

**Historical Account of the
British Cemetery, Madrid.**

**Historia del Cementerio
Británico en Madrid.**

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**HISTORICAL ACCOUNT OF
THE BRITISH CEMETERY
MADRID**

by

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with a note on some of the inscriptions

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The British Cemetery in Madrid is to be found in the Calle del Comandante Fontanes, appropriately enough where the streets named Inglaterra and Irlanda meet. It is a place made shady with trees and full of curious inscriptions in many languages and scripts on its gravestones, dating back to the eighteen fifties.

Spain, in common with most other countries in post-Reformation Europe, excluded those not of their established Church from burial in their consecrated ground. As the general population movements began a hundred and fifty years ago, communities of foreigners living away from their lands of origin felt a great need for burial places: the monuments in the British Cemetery are testimony to this, especially so after the turn of the century when burials were permitted not only of non-Roman Catholics but also of members of all other faiths and sects. Those include an exiled ruling family (Bagrations, who lost Georgia in 1801 to the Czar and who fought so bravely against Napoleon), railway financiers and bankers (Bauers from the Austro-Hungarian Empire), many other Jewish families, Russian and Greek Orthodox families, Swiss and French protestants (such as Girod and Lhardy), German and Swedish protestants (Loewe, Boetticher) and - by far the majority - Britons and Americans. The Parish monument tells the story from 1845 in Stafford to 1930 in Madrid via Padua and Hanover of the family who created the Circo Parish, when, in 1878, William Parish married the daughter of Thomas Price of the Circo Price, significant in theatrical history since the eighteen forties and then refounded by the Parishes in 1926 under its original name "Circo Price" and doubtless still remembered by longstanding Madrid residents. There are Jewish families whose members are to be found in both Jewish and Christian sections of the Cemetery through conversion. There are inscriptions in Hungarian, Greek, Serbo-Croat, Hebrew, Bulgarian, German, French and classical Latin. In one nearly inaccessible spot between inner and outer boundary walls, there is at least one Moslem grave. There are several diplomats of northern Europe including a consul from Prussia (before the unification of Germany), whose monument, though truncated, has survived the two World Wars.

A few Roman Catholics are buried there, including a whole dynasty of long-serving sextons and members of intermarried Anglo-Spanish immigrant families.

One imposing pyramid monument, against the southern boundary wall, is identifiably Masonic with its numerological and constructional peculiarities.

In the files on the Cemetery at the British Consulate General in Madrid there survives a cutting from The Illustrated London News (issue of 14th July 1855): a paragraph, illustrated by a line drawing of the Cemetery, headed "The British Cemetery at Madrid", and reporting with proper pride, albeit it with confused chronology, the first two funerals there: "very grand affairs for Madrid" attended by mourners, of course, but also "a good many Spaniards came into the ground, some taking part, others as spectators". There is a sense of achievement in the article, partly because "much difficulty and annoyance" was experienced during "the hostilities attending the outbreak of the Revolution of July last" (that was by way of a military coup cunningly converted by certain political interests into a popular uprising in defence of the monarchy) and partly because - as papers in the Consulate General testify - the British Consular officials and members of the British community had to struggle to obtain their objective. There is much implied by the reference in the article to "the energy of Ambassador Lord Howden" (Minister Plenipotentiary at Madrid from 1850 to 1858).

The diplomacy to create the Cemetery was indeed conducted on a razor's edge. The Spanish authorities were not likely to be sympathetic to the British Government for Lord Palmerston's policy as Foreign Secretary (he did not become Prime Minister until 1855) was assertive of British privilege in every field and as a result of his objections to the marriages in October 1846 of the young Queen Isabel II and her sister the Infanta Luisa Fernanda to bridegrooms of the French royal house, he felt that the balance of power in Europe might become tilted away from British interests. As if that had not been enough, in 1848 Sir Henry Bulwer, the then Minister at Madrid, had to leave suddenly for England as the result

of violent disagreement with Narváez, (Presidente del Consejo de Ministros of Spain) who accused him of inciting factious revolt: consequently, there was a break in diplomatic representation between the two countries until 1850, when Lord Howden was appointed.

The creation of a burial ground had been an issue for many years. Cemeteries for non-Roman Catholics, almost always labelled by Spanish and British alike "Protestants" had been founded at other centres in Spain. The first had been in Bilbao in the mid seventeen hundreds for the large, shifting population of entrepreneurs, traders and seafarers. Cemeteries founded in the nineteenth century were at La Coruña, Seville, Huelva and Malaga. In a letter of 14 April 1932, Consul George Grahame wrote to Spanish Secretary of State Luis de Zulueta that some of the cemeteries were vested in "persons having no official status" but "the majority stand in the name of the local British Consular Officer".

