

ST PETER'S CHURCH,
Petersham, London Borough of Richmond

Survey of Churchyard Monuments

by

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Historical Analysis & Research Team
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English Heritage**

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THE CHURCHYARD, St PETER'S CHURCH, PETERSHAM, LB RICHMOND

We have been contacted by Mr Bill Crossley, a churchwarden, who is concerned at the condition of some of the outdoor monuments here. None are at present listed. The opportunity has been taken to assess the tombs and suggest a priority list for future conservation.

Historical Background

'Of uncommon charm', re Pevsner, St Peter's church, listed Grade II*, has some medieval elements but is essentially composed of 17th, 18th and 19th century work. Of brick, partly rendered, it retains a remarkable pre-Victorian interior with a full set of box pews (the finest such in greater London) and has a number of good internal monuments. Originally a chapel-of-ease to Kingston, the church attained semi-parochial status following a 1769 Act which united it with Kew to form a new parish. Petersham's long history as an aristocratic suburban retreat close to Richmond and Hampton Court has ensured that an exceptional number of noblemen have lived and died here: Stuarts, Dysarts, Montagus and Tollemaches abound. As James Thorne wrote in 1876, 'the churchyard contains the remains of many persons eminent in place or merit'. Its location, adjoining the river meadows and set amid the exceptional Georgian houses of Petersham, only adds to the interest and importance of the churchyard.

For a village as small as Petersham, the churchyard is exceptionally large, testifying to its centuries-old appeal as a place of lasting rest. Petersham was a place of retirement: hence the burials greatly outnumbered baptisms, according to Lysons¹. The church stands in the south-east corner, directly off the lane which leads to the water meadows and Richmond. The churchyard was extended to the east in 1801, to the north in 1867, and again to the north in 1919: the boundary of each area is readily sensed through shifts in alignment and tomb types.

There are a number of early views of the churchyard, but none are entirely reliable in matters of detail when it comes to identifying individual tombs.

Survey of Monuments

The churchyard was inspected on 19th January and 19th March 1999. Substantial research has already been carried out into the church: Charles Warren's 1978 history is comprehensive and reliable, and a survey plan of all the tombs was prepared in 1977 (and last revised in 1995) by C. Vines and J.R. Plant which marks the 717 monuments then in situ: the numbers allotted in this survey are used here too. Selected tombs are listed here in

¹Burials averaged 8 per year, baptisms 3 for 1682-91; the figures for 1780-89 were 20 and 9.

order, starting in the north-west corner and working to the south-east. By no means all monuments of note or age are described below, but the outstanding tombs are all covered.

[93] Miss Frances Slack d.1876

Large York headstone. Inscription states 'for more than 60 years lived in the household of the late Louisa, Countess of Dysart and her family. She died at Ham House'. Condition: fair, some weathering and staining.

[102] Captain Paul Amedée Francis Coutts Stuart d.1889

Marble plinth on square two-stage base. Inscription on east face records he was the son of Lord Dudley Coutts Stuart and Princess Christine Alexandrine Egypta, daughter of Lucien Bonaparte, and that the tomb was erected by his uncle, Prince Louis-Lucien, 'the only surviving son of Lucien Bonaparte'. Condition: good, recently partially cleaned.

[153] Glyn Philpot RA d.1937

Pink granite coped ledger with cross. Philpot was an outstanding portraitist and muralist. The monument is disappointingly conventional. Condition: good.

War Memorial

Tall grey granite cross on square plinth, inscribed on west side 'To God alone be the praise. In glorious memory of those who fell in the Great War. Their names liveth for ever more'. Twenty five names are listed around the plinth to the dead of both wars. Condition: fair, some algae staining.

[180] Charlotte and Henry Cain d.1871

Portland stone headstone, signed S.J. Griffiths carver no. 10 Callow Street Chelsea. Gabled headstone with pinnacles and cross finial, with high portrait reliefs set within trefoil-headed arches below a bordered relief of the hand of God; relief of anchor at base. An exceptional Gothic Revival headstone with unusual portraits of the deceased. Condition: fair, some weathering.

[253] Jonathan Cape 1879-1960

Grey granite headstone, roughly hewn, with the logo of this well-known publisher over the inscription. Condition: good.

[267] Russell d.1773

Brown brick chest with Portland slab on top. No tomb of this date or name is listed in Lysons' 1796 survey. Condition: bad, owing to a tree being planted too close which is now pushing the tomb over.

[276] Edward Cumming Esq. d.1818

Portland stone chest with inscribed York stone ledger slab. Latticed angle pilasters, raised inscription panel with drip mould on south side. Remains of protective coats of limewash evident. One of a group of three distinctive and identical monuments originally along the northern edge of the churchyard. Condition: fair.

[277] Unidentified, c.1818

As above, but with a badly weathered marble inscription panel. Condition otherwise fair.

[278] Mary Carter, Spinster c.1818

As above, but with damage to ledger, south-west corner and drip mould. Condition otherwise fair.

[279] Mary, Lady Buck d.1813

Portland stone arca with pedimental eared cover, inset *tabula ansata* with marble inscription panel on rectangular base. Epitaph given in Warren (1978), 124. History: Lady Buck was the widow of Sir Charles Buck, Bart. of Hanby Grange, Lincs. A bold example of the austere neo-classical tomb. Condition: fair, but inscription badly weathered and scarcely legible.

[283] Rev. Thomas Monk d.1809

York headstone with scrolled top. Epitaph opens 'formerly Professor of Divinity and Belles Lettres in the Royal College of Vendôme. He was Pious without Bigotry and bore the afflictions arising from an impaired state of health with pious resignation'. Condition: good, but algae-stained.

[293] Unidentified, c.1760

Marble. Collapsed chest with upswept cover supporting a flaming urn with gadrooned bowl. Condition: bad, chest has collapsed and its components stacked; evidence of crude consolidating repairs and much ivy growth.

[295] Nicholas Sprimont d.1771

Red brick chest with Pennant stone ledger and Portland base and west end. Inscription panel on west end of Portland stone states 'the family vault of Mr Francis Deschamps of St Anne's Westminster erected in the year 1771' but the ledger identifies it as the tomb of Sprimont. History: Sprimont was a Belgian-born silversmith who rose to become proprietor of the Chelsea porcelain factory. Condition: fair, but north side has suffered from ivy growth. One of around a dozen brick chest tombs here.

[319] Mary and Agnes Berry d.1852

York stone slab on low Portland stone base. Epitaph states they were buried 'amidst scenes which in life they had frequented and loved'. History: Mary (b.1763) and Agnes (1764) were intimates of Horace Walpole, who left them a house neighbouring Strawberry Hill; Mary Berry nearly married him, and became his literary executor as well as writing a number of plays and historical works in her own right; see her entry in the DNB. She wrote in her journal in July 1836, while in Paris, 'it is now I figure Petersham and our quiet garden there as everything on earth that I most covet... there I feel I can patiently wait for the last stroke which is to send me to the neighbouring country church-yard, where I have long intended to have my bones deposited' (quoted in Thorne, 1876). Condition: fair, but damage to west end of base.

[324] MB and AB c1700

Portland stone. A very early headstone with a scrolled top, incised with M:B and A:B. The rest of the inscription has weathered away. Condition: Fair.

[361] Mrs Eliza Howell d.1763

Chest of red and yellow gauged bricks with Pennant stone ledger. Brickwork to north face starting to collapse. Condition: bad.

[386] Mrs Mary Abell d.1830

Portland stone chest tomb with ledger. Fielded panels to sides and ends. Condition: fair.

[388] Nathaniel Halhed d.1730

Statuary marble pedestal formerly surmounted with an urn (detached at time of inspection), standing on a stepped base; railings shown in situ in a lithograph by Adrian Allinson, repr. In Robert Byron, *Imperial Pilgrimage* (1937), opp. 49. Inscription panels on east and west faces badly weathered: only legible name is James Halhed, son of Nathaniel, d.1757 but partial inscription given in Warren (1978), 133. The Halheds were City men, one of whom (d.1786) served as a governor of the Bank of England. Not listed in Lysons. Formerly one of the most lavish tombs in the churchyard, and an example of the small number of outdoor funerary monuments of marble, comparable to the listed tomb of Henry Joynes (d.1754) in Hendon churchyard. Condition: bad.

