

# St Mary's Churchyard

**This Churchyard was opened in 1809. Its Mortuary Chapel, now a ruin, was designed by John Pinch and built in 1818 of materials salvaged from the demolition of the old 12th Century Parish Church of St Mary's Bathwick, which stood nearby. Originally the chapel was used for both funerals and baptisms until the new parish church was consecrated in 1820. In 1856 this churchyard was closed to new burials and these then took place in the St Mary the Virgin Churchyard which opened in the same year at Smallcombe Vale.**

1 William Farr MD, 23rd August 1809 aged 77. A Bath Chronicle report confirms he was a physician living (in retirement?) in Great Pulteney Street, who had forty years' service in Royal Naval hospitals. The significance of his headstone to us is that it marks the earliest grave so far found in this burial ground.

2 Here lie the three Frowd sisters, Elizabeth, Anne and Mary. The Misses Frowd lived at various addresses in Bathwick, latterly at Bayfield House, Bathwick Hill. The gravestone's inscription refers to Mary as the "beloved friend of Hannah More" and research reveals she was indeed a close and devoted companion to Miss More who herself came from a large family of unmarried sisters. Hannah More was a philanthropist and social reformer of great influence in Bristol and Somerset. She promoted education for ordinary people by setting up Sunday schools and publishing moral tracts. From 1792 to 1802 she lived at 76 Great Pulteney Street and, presumably, at that time met the Frowd sisters of Bathwick. When Hannah's fourth and last sister died, Mary Frowd went to live with her as

companion, housekeeper and co-worker. They lived together for fourteen years. In September 1833, as Hannah More was dying (aged 88), Mary Frowd knelt at her bed and read to her from the Bible. Hannah said: "I love you, my dear child, with fervency. It will be pleasant to you twenty years hence to remember that I said this on my deathbed." Mary Frowd received £1,120 in Hannah More's will.

3 We know little of Sophia Wren except that she lived at 41 Great Pulteney Street and was a great age (83) when she died there in 1849. Also, she was proud of her ancestry, as the plaque to her in St. Mary's Church is careful to remind us she was great granddaughter of Sir Christopher Wren.

4 Elizabeth Smith died in 1835 aged 45. Note the inscription: "During a period of nineteen years she was a faithful servant to a mistress who sincerely valued her and in whose house she expired." That house was in Darlington Street and she is one of several faithful servants in this burial ground whose funerals and graves were presumably paid for by their grateful employers.

5 A florid inscription to Euclid Shaw (1768-1842) tells of his many virtues and his popularity with his fellow citizens and his numerous offspring whom he brought up at 4 Darlington Street. Euclid Shaw had an unusual career: until his early forties he was a banker but was made bankrupt in 1810, possibly as a result of the economic collapse during the Napoleonic Wars. 1810 was the year that Rennie's Kennet and Avon canal was completed, linking London and Bristol, with the busy Sydney Wharf just yards from Euclid's home. So by 1812 he had set up as a flyboat operator. (A flyboat was a long, narrow, swift barge, specifically designed for canals.) His business flourished, offering (as an extant advertisement proclaims) 'cheap and expeditious canal conveyance', and for the rest of his long life he ran a national business carrying goods to and from London, Wiltshire, Dorset, Somerset, Devon and South Wales. And just when the railway arrived in Bath, both Euclid and the canal boom died.

6 Look over to your left and you will see a Roman stone coffin built into the southern boundary wall. The Rev. H. M. Scarth (rector of Bathwick 1841-1871) was an authority on the Roman antiquities that throughout the nineteenth century were turning up in abundance in Bath. The BRLSI holds a collection of his scholarly papers and publications on the subject. In 1854 he reported to the Somerset Archaeological Society that this coffin was found "in Bathwick, just at the foot of the hill".

Incidentally, it was Rev. Scarth who in 1856 had the sad duty to preside over the fifth burial in the new St. Mary's Churchyard in Smallcombe Vale – that of his own ten-year-old son Thomas.

17 Here is the grave of Mary Lawrence whose stone was erected by the grateful parish "to record the memory of humble worth" because for 68 years she had been a pew opener in both the old and the new St Mary's churches in Bathwick. She died aged 94 in 1860 which means she was probably opening pews from age 26 until her death! In fact, by 1860 the practice of renting out pews (and collecting those rents) was beginning to die out and in her lifetime Mary would have gained only modest recompense for her work e.g. in London churches in the 1830s the typical wage for a pew opener was two guineas a quarter. We know that Mary lived in Villa Place (demolished c. 1888) off Bathwick Street and we hope she was of a sweeter disposition than the "vessel of vinegar" encountered by David Copperfield in the church at his wedding who causes him to exclaim: "Why must pew openers always be the most disagreeable females procurable?"

