

# Ecclesfield Churchyard Transcription

Compiled by Mr. F. S. Hague in 1959 to 1962

Mr. Hague was an engineer working for the YEB (Yorkshire Electricity Board) and a member of CEMS (Church of England Men's Society); in 1959 and in collaboration with other members of CEMS undertook the cleaning and surveying of the churchyard and its grave stones.

Over a period of three years Mr. Hague then went on to document the survey work and produce the plans and indexes now available on St Mary's Website.

[www.stmarysecclesfield.com](http://www.stmarysecclesfield.com).

In the same period he wrote a series of nineteen articles for the Ecclesfield Parish Church Magazine and an article for the YEB News.

These articles have now been scanned and compiled into a single document for all to read. These articles provide an interesting and often slightly humorous insight into some of the more interesting graves stones in the churchyard.



St Mary's - Ecclesfield

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## The fascinating history written on Ecclesfield's tombstones

An Article - Circa 1962 Possibly for a local newspaper the Sheffield Telegraph.

By George Hopkinson

*Here lies George Wilkinson  
Born and cri'd,  
Liv'd ninety-four years  
And then he di'd.*

George was the Village crier of Ecclesfield, near Sheffield, and he "di'd" in 1797 and was thus laconically chronicled on his grave-stone in Ecclesfield is duly re-chronicled, as are the subjects of all the churchyard's other 1,158 surviving stones in a remarkable achievement completed by a local historian and lover of the village's Parish Church of St. Mary the Virgin. 44 year-old Mr. Stanley Hague, of Broom Road, Rotherham, a Yorkshire Electricity Board engineer.

Mr. Hague, a member of the Church of England Men's Society, has made a full scientific survey of this ancient burial ground, with comprehensive index of names and families.

### **Revealing**

The work took three years, and the whole dossier tells not only of local history but touches on the history of England in an absorbing record of the "forefathers of the hamlet" who sleep in this God's Acre. And, Mr. Hague has presented his record to Sheffield City Libraries.

In the summer of 1959, he was one of the members of the C.E.M.S. who cleared the churchyard, revealing for the first time in years stones that had become grass-covered. There were no plans of the burial ground no records giving the position of graves. For centuries before 1600 the place was a burial ground -1600 is the earliest date of the surviving stones.

This earliest gravestone is that of Vicar Richard Lord - and historian Hague has delved into his period and found that in Lord's day there was a local wave of wanton damage to park walls and in the killing of game, sheep, and deer, even pushing horses down a coal pit. Lord conducted an inquiry into a long list of misdoings.

### **Embracing**

Mr. Hague's precision maps of the gravestones run to seven large opaque sheets, and the operation also embraces three volumes of names, families, and inscriptions, fully indexed; and an album of articles covering the progress of the work and historical data about families and individuals.

Accidentally but appropriately, the first stone recorded is that marking the Gatty vault. Dr: Gatty spent 63 years in Ecclesfield as its Vicar and, an archaeologist of distinction, revised Hunter's Hallam-shire (Hunter, too, is buried at Ecclesfield).

The Gatty vault is linked with English history, for there lies Gatty father-in-law, the Rev. Dr. Alexander John Scott chaplain to Admiral Nelson on board the Victory at

Trafalgar. He is one of the group attending Nelson in the famous picture of his death, A stone midway between the church's west -end and the Lych gate records that George Hawsworth was slain at the Battle of Waterloo on June 8, 1815, aged 29. Buried at Ecclesfield are industrialists - many of the Rotherham Walker family of the Masbrough Ironworks; and farmers and peasants, scholars, musicians And gentlemen in the truest sense, as Parkin Jeffcock, civil engineer who died a hero's death in the Oaks Colliery disaster of 1866, tragic end of a life of culture and kindness.

Mr. Hague writes of this cross-section of Yorkshire rural life as "...a people united in their devotion to the church which was the focal point of their lives and the meeting place of two distinct classes..."

### **Flourishing**

Ecclesfield seems to have known little of animosity between Church and Chapel. They joined, as now, in Whit Monday assemblies and, says Mr. Hague it was common for devout members of the Wesleyan, Chapel to be in married in the parish church as well as, ultimately, being buried in the churchyard.

He tells of the string and reed orchestra that flourished before the church had an organ. It often toured the parish accompanied by the choir, and one famed 'cello, known as the Ecclesfield Bass, was bought from the collections.

For nearly half a century, John Walker, of Shiregreen played it, and took it home so often that on his death his family thought it was theirs.

There was a compromise by payment. and the 'cello passed to Mortomley publican Joel Hobson, "who in turn played it so long that he thought it was his property." Joel died in 1861, aged 82, and his gravestone reads: -

*In music skilled, he took for  
many years  
In the church choir a part  
in sacred song,  
And let us hope that when  
the Lord appears  
He may found amongst  
the faithful throng*

# A Survey of Ecclesfield Churchyard

By F. S. Hague

To make a survey of a churchyard may seem an odd pastime, but if the church is ancient it can be a very useful service and a very interesting task. Gravestones can give a wealth of information which, whilst being brief can often fill in gaps of family or local history. Time and weather take a heavy toll of the stones, inscriptions become faint and disappear, some are broken and lost and it is not uncommon for clearance of stones to improve appearance or to put part of the ground to other purposes. Once the engravings are gone or the stones removed the information is lost forever, for few churches have plans of their yards or records of the stone details. It was in order that a permanent record could be made of what is there today that I commenced the survey of Ecclesfield Churchyard.

It is not known at what date a church was first established at Ecclesfield the name of the place at the time of the Domesday Book was Ecclesfelt, suggesting a church prior to the Norman Conquest. We do know that a church was built in 1103 and that it was supervised by the monks of St. Wandrills of Fontenelle, Normandy. The present building was erected between 1450 and 1500. The ancient parish was one of the largest in England covering nearly 78 square miles, its boundaries meeting those of the parishes of Rotherham and Sheffield, the county boundary of Yorkshire and Derbyshire to a point within a mile of Cheshire, and the parish boundaries of Penistone and Tankersley. In fact it covered much of the Y.E.B. Ecclesfield District with the same boundaries in many places.