Long before the period 1825 to 1830 when the Málaga cemetery was founded, like the Bilbao cemetery before it, because of special circumstances of a large, shifting population of British merchants and seafarers, land had been bought in Madrid for a burial ground. In 1796, the then Minister at Madrid, Lord Bute, acquired two and a quarter acres near the Puerta de Recoletos "outside the walls of the capital on the road "Pajaritos" bordering with the wall of Maroto's orchard; opposite one side of Luis Pierna's country house" (extract from 1847 conveyance based on a surveyor's report of 1846). These surroundings which sound rustic if not sylvan, were just about where the Plaza de Colón, the hub of Madrid, now stands. The site was never walled in its entirety but marked out with boundary stones - "mojones rotulados" - inscribed "GB 1796 que le acotan" (File 2.152.85, Archivo de la Villa, Corregimiento).

Part of the problem in making use of that site for the purpose of burials was the lapse of time because of the French Wars, then the French occupation of Madrid. Also, meanwhile the city was growing slowly but surely in the direction of the Puerta de Recoletos. By 1831, the British had been considerably forewarned by the Policía Urbana that as the city

was advancing, burials almost certainly would never be allowed in the ground they owned.

There is a letter dated 28th Dec 1848 from Assistant Consul George Brackenbury to Lord Clarendon at the Foreign Office in London which relates the initiative of the Rev. James Thomson "of the Scotch (sic) Episcopalian Church whose wife died at Madrid about a year since". From the file at the Archivo de la Villa it seems that Mr. Thomson either styled himself "Consul Thomson" or was so designated for certain purposes and with this weighty advantage of rank he addressed the need of the British residents in Madrid for their own cemetery. He enlisted the help of important enlightened members of the Academia de Medicina y Cirugia and the city Architect himself and liberal-minded figures or simply those who were disposed to challenged the established order, such as Mesonero Romanos, Goyeneche, Necedal, Clemencin, and others. Most of the existing cemeteries, many of which were privately owned by families or associations, were outside the Puerta de Fuencarral which is the district between the Glorieta de Quevedo and present day Arapiles. Land had been offered to the British there, but Mr. Thomson had reservations about whether some of the stricter owners of established cemeteries might resent the nearness of a new cemetery for those not of the Roman Catholic faith and might try, and possibly succeed, in preventing it. Besides, as he himself wrote about some site near the Puerta de Bilbao, they were all "subject to city expansion in that direction too". Mr. Thomson found what he thought was a most suitable enclosed site, near the river and cemeteries in that area and even persuaded the vendor to give a month's option on the land. The Consulate officials had seen this as a promising change of direction and Mr. Brackenbury requested £500 for the cost of the land, the construction of a boundary wall and other expenses. The land, reduced from an earlier asking price of 48,489 reales, was now on offer for ready money at 43,000 reales (equivalent at the 1848 rate of exchange to £ 434). (Note that reales were used until coinage reform brought in the peseta in 1870). The land already had a well and a cottage for a guardian whose wages, it was estimated, would be "no more than seven reales (one shilling and fivepence) per day" (i.e. 7 new pence).

This plot was not purchased but, as in so many matters, a good cause is sometimes lost and yet that is the spur towards a later solution. Now the search for a cemetery site began in earnest!

It is evident that usually the Roman Catholic upholders of their cemeteries disliked accommodating non-Roman Catholics as much as non-Roman Catholics disliked burying their dead there. Mrs. Thomson had most probably been buried in a Roman Catholic cemetery and almost certainly in the district where Arapiles now is. More than one conscientious and sympathetic priest is known to have conducted proper burials of non-Roman Catholics. It was estimated that from 1834 to 1850 between fifteen and twenty "English Protestants" had died in Madrid. Lord Howden, writing to Lord Palmerston in 1850, mentions that among them was his own uncle "the Honourable General (sic) Meade" who had to be buried in a Roman Catholic cemetery.

Streams of correspondence had already passed between London and Madrid on the subject of the cemetery and the flow continued until all the detail was dealt with. The outgoing letters survive as drafts in the handwriting of their authors, ready to be "fair-copied" by a clerk for signature and then despatch. The handwriting of the incoming letters is that of their senders' clerks and is generally elegant and easily legible. The key letters of the correspondence were printed on 8th August 1851 (those in Spanish both in their original language and translated into English) in preparation for obtaining Parliamentary approval for the sale and purchase of land and a grant of money later. Some examples of transit time for letters follow (taken from annotations on the originals)

<u>Letter dated</u>	<u>Arrival date in Madrid</u>	<u>Courier or Messenger</u>
19th December 1846	27th December	Drury
26th June 1847	8th July	Fricker
22nd July 1847	28th July	Santiago

These deliveries were made while the railway between Paris and Madrid was anything but complete and indeed non-existent in Spanish territory.