18 Notice nearby another inscription of gratitude to a loyal servant: "Ann Lee, January 20th 1835 aged 78, a faithful domestic in Mrs Wilson's family forty years."

19 Here are John Kilvert (died 1861, aged 63) and two of his ten children, a 7-year-old son and a 22-year-old daughter. There is a plaque in St Mary's Church to John Kilvert and his wife Mary Ann recording that he was a "surgeon resident in this parish 37 years. Highly valued and respected for his professional skill and integrity and for his Christian benevolence especially to the poor." John Kilvert lived most of his life at 12 Darlington Street, Bathwick and kept a surgery and apothecary's shop at 33 Claverton Street, Widcombe. He was the uncle of the celebrated Rev Francis Kilvert who in the 1870s kept the Diary about the agricultural folk in his Welsh Border parish which has now become a classic. John Kilvert's brother, another Rev Francis Kilvert, was for many years Headmaster of a school at Claverton Lodge on Bathwick Hill, so the Kilvert family was one of Bathwick's most influential and they married into another such, the Stotherts (of Stothert and Pitt.)

20 Here is an officer of the parish, a sexton, Daniel Palmer, 1786-1839. A sexton at that time was a paid official assistant to the parish clerk, responsible for grave-digging, bell-ringing and odd jobs in and around the church.

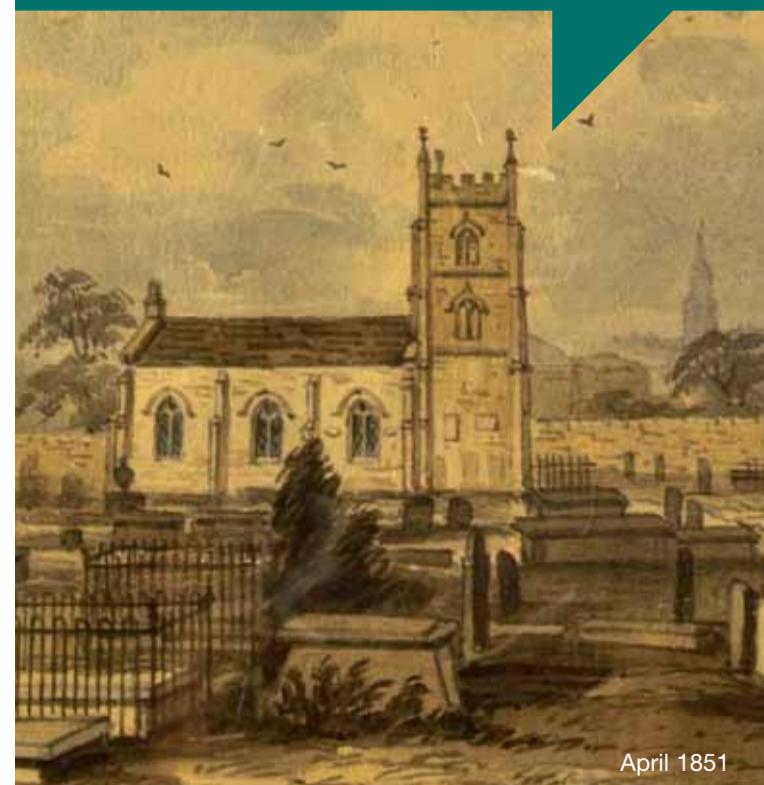
21 Eleanora Brisbane (1741-1823), daughter of Sir Michael Bruce of Stenhouse, married her neighbour Thomas Brisbane of Largs. The Brisbanes had been in Scotland since the Norman Conquest but it was Eleanora's son Sir Thomas Makdougall Brisbane (1773-1860) who was to give the Brisbane name to a city and a river in Australia. He studied astronomy and maths at Edinburgh University before joining the army and served as a Major-General at the Battle of Waterloo. On the recommendation of the Duke of Wellington he was sent in 1821 to administer the new colony of New South Wales. The first immigrants arrived there in 1823 – the year of his mother's death while she was staying at 6 Sydney Place, Bathwick. Sir Thomas remained Governor General of the colony until 1825 when he returned to Scotland and his greatest passions – building observatories and tracking the stars. He himself is buried in Largs but his (and his mother's) seventeenth century house there was demolished in the Second World War. Its oak front door was rescued and sent to Australia where it now forms the entrance to City Hall in Brisbane. Sir Thomas, however, would probably be most pleased that a crater on the moon has been named after him.