The Churchyard has been used for burial for many hundreds of years, Just how many are buried there is impossible to say but an indication may be obtained from the fact that in the 300 years between 1560 and 1860 the Church register records 21,937 burials. At one time it was much cheaper to bury at Ecclesfield than elsewhere and for this reason many were brought from the surrounding parishes. In 1842 the yard was extended at the West end and this was quickly filled. General burial was brought to an end in 1858 by an Act of Parliament forbidding burial within the Church or in the yard, in ground that had been used before except in vaults where space was available. The vaults are still being used today but of course the number of burials are few. A final narrow strip of land was added to the North West boundary which has been filled in recent years but is now almost full.

The practice of erecting memorial stones in open cemeteries started around 1600 but even after then the cost of providing them would be too great for many of the poorer people. It is most fortunate that the local stone used has stood up to the weather extremely well, so much so that those engraved over 360 years ago are still perfectly legible. The few that are illegible have either lain on paths and have been worn away or are of imported sandier stone and have eroded.

In the absence of any existing plans the survey had to start from scratch using the Church as a base and working outwards. Tools used were a 66 ft. tape, 6 ft. rule, lots of string and a few knitting needles. The ground drops gradually to the south, and steeply to the east which made difficulties, but eventually the drawings were completed on a scale of 8 feet to the inch. 1159 stones were recorded and numbered on the drawings, after which it was necessary to copy the inscriptions. My family gave me much assistance in the copying. Some of the stones were difficult to read due to the use of old English, bad spelling and the occasional use of Latin. Finally, to make the whole work intelligible it was necessary to compile an alphabetical index of the names of those buried. In this, names of infants under the age of five were omitted giving a total of 3,447 names.

The earliest stones are two dated 1600, one is that of Richard Lord who had been vicar since 1585, and the other that of a member of the old Ecclesfield family of Creswick. Of course, many of the stones are only of local interest but some have a much wider interest. One such is that of the Rev. Alexander John Scott, D.D. who was buried in 1850, and who was the

chaplain to Lord Nelson aboard the "Victory" at the battle of Trafalgar. He was father-in-law of the late Dr. Gatty, Vicar of Ecclesfield for 63 years, who died in 1903. Another records that George Hawksworth was slain at the battle of Waterloo on the 18th June, 18 15. With a little digging of local history many interesting stories can be built around the inscriptions.

Amongst the epitaphs, though serious in their intent, can be found some amusement. How are these verses for pessimism?

`Remember, friend, as you pass by,  
As you are now so once was  
But as I am so must you be  
Prepare yourself to follow me.'  
1766.

`Let this vain world change no man,  
Behold the gaping tomb,  
It bids us seize the present hour,  
Tomorrow death may come.'  
1830.

`Ye blooming youth who view this stone,  
Improve your precious time,  
You see how quickly mine was gone,  
Before I'd reached my prime.'  
1840.

`Boast not reader of thy might,  
Alive at noon, dead at night.'  
1865.

Another stone reads:

In memory of Joseph Batty of Mortonley, who was accidentally precipitated into a coalpit 75 yards deep, 6th December, 1828, aged 32.

Whirl'd from the precincts of the cheerful day,  
Down the deep abyss was his mortal clay.  
We hope his spirit winged its way above,  
To sing the praises of his Redeemer's love.

Finally that of a village crier: -

`Here lies George Wilkinson Born and cri'd,  
Liv'd ninety-four years,  
And then he di'd.  
2nd March 1797.

There is nothing morbid about doing a survey of this kind. It has taken three years and has been most interesting but it is one of those things that you do but once in a life time.

## Tableau No. 5 - The Death of Nelson

On the 28th September, 1805, Admiral Lord Nelson in the *Victory* took over the command of the British Fleet blockading the French and Spanish Fleet in Cadiz. The French Admiral Villeneuve did not weigh anchor until the 1st October and then Nelson moved to deny the Mediterranean to the French, sighting them off Cape Trafalgar soon after day-break on the 1st October. Shortly before noon the first shots were exchanged. Nelson formed his ships into two columns a mile apart and sailing at right angles and head-on to the French line intended to cut the French into three. Following his custom Nelson was dressed in his admiral's frock coat with four order stars blazing on his breast, making a conspicuous figure as he paced the quarter-deck with Hardy. The engagement was fierce and while the *Victory* was hotly engaging the *Bucentaure*, the *Redoubtable* moved into a favourable position for boarding. Sharpshooters had been placed in the fighting top of the *Redoubtable*, and as the two vessels grappled, bullets pattered down from aloft on the *Victory* from a range of less than fifty yards.

Suddenly Nelson fell and rolled over on to his back, helpless, saying, as Hardy tried to raise him, "They have done for me at last, my backbone is shot through". He covered his face and decorations with a handkerchief so that the sailors should not see their Admiral had been hit. He was carried down to the cockpit and placed beside the midshipman's berth where the doctors examined him. Nelson had little doubt that the wound he had sustained was mortal. "You can do nothing for me Beatty, I have but a short time to live," he told the surgeon. At every broadside the ship shuddered. A constant cannonade thundered aloft punctuated by bursts of cheering as one after the other the French ships struck. Hardy, temporarily in command of the Fleet, could not obey Nelson's summons to come to him for some considerable time. At last, the situation eased and Hardy was able to leave his post. "Well Hardy," demanded Nelson, "How goes the battle?"

Hardy's news was good. The battle had gone well, the issue was no longer in doubt and some twelve or fourteen ships had struck. Later Hardy returned with the news that victory had been complete and that fourteen or fifteen ships had been captured. Characteristically Nelson replied "I had bargained for twenty". The fate of Europe had been decided, but for Nelson, the main architect of victory, the sands were fast running out. He was sinking and his thoughts turned to Lady Hamilton who he committed to Hardy's care. Then very softly he whispered, "Kiss me, Hardy". Hardy knelt and kissed his cheek and then his forehead. Life was slipping quickly away. Rallying briefly he bade farewell to his old friend. Pain and thirst increased and he grew delirious. Yet once again he rallied and as Dr. Scott, the Chaplain, bent over him he heard Nelson murmuring again and again. "Thank God I have done my Duty". He slowly passed into unconsciousness and Scott just caught his last words, "God and my Country". So at four-thirty Nelson died, his task nobly done. He had laid the foundation of British sea power which in two world wars was to be his country's saviour.

F. S. Hague.

## The Churchyard

Issue 1 - First Published July 1961

During the early summer of 1959 members of the C.E.M.S<sup>1</sup> members commenced a clearance of the churchyard, revealing for the first time in years stones than had become covered with grass. With the passage of time and exposure to weather, the engraving of stones becomes faint and disappears: There were no plans of the Ana and no records giving the position of the graves. In an effort to preserve and record of what is left I have commenced to draw a plan and record the inscriptions. The work is, as yet only half done.