[447] Mr Francis Barker d.1710

Portland and Pennant stone chest adjoining the east end of the church. Angle pilasters with reliefs of trophies of death suspended from fillets in the manner of John van Nost (the south-west pilaster has been inserted upside-down); armorial relief on east end. Inscription on south side describes Barker as a Citizen of London: 'This monument was erected by his sorrowful Relict Eliz. & his Eldest son Thomas Barker'. Ledger slab bears inscription to Mr Joseph Christopher, and north side inscription commemorates Mrs Sarah Crean d.1836: the burial vault over which this tomb stands having presumably left the Barker family. An outdoor tomb of exceptional quality for so early a date, showing the clear influence of contemporary interior monuments, and surviving in surprisingly good condition. Condition: fair.

[461] Richard, 2nd Earl of Mount Edgcumbe 1764-1839

Portland stone arca with pedimented cover with acroteria, on rectangular sarcophagus. Epitaph reads in part: 'who during a great portion of his life chose this neighbourhood for a residence, and dying at Richmond desired that his mortal remains should not be borne to the distant tomb of his ancestors but be deposited in this churchyard. Let us hope that his immortal part mingles thus with rich and poor in that abode prepared by Christ alike for all who trust in him'. The Edgcumbes were buried at Maker, Cornwall close to their seat of Mount Edgcumbe on Plymouth Sound. Lord Mount Edgcumbe was a keen amateur actor and supporter of Italian opera; his desire to be buried near his suburban seat displays his urbanity and a romantic sensibility. The tomb (which bears extensive traces of early layers of black paint) is a good instance of the archaeologically-inspired late phase of Neo-classicism; his wife Lady Sophia Hobart had caused the Buckinghamshire mausoleum at

Blickling, by Bonomi, one of the outstanding monuments of Neo-classicism, to be built in the mid-1790s. Thorne (1876) dismissed it as 'large and showy'. Condition: fair, but much discolouration from algae.

[469] Bushell d.1726

Portland stone. Low chest with squat pilasters and heavy inscribed ledger. Epitaph worn, but refers to the wife of David Bushell (not mentioned in Lysons). An early, rudimentary, variant of the chest tomb. Condition: poor, ledger loose.

[482] Unidentified c1800

Rubbed red brick chest with inset panels, Pennant stone ledger slab with inscription (no longer legible) and Portland stone base. Railings no longer exist. Condition: bad, mortar washed away and bricks loose; east end falling apart and base now loose; further damage from ivy likely.

[485] John Rudd d.1775

Portland stone chest with Pennant ledger slab. Fluted angle pilasters with cabling flank fielded side and end panels. Inscription on ledger slab states 'this stone was given to his memory by Caroline Baroness of Greenwich' (daughter of the Duke of Argyll and a baroness in her own right) .

[492] Hannah Penn d.1856 and Richard Penn d.1863

Curved granite slab commemorating the resting place of two great-grandchildren of William Penn, founder of Pennsylvania. An instance of the Victorian preoccupation with lineage and the great men of history. Condition: fair.

[507] Mr William Ashton d.1729

Portland stone. Headstone with scrolled top containing relief of a skull with crossed palms and flowers, emblematic of the ultimate triumph over death. Ashton was 'late of the Parish of St Martin in the Fields'. Condition: fair.

[539] Harriet, Marchioness of Lothian d.1833

Portland stone chest tomb with shallow coped cover with cross; arcade of quatrefoils to each side with six-pointed stars and armorial achievement in centre; inscription in lead letters runs around frieze. History: the daughter of the 3rd Duke of Buccleuch, Harriet was the second wife of William, 6th Marquis of Lothian and sometime Grand Master of Freemasons (which may account for the stars). The tomb would seem to date from later in the century than 1833: probably erected after the death in 1857 of Lady Caroline Scott, also commemorated here. Condition: fair, but discoloured and brick base loose in places.

[547] Mary Karze d.1686

Portland stone. Headstone with tall scrolled top enclosing a relief of a skull and crossbones. Of considerable interest as an extremely early surviving headstone with a legible relief of this sort (cf. Greenford, 1653 and 1674). The oldest legible tomb in Petersham churchyard. Condition: fair.

[558] Anne Halliday d.1840

Portland stone chest surmounted with large draped urn. Condition: fair.

[559] Albert Henry Scott d.1865

Pink and grey granite stepped ledger by George Gilbert Scott RA. Incised rinceau decoration, inscription in Lombardic capitals and, on the cover, an incised cross. Decorative bosses of onyx with incised sacred monograms. Inscription reads: 'Student of Exeter College. Oxford the third and dearly loved son of George Gilbert Scott and Caroline Scott of the Manor House at Ham & Great grandson of the Revd Thomas Scott sometime Rector of Aston: Sandford: Bucks who departed this life in faith and peace Jan:XXX MDCCCLXV in the XXIst year of his age to whose most sweet memory his sorrowing parents in sure and certain hope raise this memorial'. A Latin inscription runs around the lower stage of the base. Two yew trees have been planted at the western (head) end of the tomb. History: son of the architect, Albert Scott died from a chill caught while rowing nearby on the Thames; George Gilbert Scott's mother's family, the Gilberts, came from Petersham. 'I earnestly pray God never to let his image be dimmed in my memory, but to keep it ever fresh in my thoughts': Sir George Gilbert Scott, *Personal and Professional Recollections* (1879; G. Stamp ed., Stamford 1995), 236-9. Condition: fair, but dirty and missing the topmost onyx boss.

[566] Charles Aldridge d.1736

Portland headstone with scrolled top enclosing a relief of skull, bones and flowers, an allegory of resurrection. Condition: poor, weathered, dirty and hidden by dustbins.

[577] Richard Seymour d.1734

Portland stone. Headstone with scrolled top containing relief of skull, jaw and bone on ground. Condition: fair.

[586] Unidentified c1700

Pennant stone slab, cracked at west end, on low base. Inscription very weathered: possibly commemorates a person named 'Leat' or similar, with a date of 1679 (no-one is listed as being buried in this year in the burial register, however) or 1699. In certain light, a relief of a skull and crossbones is just decipherable; in other conditions there is no trace of such a device. Whatever, this would appear to be a very early ledger slab. Condition: bad.

[587] Eleanor Tollemache d.1800

Portland stone chest tomb with York stone ledger slab. Rusticated angle pilasters, fluted pilasters with cabling on centre of north and south sides. Inscribed along north side of slab: 'this vault is the property of John Long of this parish 1826'. There are a number of later Tollemache tombs elsewhere in the churchyard. Condition: fair.

[593] Hon. George Murray d.1833

Tapering sarcophagus of Portland stone on ball feet resting on a broad slab. Murray was the son of Alexander, 8th Lord Ellibank, who died aged fifteen 'from an attack of the scarlet fever'. Condition: poor, rusting iron cramps are splitting the sarcophagus's north face, the surface of which is blistering through the action of a sulphurous crust.

[601] Captain George Vancouver d.1798

Portland stone arched head and foot stone, set within fairly modern kerb. Headstone inscribed 'Captain George Vancouver Died in the Year 1798 Aged 40'; foot stone bears inscription regarding restoration of the tomb by the Native Sons of British Columbia and upkeep by the City of Vancouver. History: Vancouver rose from a seaman under Captain Cook to command the ship Discovery which made a voyage of exploration in 1791-95 in the Pacific and along the western seaboard of North America, which he was the first to delineate accurately. He circumnavigated the island which now bears his name. A leading figure in British maritime exploration and a figure of huge interest to North Americans. A wall monument within the church, erected by the Hudson's Bay company in 1841, provides a fuller eulogy. Condition: good.

[627] Major General Sir Jeremiah Bryant CB d.1845

Tall marble plinth supporting a draped urn, on stepped base. Bryant served with the Bengal Army. Condition: fair.

