing Monument or Grave Stone	1	10	-
A Common Interment in a Grave (no Stone allowed)			
Inscription			
Fees on Interment <i>(6 1/2 x 2 1/2)</i>	2	2	-
Service before Two o'clock	-	7	6
Turfing Grave			
Iron Bearers			
<i>22 day July 1891</i>	4	7	-

WILLIAM WALTON, SECRETARY & REGISTRAR.

All Cheques to be made payable to the order of the London Cemetery Company.

Over which a Monument or Grave Stone, of a design to be approved by the Company, must be erected within 12 months.

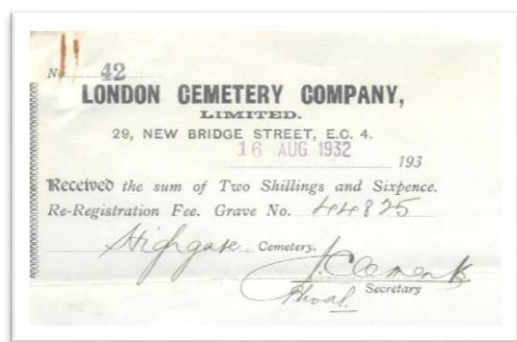
are provided in addition to a timeline (date of arrangement, coffin to the house, date of funeral, invoice paid, etc).

The following headings constructs a sequence of events describing the undertakers' involvement with Highgate Cemetery.

### Administration

Once instruction had been received to arrange a burial at Highgate, the undertaker would need to book the date of burial, which could be done by post or in person. The response would have been swift as in 1844 there were up to seven deliveries of mail per day with five in the environs.<sup>21</sup> The undertaker would have written to the company's London office (22 Moorgate Street then 29 New Bridge Street), or would have called in person to secure a booking before notifying the family. No details of this chain of communication can be traced as it is presumed that the LCC operated a 'counter service' to callers. Personal attendance by the undertaker involved a journey by carriage and was charged as a cost to the client. The LCC also stipulated that fees were to be paid in advance. For example, in April 1886 the Maxwell Bros register notes: 'Attending at cemetery office, giving notice of interment and paying fees' of £4 8s 6d for which 4s 6d was charged. The total funeral cost £46 19s.<sup>22</sup> In some cases the fees were not inconsiderable; £22 in 1901 with the

complete funeral costing £60 5s.<sup>23</sup> It may be that the undertaker requested the client pay this amount direct to the cemetery or it was agreed that the undertaker would only book the date if the disbursement to the LCC was paid before the funeral. Both Maxwell and Farebrother accounts shows that visits to the office were supplemented by telegrams.<sup>24</sup> Booking arrangements were simplified after a telephone had been installed; many undertakers were among the first subscribers. Occasionally, the undertaker took the client to Highgate to select the grave, a service involving a further trip which again was specified in the registers. In January 1900, CG Hatt invoiced for the horse-drawn carriage to be used for 'Self attending and conducting throughout and to cemetery to select space and Blackfriars to pay fees, fares, telegrams, etc'.<sup>25</sup> A further fee was to the rector at Highgate Church for burial in the consecrated old ground for which he received £2 2s.<sup>26</sup>

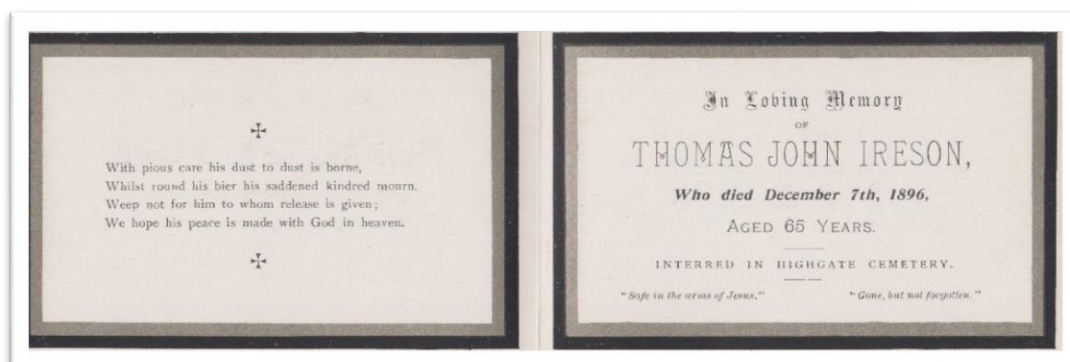


The *British Undertakers' Association Yearbook* contained a listing of all the London cemeteries together with contact details. In 1934 the entry gave the address at 29 New Bridge Street, phone numbers for both office and cemetery and that interment times were 10-4, Sats 10-12. Special service fee 10s 6d. In 1961 the only change was that the office was located at the cemetery, with the phone number being Mountview 1834.<sup>27</sup> The same appeared in 1970, although the phone number was different.

Undertakers were also required to submit an interment notice to the office detailing the name and address of the deceased, coffin size, name of parish, use of chapel or direct to grave, name of purchaser or grave or signature of grave owner, etc. This document was required to be deposited at the office at least 24 hours before the date of the burial. No examples from the nineteenth century can be traced, but one form from the period when the LCC was in the ownership of United Cemeteries Ltd is included in the appendix. Upon the purchase of a new grave a deed of ownership would be issued by the company; this would often be sent to the purchaser via the undertaker.

Commission was paid to undertakers who brought burials to the cemetery, an incentive to recommend the cemetery that was widely practiced by cemeteries, both in the private sector and by Burial Boards. The two remaining registers detailing commissions dated 1932 held by Camden Local Studies (entitled 'Discounts Highgate') indicate the date of burial, name of deceased, commission paid and name of undertaker. Although these show amounts paid, it is unclear how these correlate with the burial fees; commission could have been between five or ten per cent of the cost of a new private grave, which was a figure not dissimilar to that given by the Abney Park Cemetery Company.<sup>28</sup>

Notification to mourners of the date and place of interment was also a task that undertaker fulfilled. For a burial arranged by Maxwell Bros in May 1880, they invoiced for 'Writing 21 letters and invitations' at a cost of 10s 6d.<sup>29</sup> CG Hatt were still handwriting invitations in 1901, although in June 1899 they provided 50 printed return thanks cards and 50 memorial cards along with 75 envelopes.<sup>30</sup> In December 1905 WS Bond supplied 50 printed cards.<sup>31</sup> Printed notifications were also available on cards decorated with memorials or burial scenes and sometimes stamped in relief. By the late nineteenth century printed mourning supplied by the Verulam Press were advertised in *The Undertakers' Journal* in March 1901, 100 were supplied for 11s.<sup>32</sup> Betterton Bros of Tottenham continued to provide hand printed cards until the 1980s.





## Coffins for burial

All the funeral records consulted contain details of the coffin used for interment. From the time Highgate opened to the post-World War Two years coffins were invariably constructed from oak and elm. As will be seen below, the deceased was placed in a wooden shell pending the construction of a more elaborate and furnished outer coffin, sometimes termed as 'case'. This necessitated the undertaker calling at the house to measure the deceased, prepare a shell then return to the house in a horse-drawn vehicle with staff for the encoffining. The shell would rest on trestles or a table in the family home. The finished outer coffin would be brought to the house on the day of the funeral and using fabric tapes or webs the shell would be lowered into the coffin, then sealed with closing bolts. Wire would be tied around the decorative bolts (called 'wreath holders') to secure a floral tribute on the coffin lid. Bearers would then carry the coffin to the hearse.

Very occasionally notes concerning the deceased are given in the registers. For example, in respect of an 84-year-old female buried in February 1905, Maxwell arranged for a 'Woman laying out body' for which 5 shilling was charged.<sup>33</sup>

All timber coffins constructed from would have been suitable for earth burial. For retention in a catacomb, however, it's likely the LCC stipulated that the coffin was lead-lined. This would prevent odours or seepage as a result of cadaveric deterioration. In the 'Rules and regulations, etc' published in 1868 by the London Cemetery Company it is stated that 'No interment shall be made in a catacomb, Vault or Brick Grave, unless the coffin be of lead, stone or asphalte.'<sup>34</sup> The same directive can be found at the City of London Cemetery and also All Souls Cemetery, Kensal Green.

Nineteenth century funeral records often contain detailed descriptions of the coffin; by the mid-twentieth century this had been replaced with a note of the wood used along with the interior lining and handle type or reference. Some firms simply wrote a code or name, which was particularly the case with TH Ebbutt using locations in their trading area, such as Hooley or Oxted.