Taken as a whole the stones tell a story not only of the history of the Parish of Ecclesfield but touch on the history of England.

They give a very revealing picture of the struggle for life in the years gone by before we were blest with the wonderful medical knowledge and care that we enjoy today. In a series of articles I hope to relate some of the interesting features that I have found. It may be a place for the burial of the dead, but it is far from morbid, and with a little imagination, can be a very lively subject.

The original area, dating back at least 650 years, perhaps covered all except that to the west of a line extended from the boundary wall at the side of the property in Church Street opposite the Bull Inn<sup>2</sup>, across to the garden of the Old Hall. The westward extension was added in 1842 when the Duke of Norfolk gave an area of 1,379 yards and the cost of enclosing, sowing, compensating the occupiers, and building a new hearse house, amounted to £410.

According to Eastwood, the historian of Ecclesfield, at the time trade was very bad and £100 was granted from the National Fund raised for Relief of Distress in the Manufacturing Districts, and it was computed that 950 persons were relieved through the employment found on this occasion. Further to raise money the Feoffees gave £40 and the proceeds of a bazaar raised £410 which was no mean effort at that time. Even with the extension the yard was quickly filled, for on the 7th of May, 1858 an order was issued by Her Majesty in Council that no further burials should take place within three yards of all dwellings house, in the ancient part of the churchyard except in family vaults and graves, and in ground that can be opened without disturbing human remains. Further burial space was, provided when land was obtained on the opposite side of what we now call Priory Road, Burial still take place in the churchyard, but they are in a strip of ground on The north-west which was added later.

F. S. Hague.

Note

1. C.E.M.S – Church of England Men's Society.
2. The Black Bull – Public house.

## The Churchyard

Issue 2 - First Published August 1961

Quite by accident, but most appropriate, the first stone in my index is that marking the Gatty vault. It is on the left hand side of the path to the Vicarage, garden. Dr. Gatty was the driving force behind the vast changes that took place in the appearance of the Church during the last century. The more one reads of the changes during his 63 years at Ecclesfield the more one understands the reason for the village building a hall in his memory. Of course his interests were not confined to Ecclesfield Church, amongst other things he was an archaeologist and revised Hunter's Hallamshire. His good friend Joseph Hunter was buried a hundred years ago) on 9th May, 1861 in a grave close to the vicarage garden to the north east of the church.

In the Gatty vault we: have a real link with history in Dr. Gatty's father in law the Rev. Alexander, John Scott, D.D. The stone tells us that he was the chaplain to Admiral Lord Nelson on board H.M.S. Victory at the battle of Trafalgar. He is included in the group of people attending the Admiral in the famous painting depicting the death of Nelson. A tableau of this scene can also be seen at Madame Tussaud's in London. Dr. Gatty was influenced by this link as we see from the name of one of his sons Horatio Nelson Gatty.

Apart from this, and of course the War Memorial of the two recent wars, we have few references to earlier wars. One exception is on a stone midway between the west end of the Church and the lych gate which records that George Hawksworth was slain at the battle of Waterloo on the 8th June, 1815 at the age of 29. These few links help to make history more real to us in this modern jet age.

One of the, oldest stones is near to the sun, dial in front of the Church, marking the grave of Vicar Richard Lord who was buried on the 9th July 1600. He was instituted to, the vicarage on the presentation of George, Earl of Shrewsbury, on 8th August, 1585. During his, period of office there was a wave of wanton damage and cruelty that make our present juvenile delinquents angels by comparison. Vicar Lord conducted an inquiry into a long list of misdoings. The main complaint was Richard Wortley, the lord of the manor of Wortley, who had his park walls broken and his game killed. In Ecclesfield two horses were taken from the churchyard and driven down a coal pit where they died. Horses tails were, cut off, sheep and deer killed and sometimes part of the, dead animals were hung in the entrance of Wortley Church. One of the malefactors was Gilbert Dicconson of Barnes Hall which indicates that some at least were not all poor. In later years a Gilbert Dickenson, who was probably the same man in spite of the spelling, was a churchwarden of Ecclesfield representing Grenofirth. (Grenofirth was the name of a large section of the parish)

F. S. Hague.

## The Churchyard

Issue 3 - First Published September 1961

Ecclesfield is extremely fortunate today in the number and quality of its schools and teachers. In age the old Parish school goes back many years, though at times its efficiency was questionable. The Church warden's accounts refer to the cost of repairing the early school in 1573 and a new one was built at the corner of the lane leading to the Hall in 1722. This building was used until 1852 when the school moved to the old workhouse vacated by the building of the Union at Grenoside. Finally it would be closed at the introduction of the National schools.

The earliest reference to a schoolmaster by name is to Francis Poole who combined that duty with that of curate. How many pupils he had it is hard to say, but in 1713 he was paid £7 16s 0d by the feoffee-collector for teaching twelve poor boys. He was buried on 24th February, 1722, at the age of 50, in a grave on the south side of the Church.

At the right hand side of the path leading to the Communion door, just above the War Memorial, is the grave of another teacher, George Howson who died in 1755. The stone reads: -

'He had his pen at command by law,  
Though he could not hang yet he could draw.  
In mathematicks he was well bred,  
Both land, sea and sky he measured;  
He gave pleasant copies unto many,  
And in teaching pleased as well as any.  
He gave good counsel unto youth,  
Bid them fear God and speak the truth.  
No blot on scutcheon ever did fall  
Whilst living set a good example to all.  
Aged 68 he to a period is gone  
Interr'd underneath this adamantine stone.  
Only the actions of the just  
That smells sweet and blossom in the dust.'

Another old master was William Hague who, according to his stone, laboured hard for the public good 12 years in the free school at Ecclesfield. He died at the age of 38 on 29th Sept., 1789. This stone has caused much thought due to the inscription recording the death of his infant son being in latin. Perhaps the teacher was trying to impress his pupils. He certainly set a problem for the would be translators.

F. S. Hague.

## The Churchyard

Issue 4 - First Published December 1961

A famed tapestry of an Ecclesfield grave stone recording the death of a child hung for a number of years in the window of a second hand furniture shop in Sheffield. It was a pathetic sight; undoubtedly it was a fine piece of work, probably done by a loving mother who years later had died and her home had been sold. No one would buy the tapestry. The death of a child is always distressing but what a terrible story our old grave stones tell. Of the stones copied to date, there are three recording seven deaths in infancy, three with six, fourteen with five, nineteen with four, and twenty-four with three. One with six deaths in infancy also records one child aged 16 and another aged 19. Many more were buried but their parents were too poor to pay for a stone. Modern medical care and improved standards of living have made much of this misery a thing of the past. Indeed we should 'count our blessings one by one'.