[638] Unidentified c.1820

Low brick base with heavy Portland stone ledger with an intact set of spearheaded railings with urn finials to the corner posts. Condition: fair, but some bricks loose and north-west urn finial missing.

[640] Elizabeth Grey d.1760

Rubbed red brick chest with heavy rounded Pennant ledger slab, standing on a Portland stone base. Tomb erected by widower, 'sensible of his irreparable loss'; John Gray Esq. followed her to the grave in 1769, re Lysons. Condition: fair.

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Historical Analysis and Research Team
25th August 1999.

SOURCES

C. Vines and J.R. Plant, *Saint Peter's Church, Petersham, Surrey. Register of Graves* (1977, revised 1980, 1983, 1984, 1995). This scaled plan has been invaluable in charting the tombs. The key is published in Warren (1978).

Robert Byron, *Imperial Pilgrimage* (London Transport 1937).

Bridget Cherry and Nikolaus Pevsner, *Buildings of England London 2 South* (rev. ed. 1994), 514-15.

G.E.C.[okayne] ed., *The Complete Peerage* (1910-40, repr. Stroud 1982).

Dictionary of National Biography

Daniel Lysons, *Environs of London I* (1796), 399-402.

George Gilbert Scott, *Personal and Professional Recollections* (1879; rev. ed. by G. Stamp, Stamford 1995), esp. 236-39.

James Thorne, *Handbook to the Environs of London* (1876), 468-9.

Charles D. Warren, *History of St Peter's Church, Petersham, Surrey* (1978), esp. Ch. XIII.

National Monuments Record: photographs

Richmond Local Studies Library, collection of prints and photographs.

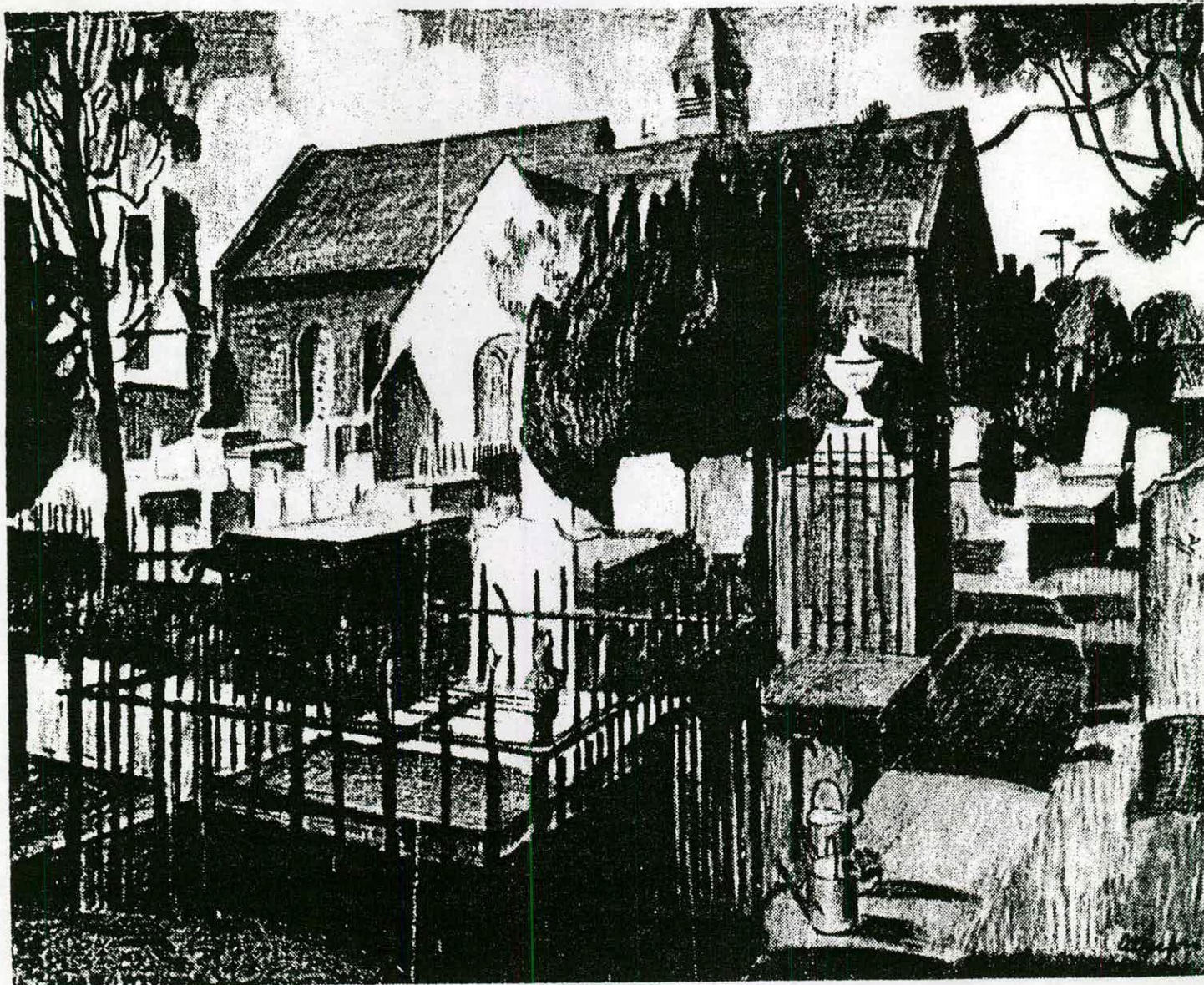
Surrey Record Office, Woking: P48/1/1-13, burial registers 1574-1878.



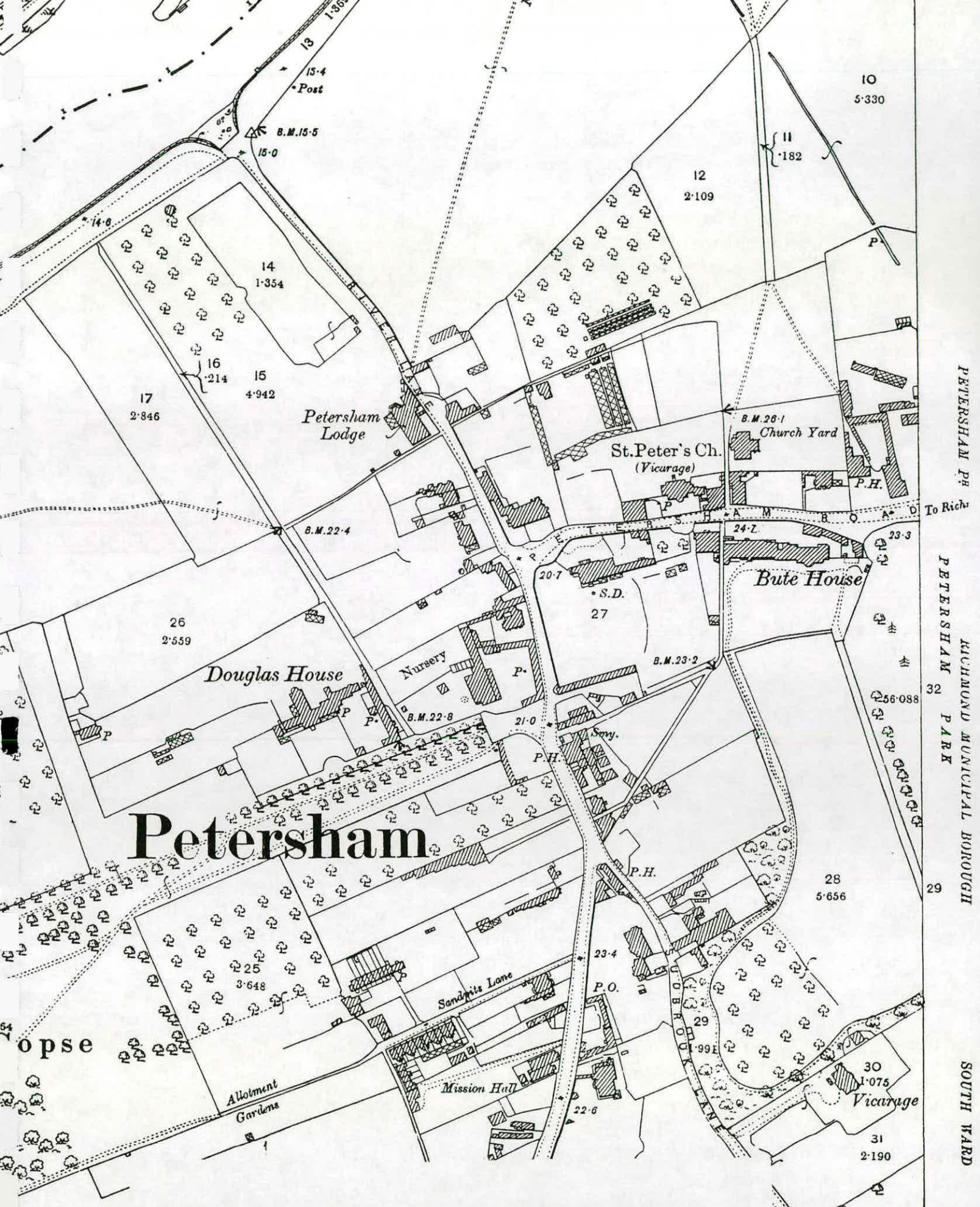
1 Petersham Church from south-east. Engraving pub. 1810 by S. Woodburn
(Richmond Local Studies Library)