Below are several examples from the records consulted including this entry dated February 1858 from an unidentified undertaking business in north London. For Henry Beverley Wakeling of Wakeling Terrace, Barnsbury:

'6,4,19 [6' 4" x 19"] shell lined and supplied in the best manner, bed. Lead coffin, winding sheet, Elm case covered black cloth finished 1 row large 2 dozen small nails 4 pairs registered handles, lid ornament. Lead plate.'<sup>35</sup>

For a child born on 11 Sept 1858 who died 1 October 1858:

2ft shell covered white lined and supplied in the best manner, bed. Lead coffin, inscription. Elm case covered fine white finished 2 rows of white nails, 3 pairs Cherub handles and ...Angles & Flowers. Pewter plate.<sup>36</sup>

Pine or elm tended to be used for the inner shell with violet or blue fabric being an alternative to black.

For a burial carried out on 30 September 1883, Maxwell Bros provided an

Elm shell covered with black blaze lined with fine cambric and padded, ruffled wool

mattress and pillow and improved folding sheets. A 1½” English oak outer case with moulded lid and plinth. French polished and mounted with eight solid brass gothic handles, eight brass corner clips, closing bolts, *fleur de lis* lid ornament and brass inscription plate engraved and polished.<sup>37</sup>

In April 1886 Maxwell Bros supplied an elm shell which was lead lined followed by:

A 1½” oak outer case, chamfered lid and plinth. French polished and fitted with 8 polished brass handles, closing bolts and engraved brass Calvary cross.

which required the services of a ‘plumber and attendant [for] soldering down’.<sup>38</sup>

In respect of a burial on 27 January 1900, CG Hatt supplied a:

5’ 10” stout pine shell covered with blue cloth and inside lined with swansdown wool mattress and pillow and swansdown slip sheet trimmed with satin. To a stout lead coffin soldered complete. To a 1¼” English oak case to receive the above, French polished and finished with moulded plinth and lid, four pairs of solid brass crescent handles, lid ornaments and plate of inscription engraved, and extra plate of inscription on head of coffin.<sup>39</sup>

George Gamble of Fulham provided the following inside coffin in December 1911:

5ft 7”, 18” Elm shell with the inside lined with best white satin and side padded and best white satin ruffed pillow only.

The exterior case detailed as:

To best made 1¼” oak case for the above shell, French polished finished with four pairs of solid brass Gothic handles [21], two lid ornaments [4] eight best brass screw and long washers, 16” best brass engraved plate of inscription on brass mount, and inside lined. <sup>40</sup>

By the interwar years, use of the shell had disappeared and the deceased was placed directly into the outer coffin, which would be sealed with pitch or wax to ensure there was no leakage. The coffin was also increasingly accommodated in the funeral directors’ chapel of rest in place of the family home.<sup>41</sup> Some firms may also have offered the service of arterial embalming, although this more prevalent in the 1950s. Using only one coffin not only eliminated a task for the funeral director but also reduced the overall weight of the coffin, both factors impacting on funeral costs.

For a burial taking place on 19 September 1929 arranged by Maxwell Bros, the register notes:

To a dull polished oak coffin with plinth and lid moulding fitted with eight brass handles, ornaments and engraved brass inscription plate on polished oak mount. Padded and lined inside and finished with folded sheets and ruffle and pillow trimmed satin.<sup>42</sup>

Similarly, in March 1930 a briefer description can be located:

To a polished elm coffin fitted with handles and inscription plate. Lined inside and filled with sheets, ruffle and pillow.<sup>43</sup>

A coffin noted in FW Paine's registers in March 1935 was simply entered as 'No 1 Elm  $\frac{3}{4}$ ' and in 1943 as 'Pol Elm' [polished elm].<sup>44</sup>

It's possible that rectangular shaped wooden caskets were interred, but none have been located in any of the records consulted.

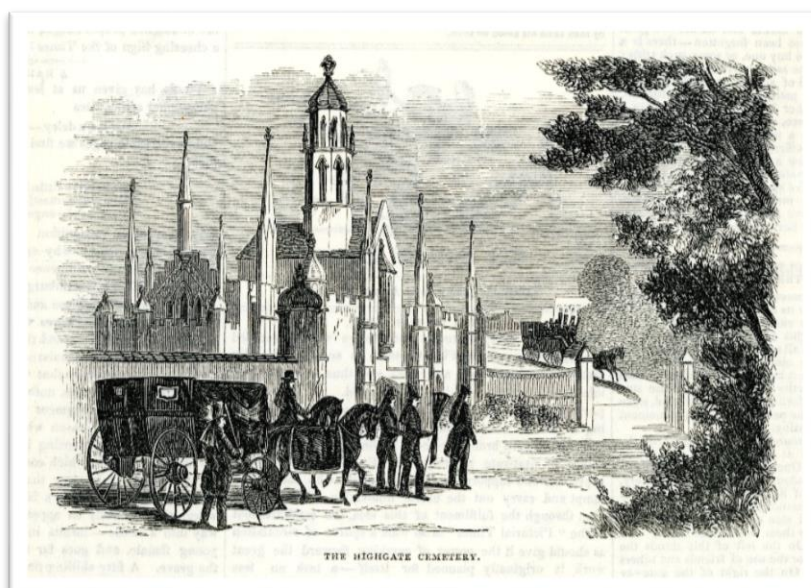
### **Transport to the Cemetery and bearing the coffin**

When the cemetery opened the only form of funerary transport to reach Swain's Lane would have been by horse-drawn hearse and following carriages. All the funeral records consulted confirm this mode of transport until the introduction of the motor hearse in the early part of the twentieth century.<sup>45</sup>

Many of the funerals arriving at Highgate would have been arranged by firms located in the central area of London, so within a six to seven-mile radius of the cemetery. As noted in the introduction, however, burials came from all area of London and further afield. Horse-drawn funerals often travelled long distances to reach the cemetery, including those arranged by the funeral directing firms located south of the Thames whose records have been surveyed for this research. For FW Paine and C Farebrother, the journey from Kingston to Highgate was approximately 19 miles. Their registers reveal that such long distances were not unusual and include trips to Brookwood (25 miles) and the City of London Cemetery at Ilford (31 miles).

Horse-drawn funerals would have had little problem reaching the cemetery using the established road network, although the journey would perhaps have been uncomfortable due to the road surfaces. The gradient encountered from approaching the cemetery from the north would, however, have required particularly the hearse driver to be in full control of his vehicle as the overall weight including the coffin could have literally propelled the hearse downhill to its destination. Conversely, animate power would have expended considerable energy drawing the funeral up Swain's Lane from the south. It's likely that undertakers would have only engaged experienced coachmen for this potentially hazardous final section of the route. In this respect it is significant to note the original proposed route of the carriageway from chapels up into the cemetery changed as it was found to be too steep for the horse-drawn vehicles.<sup>46</sup>

Records only offer a limited insight into the vehicles used, such as a 'Hearse & four horses, 3 carriages, pairs to Highgate',<sup>47</sup> 'A funeral car and four horses. Two carriages and pairs',<sup>48</sup> 'To our open car & pair horses and five broughams with pair horses...'.<sup>49</sup> A 'funeral car' is a type of hearse as is an 'open car' being one without glass sides. The number of following carriages is indicative of the scale of attendance at the funeral, although its possible other





mourners made their own way. None of the records consulted refer to use of the Shellibere combined hearse and mourners' carriage, referred to in John C Loudon's book on cemetery layout.<sup>50</sup> This type of hearse is depicted in the *Pictorial Times* (27 April 1844). (Courtesy of Highgate Cemetery)

Depending on the distance, some funerals would have paused at some point for refreshment of the horses at one of the drinking troughs.<sup>51</sup> There is an oblique reference to this when in December 1908 C Farebrother organised for '...3 extra broughams so as mourners would not have to stop on the road'.<sup>52</sup> In this case the horse drawn carriages would have returned the mourners to East Molesey in Surrey without pausing, a distance of some twenty-one miles.

Some later funeral records detail the timings of the funeral and the time taken to reach Highgate. On 4 January 1907, C Farebrother's hearse drawn by a pair of horses departed from Beaufort Road in Surbiton at 10.15am to arrive at Highgate at 1pm. The mourners were returned home for 4.45 home. Two hours 45 minutes were allowed for the journey of around 20 miles.<sup>53</sup> On 9 July 1912, FW Paine's hearse departed a house in Richmond Park Road in Kingston at 11am for a service at 1pm at Highgate. In this case the horse-drawn hearse containing a lead lined oak coffin was followed by two broughams.<sup>54</sup> A further entry from 16 May 1914 gives the timing at the 'shop' [Paine's premises], house, departure from house, arrival and departure from church (Christ Church, New Malden) to the cemetery.<sup>55</sup> The two hour journey by horse drawn vehicles is also confirmed by an entry in July 1916.<sup>56</sup>

Where the coffin was conveyed from outside London, it would have been dispatched by train to a London terminus and then collected by an undertaker.<sup>57</sup> For example, in June 1881 JH Kenyon were waiting at Victoria station for the 12.30am train to take a coffin for burial at 3pm in the cemetery.<sup>58</sup> Burials were frequently on the day of collection from the station with mourners in carriages following behind the hearse to the cemetery.