The correspondence was sometimes stormy. Lord Palmerston thundered in his letter of 28th July 1851 that the land purchased in 1796 should be sold and another site bought, the area to be one and a half or two acres (the implication being the smaller the better). The long held site outside the Puerta de Recoletos had had its boundaries squared up by a deal in 1846/47 between the British Government and Sr. Laguna, the "guardian" of the widow of Pablo Maroto and her son, whose farm was the neighbouring land. Some small, odd pieces of land were exchanged and the Widow Maroto accepted all legal expenses and the cost of some boundary wall construction. As Sr. Laguna was also the trustee for other land belonging to the late Pablo Maroto, outside the Puerta de Fuencarral, a proposal was made in 1850 to exchange the land held by the British since 1796 for the other plot, thereby consolidating the Maroto holding, but it came to nothing. The valuation, carried out scrupulously, took into account that the plot where the Plaza de Colón is now would almost certainly appreciate but considered it less valuable at that time "por fanega" or "per rood" for agricultural purposes.

By 25th.October 1850, the acre of land now in use as the British Cemetery figures in the correspondence. It was advertised by Julián Pachón Guillán, presumably the representative of the owner, Manuel Chacón, an innkeeper. It is described as situated on the Cerro de San Dámaso: the Deeds (17th August 1853) relate: "to the right of the road to Carabanchel on leaving Madrid after passing the small bridge of San Dámaso" (extract quoted from the Deeds in correspondence).

In parts of the correspondence, the land is referred to as "at the Parador de los Chacones (sic)". The land which had been bought in 1796 was sold in 1853 for £553-0-4d, and the money deposited with Henry O'Shea and Company, bankers of Madrid.

Even then, the problems were not all solved, for before the firm offer for purchase could be made, the Minister himself, Lord Howden, entered into correspondence with Minister of State Pedro Pidal, the Marqués de Pidal, to ensure that no obstacles would be put in the way. Pidal's reply by his letter of 6th July 1851 was a number of conditions and requests and all these were transmitted to Lord Palmerston who was again roused to the use of stern words for he understandably objected to Pidal's requests that no church or chapel should be built and that burials should be conducted without public or private worship and without "ritual" (translated as "Divine Service") and that there should be no "pompa o publicidad". Lord Palmerston felt (his letter of 28th July 1851) these requests were "inconsistent with the liberal spirit of the age" and invokes reciprocity as there was - he writes - "perfect religious freedom for Roman Catholic in the United Kingdom" (in fact, by Catholic Emancipation and Reform Acts in 1829 and 1832 respectively). Lord Howden obtained the necessary alleviation of Pidal's conditions by perseverance and persistent contact especially with Beltrán de Lis and the Marqués de Miraflores.

The new plot was bought in 1853 for £138-6-2d and estimates were sent to London for a considerable amount of work: a boundary wall, a keeper's cottage and so forth but the estimates, made by master builder Mr. James Lilliot of Madrid and surveyor Sr. Wenceslao Gavina (sometimes Gabina) also of Madrid, were rejected and Surveyor of the Board of Works Mr. B. Albano (his plan dated 7th November 1853 survives) gave new estimates and £1000 was to be forthcoming from the Treasury for the work. The O'Shea Bank failed in the meantime - though at least 30% of the money deposited does seem to have been recovered over the next few years - but the project struggled through and Mr. Albano, who had been corresponding from Paris, where he had been engaged in another Board of Works project, moved on to Madrid and extensive levelling work began on 10th January 1855. The royal arms over the gate - sculpted by Pedro S. Nicoli - were completed and put in place on 19th May 1856. Stonemason Jaime Luis and plumber José Pérez for their part continued on the job although eleven burials had already taken place, meeting some unforeseen needs for fast work to improve site drainage.

The first two burials were of Arthur Thorold (on 10th February 1854) and Samuel James Lilliott (on 25th July 1854), the latter the eight months old son of the builder whose quotation had been rejected. The burials were duly accompanied by the pomp of that period: "a hearse with four horses followed by eight carriages" is mentioned in the report in "The Illustrated London News" in July, 1855.

The Cemetery was not consecrated, however, until 7th February 1866 when the ceremony was performed by the Bishop of the Diocese of Illinois (USA), John Whitehouse, in the presence of Sir John Fiennes Crampton, Bt., KCB, HM Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary, and of the Chaplain of the Legation, the Rev. William Adderley Campbell.

The later history of the Cemetery becomes an account of a struggle for funds just to maintain it all in good order and to pay the sexton's wages.