PETERSHAM CHURCH.
SURREY.



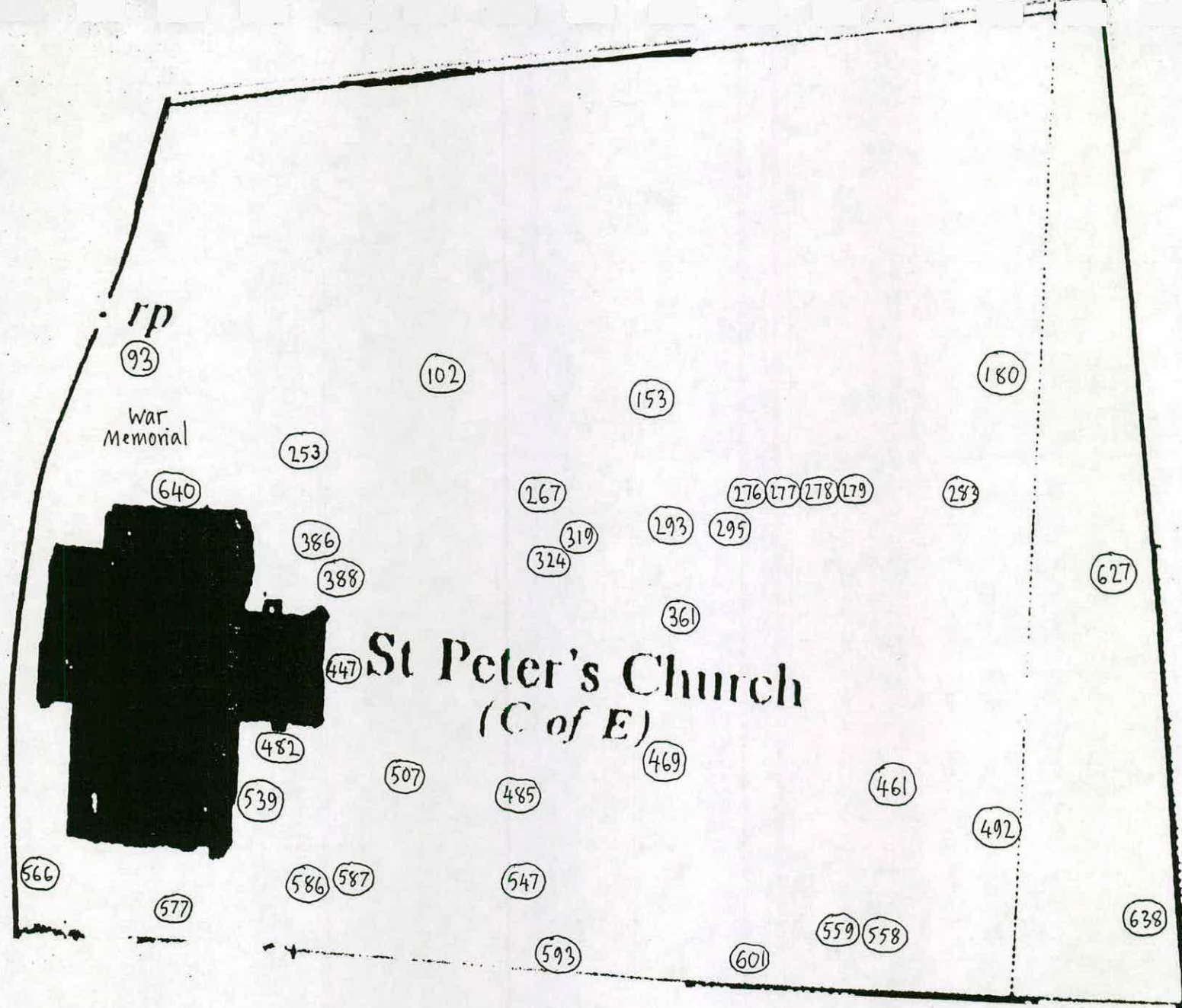
3 Petersham Churchyard. Lithograph by Adrian Allinson (from Robert Byron, *Imperial Pilgrimage*, London Transport, 1937)



Petersham

Ordnance Survey 25" map, 1894-96 edition (London Sheet CXXII)

PETERSHAM PH
 PETERSHAM PARK
 RICHMOND MUNICIPAL BOROUGH
 SOUTH WARD
 RICHMOND UN



Location Map (taken from current Ordnance Survey map) showing approximate locations of selected monuments, using numbering system from Vines and Plant's 1977-95 survey