In general the ages at death suggest that childhood was most precarious under the age of five and again between 12 and 18, that many mothers died in childbirth, many men died in their fifties, but after that a large number lived to a good age between 70 & 90.

It is unfortunate that the stones seldom record the trade or profession of the people. Some that are given are:— John Kirk of Cowley died 30th December, 1778; Thomas Smith of Cowley died 21st March, 1791 and George Abdy died 1810, all tanners; Joseph Hague of Chapeltown died 27th October, 1772 and George Smith of Hill Top died 2nd June, 1838 who were nail chapmen; Matthew Eaden, died 15th January, 1774 was a woodman; William Yeule, died April 1717 was a wheelwright of the Wheel House; John Tyler died 17th May, 1667 was the hammer maker at Wadsley Forge; Frances Croft who died aged 83 on 10th May, 1883 was the stud groom caring for the race horses at the Paddocks near Sheffield Lane Top. All of these are trades which are no longer practiced in the Parish.

Many of the Walker family of Rotherham, the owners of the iron works at Masboro are buried here. The family was one of the most prominent and prosperous in the Rotherham Parish. The founder of the iron works was Samuel Walker born at Hill Top, Grenoside in 1716. He was poor and an orphan at the age of 12 but in spite of this he studied and became the local schoolmaster. He also had an aptitude for making things; he made many sundials, to such an extent that his genius prompted Sir Watts Horton of Barnes Hall to say 'Sam Walker will one day ride in his carriage'. This was to be, for in 1749 he moved to Masboro to start the Iron works which brought prosperity to him and his family for many years.

F. S. Hague.

## The Churchyard

Issue 5 - First Published January 1962

Outside the Church, under the East window is the grave of the Revd. Thomas Wright, Vicar of Evvlesfield, who died on 5th February, 1690, aged 80. From his induction to the living on 22nd December, 1638 to his death he witnessed the greatest changes in the mode of worship and the appearance of the Church that have ever occurred over a short span of years. Five years after his induction he was ejected in 1643, but though the law of Westminster had to be obeyed, he went with dignity, preaching a farewell sermon with an appropriate text, 'He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed; shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him'.

During the next few years worship must have been very different, for the use of the Book of Common Prayer was forbidden until the Restoration of Charles II in 1660. Perhaps the greatest loss to our Church was the destruction of the beautiful stained glass windows, then over 150 years old, which had been described by Dodworth in 1628 as some of the finest he had seen in a parish church. Fortunately they are described in detail in the Dodworth manuscripts. At that time the altar was removed, and any raised ground in the chancel for the altar was levelled to, the general floor level. The communion table must have been moved considerably as it was required that the communicants should sit about it. Another strange requirement was that the burial of the dead was to be done without any prayers or religious ceremony.

The first Vicar after Vicar Wright's ejection was Immanuel Knutton who was buried in the chancel on 28th November, 1655. He was followed by Rowland Hancock though at what date is not clear. Hallamshire states that he was inducted in 1651 or 1652, but other records say that Mr. Knutton was still the Vicar at his death. Vicar Hancock remained until 1660 when, at the Restoration, he in turn was ejected. The confusion of these times is shown from the fact that he was appointed in April, 1661 by the Church Burgesses of Sheffield to be 'assistant Minister of their Parish Church. True to his convictions of non-conformity he was forced to resign from that office in the following year. As he continued to preach he was sent to prison at York Castle in 1668, and later after a long, painful illness died in 1685.

Vicar Wright's prediction of his farewell sermon prior to his ejection came true and he was reinstated at the Restoration. He enjoyed thirty years in office before his death, during which time he must have had a happy relationship with the people of Ecclesfield, for in his will he left money to the Parish. What a pity that three Vicars, all sincere in their own ways, and obviously liked by the people, should have been pawns in the political game of that time.

F. S. Hague.

## The Churchyard

Issue 6

One of the oldest tombs is at the side of the church near the south-east corner. Unfortunately the inscription is badly eroded, but once again Eastwood has recorded the detail in his "History of Ecclesfield". The tomb contains members of the Silvester family. Thomas Silvester of Chapeltown, buried 21st August, 1679; Eleanor his wife, 20th May, 1669; children by her, Mary 1668, Nicholas 26th September, 1702; Anne 11th August, 1711, Mary, wife of Nicholas Silvester 4th July, 1702; Mary second wife of Thomas Silvester 15th February, 1679; by her he had Hannah buried 3rd October, 1677, Elizabeth 20th March, 1682 and Martha 6th April, 1683.

The family of Sylvester resided somewhere about High Green or Chapeltown, and the name occurs very frequently in the Parish records, the earliest being Robert Sylvester buried 1583, Edward Silvester, Churchwarden in 1594, Feoffee in 1616. The latter is described in the Parish Register as 'of Hyegrene' in September, 1599. They were very generous donors to the charities of the Parish. Edward Silvester, of the Tower of London, founded the Mortomley Lane End Hospital on 21st April, 1693, when he conveyed for a term of 6,000 years certain lands at Womersley to John Parkin of Mortomley, Nicholas Silvester, and John Allen, in trust for the use of the poor of Ecclesfield to build for them a hospital consisting of seven rooms for seven poor men or women from the north side of the Parish. The hospital was recently demolished.

An interesting side issue to the reference to the Tower of London is that Edward's brother John was the smith at the Tower who constructed a strong iron chain to be drawn across the Thames at a time when it was supposed that the Dutch fleet would attempt to sail up the river as high as the bridge. He acquired a large fortune and was buried at Darton.

Ann, spinster sister of the above Edward and John, left in her Will, dated 14th August, 1711, the income of £200 to be distributed yearly to the poor children to trades. This fund was known as Silvesters' Dole. The same Will granted an endowment and inspiration to build the Lound School in the following words: -

"I give and bequeath the income of one hundred pounds for teaching so many poor children to read as the executor hereafter named, together with the feoffees in trust, shall think convenient, belonging to Chapeltown, Mortomley Lane End, and Burn Cross, provided that the Inhabitants of the above places shall erect a school house in some convenient place for that purpose".