Undertakers would be expected to provide coffin bearers, sometimes termed 'pall bearers', although strictly the latter would carry the ends of the large fabric pall covering the coffin whilst the undertaker's staff would shoulder the coffin. Weight was the determining factor in supplying the number of bearing staff.

G Hunt supplied 12 bearers to carry a 'strong lead coffin' 1¼" solid oak coffin, French polished and with brass furnishing.<sup>59</sup> The staff would have been required for the encoffining of the shell into the case at the home of the deceased (Cambridge Gate near Regent's Park), then for bearing the coffin on arrival at Highgate. Similarly, in September 1883, Maxwell Bros arrived from Clapham Park with eight bearers (each with handbands, gloves and truncheons) to carry a coffin constructed from 1¼" oak boards.<sup>60</sup> Three examples from 1899 contained in the CG Hatt records provided further insight: 'eight men as bearers' to carry a lead lined oak coffin, six men for a non-lead lined oak coffin with shell, and four men to carry 5ft 10" elm coffin without a shell.<sup>61</sup> Ten were used to place a coffin in a catacomb in January 1900.<sup>62</sup> In January 1907, C Farebrother arranged for '5 men from house' with the uneven number probably represented by a bearer helping to lift the shell inside an oak coffin onto and from the bearers shoulders.<sup>63</sup> For a burial in January 1905 using a elm shell inside a oak case, WS Bond attended with six men, as did G Gamble in March 1910.<sup>64</sup> In addition to bearers, G Gamble also supplied 'vault men' and occasionally a 'mason' in February 1911 presumably to be inside the vault to assist with reception of the coffin.<sup>65</sup> FW Paine's registers indicate that by the interwar years only four bearers were provided. In other registers the number was not specified with simply the term 'necessary assistants' or 'men as bearers'.

Bearers would need conveyance to and from the cemetery in a separate vehicle as neither the horse drawn hearse and following carriages possessed accommodation; one register refers to a 'cab for bearers', another to 'conveyance for men'.<sup>66</sup> An additional vehicle added to the cost of the funeral. It should also be noted that the drivers of the hearse and following carriages would not act as bearers as horse-drawn vehicles were not permitted be left unattended at the cemetery, a stipulation usually written into cemetery regulations. In Hunt's registers there is clear distinction between drivers and bearer; for a funeral in February 1900 '9 Broughams and pairs, 9 drivers and 4 men' were supplied.<sup>67</sup>

There is evidence to suggest that bearing staff made their way to and from cemeteries by train. In December 1895, C Farebrother's register notes use of the North London Railway: 'Railway charges for men 8s'.<sup>68</sup> Further details of the journey are contained at the end of the volume: 'I went by train. Left K [Kingston] at 10.50. Left R [Richmond] 11.23. Gospel Oak 12.00. Home from GO [Gospel Oak] 2.14. Change at Acton for Richmond. Home at 3.30'.<sup>69</sup> Similarly, in November 1904 Farebrother invoiced for '2 mens fare to Gospel Oak station and return'.<sup>70</sup> Occasionally, bearers were supplied by a carriagemaster or another firm, particularly if their staff were already at the cemetery on the previous funeral. This was an efficient use of manpower as staff could attend two local funerals in the time taken to travel to and return from Highgate. Instead of FW Paine transporting bearers from Kingston in 1912, the Hoxton-based wholesalers and carriage-master Dottridge Bros supplied three men at the cemetery.<sup>71</sup>

Although motor hearses first made an appearance around 1900, they were only used for the distance conveyance of coffins; it would be over a decade before they started to replace animate power on funerals.<sup>72</sup> The first used by TH Ebbutt was in February 1913,<sup>73</sup> FW Paine on 22 March 1913,<sup>74</sup> JH Kenyon in 1911,<sup>75</sup> Farebrother on 1 May 1913,<sup>76</sup> and Maxwell's in December 1914 to transport a coffin from Streatham to Gravesend.<sup>77</sup> The motor hearse was soon used for the journey to Highgate, such as in October 1918,<sup>78</sup> and then in May 1919 when Maxwell's motor hearse met a train at Waterloo to convey to the cemetery a coffin containing a 31-year-old RAF Captain.<sup>79</sup> A further example of a grave owner's burial can be found in 1929.<sup>80</sup> The register notes a further important development in the early part of the twentieth century, although outside the scope of this paper was that the coffin was accommodated in Maxwell's private chapel of rest rather than at home. On Saturday 17 May 1930, FW Paine arrived at the cemetery with the coffin containing a 17-month-old female who died at Great Ormond Street Children's Hospital. The 'Limousine Carrette' (a limousine with a shelf behind the driver to accommodate the white domette [fabric] covered coffin) left Teddington at 10.45am and arrived at Highgate at noon.<sup>81</sup>

The complete transition from animate to motor power took several decades. It would not be until 1937 before TH Ebbutt was fully motorised, while FW Paine's last horse-drawn funeral was in December 1940. In 1931 TH Ebbutt received instructions for the owner's interment and a motor hearse with two following cars travelled from Purley to Highgate.<sup>82</sup> Similarly, for a funeral from Kings Avenue Clapham to Highgate in May 1932 Maxwell Bros supplied a motor hearse and one car, and again in August 1940.<sup>83</sup>

There were many advantages of a motor fleet to both mourner and funeral director; the journey was comparatively swift and comfortable (particularly as road surfaces improved); vehicles were less intensive to maintain than animate power; bearing staff could be

conveyed in the hearse, whilst the streamlined bodywork gave a modern and progressive image to funeral service.

At an FW Paine in July 1943 funeral staff were instructed to 'All meet at Cemetery' at noon. The family lived in New Malden and made their own way for service followed by burial in a re-opened grave.<sup>84</sup> Whilst it could be that the client had their own transport, it could also be the case that wartime petrol rationing meant that mourners had to utilise public transport. Certainly, in post-war years limousines were increasingly dispensed with as car ownership increased.

### **Funerary accoutrements**

Nineteenth century funerals have been characterised by their lengthy processions, plumed horses, trays of feathers and undertakers wearing top hats and carrying wands.<sup>85</sup> Utilisation of these items, however, was restricted to only a proportion of funerals, a point requiring a thorough assessment in addition to whether families felt obliged to follow social protocols or were pressurised into purchasing trappings. Whilst a number of sources explain the use of these accoutrements, an extract from *The Penny Magazine* provides a pithy account of their origin:

The man who heads the procession, wearing a scarf, being a representative of a herald-at-arms; the man who carried a plume of feathers on his head being an esquire, who bears the shield and casque with its plume of feathers...the men walking with their wands being supposed to represent gentlemen-ushers...<sup>86</sup>

One enduring feature was the use of mourning dress. Although this could be obtained from 'Mourning Warehouses' such as Jay's on Regent Street or Peter Robinson. That said, from examining details of funerals arriving at Highgate between the 1840s and the early part of the twentieth century, it can be seen that undertakers supplied much of this paraphernalia.