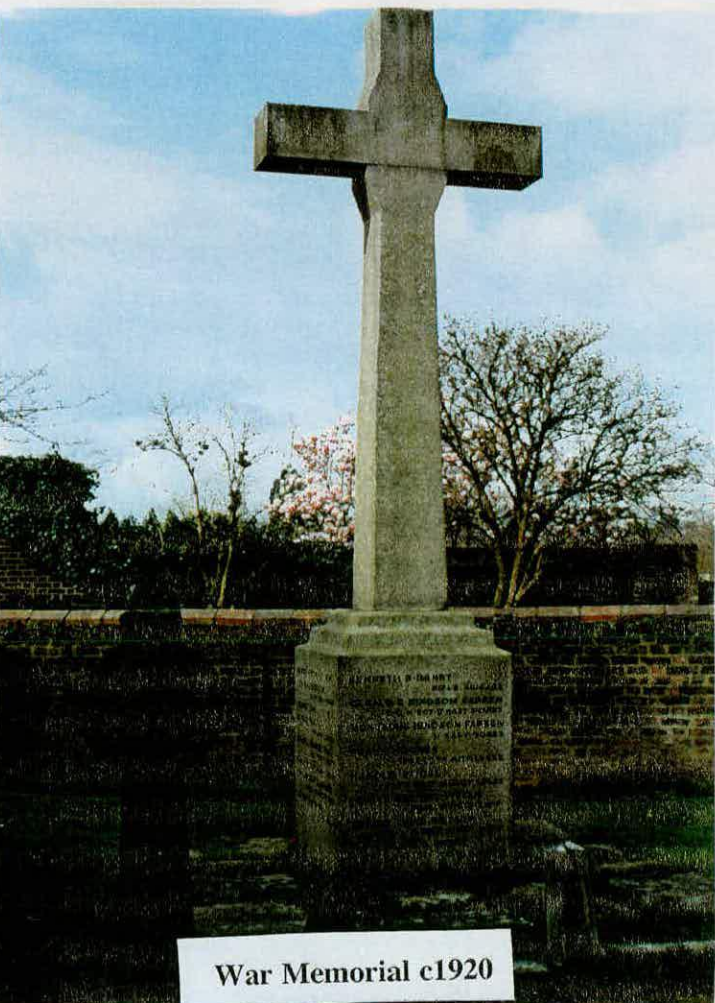
[93] Miss Frances Slack d.1876



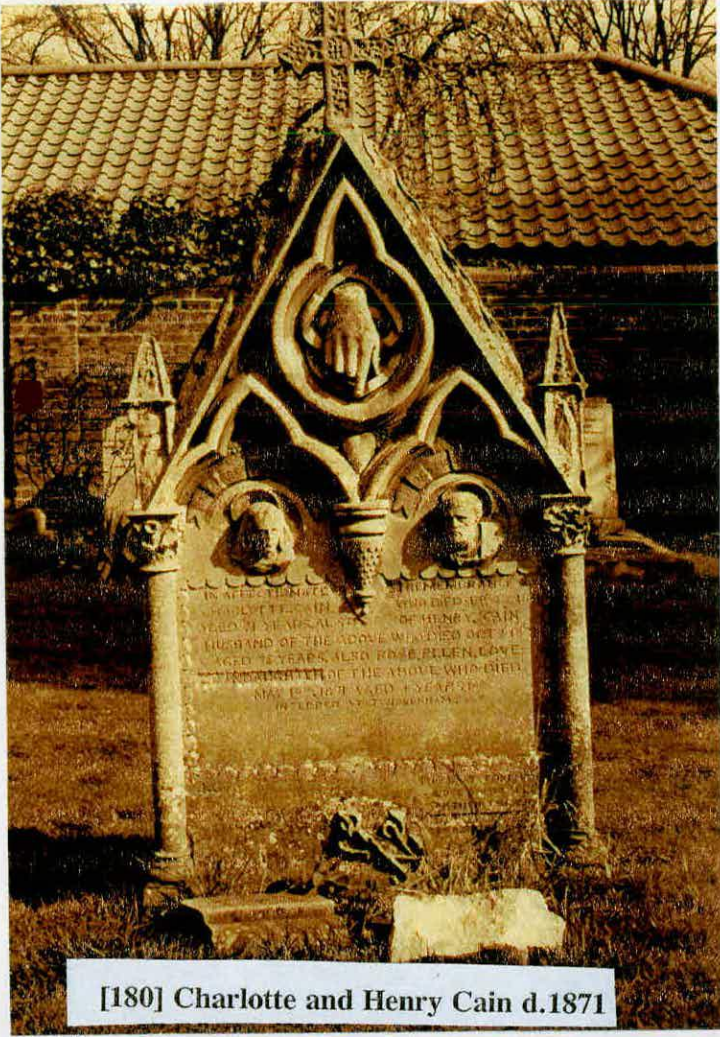
[102] Captain Paul Amedée Francis Coutts Stuart d.1889