F. S. Hague.

## The Churchyard

Issue 7

Some of the verses on the gravestones are a little odd, Pessimistic warnings are given in the following:

- 1/ 'Boast not reader of thy might,  
Alive at noon, dead at night'. Date 1865
  
- 2/ 'Let this vain world change no man,  
Behold the gaping tomb,  
It bids us seize the present hour,  
Tomorrow death may come', Date 1830
  
- 3/ 'Remember, friend, as you pass by,  
As you are now so once was I,  
But as I am so must you be,  
Prepare yourself' follow me'. Date 1766
  
- 4/ 'Ye blooming youths who view this stone,  
Improve your precious time,  
You see how quickly mine was gone,  
Before I'd reached my prime'. Date 1840

The stone of Jonas Thackray, Grenoside, who died on 21st April, 1826, aged 72, reads:

'Numbered as the trees in Greno I stood  
Till was marked to fall;  
Death laid the axe into the root,  
As He will do to all'.

The verse on the stone of Richard Shepherd, of Colley, who died in 1775, makes one wonder what his occupation was. Could he have been a landowner or agent?

'Here lies the man who farmers loved,  
Who always to them constant proved,  
He dealt with freedom just and fair,  
An honest neighbour all declare'.

One of the most remarkable men of the Parish during the last century was the Ecclesfield Huntsman, Thomas Ridge, who died in 1871 aged 77. Physically he must have been a giant to hunt day after day, walking many miles to and from the hunts, but spiritually he was even greater with his strict adherence to his Church on Sundays, The verse tells of his talents,

'Though fond of sport, devoted to the chaise,  
And with his fellow hunters, first in place,  
He always kept the Lord's Appointed Day,  
Never from Church or Sunday School away.  
And now his body lies beneath this sod,

His soul relying on the Love of God'.

Finally, the stone on the main path tells of the village crier.

'Here lies George Wilkinson,

Born and cri'd,

Liv'd ninety four years,

And then he di'd'.

March 2nd, 1797

F. S. Hague.

## The Churchyard

Issue 8

From piles of scribbled notes and rough drawings the plans of the churchyard are now complete. We know now that there are 1,157 stones. The second half of the work is the recording of them and details of the inscriptions and the preparation of an alphabetical index of the names. 960 inscriptions have already been noted and it is hoped that they will all be complete by mid-summer, weather permitting. It is intended to have one set of plans and records to be kept in the church safe as a permanent record, and a second set which can be used for reference purposes. The plans can be duplicated by printing, but the records must be typed. Is there a typist amongst our congregation who would do this work? It will be a big task, but it will be of great use in the future. It certainly is interesting and in no way morbid. Could anyone interested please let me know? (Note: no one did!)

Generally, over the years, members of any one family have been buried in graves scattered over the yard making it impossible to see any continuity at a glance. There are however some interesting family vaults which cover many years of burials. One such is the Fowler vault which spans 172 years, starting with Joshua Fowler of Wincobank who died on 27th April, 1742. The family later moved to Wadsley Hall where succeeding generations lived for many years; the last named, Annie Fowler, died there on 15th February, 1914 at the age of 86. As a memorial to Henry Fowler who died 16th January, 1854, the stained glass window on the south side of the sanctuary was installed. He was a rising engineer of great promise, and had been engaged in important works in India Holland, where the climate undermined his health. He died at the age of 32.

To the left hand side of the main path' to the church porch is a group of graves containing members of principal families of the Southey part of the parish. The old houses are gone, but their names live on in new street names, Hukin, Deerlands and Southey. The Swift family occupied the Hukin for four centuries and Deerlands for well over a century. Southey Hall was occupied by the Twybell family as early as 1637 when James Twybell was holding a tenement called 'Southall' and lands, at a yearly rent of £20. He also held an office in the household of the Earl of Shrewsbury. By marriage Southey passed into the Vickers family, which is most apparent from the mixture, of the two names on the tombstones. The list of churchwardens includes at various times, Swifts from 1643 to 1851, Twybells from 1579 to 1757 and Vickers from 1786 to 1834.

F. S. Hague.

## The Churchyard

Issue 9

Below the east window of the church is the 'grave of the Booth family. My interest is drawn to it for two reasons, first they occupied Brush House which has for many years housed Firth Park Grammar School which I attended, and secondly for the colourful occupations of the members of the family.

Brush House or, as previously known, the Brushes existed as early as 1681 when it was recorded as the home of John Nutt from whose family it passed to the Booths by marriage. The present house, substantially built with its commanding circular tower, was built by John Booth who died unmarried in 1797. He spent the latter part of his life in mathematical and philosophical studies, was unwilling to be separated after death from the scene which he had in a great measure created, & accordingly was buried within the grounds in a small mausoleum on the 'top of a knoll. Most of the grounds of the house must have been lost by the building of the Stubbin estate and the extensions since it became a school but we are told that they were very picturesque with the beauty of trees and shrubs.

The first named on the grave stone is William Booth previously of Masborough House and then of Brush House who, died 3rd May, 1800 aged;57. He was the brother of the builder John Booth who had left the house, to his nephew John Kay Booth a son of William. William was a partner in the Walker iron foundry of Rotherham and was also connected to the Walker family by marriage. He had a large family of six sons and five daughters.

The eldest son, John Kay Booth, who is buried in the grave, was a doctor and lived for many years in Birmingham. He was a magistrate in that city where he took prompt and energetic measures for the suppression of the riots on one occasion. He was afterwards Honorary Principal of Queens College, Birmingham, and a. magistrate for the West Riding of Yorkshire. Three sons entered the army, one became a major in the 15th Hussars, one a lieutenant of the 52nd Reg. Light Infantry, who was killed at the storming of Badajoz in Spain (1812) and the other a lieutenant colonel of the 43rd Reg. Light Infantry and who also had two sons in the army. One son later resided at Hazelshaw and Darfield. The last son was educated at Eton, Cambridge, and Oxford, and took Holy Orders.

What an appropriate house to be taken over as a grammar school! The Booths set a wonderful example of study and ability to become leaders in industry, medicine, the Church and the Services, with a very apparent abundance of personal character.

F. S. Hague.

## The Churchyard

Issue 10 - First Published July 1962

When reading verses on gravestones it is sometimes hard to understand how some were permitted to be inscribed. What a reflection on the lack of impact of the teaching of Christian principles during the life of a person to have such an epitaph as I recently found engraved on their stone after death.