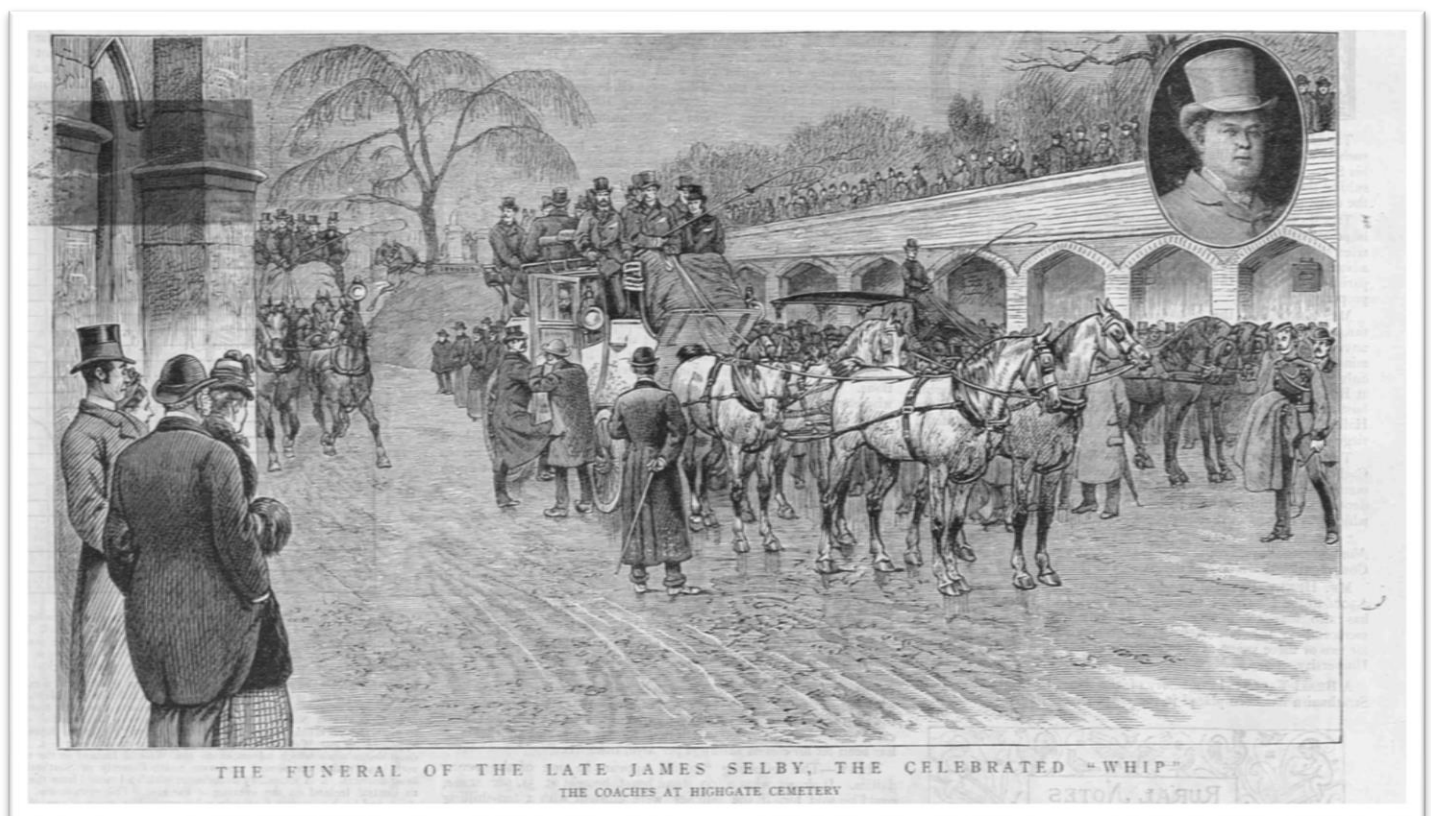
At a funeral of a female in November 1840, William Garstin supplied a hearse with four feathers (for the heads of the horses), velvets (to be draped over the backs of the horses) and six pages.<sup>87</sup> Details of clothing provided at the funeral of a male buried in August 1875 was as follows: 1 deep cloth band; 6 ordinary cloth bands; 4 narrow cloth bands; 10 pairs gents gloves; 6 pairs ladies gloves, silk band and gloves.<sup>88</sup> It is presumed these items were distributed to the mourners by the undertaker or his staff at the house or cemetery. Maxwell Bros obtained their gloves from the Worcester-based firm of Dent's, founded in 1777.<sup>89</sup> Feathers used on the horses tended to be ostrich, as specifically detailed in Maxwell's records.<sup>90</sup> At a funeral furnished by the firm on 25 June 1881, they provided 'a pair [of] velvet hammercloth and use of pall. Coachmen and attendants with hatbands, truncheons, etc'.<sup>91</sup> In February 1882 Hunt's provided 'Fringe velvet coverings, velvet hammercloth and velvets for horses'.<sup>92</sup> A hammercloth was an ornamented often fringed cloth hung over the coachman's seat especially of a ceremonial coach. In 1883, Hunt supplied '3 pairs of kid gloves for both men and women'.<sup>93</sup> In January 1905, WS Bond provided 'Feathers and Vel [velvets]' on the horse drawn hearse going to the cemetery.<sup>94</sup>

Records indicate that all attending the funeral including the undertaker's staff, priest and cemetery official were issued with clothing. For example, in May 1880 Maxwell Bros registers note: 'Coachman and attendants with silk hatbands, gloves & truncheons; use



of silk velvet pall in cemetery'. In addition, the firm provided: '9 crepe hatbands, 10 pairs gents gloves, 1 pair for cemetery clergyman; 5 pairs ladies gloves'.<sup>95</sup> Hunt distributed 'Fittings for officiating minister and clerk' in October 1883.<sup>96</sup> And similarly, at a burial in December 1899 the invoice details the following: 'bearers and superintendent with cloth hat bands and gloves.'<sup>97</sup> It's possible that staff were not issued with the best garments; a line in Hunt's register for a funeral in December 1882 refers to '6 pairs of inferior gloves for private coachmen'.<sup>98</sup> It is unclear what happened to the scarves, hatbands and gloves issued to the undertaker and cemetery staff; presumably they were discarded after the burial, to await new ones from the next funeral. The quantity of clothing supplied by the undertaker needed to equate with the number of mourners attending, hence the dispatch of invitations which necessitated prompt answering.

One of the most extraordinary features of a nineteenth century funeral was the engagement of mutes to stand silently outside a house thus signifying that death had occurred. Dickens describes them as '...fellows (all hot and red in the face with eating and drinking) dressed up in scarves and hatbands, and carrying - shut-up fishing rods, I believe'.<sup>99</sup> 'Mutes with silk fittings' to stand outside a house in Church Road Brixton in August 1883 were part of Maxwell's invoice. Some accounts reveal that they led the procession to the cemetery. It is doubtful, however, that this was the case in respect of the funerals travelling from south London to Highgate.<sup>100</sup> The latest date mutes can be found in any of the records surveyed was 1899.<sup>101</sup>



(Source: *The Graphic* 29 December 1888)

None of the records examined indicated the use of trays of feathers carried on the head of a members of the undertaker's staff. Although Maxwell's records show that these were in use, such as in 1877 which notes the use of a 'Best lid of feathers', like mutes, it is unclear if these were conveyed all the way to Highgate.<sup>102</sup>

The close of the nineteenth century did not bring an immediate end to mourning wear. At a burial arranged by C Farebrother on 4 January 1907, the firm provided '6 gloves and hatbands' costing £1 6s.<sup>103</sup> By the end of WWI, the observance of mourning wear in respect of funerals arriving at Highgate and elsewhere had become simplified, whilst plumes on horses heads had been declared illegal.<sup>104</sup>

### **Burial in the cemetery**

The sequence of events when the funeral arrived at a cemetery was relatively simple: the superintendent would check the name of the deceased with the undertaker before the bearers carried the coffin into the chapel for the reading of the burial service (unless this had been held in a church). After the coffin had been carried out and repositioned on the hearse, the cortege would be escorted to the grave where the words of committal would be said and the coffin interred. Floral tributes would be examined before the mourners were returned to their carriages for the journey home. The events today are not dissimilar.

It's likely that undertakers would have been instructed to always approach the cemetery from either the north or south of Swain's Lane, unless otherwise directed in advance by cemetery staff. It is possible that the upper gate to the western section may have been used; it's certainly the case that the gate on Chester Road/Stoneleigh Terrace was used as the access point into the eastern section, as depicted in the photo of the funeral of the first Chief Officer of the Metropolitan Fire Bridge, Sir Eyre Massey Shaw in August 1908. The now demolished lodge can be glimpsed to the right.