**This is a very special part of old Bathwick and we hope you enjoy your visit here. Please be careful to follow the designated paths and take litter away with you. The churchyard is normally open daily until dusk.**

This leaflet about St Mary's Churchyard can be made available in a range of community languages, large print, Braille, on tape, electronic and accessible formats from Haycombe Crematorium. Tel 01225 396020 Fax 01225 316339.

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## St Mary's next St John's Churchyard



April 1851

### Henrietta Road, Bath An historic churchyard trail

Produced in partnership with  
Friends of St Mary's Churchyard 01225 396020  
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7 This large chest tomb is the grave of Ellen Maria Bestandig (of Gottingen, Germany) who married the Irish Captain Peter La Touche and died in Bath in 1845. Notice the precision of her inscription: "... departed this life aged 29 years, 1 month and 12 days." But the real interest of this gravestone is the additional inscription of the heroic death of Ellen's son Charles in 1867.

Charles La Touche was born in 1835 and was therefore only ten when his mother died. Four years later his father also died and Charles was unofficially adopted by banker's grand-daughter, philanthropist and family friend Angela Burdett Coutts who recommended him to the Indian Army. He joined as an ensign in 1852 and served fourteen years in and around Bombay, with regular action against the Waghris (or Waghurees) a persistently rebellious tribe of Western India whom you will see named on the inscription. In 1866 Charles married a Hertfordshire girl and the young couple immediately returned to India where Charles, now a Captain in the Bombay Staff Corps, was just a year later killed by the 'banditti'. The inscription reads: "... lies buried at Macherda with the friend and brother in arms to avenge whose death he died. The monuments raised by the native chiefs and by his brother officers, by the one at Macherda, by the other in the church at Rajcote, perpetuate in India at once the memory of the zealous officer and the genial comrade".

We know a great deal about this action against the Waghris because Charles' Colonel wrote a long letter describing "the noble and gallant conduct of your protegee" to Miss Burdett Coutts who passed it to The Times to print as an obituary. Thirty soldiers, including Charles and his closest friend Captain Henry Hibberd, attacked a hill where the bandits were holding out. The Colonel writes: "Poor Captain Hibberd was shot mortally on reaching the crest. When I reached the crest I found Charlie all safe and doing deeds of valour. He had killed the leader with his own hand and as the rest of the gang broke and ran down the hill he pursued ... he shot one Wagheer dead and wounded another and dismounted from his horse to finish him with his sword when the man fired; the ball hit poor Charlie in the right side and stomach and he fell and as he did so killed his opponent with a thrust of his sword ... he expired in about a quarter of an hour, breathing messages of love to all his relatives and friends and begging Government might be told how he had done his duty ... I have buried him near this village in the same coffin with his bosom friend Henry Hibberd".