'How love'd, how valued once avails thee not,  
To who related or to whom begot,  
A heap of dust alone remains of thee,  
Tis all thou art, tis all that we shall be'.

The whole message of Christ's life and death on this earth seems to have been missed. How much better is the rather unique inscription found on a stone at the bottom of the slope at the east end of the yard.

`In memory of Joseph Batty of Mortomley, who was accidentally precipitated into a coalpit 75 yards deep, 6th December, 1828, aged 32 years.

Whirl'd from the precincts of the cheerful day,  
Down the deep abys was his mortal clay,  
We hope his spirit it winged its way above;  
To sing the praises of his Redeemer's love'.

A quotation from 'A Psalm of Life' by Longfellow, recently given in a letter in a national newspaper is an appropriate conclusion.

`Life is real! Life is earnest!  
And the grave is not its goal,  
Dust thou art, to dust returnest,  
Was not spoken of the soul'.

In a district which has been for many years associated with coal mining, it is surprising that there are not many more references to mine accidents. There is, however, one which recalls the disaster at Stairfoot near Barnsley when many were killed. It is of a member of one of the principal Ecclesfield families during the last two centuries. The stone reads: -

Also Parkin Jeffcock, late of Duffield in the County of Derby, Esquire, civil engineer and nephew of the said William Parkin, and second child and eldest son of John and Catherine Jeffcock of Cowley Manor where he was born 27th October, 1829. He died in the great explosion at Oaks Colliery, near Barnsley, leading a band of volunteer explorers on 13th December, 1866 and was buried 7th October, 1867.

F. S. Hague.

## The Churchyard

Issue 11

Compiling an index of names from the gravestones has revealed the interesting fact that the burials are of the old parish and beyond and by no means confined to the village of Ecclesfield. It was expected that the old village names would have accounted for at least half but that is not so. On the 1,159 gravestones there are no less than 535 different surnames. A large number appear on only one gravestone suggesting outsiders who have lived a short time in the parish and then moved on. Of course a number of single occurrences are due to female members of local families marrying people from outside the area and later being buried in the family grave.

As the purpose of the index is to assist in locating family graves, infants under 5 years have been omitted. When death in childhood was so prevalent this omission accounts for a large number. Even so there are 3,447 names in the index ranging in date from 1600 to the present day. The method used was to list the surnames in alphabetical order with the Christian names arranged in date order, giving also the ages and stone numbers. Given the names and approximate date of death the stone can now be found within minutes.

The order of families with the largest number of burials is: - Greaves 71, Smith 66, Hobson 49, Hague 48, Parkin 45, Johnson 40, Lockwood and Wood 39, Ellis and Turner 38, Nicholson and Swift 35, Loxley 34, Walker 33, Folding 32, Shaw 31, Machen and Unwin 29, Dawson' 28, Green 27, Taylor and Kirk 25, Denton and Vickers 23, Tingle, Hawksley and Jepson 22, and Parker 20.

It must be remembered that the stones only account for a small proportion of the burials at Ecclesfield. Prior to 1600 it was not usual to have engraved gravestones in churchyards, and even after that date many people would be unable to pay for a stone. Also some of the wealthier people were buried within the Church, and during the last century the new cemetery on the opposite side of the Priory Road was opened. In the 300 years between 1560 and 1860 the registers show that there were 21,937 burials, when all, except the relatively small number who were buried in the Church, would be in the churchyard. The Act of Parliament of 1858, forbidding burial in ground that had previously been used for burial, stopped further extensive use of the yard.

F. S. Hague.

## The Churchyard

Issue 12 - First Published September 1962

The engraving of some of the gravestones is rather strange. One stone near to the Communion door caused some difficulty in deciphering as there are no spaces between the words and some of the letters are indistinct. The stone reads:-

`HERELIETHTHEBODI  
EOF SCILIEHANLEYLAT  
EWIFEOFJAMESFOSTEROF  
ECKLESFIELDMOOREWHO  
UNDERTHISSTONEEXPEC  
TETHHERREDEMERCO  
MMINGESHEDEPARTED  
THISLIFE9NOVEM1643'

Another stone states: 'Hear lyeth the body of Ann the wife of Nicholas Lister who dyed the 18th day of OXTOBER, A.D. 1703'. Apart from the odd spelling of some of the other words the use of X instead of C in the month of October is most unusual. One suggestion is that X was substituted as it is the Roman numeral for 10, October being the tenth month of the year.

I recently read an old funeral custom which at one time was practised in Sheffield and Rotherham and was probably also done at Ecclesfield. This was the distribution of biscuits after funerals. The biscuits were of the rusk type, wrapped in parcels of two in white paper and tied with ribbon. These were placed in a basket lined with cloth and delivered to the houses of friends of the deceased by a man dressed in black wearing black gloves and a top hat bound with a piece of black material. In a collection of old Sheffield songs the reference is made to a messenger, by the name of Roundlegs, employed by a Sheffield baker. The lines are: -

`Roundlegs to Wadsley went,  
With burying cakes, he was sent'.

A collection of bakers' cards, similar to funeral cards, advertising this service was presented to the Sheffield City Library by Rev. C. V. Collier. A probable date of the cards is 1837.

F. S. Hague.

## The Churchyard

Issue 13

Ecclesfield families have long been connected with the industries and commerce of this part of the country. Descendents have branched out away from the parish and appear as prominent citizens in many places. One such reminder of this came recently with the announcement that Mr. Stephen Martin de Bartolome is to become the Master Cutler for the coming year (1962 – 1963).

It may be stretching the claim of family linkage a little, but Mr. Bartolome's grandfather certainly came to Ecclesfield and was buried in the Churchyard. The grandfather, Mariano Alejo Martin de Bartolome, M.D. (Edinburgh), was born at Segovia, Spain on 17th July, 1813, and was descended from a Spanish provincial governor. On a journey from Spain to England he stopped at Jersey, where he met Miss Mary Parker, a member of the Parker and Shiercliffe families who have long had prominent Ecclesfield connections. Inspire of the difference of ages, Miss Parker was 25 years his senior, they were married and settled in these parts where Dr. Bartolome was to be at the Royal Infirmary for over 40 years.

When he was 44, his wife died at the age of 70, on the 11th March, 1858. For us her burial was significant as she was the last person to be buried inside the Church. She is buried in the Shiercliffe vault in the south chapel of the chancel below the east window. The stone itself is interesting as it has on it five crosses which seem to show that it was once the top of an altar; probably the altar in the south choir. (Eastwood p. 247).