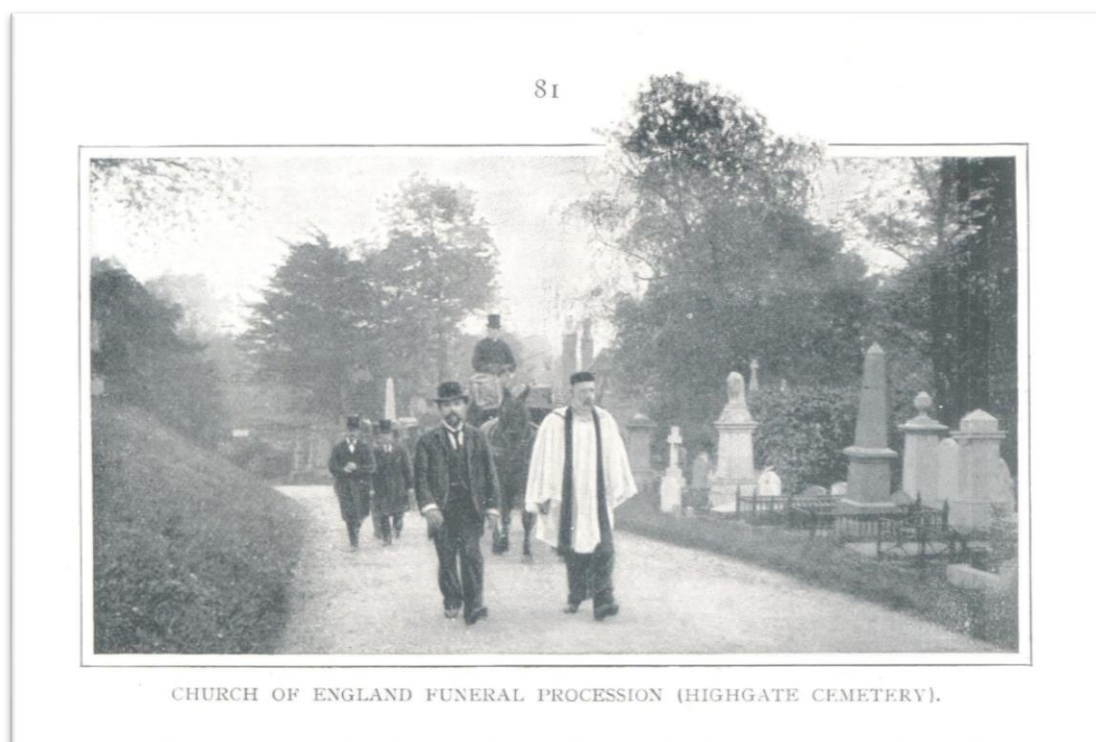


If a burial was to take place in the western section or a service held in the chapel before burial in the eastern section, the cortege would enter through either the main gates or the archway dividing the two chapels. The cemetery clerk (possibly the superintendent) would greet the funeral conductor/director and the former's staff may well have been on hand to marshal the vehicles in the turning area. The clerk/superintendent would have ascertained the name of the deceased and may also have checked the nameplate. This was particularly important in the case of multiple hearses arriving for a communal 'public reading' time where members of unrelated families would gather in the chapel for a service

prior to committal in the grave. In the recollections of Jack West, an east London funeral director, he notes that up to five funerals could arrive for a 'public reading time' in the chapel City of London Cemetery in the 1940s.<sup>105</sup> Although the number of common interments was comparatively modest at Highgate, it's possible that communal funeral services were held. In the absence of the any records noting the times of services, it has not, however, been possible to verify this statement.

Following the first registration of deaths legislation of 1836 there was a requirement for the registrar to deliver a certificate to the undertaker or 'other person having charge of the funeral' confirming that the death has been registered, although burial could take place without this certificate.<sup>106</sup> Alternatively, the Coroner could give his certificate if an inquest was held. If no certificate was received, the burial could proceed, but the person carrying out the burial must give notice to the registrar.<sup>107</sup> Section 17 of the Registration of Births and Deaths Act 1874 reinforced this position.<sup>108</sup> The following section also required the undertaker to notify the cemetery if the bodies of a child or still-born child were contained in one coffin. Stillbirth registration, including the issue of a certificate to permit disposal, was not introduced until 1926.<sup>109</sup>

If there was a service in the chapel the mourners would follow the coffin as it was shouldered from the hearse to be placed on the trestles or a catafalque in the chapel; they would take their seats from the reading of the 'Order of Burial of the Dead' from the *Book of Common Prayer* by the cemetery chaplain or their own priest. If burial service booklet were requested from the undertaker these would have been distributed prior to the commencement of the ceremony. The name of the deceased along with the date and place of burial, etc would be printed in the frontispiece of the booklet while the words of the burial service had to remain unchanged. After the service in the chapel the coffin would be shouldered back to the hearse while mourners would take their seats in the carriages. None of the records refer to use of the tunnel under Swain's Lane.<sup>110</sup>



(Source: *Living London* G Sims (1903))



If a service was held prior to arrival at Highgate, the funeral would be greeted at the gates and in both cases the clerk/superintendent would escort the funeral to the grave. Once mourners were assembled around the grave the bearers would remove the coffin from the hearse and either shouldered or took the it in hand to the grave. Flowers may or may not be removed from the lid of the coffin. Webs would then be placed through the handles and at the indication of the chaplain the bearers would slowly and evenly lower the coffin. The chaplain would cast earth on the coffin during the words of committal. Sometimes the grave would be decorated; C Farebrother paid £2 2s for the grave to be 'lined with evergreens, while G Gamble requested that for 'Lining vault with flowers and Evergreens' in February 1911; this was a common practice in London cemeteries as similar entries appear in other records.<sup>111</sup>

The funeral conductor would always give the cemetery staff a gratuity, a long-standing tradition that continues to be maintained. In December 1853, W Garstin gave 5s 6d to the gravediggers, the 'Grave digger & sexton' received 2s from Maxwell in 1880.<sup>112</sup> In October 1888 Maxwell one shilling to the grave digger.<sup>113</sup> At the reopening of grave in 1919, 5s was handed over.<sup>114</sup> The 'Vault men and Mason' mentioned in the Gamble registers received 10s in February 1911.<sup>115</sup> In 1932, the gratuity was 3s 6d. As records indicate that all undertakers would have gratuities on every occasion, which was charged to the client, the cumulative amount received by cemetery staff was not inconsiderable. It is not known if the individual staff retained the gratuity or pooled it for distribution with other LCC employees. The chaplain would have been paid by the cemetery as this was included on the receipt for burial fees payable in advance.

### **Burials in Catacombs**

Much research about coffins being interred in the catacombs, Egyptian Avenue and the Circle of Lebanon) has been carried out by Matthew Pridham.<sup>116</sup> He has calculated that there were 957 above-ground deposits in a vault, mausoleum or catacomb loculi between 1838-1878. Additionally, he has helpfully tabulated the names and date of burial of the 224 buried in the sixteen vaults forming Egyptian Avenue. These places of deposit, in contrast to earthen graves, were used for both permanent and also temporary resting places for coffins; in the case of the latter they were utilised until such time as a mausoleum had been constructed, for example prior to Ada Beer (who died in 1875) and also members of the Dalziel family.

In January 1900, William Garstin arranged for a burial in catacomb No8. The fee to the company was £194 15s 0d. Before the triple lined coffin was interred, the catacomb was decorated and Garstin arrange for it to be photographed at the cost of £10 10s.<sup>117</sup> In January 1902 Maxwell Bros arranged for a burial in catacomb No37. The shell contained in a 1¼" oak case was conveyed in a glass hearse from Lonsdale Road in Barnes. Regrettably, the register does not specify the staffing involved.<sup>118</sup>

### **Burying the cremated**

The first cremation took place at Woking Crematorium on 26 March 1885 and the ashes of Mrs Jeanette Pickersgill were later deposited in the catacomb under Kensal Green's Anglican chapel.<sup>119</sup> Highgate was an early recipient of ashes; following the thirteenth cremation on 19 December 1886, an earthenware jar containing the remains of James John Field were placed in a mahogany box and buried in a grave later the same day.<sup>120</sup>

Then on 16 November 1889, the ashes of Robert Whelan Boyle were buried in a catacomb (the superintendent's day book state that they were for 'Temporary Deposition'), following his cremation at Woking.<sup>121</sup> The LCC were not slow in making specific accommodation for those cremated by following the lead of Kensal Green Cemetery that had created a columbarium within the monumental chambers behind its Anglican chapel in 1891-1892. In 1893 an unused catacomb was converted to provide niches for caskets of ashes.<sup>122</sup> This was a highly progressive step despite the low number of cremations; in 1893 there were only 131 cremations at Woking. Most caskets of ashes, however, would have been interred in existing family graves. Although figures are unobtainable, commensurate with the increase in cremations in the post WWII years would be the number of ashes received for burial in Highgate Cemetery. FW Paine arranged for a cremation to take place at Golders Green on 11 January 1922 and for the ashes to be buried in an existing grave at 3pm on 16 January. A terracotta urn contained in an oak casket was used. Perhaps unusually, the account notes that 'use of motor hearse to convey remains from Golders Green to Highgate', as it would generally be considered unnecessary to supply such a vehicle for this purpose.<sup>123</sup>

## **Exhumation**

A number of notable exhumations have taken place at Highgate and most have involved undertakers. The Druce examination has already been mentioned, while literature exists about Marx.<sup>124</sup>

Temporary deposits in the Egyptian Avenue and catacombs can be classified as exhumation and Pridham identifies records this data in his research. In respect of the latter, there were 79 removals from the terrace catacomb, with 43 per cent having been buried for more than ten years.<sup>125</sup>

In November 1938, William Garstin was instructed by Thomas Cook & Sons to exhume two coffins from the cemetery and transport them to France (rail from Liverpool Street to Harwich, then by ship), presumably for burial.<sup>126</sup>

## **Two case studies**

The two case studies that follow indicate how it is possible to construct a linear insight into the sequence of events from death to burial using material funeral directors' records supplemented by newspapers, cemetery registers and receipts. The two examples have been selected on account of the range of material, including original receipts. Brief comments are given after each example.