[153] Glyn Philpot RA d.1937



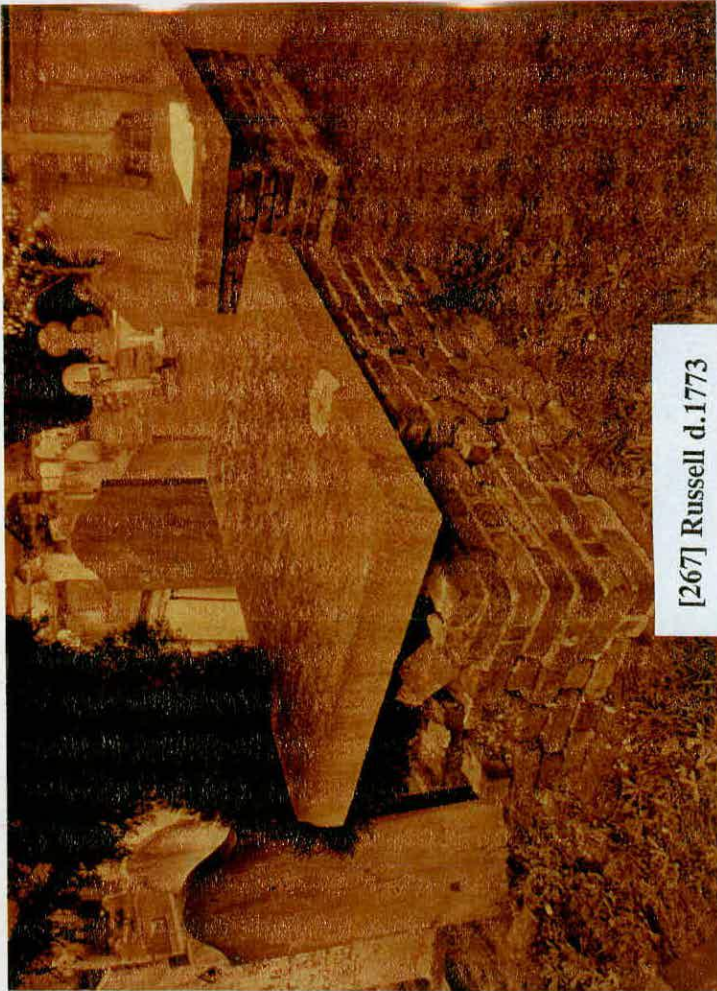
War Memorial c1920



[180] Charlotte and Henry Cain d.1871



[253] Jonathan Cape 1879-1960



[267] Russell d.1773



[276] Edward Cumming Esq. d.1818



L. to R.: [276] [277] Unidentified, c.1818] [278]



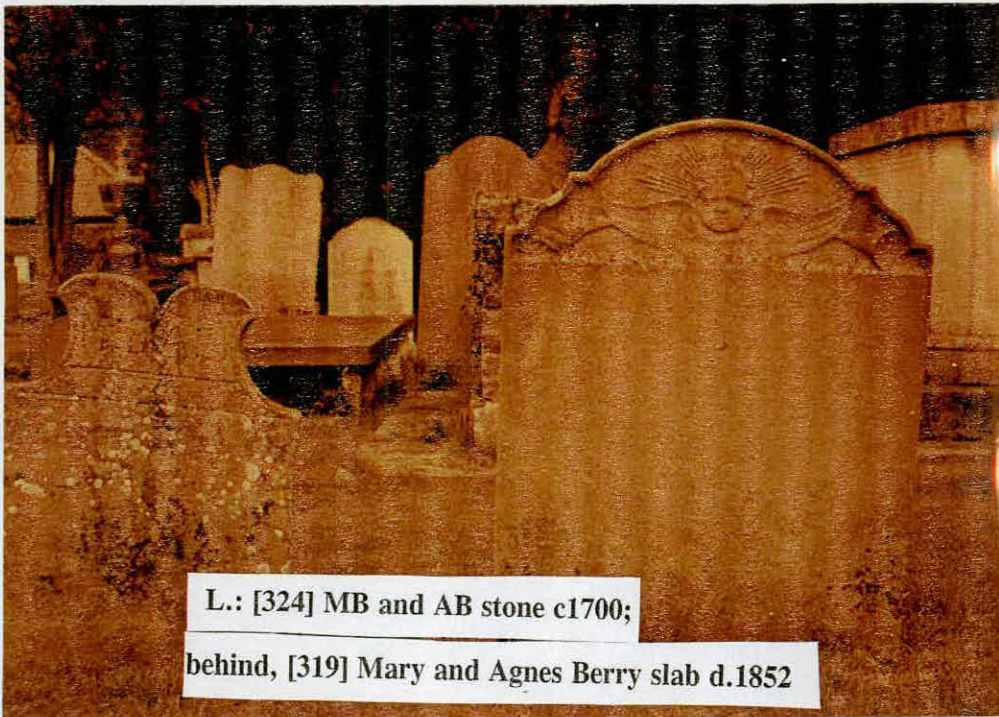
[278] Mary Carter, Spinster c.1818



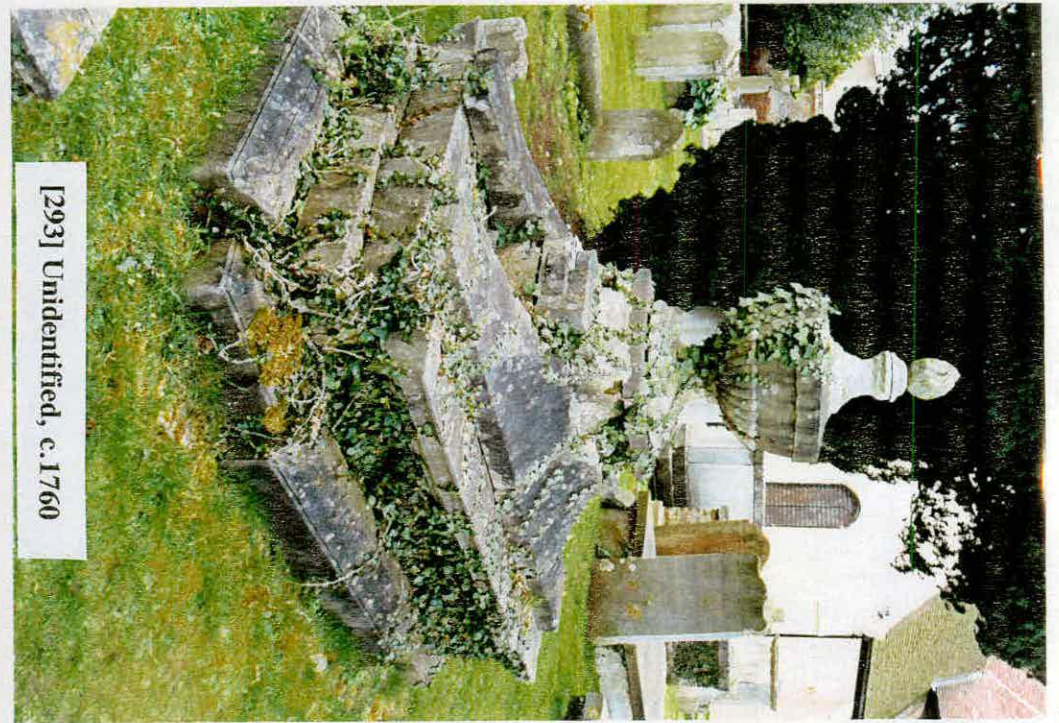
[279] Mary, Lady Buck d.1813



[283] Rev. Thomas Monk d.1809



L.: [324] MB and AB stone c1700;
behind, [319] Mary and Agnes Berry slab d.1852



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[361] Mrs Eliza Howell d.1763