Dr. Bartolome was married for a second time and had a number of children, from one of whom the Master Cutler descended. The gravestone records two daughters who died in infancy, and Francis, their third son, who died at the age of 18. Dr. Bartolome died on 2nd June, 1890 at the age of 76, and his wife, Mary Emily, died on 10th August, 1905, aged 69. 'In the adjoining grave lies Elizabeth Shiercliffe Parker, his sister in law by his first marriage.

F. S. Hague.

## The Churchyard

Issue 14

The name of Green is frequently found on gravestones in the Churchyard. The earliest is dated 1786 but this is by no means the earliest burial, as, being one of the wealthier families, the principal members were usually buried within the walls of the Church. The family forms an interesting link with the past and over the years has occupied the- more important houses of Eccles-field.

The first of the name to come to the Parish was James, son of Thomas Greene of Cawthorne, who on 28th August, 1604 married Anne the daughter of Nicholas Shiercliffe of Ecclesfield Hall, grand daughter of Thomas Wombwell of Thundercliffe Grange, and great grand daughter of a daughter of Thomas Wentworth of Wentworth. Anne thus was descended from a combination of the most influential families of South Yorkshire. By the marriage James Greene secured Thundercliffe Grange which had been owned by his wife's ancestors since 1537 when, at the dissolution of the monasteries, it had been granted to Thomas Rokeby. At that time the Grange was just within the Ecclesfield Parish boundary. It was six generations later, after being sold by a member of the family and subsequently acquired by the Earl of Effingham that it was pulled down and a new mansion built in the same grounds but on the Rotherham side of the boundary.

Robert Green, son of the first James, became involved with the Royalist and Parliamentary clashes of the seventeenth century when in 1645-6. He incurred the displeasure of the Parliament as he went to live in York at a time when it was opposed W, and besieged by, the forces of Parliament. For his troubles he was heavily fined. Two generations later William Greene married Alice who was of the family of the Duke of Northumberland.

The Greens continued to provide some of the leading citizens of Ecclesfield down to the present day when we find the Hall again occupied by members of the family almost 360 years after the arrival of the first of the name. An epitaph on the stone of William Carleill who married into the family, lived at the Hall, and died in 1779 gives food for thought.

*'Our life is like a winter's day,  
Some only breakfast and away;  
Others to dinner stay and are full fed,  
The oldest man but sups and goes to bed;  
Large is his debt who lingers ye day,  
Who goes ye soonest has ye least to pay'.*

F. S. Hague.

## The Churchyard

Issue 15

In 1839 when Dr. Gatty first came to Ecclesfield the churchyard was in a deplorable state. Whilst appreciating the fine exterior of the Church he was shocked to find the Sexton's three heifers feeding amongst the graves, the unkept appearance and the broken gates. He long remembered the embarrassment when Sir Charles Dodsworth, Bart., paid a surprise visit to locate and see the tomb of the Sylvester family from whom he was descended. The alter tomb stands close to the south wall of the Church, east of the door to the transept, and is now most conspicuous, but neither the Vicar nor the Sexton could find it as it was covered with rubbish and cinders from the stoves. The only part of the yard that attracted any attention was the broad flagged path from Burying Lane (now Priory Road) to the porch. It was a favourite resort of the aged and invalid who came to meditate. At that time the yard had not been extended to the present lych gate and the path terminated at a turnstile.

In Dr. Gatty's words: - "The sepulchre, which received our Lord's Body after death was in a garden - "there was a garden, and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid'. This brief account ought to set a pattern for the treatment of every churchyard or cemetery — green sward, and shrubs, and flowers, if you will". He would be pleased if he could visit our churchyard now, but he would not be too happy at the appearance of the extensions across Priory Road.

It was on the 1st April, 1873, that the Archbishop of York consecrated the additional cemetery across the road. The land was owned and was given by the Duke of Norfolk who, in spite of the fact that he was a member of the Roman Catholic faith, took a personal interest in the happenings of the parish. He was asked, for 'God's acre' and that is the area that was given. The cost of building the walls, which amounted to £331-19-3, was raised by voluntary contribution, the iron gates were given by Mrs. Smith of Barnes Hall, and the evergreens and lime trees planted by the wall sides were the offerings of Mr. W. H. Strouts, a churchwarden who was later buried there. Having seen the muddle and confusion of the graves of the old churchyard the Vicar was determined that this should not happen in the new acre. He consulted the clerk to the Burngreave Burial Board who advised that the whole ground be mapped on a plan and every grave plot be numbered, so that the Sexton could preserve due regularity in the interments. It was ruled that no new grave was to be dug at a less depth than eight feet.

F. S. Hague.

## The Churchyard

Issue 16

The ease of travel, radio and television of the present day, have largely destroyed the village life of days gone by. During the last century it was perhaps at its height when the villagers had to find their own amusement within the village. They did this with enthusiasm whether it be the pursuit of music, dramatics and literature, or drinking and the baser sports. Ecclesfield had a peculiar reputation for excelling at both levels. Stocks Hill was the venue for the worst in the form of rough sports such as bear baiting and the best in the vast gatherings of the Whit Monday Sunday School meetings.

The Whit Monday meetings, as now; were a combined effort of the Church and Chapels. The denominations were, very close and it was common for devout members of the Wesleyan Chapel to be married in the Church and buried in the Churchyard. Mr. William Gregory was a good example. He was a Wesleyan, was married in the Church, for many years conducted the singing at Stocks Hill, and was highly respected by people of both denominations. Both his wife and himself were buried by Dr. Gatty in the Churchyard, his wife aged 79 on 17th February, 1884 and he aged 76 on 2nd April, 1884.

An opportunity was afforded to the musical enthusiasts to pursue their art in the form of a string and reed orchestra in the Church in the days before an organ was installed. Apart from providing music in the Church they often made tours of the parish accompanied by the choir. One noted violencello was known as the 'Ecclesfield Bass' which had been purchased for six guineas collected during one of the parish tours. On one occasion it was broken and had to be sent to London for repair which cost ten guineas. For almost fifty years it was played by John Walker of Shiregreen who had taken it home so long that on his death his family thought that it was their property. A compromise was reached by payment after which it passed to Joel Hobson who in turn played it so long that he thought that it was his property. A tribute to the latter engraved on his stone after he died on 9th March, 1861, aged 82.