### **Lady Smale**

From *The Times* Thursday 23 July 1891:

On the 21<sup>st</sup> Inst at 12, Inverness-terrace, CLARA, widow of the late SIR JOHN SMALE, Chief Justice of Hongkong, and daughter of Halsey Janson, Esquire, of Stamford, in her 75<sup>th</sup> year.

Death was registered in the Paddington registration sub-district.

## JH Kenyon register

The arrangements were received by JH Kenyon of 45 Edgware Road on Tuesday 21 July 1891. The firm constructed an elm shell along with a lead lined oak case furnished with 'best Gothic handles' and brass plate. A horse-drawn hearse and men took the shell to 12 Inverness Terrace where the deceased was encoffined. The funeral took place on Friday 24 July 1891 and Kenyon supplied a hearse drawn by four horses followed by six broughams each with a pair of horses. One brougham collected the vicar of St Philip's Kensington (the Revd William Smale, presumed to be a member of the family, was the vicar from 1884 to c 1909) at 10.15, while another went to 62 Green Street to collect Mrs Birkett (presumed to be the arranger of the funeral). Nine pairs of gents gloves were provided. The cortege assembled at Highgate for the burial service to be read at 12.30pm. Kenyon's arranged for the grave to be lined with evergreens at the cost of 21s. The firm's account for their services and the fees to Highgate amounted to £54 14s 6d.<sup>127</sup> A margin note states: 'Sir John Smale, 7 years ago, 21 Sussex Place, Regent's Park.'

### Highgate Cemetery Receipt

The receipt issued from the office at 29 New Bridge Street indicates that the opening and closing of the grave (at 10ft) was 7s 6d with the charge to move and replace the memorial at £1 10s. The 'Fee on interment' was £2 2s and for a service before 2pm the additional charge was 7s 6d. The 4s gratuity to the gravediggers was also added bringing the total to £4 11s 0d.

## Aaron Da Costa

From *The Times* Friday 31 January 1873:

On the 28<sup>th</sup> Inst. At 104 Gower-street, Bedford-square, A.G. Da Costa, Esq in his 72<sup>nd</sup> year.

Death was registered in the [St] Pancras registration sub-district.

## W Garstin register

The funeral of Aaron Gomez de Costa, aged 71, was arranged by W Garstin on 28 January 1873. The cortege departed from 104 Gower Street to Highgate Cemetery on Saturday 1 February 1873. The firm provided a '2<sup>nd</sup> Class funeral' for £45. 10s. 0d. In addition to extras (polished oak case with brass handles, coach and pair, equipment, driver with silk hatbands and gloves) and also crape scarves, hatbands and gloves for men and ladies, copies of the burial service and interments fees and also hatbands and gloves for cemetery chaplain and clerk the funeral totalled £80. 3s. 9d. This was paid by the executors on 10 March 1873.<sup>128</sup>

### Highgate Cemetery Receipt

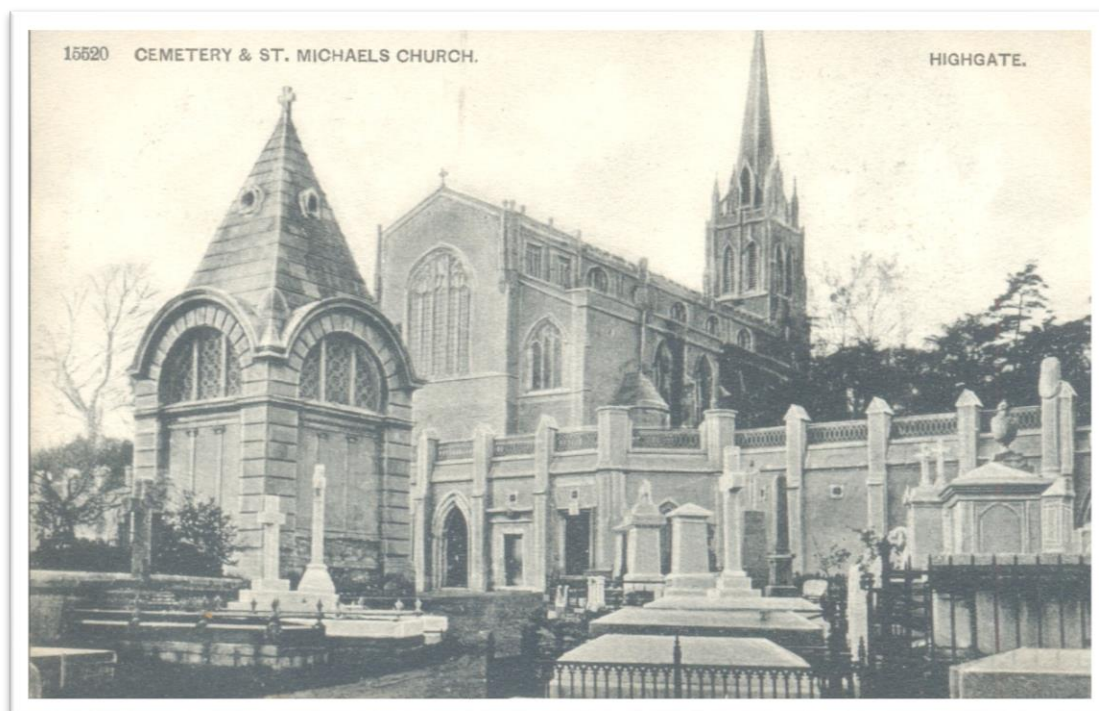
The receipt details that the opening and re-closing of the grave cost £1 1s removing and replacing the 'monument or grave stone' £2 2s, the fee for interment was £5 5s, for the service being held before 2pm the supplement was 7s 6d and the iron bearers [for positioning in the grave] 15s. The total of the fees to the London Cemetery Company amounted to £9 10s 6d.<sup>129</sup>

## Burial Register

Burial number 42479. Gomez (sic check) da Costa 104 Gower Street 1 February 1873 72 years. Arthur FH Scholefield Chaplain

### **An afterword**

From examining the registers of the firms used for this survey it became discernible that by the 1960s very few burials were taking place at Highgate. For example, the CG Hatt registers detailing about 700 funeral arrangements between 1949 and 1968 reveal only one in the cemetery (28 Nov 1952). This is consistent with the number of funeral received at Highgate, which had declined significantly by the 1970s.<sup>130</sup>



### **Location of funeral records consulted:**

WS Bond	JH Kenyon 83 Westbourne Grove
TH Ebbutt	FW Paine Museum Kingston
C Farebrother	FW Paine Museum Kingston
G Gamble	R Brain & G Gamble 601 Fulham Road SW6
W Garstin	Westminster Archives Centre
CG Hatt	FW Paine Museum Kingston
J Henwood	Author's collection
Hunt G	JH Kenyon 83 Westbourne Grove London W2
JH Kenyon	JH Kenyon 83 Westbourne Grove London W2
Maxwell Bros	FW Paine Museum Kingston
FW Paine	FW Paine Museum Kingston



The records of an unidentified firm trading in the Barnsbury area held at the FW Paine Museum and Archive Kingston.

All images from the author's collection except where stated.

**Acknowledgements:** Dr Ian Dungavell, Matt Pridham, staff at Camden Local Studies Library and at Westminster Archives Centre, colleagues at the FW Paine museum.

**LONDON CEMETERY COMPANY, LIMITED.**  
**UNITED CEMETERIES LIMITED.** Cemetery.

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**NOTICE OF INTERMENT.**

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IN GRAVE No.....

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The several Particulars undermentioned must be carefully and accurately set forth.