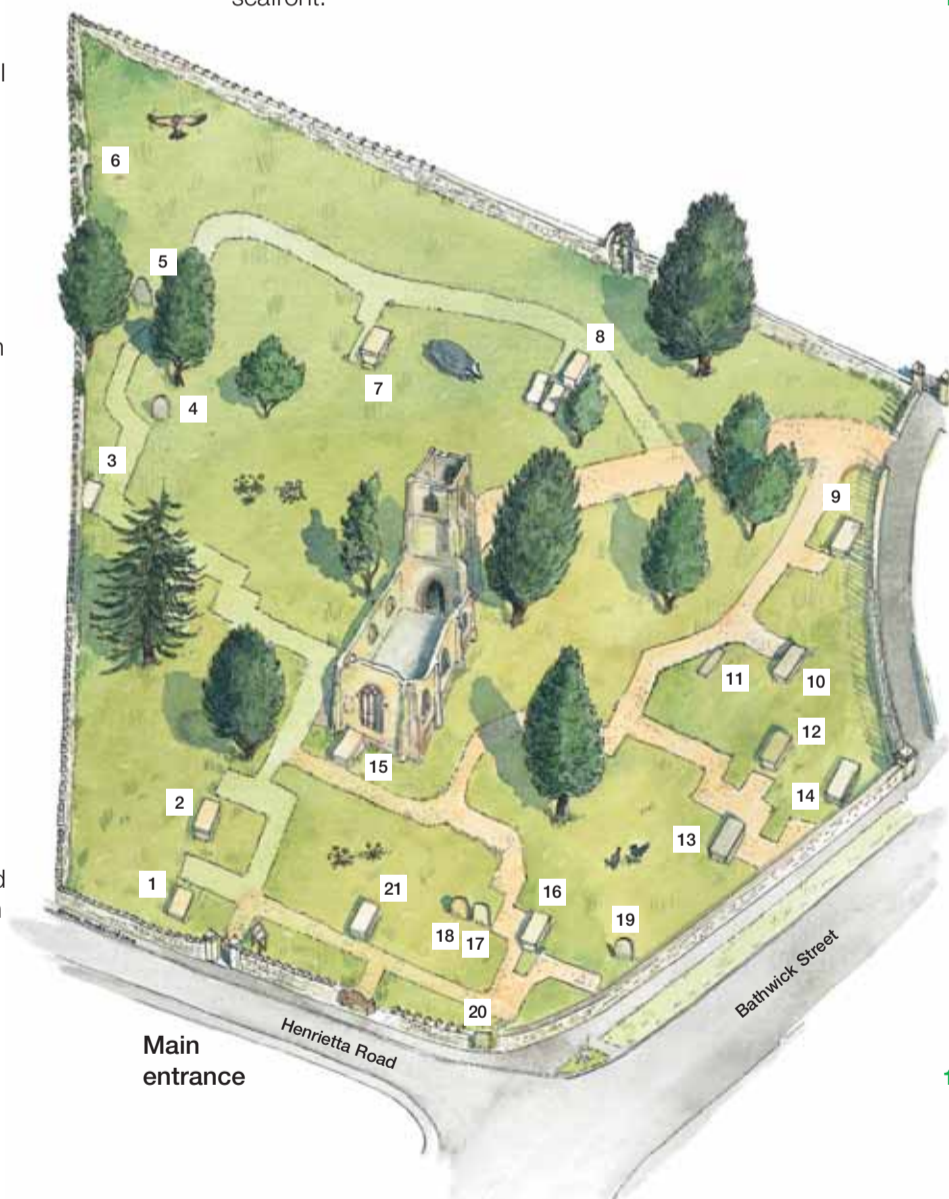
8 The nearest of the three large chest tombs is the grave of Dame Mary, daughter of Colonel Long of Tubney, Berkshire and wife of Sir William Wynn who was of an ancient, aristocratic Welsh family. She, 1766-1850; he, 1770-1855. They married in 1801 when she was 35 and he 31. William Wynn's family had intended him for a lawyer but "not liking so rascally a profession" he joined the Kings Light Dragoons and served with distinction in Holland where in 1799 he was dangerously wounded in action. Three ounces of grapeshot was surgically removed from his lungs and is on display today at the family house in Llanfendigaid! The injury left him a chronic invalid. Nevertheless he married Mary, retired on full pay in 1803 and in 1810 was both knighted and appointed Governor of Sandown Fort on the Isle of Wight. The fort, built by Henry VIII, was still then manned but after Waterloo it was run down and Sir William kept a house in Great Pulteney Street from the 1820s till his wife's death. Presumably Bath's hot water was beneficial to his damaged lungs!

N.B. Sandown Fort is now the Isle of Wight Zoo and Tiger Sanctuary.

9 Thomas Steele lived in Daniel Street, Bathwick and had a chemist's shop in New Bond Street. His death in 1859 was much mourned by his brother freemasons. The Bath Chronicle of 27th January 1859 recounts a Lodge meeting at which tributes were paid: "He was never cold or indifferent to the wants and anxieties of others; his words were always kind and his actions, if possible, kinder.... When occupying the several offices to which at different times he was appointed in Lodge and Chapter, he never

failed to perform the duties incumbent on him with fidelity and judgement." His brother masons established a fund to raise the memorial tablet to Thomas Steele which can still be seen in Bath Abbey today. The Chronicle also gives affecting detail of the interment here: "The funeral procession was met at the Bathwick burial ground by a large number of our most respectable fellow-citizens, freemasons who testified by their demeanour how deeply they felt the loss of their late friend and brother. In fact, there was scarcely a dry eye in the assemblage."

10 Here is Charles Gee Jones who died 20th May 1851 aged 45. It was, as the inscription states, "through his exertions the Shipwrecked Fishermen and Mariners Society was first formed". Charles Jones was in his short life a pilot guiding ships into Bristol; landlord of the Pulteney Arms, Bathwick; and, again as the inscription states, for twenty years in service to Mr John Rye a retired medical man living in Great Pulteney Street. In early 1839 Jones drew Mr Rye's attention to a terrible disaster when in a storm several fishing boats of Clovelly were lost with all hands. The Society has a portrait (1844) of Jones reading a report of the disaster to Mr Rye from the Bath and Cheltenham Gazette. As a result Mr Rye drew up a scheme for a charity to aid the widows and orphans and very quickly (in March 1839) Queen Victoria agreed to be its Patron. The charity therefore became a Royal Benevolent Society and is still very active, distributing over £1 million of donations a year to three thousand cases of distress amongst the seafaring community. The Princess Royal is the current Patron: look out for the large red and white collecting boxes (made from genuine, detonated First World War mines) on the seafront.