[295] Nicholas Sprimont d.1771



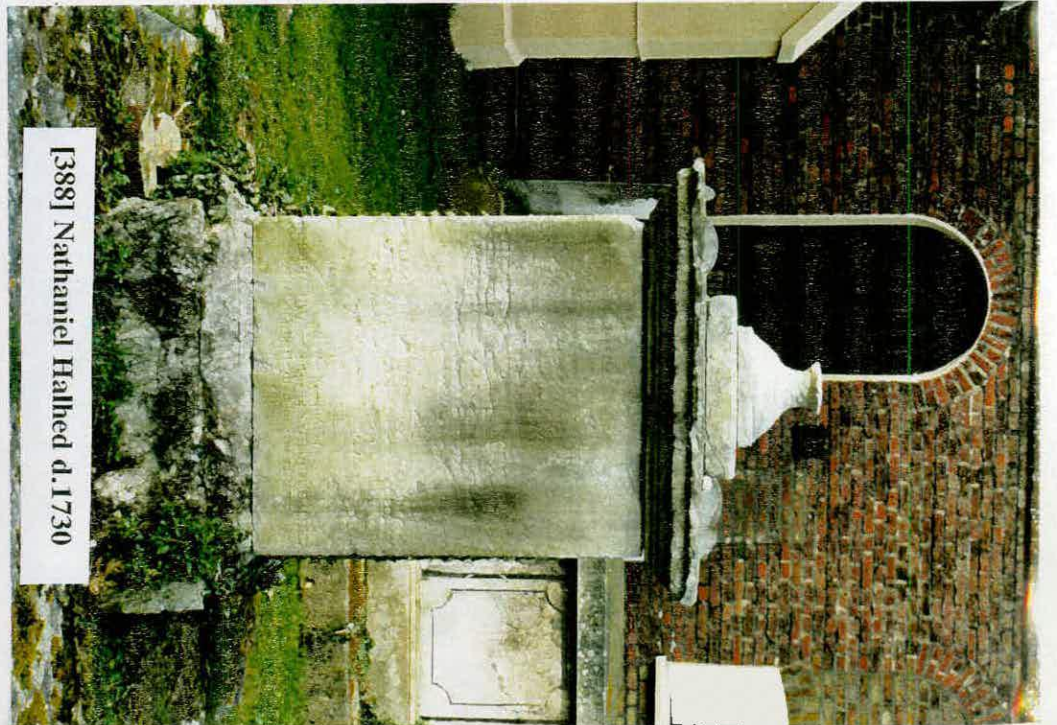
[447] Mr Francis Barker d.1710



[386] Mrs Mary Abell d.1830



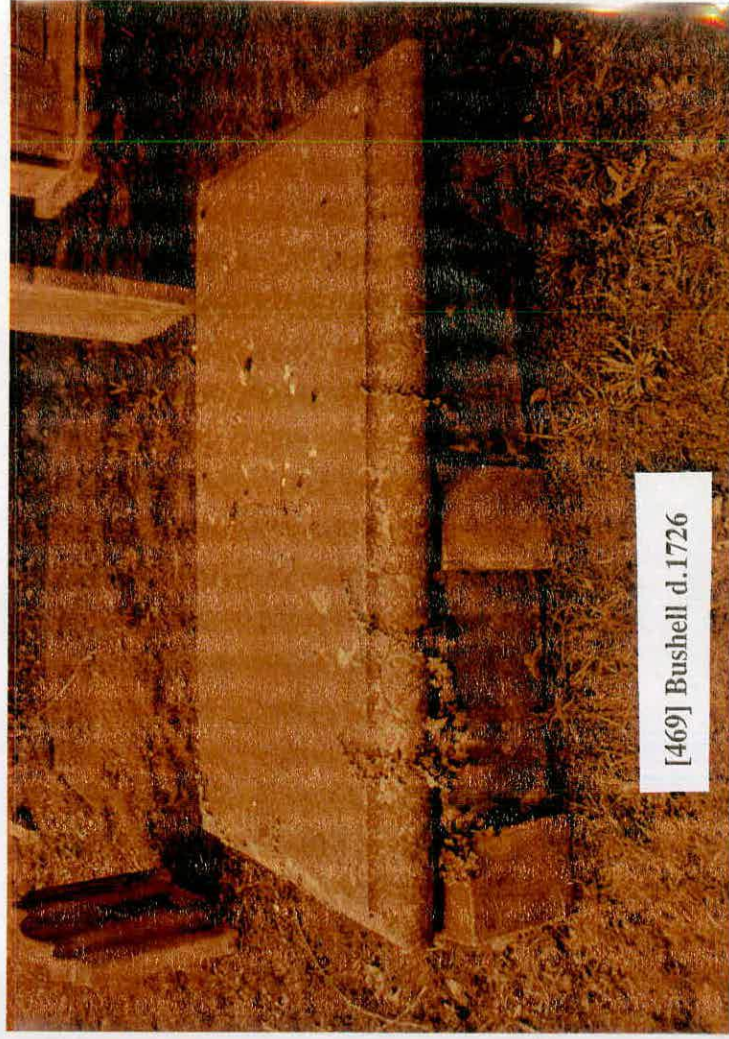
[447] Barker d.1710: detail of pilaster



[388] Nathaniel Hallsted d.1730



[461] Richard, 2nd Earl of Mount Edgecumbe 1764-1839



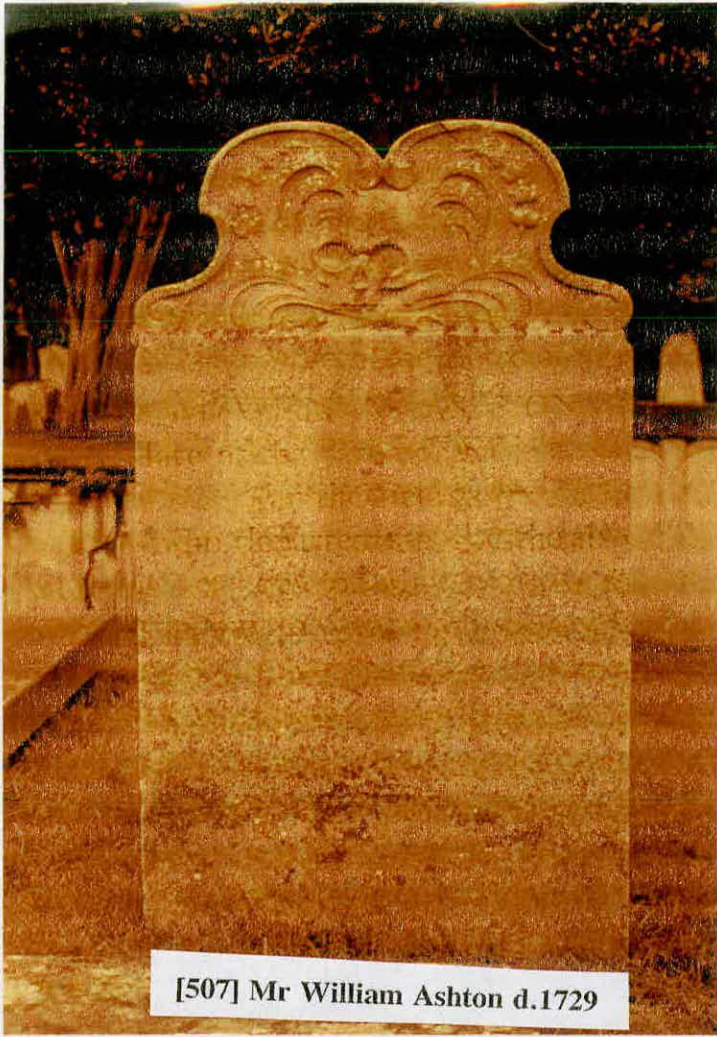
[469] Bushell d.1726



[482] Unidentified c1800



[485] John Rudd d.1775



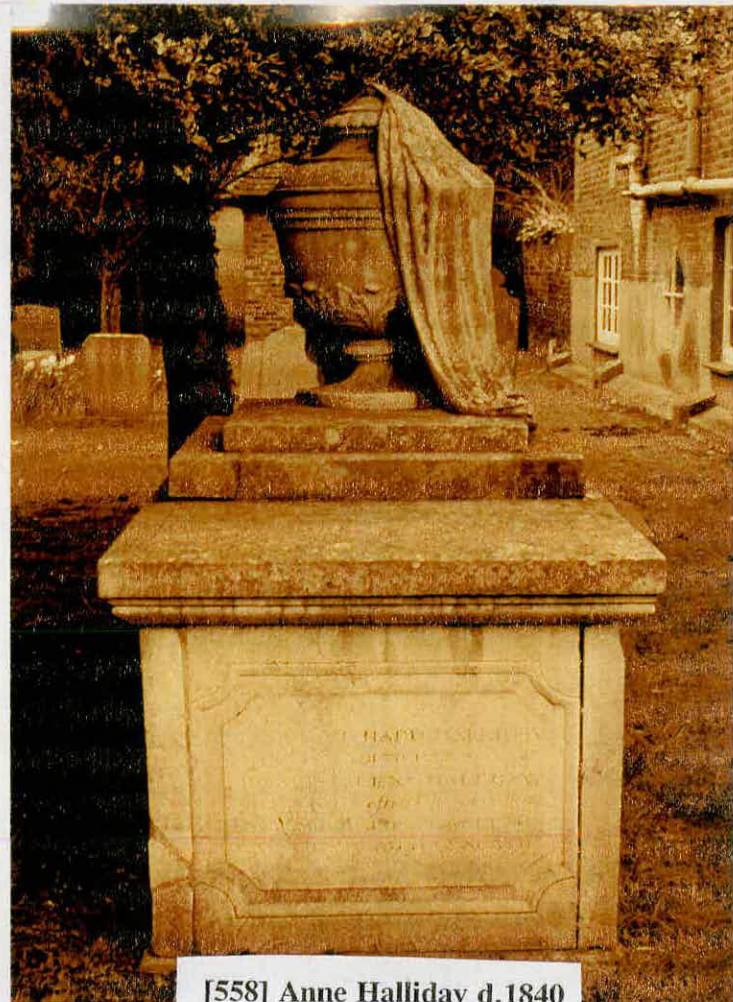
[507] Mr William Ashton d.1729