1. Name in full of the Deceased	Age
2. Late residence and Parish	
3. Day of the week, and hour of Interment	
4. Is it desired that the appointed Chaplain or Minister should officiate	
5. Size of Coffin	
6. Name and residence of Undertaker	
7. Owner's name in full and address, if new Grave to be purchased	

(IF OLD GRAVE THE FOLLOWING MUST BE SIGNED.)

I hereby authorize my Grave numbered as above to be opened for this Interment.

Signature of Registered owner.....  
Address.....  
Date.....

40  
8/2156

## References

- <sup>1</sup> Meller H & Parsons B (2008) *London Cemeteries: An Illustrated Guide and Gazetteer* Fourth edition Stroud: The History Press p187
- <sup>2</sup> Curl JS (1977) 'Nunhead Cemetery, London. A History of the Planning, Architecture, Landscaping and Fortunes of a Great Nineteenth-Century Cemetery' *Ancient Monument's Society Transactions*
- Woollacott R (2010) *Investors in Death. The Story of Nunhead Cemetery and the London Cemetery Company and its Successors* London: Friends of Nunhead Cemetery
- <sup>3</sup> Meller H and Parsons B (2008) *London Cemeteries: An Illustrated Guide and Gazetteer* Fourth Edition Stroud: The History Press pxxi
- <sup>4</sup> *John Bull* 23 June 1839

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- <sup>5</sup> Lloyd JH (1888) *The History, topography, and antiquities of Highgate, in the County of Middlesex*. London pp494-495
- <sup>6</sup> *The Globe* 25 May 1839
- <sup>7</sup> *Morning Post* 10 August 1839
- <sup>8</sup> *Morning Post* 7 August 1839
- <sup>9</sup> *Bell's Life in London and Sporting Chronicle* 13 October 1839 and *Sun* (London) 8 October 1839
- <sup>10</sup> See Parsons (Forthcoming) Hendon Park Cemetery: Exploring the Third Venture of the Abney Park Cemetery Company
- <sup>11</sup> Pridham M (2012) *Victorian Social Aspiration: Highgate Cemetery Terrace Catacombs Deposits*. MSc Thesis University of Strathclyde p46
- <sup>12</sup> Parsons B (2009) 'Unknown Undertaking: The History of Dottridge Bros Wholesale Manufacturers to the Funeral Trade' *Archive: The Quarterly Journal for British Industrial and Transport History* No63 pp41-53
- <sup>13</sup> Clarke J (2006) *The Brookwood Necropolis Railway* Fourth Edition Usk: The Oakwood Press, and Dawes MC (2003) *The End of the Line. The Story of the Railway Service to the Great Northern London Cemetery* Barnet: Barnet & District Local History Society. See also Parsons (forthcoming) *Cemeteries and Competition: Insights into operations of the Great Northern Cemetery Company*
- <sup>14</sup> Parsons B (2012) 'Dickens and the Undertakers' *The Funeral Director Monthly* Vol 95 No 9 pp18-19
- <sup>15</sup> *The Undertakers' Journal* January 1901 p3
- <sup>16</sup> Parsons B (2014) *The Undertaker at Work 1900-1950* London: Strange Attractor, and Parsons B (2018) *The Evolution of the British Funeral Industry during the 20<sup>th</sup> Century: From Undertaker to Funeral Director* Bingley: Emerald
- <sup>17</sup> See 'Obituary: The Late ED Boddington (London)' *The Undertakers' Journal* September p290
- <sup>18</sup> Woollacott (2010) p59
- <sup>19</sup> Litten JWS (2002) 'Golders Green Crematorium and its early influence in London funerals' in PC Jupp and HJ Grainer *Golders Green Crematorium 1901-2002. A London Centenary in Context* London: London Cremation Company p17
- <sup>20</sup> Maxwell Bros entry 971 (Funeral 13 November 1890), received instructions from the family of a deceased person living in Devonshire Street Islington in November 1890
- <sup>21</sup> See <https://www.victorianlondon.org/communications/dickens-postalregulations.htm> (accessed 22 June 2019) Golden CJ (2009) *Posting It. The Victorian Revolution in Letter Writing* Florida: University of Florida Press
- <sup>22</sup> Maxwell Bros entry 852 (Funeral on 12 April 1886)
- <sup>23</sup> Maxwell Bros entry 338 (Funeral on 12 December 1901)
- <sup>24</sup> Maxwell Bros entry 173 (Funeral on 27 January 1900) & Farebrother entry 187 (Funeral on 14 December 1895)
- <sup>25</sup> CH Hatt entry 173 (Funeral on 27 January 1900)
- <sup>26</sup> Maxwell Bros entry 759 (Funeral on 30 Sept 1883)
- <sup>27</sup> *British Undertakers' Association yearbook, diary and directory* (1934) London: British Undertakers' Association and *Year Book and Directory* (1961) London: National Association of Funeral Directors p148
- <sup>28</sup> Parsons (Forthcoming)
- <sup>29</sup> Maxwell Bros entry 48 (Funeral on 7 May 1880)
- <sup>30</sup> CG Hatt entry 336 (Funeral 7 December 1901) and Entry 121 (Funeral 2 June 1899)
- <sup>31</sup> WS Bond entry 347 (Funeral on 30 January 1905)
- <sup>32</sup> Maxwell Bros entry 280 (Funeral on 21 March 1901)
- <sup>33</sup> Maxwell Bros entry 2440 (Funeral on 1 February 1905)
- <sup>34</sup> *Rules, Orders and Regulations of the London Cemetery Company* (1868) Courtesy of Highgate Cemetery
- <sup>35</sup> Register of unidentified north London undertaker. Entry 110
- <sup>36</sup> Register of unidentified north London undertaker. Entry 189
- <sup>37</sup> Maxwell Bros entry 759 (Funeral on 30 September 1883)
- <sup>38</sup> Maxwell Bros entry 852 (Funeral on 12 April 1886)
- <sup>39</sup> CG Hatt entry 173 (Funeral on 27 January 1900)
- <sup>40</sup> G Gamble entry 384 (Funeral on 29 December 1911)
- <sup>41</sup> Parsons (2014)
- <sup>42</sup> Maxwell Bros entry 1908 (Funeral on 19 September 1929)
- <sup>43</sup> Maxwell Bros entry 1936 (Funeral on 13 March 1930)
- <sup>44</sup> FW Paine register No 49 E entry 626 (Funeral on 25 March 1935) and Register 64A entry 632A (Funeral on 27 July 1943)
- <sup>45</sup> See Parsons (Forthcoming) Hendon Park Cemetery: Exploring the Third Venture of the Abney Park Cemetery Company
- <sup>46</sup> *Highgate Cemetery. Saved by its Friends* (2016) London: Highgate Cemetery p19
- <sup>47</sup> Unidentified north London funeral director. (Funeral in February 1858)
- <sup>48</sup> Maxwell Bros entry 30 (Funeral on 20 March 1880)<sub>23</sub>

