

# THE GRAVEYARD DATABASE

## The Background

Since the foundation of St. John the Divine in 1866, burials have been carried out in our extensive churchyard until very recently, the most recent being only ten years ago. We still inter ashes, following cremation, but these are not burials in the accepted sense, and they have not been included in the present survey. Leaving them aside, we have a total of **959** identifiable memorials, (including 75 with fragmentary information or none at all, which have been included because their sites appear on the Area Plans). Some of these are grave stones which cannot be read, because they lie face downwards and are too heavy to lift without special equipment. The majority of these graves contain more than one body, so that the total number of individuals with a complete record on these memorials is **1662**. Some of these have probably been buried elsewhere, but are included in the list *unless* they are actually stated to be buried elsewhere. There are, of course, far more graves which have no associated memorial, because Horninglow has always had a large population of folk with very limited means, who could not afford the expense of a stone. Their names are to be found in the Register of Burials, which is kept in the Vestry, but we have no means of knowing exactly where they lie.

## Why have we done the Survey?

There is a statutory requirement for the Churchwardens to keep a record of both burials and the associated memorials, so long as the churchyard is under our care. From time to time, we do get enquiries about the site of specific graves, especially from visitors from the Commonwealth, who have made the trip in order to trace their family roots. Happily, we have been able to help some of these visitors, but we wish to make it easier to find memorials, when people arrive, armed with a name and a date of death. With the early census returns being now available on the Internet, there is a growing interest in tracing ancestors and in researching family trees. Gravestones are a valuable resource in providing information, provided that the information is readily accessible.

## The Scheme of the Survey

In order to identify a specific memorial, they have all been given a serial number, known as the **Grave Number**. Adjacent to it is the **Area** in which it is found. The precise location of the memorial can then be found by referring to the relevant **Area Map**.

Where there are two or more individuals in a particular grave, their entries are identified by letters, (a,b,c etc) in the column to the *right* of the Grave Number. In some cases, there are five or more persons recorded on a single memorial, (though some of these may be buried elsewhere). The commonest pattern is for a husband and wife to be buried in the same grave, but children and siblings are often commemorated, and sometimes sons who died on active service in France or elsewhere. This last group have been identified with a special mark, (#), in the right hand 'Relationship' column.

## The War Graves

As many will know, the Graveyard contains a number of War Graves, most of which have memorials of the standard type supplied by the War Graves Commission. There are also a few from the early part of the Great War, which have conventional graves.

Graveyard database, plans and documentation originally compiled by Adam Johns, Church Warden at St. John the Divine, Horninglow.

Adapted for St. John's website by Stephen Oakes 2013

## How to use the Graveyard Database

The database is available in four formats:

graveyard.xls	Excel format, also readable by OpenOffice™
graveyard.csv	a general purpose format for any spreadsheet
graveyard.pdf	for those who do not have a spreadsheet installed on their computer.
graves-numerical.pdf	a list of graves in numerical order.

To find a grave you need to have a grave number and you need to know the area of the graveyard where the grave is to be found. The area is denoted by a code such as A(1), G(2a) etc.

The databases are sorted into alphabetical order by surname, so that if you know the surname of the person you are trying to find, it is relatively straightforward to locate the grave number and location of the grave. Spreadsheets are also searchable and can be reordered as required.

# This mark, in the right hand column, denotes the memorial of a son killed abroad on active service, but not buried here.

The procedure is:

- Look up the Surname in the alphabetical list in the database, or search for it.
- Find the relevant Christian name, and check that it matches the date of death.
- Note the **Area**, and also the **Grave Number**.
- Print off the Key to Areas
- Print the relevant Area Plan
- Find the grave you want on the plan and note where it is in relation to the landmarks that are marked on all the plans.
- Some graves are difficult to find and you may find it useful to mark on your plan the names of people buried in nearby graves or the names of people buried in graves at the start of the row.
- Visit the churchyard and with the Key to Areas and the relevant area map you should be able to find the grave you are looking for.

All the plans mark:

- Buildings, walls, hedges, paths, steps and notable trees or bushes
- Distinctive gravestones that can be used as markers to compare with the location of the grave you wish to find. War Graves are particularly distinctive because of their consistent design and the close cropped grass around them.

The plans all have the top of the sheet facing Rolleston Road, except for areas C(b), G(1a), G(1b), G(2a) and G(2b). These are all accessed from the bottom path and are all facing towards Harpur Avenue.

Much of the Graveyard gets overgrown in the summer and autumn, and this can make location difficult, especially in the case of headstones which have been laid flat.

Recently, we have made great efforts to mow the whole area, with the help of the day-release prisoners from Sudbury, but there will still be times when foliage is rampant.

In a project of this complexity, there will inevitably be some errors. Please contact [webmaster@stjohnshorninglow.org.uk](mailto:webmaster@stjohnshorninglow.org.uk) if there are problems with the database or plans, or if you find errors in the database.