*"In music skilled, he took for many years  
In the church choir a part in sacred song;  
And let us hope that when the Lord appears  
He may be found amongst the faithful throng"*

In times of excesses it is surprising to find that prominent Church members were also publicans. The above Joel Hobson kept a respectable public house at Mortomley, whilst it had almost become tradition for the parish clerk to keep the George and Dragon and for the sexton to keep the White Bear.

F. S. Hague.

## The Churchyard

Issue 17

In 1862 two remarkable old men were presented to Archbishop Longley for Confirmation in the Church. One was Mr. Samuel Swift a farmer aged seventy eight, who was a constant attendant at the Church and a communicant, though he had never been confirmed. With grave simplicity he submitted to the holy rite. He was one of the long line of Swifts who, had held the ancient farm at Southey named the Hukin since the fifteenth century. He lived to the good age of ninety-six and was buried on 25th Sept., 1880. Many had preceded him though the earliest stone still in existence is dated 1769.

The second aged candidate for confirmation was John Addy, a fine old soldier with medals on his breast. He had served in the Royal Horse Guards, was for a short time in the Peninsula, and was afterwards at Waterloo, where he was taken prisoner but soon released. After leaving the army he was amongst the first men to join the new police force formed by Sir Robert Peel. He was a fine man who when young could vault into the saddle of his horse wearing full uniform. He died on 28th January, 1865, aged seventy-two, to join his wife whom he had married whilst stationed -in Knightsbridge barracks, and who had preceded him the year before. The inscription 'Rest, Warrior, Rest' is appropriate.

The year in which the Confirmation took place must have been a year in which our Church was putting its house in order as far as the congregation was concerned. On 29th June, Feast Sunday, was held a memorable Baptism Service when one hundred and eighty two children and adults were baptised. The curate Mr. Wilkins, must have searched every house in the area for candidates.

Cholera is not a disease that we associate with this country, but in 1866 an outbreak occurred in the village. Of the fourteen cases, eleven were fatal. One of the victims was Benjamin Coward who died on 14th September, 1866, aged 63. He was a joiner by trade and had married Isabella, the personal maid of Mrs. Gatty.

At the time of the plague two young army officers from the Hillsborough Barracks visited the Vicarage. Returning they met a funeral party bearing -one of the victims, stood aside to let it pass, and continued on their way. On the following day one of the officers left for leave in Ireland, but on arrival he was taken ill and swiftly died of cholera, The Gatty daughters long felt that they were unwittingly responsible for his death.

F. S. Hague.

## The Churchyard

Issue 18

In an earlier article mention was made of Parkin Jeffcock, a mining engineer, who died leading a rescue team after the explosion at Oaks Colliery near Barnsley. I have recently read a memoir, written by his brother, which was kindly lent me, by Mrs. Hartley. A paragraph of the preface gives a good indication of his character: 'His was a career from which men who had not yet reached middle life might especially, I thought, gather a few hints for holy living; or be strengthened in following their path of duty towards God and towards man, through catching a sympathy with his great aim, and the oneness of his purpose in pursuing it'.

Born on 27th October, 1829, at Cowley Manor, he was the, eldest son of John and Catherine Jeffcock, a leading family of the gentry of the neighbourhood. His mother was descended from the Parkins who had held Mortomley Hall from the time of Henry VIII. He had a happy childhood enjoying to the full games and sport in the field, but this did not detract him from his studies when he started school, first with Mr. George Rider of Grenoside, and later at the Grange School near Sunderland.

His first choice of a profession was to enter the ministry of the Church and in this direction he was tutored by the Rev. Thompson Podmore at Rockley Old Hall in preparation for entry to Oxford. Shortly before he was due to enter Oxford he realised that this was not his vocation, though his later life proved that he was eminently suitable for this, and he was sent to the College; of Civil Engineers at Putney. 'On leaving this college he was articled to Mr. George Hunter, a colliery consultant engineer, of Belmont Hall near Durham. He there learned the coal trade in an area with perhaps the most difficult conditions.

As an engineer he went to Moira in Leicestershire, Derby and Duffield, working as a mining consultant for mines over a wide area. He worked hard and had to visit many mines after accidents or explosions when his personal bravery was frequently shown.

In all things he was conscientious, methodical, and a, natural leader. His duties and the travelling involved made his working hours long, but he was extremely active in church life and welfare. Most marked were his Sunday School teaching and sympathy and understanding for the old and infirm who he regularly visited. This was no narrow-minded man however, he loved life and organised some of the finest galas, flower shows and social functions ever known in the areas. There is little wonder that after his heroic death, the Church at Mortomley was built in his memory.

F. S. Hague.

## The Churchyard

Issue 19

Each stone in the Churchyard must have a story full of happiness, sorrow and interest but alas in the majority -of cases all we know are the bare facts of the names and dates engraved thereon. I have exhausted the information that I have found from various sources in the articles written before and regret that the series must come to an end. It is hoped that the readers have had .as much pleasure from the articles as I have had in searching and writing.

The five years that I have spent have been full of interest and an education. The measuring and drawing of the plan was, an exercise which I enjoyed, but at that time the stones were just slabs of rock. The interest came with the writing of the inscriptions followed by historical reference to the names, found, changing them from mere names to real people. Individual people joined into a community producing a picture of Ecclesfield in the past. It is a picture of a people united in their devotion to the Church which was the focal point of their lives and the meeting place of the two distinct classes. The upper class became the leaders of the professional, commercial and industrial life of not only Eccles-field but for many miles around. The lower classes were industrious and, due to working in their own small workshops at their cottages, independent. Again, each in their own ways, they were alike in their love of entertainment be it sport, music, drinking or bear baiting.

Ecclesfield is indeed fortunate to inherit a Church and Churchyard so beautiful and full of historic interest. Looking round other old churchyards with their broken and eroded stones and wide open spaces where stones have been cast aside makes one appreciate ours all the more. My plea must be to keep it neat and as it is. Let us remember that it is the resting place of all those who have gone before and if a standing stone becomes unstable let it be either made safe or laid on the spot where it was intended. In most of the area no new burials are permitted so there is no reason for their removal, if indeed there is a right. Too many priceless things have been lost for ever by so called improvements which have been regretted within a short spell of time. It is sincerely hoped that not one yard of ground will be lost by road widening or building development. Let God's Acre at Ecclesfield remain as it is. It has served us well for so many hundreds of years and it is our duty as temporary custodians to maintain it for the future generations.

F. S. Hague.