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- <sup>49</sup> CG Hatt entry 254 (Funeral on 24 December 1900)
- <sup>50</sup> Loudon JC (1843) *On the Laying Out, Planting and Management of Cemeteries* Redhill: Ivet Books (1981) p50
- <sup>51</sup> See Hayes D (2003) 'Drinking Foundation and Horse Troughs of Hampstead and St Pancras' *Camden History Review* No27 pp7-12
- <sup>52</sup> Farebrother entry 232 (Funeral on 24 December 1908)
- <sup>53</sup> Farebrother entry 30 (Funeral 4 January 1907)
- <sup>54</sup> FW Paine Register No 7 Entry 325. Arch 26 compartment 30298. Funeral of Elizabeth Bacon
- <sup>55</sup> FW Paine register No 9 Entry 202 (Funeral on 16 May 1914)
- <sup>56</sup> FW Paine register No 12 Entry 120 (Funeral 25 July 1916)
- <sup>57</sup> Parsons B 'Place on Rail' -The Transport of the Dead by Train in the UK' *Backtrack* Vol 33 No 5 pp292-296
- <sup>58</sup> JH Kenyon entry 175 (Funeral on 24 June 1881)
- <sup>59</sup> C Hunt entry 40 (Funeral on 12 December 1882)
- <sup>60</sup> Maxwell Bros entry 759 (Funeral 30 September 1883)
- <sup>61</sup> CG Hatt entry 93 (Funeral on 20 February 1899), entry 89 (Funeral on 8 February 1899) entry 122 (Funeral on 5 June 1899)
- <sup>62</sup> Garstin WAC 948/47 p174
- <sup>63</sup> C Farebrother entry 30 (Funeral on 4 January 1907)
- <sup>64</sup> WS Bond entry 347 (Funeral on 30 January 1905), and G Gamble entry 36 (Funeral on 2 March 1910)
- <sup>65</sup> For example G Gamble entry 219 (Funeral on 16 February 1911)
- <sup>66</sup> Hunt Entry 80 (Funeral on 8 October 1883). Maxwell Bros entry 2168 (Funeral on 2 October 1899)
- <sup>67</sup> Hunt Entry 439 (Funeral on 23 February 1900)
- <sup>68</sup> Farebrother entry 187 (Funeral on 14 December 1895)
- <sup>69</sup> Farebrother entry 361
- <sup>70</sup> Farebrother entry 14 (Funeral on 16 November 1904)
- <sup>71</sup> FW Paine Register No 7 entry 152 (Funeral 9 February 1912). For history of Dottridge see Parsons B (2009) 'Unknown Undertaking: The History of Dottridge Bros Wholesale Manufacturers to the Funeral Trade' *Archive: The Quarterly Journal for British Industrial and Transport History* No63 pp41-53
- <sup>72</sup> Parsons B (2018) pp110-115
- <sup>73</sup> Ebbutt entry 371 (Cremation on 18 February 1913)
- <sup>74</sup> Parsons B (2017) FW Paine: A Short History p30
- <sup>75</sup> Parsons B (2014) *JH Kenyon. A Short History* London: JH Kenyon p39
- <sup>76</sup> Farebrother register No 24 (Funeral on 1 May 1913)
- <sup>77</sup> A motor hearse was used at a funeral carried out in Gravesend on 15 December 1914 (Branch 312 entry 1936)
- <sup>78</sup> Maxwell Bros entry 1496 (Funeral on 22 October 1918)
- <sup>79</sup> Maxwell Bros entry 4259 (Funeral on 30 May 1919)
- <sup>80</sup> Maxwell Bros entry 1908 (Funeral on 19 September 1929)
- <sup>81</sup> FW Paine Register No 40 entry 17 (Funeral on 17 May 1930)
- <sup>82</sup> TH Ebbutt entry 71 (Funeral on 13 June 1931)
- <sup>83</sup> Maxwell Bros entry 2085 (Funeral on 4 May 1932) and entry 6 (Funeral on 24 August 1940)
- <sup>84</sup> FW Paine Register 64A entry 632A (Funeral on 27 July 1943)
- <sup>85</sup> Parsons (2012)
- <sup>86</sup> 'Expense of Funerals' *The Penny Magazine* 9 March 1884 pp94-96.
- <sup>87</sup> Wm Garstin WAC 948/3 Entry 137 (date of death: 22 November 1840)
- <sup>88</sup> Unknown Entry 50 (Funeral July/August 1857) John Young
- <sup>89</sup> See [www.dents.co.uk](http://www.dents.co.uk) (Accessed 2 May 2017)
- <sup>90</sup> Maxwell Bros entry 756 (Funeral in August 1883, date not specified)
- <sup>91</sup> Maxwell Bros entry 184 (Funeral on 25 June 1881)
- <sup>92</sup> G Hunt entry 15 (Funeral on 15 February 1882)
- <sup>93</sup> G Hunt entry 70 (Funeral on 8 October 1883)
- <sup>94</sup> WS Bond entry 347 (Funeral on 30 January 1905)
- <sup>95</sup> Maxwell Bros entry 48 (Funeral on 7 May 1880)
- <sup>96</sup> G Hunt entry 70 (Funeral on 8 October 1883)
- <sup>97</sup> Maxwell Bros entry 2168 (Funeral on 2 December 1899)
- <sup>98</sup> G Hunt entry 40 (Funeral on 12 December 1882)
- <sup>99</sup> Dickens. Household Words (Check)
- <sup>100</sup> Maxwell Bros entry 756 (Funeral date not stated. August 1883) Charlotte Remington Died 26 August 1883. For more about mutes see 'Mutes, feather men, pages, trappings Mr HA Kellaway Saw Birth of FD Organisation' (1946) *Funeral Service Journal* August pp463-464
- <sup>101</sup> CG Hatt Register 122

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- <sup>102</sup> Maxwell Bros entry 550 (Funeral on 13 May 1877)
- <sup>103</sup> C Farebrother entry 30 (Funeral on 4 January 1907)
- <sup>104</sup> Taylor L (1983) *Mourning Dress: A Costume and Social History* London: George Allen & Unwin p266. Parsons B (2004) 'Farewell to the Appendages of Sorrow: The End of the Funereal Plume' *BIFD Journal* Vol 18 No 3 September pp13-15. See also 'Funeral Horses' Plumes' (1913) *TUJ* March pp80-81; 'Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. Notice to Undertakers: Funeral Plumes on Horses' (1913) September *TUJ* p253 and 'The Passing of the Funeral Plume' (1914) *The Animal World* January p11 and 'Funeral Plumes' (1914) *The Animal World* February p22
- <sup>105</sup> See West J (1988) *Jack West Funeral Director: Forty Years with Funerals* Ilfracombe: Stockwell p112
- <sup>106</sup> For a discussion on this matter see Rose L (1986) *Massacre of the Innocents. Infanticide in Great Britain 1800-1939* London: Routledge & Kegan Paul
- <sup>107</sup> An Act for Registering Births, Deaths, and Marriages in England [17 August 1836] CAP LXXXVI Section XXVII
- <sup>108</sup> Registration of Births and Deaths 37 & 38 Vict Ch 88 Section 17
- <sup>109</sup> See Rose L (1986) *The Massacre of the Innocents. Infanticide in Britain 1800-1939* London: Routledge & Kegan Paul pp120-135. See also Parsons B (2017) 'Ninety Years on: The Registration of Births and Deaths Act 1926' *ICCM Journal* vol85 no 2 pp56-59
- <sup>110</sup> Dungavell I (2017) 'Why did they build the tunnel to Highgate Cemetery East?' *Highgate Cemetery Newsletter* April pp5-7
- <sup>111</sup> C Farebrother entry 232 (Funeral on 24 December 1908) and G Gamble entry 219 (Funeral on 16 February 1911)
- <sup>112</sup> Maxwell Bros entry 48 (Funeral on 7 May 1880)
- <sup>113</sup> Maxwell Bros entry 925 (Funeral on 25 October 1888)
- <sup>114</sup> Maxwell Bros entry 4259 (Funeral on 30 May 1919)
- <sup>115</sup> For example G Gamble entry 219 (Funeral on 16 February 1911)
- <sup>116</sup> Pridham M (2010) 'The Egyptian Vaults of Highgate Cemetery' Postgraduate Diploma in Genealogical Studies dissertation. University of Strathclyde, and Pridham M (2011) 'Victorian Social Aspiration: Highgate Cemetery Terrace Catacombs Deposits' MSC thesis University of Strathclyde
- <sup>117</sup> Garstin WAC 948/47 entry 174 (Funeral 27 January 1900)
- <sup>118</sup> Maxwell Bros entry 2345 (Funeral 1 Jan 1903)
- <sup>119</sup> Parsons B (2005) *Committed to the Cleansing Flame. The Development of Cremation in Nineteenth Century England* Reading: Spire Books pp269-270
- <sup>120</sup> Garstin WAC 948
- <sup>121</sup> See Superintendent's Day Book (Camden Local Studies) Catacomb No 41 Letter A.
- <sup>122</sup> Woollacott p58
- <sup>123</sup> FW Paine register No 21 entry 145. Grave 32357. Stone on grave. Cemetery fees £12 4s 0d
- <sup>124</sup> [https://www.historyfiles.co.uk/FeaturesBritain/Modern\\_DrucePortland01.htm](https://www.historyfiles.co.uk/FeaturesBritain/Modern_DrucePortland01.htm) (accessed 10 June 2019). See also Eatwell P (2015) *The Dead Duke, His Secret Wife, and the Missing Corpse. An Extraordinary Edwardian Case of Deception and Intrigue* New York Liveright Books/WW Norton. <http://thelondondead.blogspot.com/2014/07/the-posthumous-life-of-karl-marx.html> (accessed 10 June 2019)
- <sup>125</sup> Pridham (2011) p54
- <sup>126</sup> Garstin WAC 948/56 Entry 22 (7 November 1938) Philomena and Francoise Nailtzens. The cemetery fee was £52 10s. Eight bearers were required.
- <sup>127</sup> JH Kenyon register
- <sup>128</sup> Westminster Archives Centre 948/13 page 18
- <sup>129</sup> Author's collection (receipt no 2040). Grave No 18774
- <sup>130</sup> See *Highgate Cemetery. Saved by its Friends* (2016) London: Friends of Highgate Cemetery Trust p48