[539] Harriet, Marchioness of Lothian d.1833



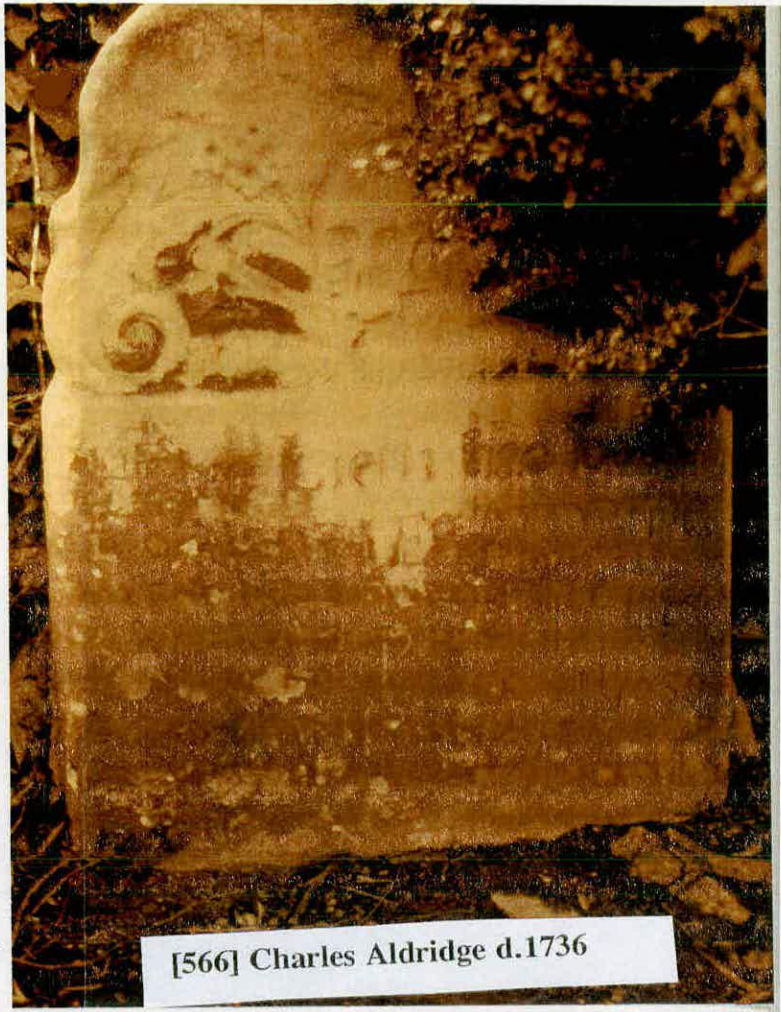
[547] Mary Karze d.1686



[558] Anne Halliday d.1840



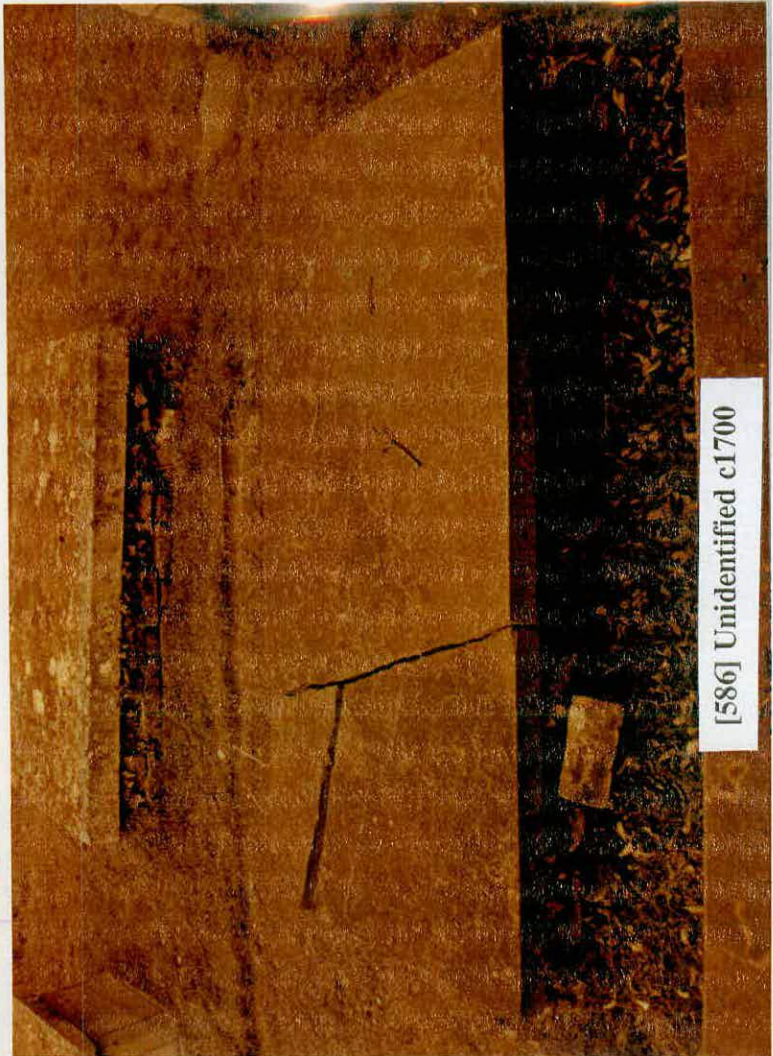
[559] Albert Henry Scott d.1865



[566] Charles Aldridge d.1736



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[586] Unidentified c1700



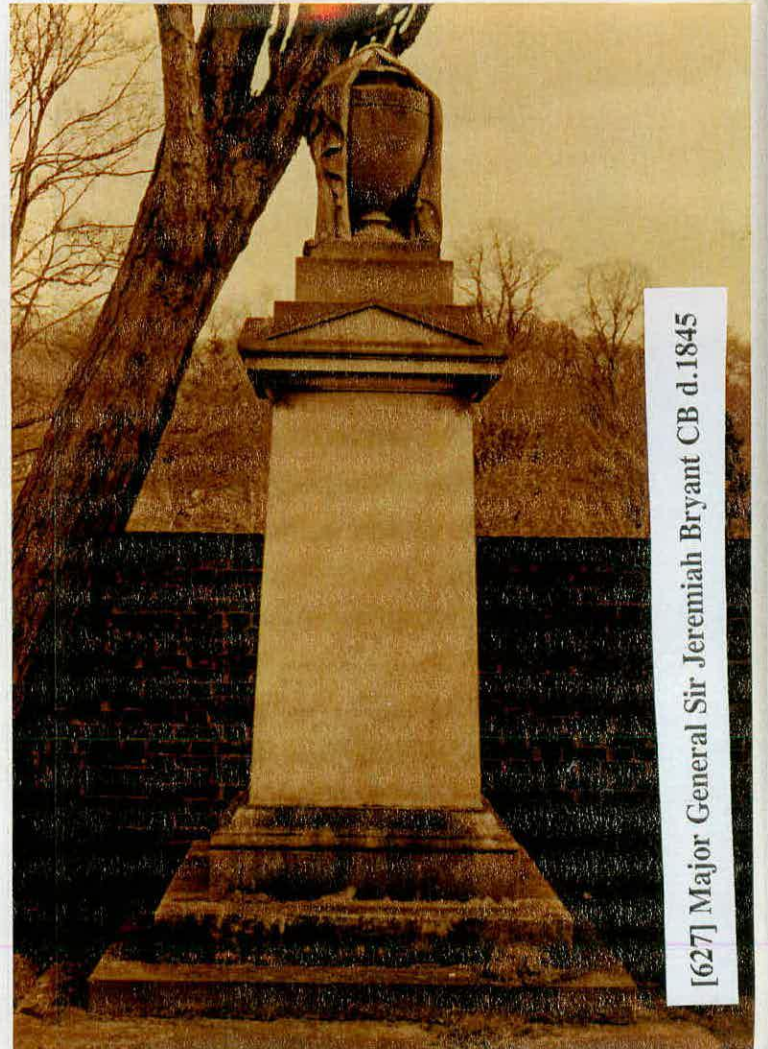
[587] Eleanor Tollemache d. 1800



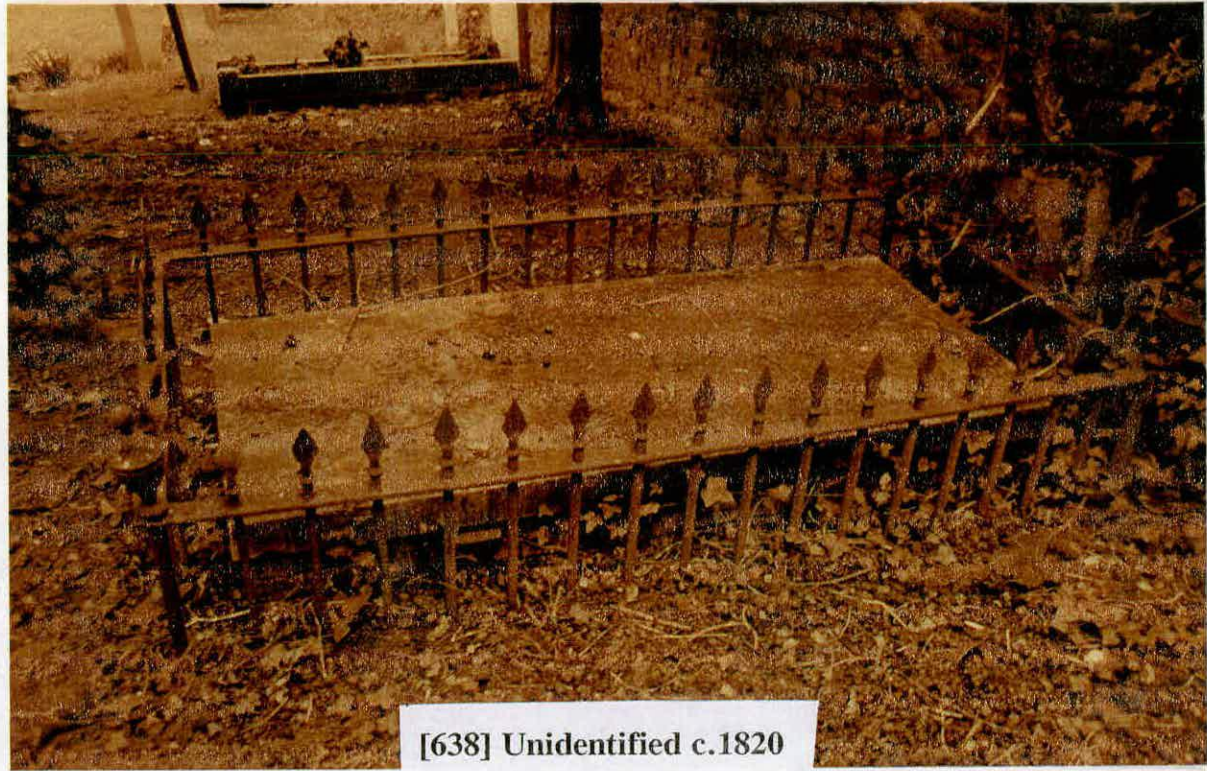
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