11 Here is a mystery! A low (fallen?), only partially worked stone which is anonymous except for the word "Reeves's". Is it a memorial? A Reeves family was for generations through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries stone-cutters and monumental masons in Bath with yards and showrooms mainly in the area of Charles Street, New King Street and Monmouth Place. By the nineteenth century they were very successful and grand calling themselves "Statuarists and Marble Masons". Some of the memorial tablets on the walls of Bath Abbey are by Reeves and so is a high proportion of the most expensive gravestones in the churchyard of St Thomas a Becket, Widcombe.

12 This inscription tells the sad but sadly common story of the Thorne family of Laura Place. The four children of Peregrin and Mary Thorne, Euphemia, 12, Frances, 11, Mary, 7 and Arthur Horatio, 3, all died within six days of each other from the dreaded streptococcal infection scarlet fever. "These lovely buds so young and fair called hence by early doom, just came to show how sweet such flowering in paradise shall bloom".

13 Dr Charles Hannings Wilkinson (c.1763-1850) was a surgeon, inventor, linguist and lecturer and researcher in the new sciences of gas and electricity. He came to reside in Bath (eventually in Sydney Place and 55 Great Pulteney Street) in 1809 and quickly made his mark on the city by modernising the Kingston Baths replacing the dangerous, lead hot-water pipes with tin. His vivid lectures at Kingston Buildings on chemistry and electricity became nationally famous, attended by the chic and the avant-garde (including even Mary Shelley). In 1818 Dr Wilkinson was appointed Superintendent of the new Gas Works on the Lower Bristol Road and triumphed the following year when thousands flocked to see the first Bath gas street-lighting system turned on. He lived out his retirement deeply involved in the Bath Philosophical and Literary Society, still researching, experimenting and teaching. As his gravestone says: "Here science mourns a son."

14 Notice here the grave of the Rev Jerimiah Awdry, vicar of Felsted, Essex, who lived for a short time in Johnstone Street, Bathwick and lived 1774 to 1859. He was the great uncle of the Rev Wilbert Vere Awdry (1911-1997) writer of the Thomas the Tank Engine stories for children.

15 This large chest tomb is the grave of 'Mr John Pinch of the City of Bath, Architect, who died March 11 1827 aged 57' and his wife Martha (1830) and their two sons, John (1849) and Charles (1854). The two Johns, Pinch the Elder and Younger, were among the greatest architects of nineteenth century Bath and especially prolific in Bathwick. The Bath Chronicle recorded the death of John Pinch the Elder at his house in Duke Street: "Architect for upwards 30 years in the city. A man of great talent and experience in his professional pursuits, an affectionate husband and father, a warm-hearted and sincere friend."

Among Pinch the Elder's fine buildings still to be seen are New Sydney Place (1808), Daniel Street (1810), St Mary's Church (1814-20), Cavendish Crescent (1815-17), Cavendish Place (1808-16) and the mortuary chapel in this burial ground beside which he now rests. In his Architectural Guide to Bath, Thom Gorst writes: "There were different ways in which builders dealt with the city's contours ... The master of this was John Pinch the Elder whose subtle ways of stepping down the composition down the hill provided a fitting finale to this chapter of Bath's development." And the great example of that is Raby Place, Bathwick (1818-25).

Pinch the Younger's works include St.Saviour's Church, Larkhall (1829-32), the redesign of the west side of Queen Square (1830) and the attic storey of the Holburne Museum (1836).

16 Here is the grave of Sir Joseph Dacre Appleby Gilpin, 1744-1834 (aged 90). He lived in Old Sydney Place. The inscription records he was "many years physician to the force and Deputy Inspector of Regimental Hospitals". By the eighteenth century every regiment included a surgeon and an assistant surgeon to run a small hospital to treat the wounded and sick. These soldier-surgeons were regularly inspected by civilian medical men like Gilpin most of whom were very eminent and tried to ensure high standards. As well as regimental hospitals he would have been responsible for any hospital-ships in his area. Gilpin appears to have worked mainly in Northern Britain and the West Indies. He retired in 1814 and presumably then came to live in Bath as so many retired medical and military men did.