In the early years the British resident community showed interest and was generous. Assistant Consul Brackenbury was evidently a well-liked figure and ready to open his home for meetings of his fellow countrymen. At one such meeting in 1850, the sum of £30 was forthcoming by subscription among those present. Other early subscription lists which have survived show that funding of the annual expenditure budget of £79-15-0 (£79.75 in decimal currency) should not have been a big problem, especially when burial fees would add to the revenue. Though there are no more than twelve to twenty five names on annual subscription lists, the amounts donated were considerable for the time. Sir John Crampton (who succeeded Lord Howden as Minister at Madrid in 1858) led off with 500 reales (about £5). Pillars of the community contributed handsomely: the banker Mr. Ignacio Bauer and Henry O'Shea and Company (the latter only until the O'Shea Bank failed), the builder Mr. James Lilliott, the ironfounder Mr. William Sanford, the photographer Mr. Charles Clifford (and, after his death on New Year's

Day, 1863, his widow) were all regular subscribers. The 1854 fees for burials were sufficient at:

A grave	100 reales (equivalent to £ 1)
A grave 7 feet x 4 feet with liberty to erect a monument	1000 reales (equivalent to £ 10)
A family vault 10 feet x 10 feet	2000 reales.
Each new interment	100 reales.
Exhumations	30 reales.

These contrast with the fees in 1920:

<u>Adult graves</u>	<u>for British subjects</u>	<u>for non-British subjects</u>
Without exclusive rights	150 pesetas	not admitted
With exclusive rights	500 pesetas	1000 pesetas

There was a fifty percent increase in 1930 on the 1920 fees. The exchange rate in January 1930 was 25 pesetas to the £ sterling.

Almost from the outset, the Cemetery was managed by the Consul under the Consular Act, a procedure which brought with it the advantage that whatever money was raised locally among residents, the Treasury would provide a sum equal to it. In the period from 1850 to 1860, some emphasis was placed on whether people contributing lived in Madrid or outside and by "outside", places as far afield as Toledo and Aranjuez were meant, but why this distinction was made is not clear now. Money from subscribers was for running expenses and does not seem to have brought with it any rights to burial. There was no real financial problem then, however. Then, in 1860, Mr. Brackenbury realised that there had been no remittance from the Treasury in respect of 1859 and upon enquiring, he was taken aback to learn that as he had secured sufficient number of subscribers, and had adequate money in hand, there would be no further contributions from the Treasury to match the local fund raising. Already, there had been some indications in correspondence of a feeling of

disappointment over Cemetery finances. Mr. Frederick Bernal, HM Consul, and the Minister, Lord Howden, had had to make quite trivial special needs known to the Foreign Office and in a despatch of the 7th May 1855 to Lord Clarendon, Mr. Bernal had justified a relatively small sum as necessary for "various articles for the Cemetery, viz: a Gun, Spade, Wheelbarrow, Bucket, etc". In the same account comes the charge made by a paperhanger for a small job costing 209 reales (£2) at the residence of Head of Legation.

The nationals of countries other than Britain had to pay more for their burials (usually double). Other nations had shown interest from the start. In 1850, the Dutch Minister, Baron de Grovestins, had proposed a Protestant union or collaboration to Lord Howden when the project was showing signs of success and the Dutch support was, no doubt, useful at the time in the diplomatic manoeuvres and negotiations. In 1892 the Germans expressed interest in collaborating - "quite a new idea" wrote Consul Mr. Little - but nothing came of it and knowledge survives only in a brief reference in Mr. Little's correspondence to the effect that Britain "wanted joint administration of it".

The cyclone which hit Madrid with great force, devastating effect and loss of life on 12th May 1886 and following which extensive parts of the Retiro and the Botanic Gardens had to be largely replanted did damage in the Cemetery too. Happily, the Treasury saw fit to provide £60 in 1887 towards the cost of repairs and replanting.

George Fitch, buried in the Cemetery on 16th July 1882, resident at number 15 in the Calle de Goya, was active until his death at the age of seventy four in local affairs of the British community. His name does not appear on lists of subscribers in the early years of the Cemetery, perhaps because he formed part of the Embassy or Consular representation, but judging by his rank of Colonel, he might have been retired. Colonel Fitch's mission seems to have been to put order into matters as he found them, but although there is frequent reference to him in the documents on file at the Consulate General (e.g. notifications about the proper use of a Visitors' Book, a hand drawn plan of the burial plots, etc.) there is no

clear way of including him in the chronological order of things. He certainly was a trustee of the Cemetery, together with William Sanford and at the same time William O'Shea was Treasurer and George Brackenbury was Consul, as testifies an undated list of persons responsible for the Cemetery. William Sanford, who was one of the original subscribers in the eighteen fifties and eighteen sixties, died in 1876 at the age of sixty-eight and he also was buried in the Cemetery.

There was a fall in the number of burials in the eighteen nineties, possibly attributable to the better health of young expatriates by then and also to the possibility of their convenient return to the home country by improved train services when seriously ailing. Whether the decline in use was the only cause of financial difficulties we may not know, but in his appeal letter of 24th February 1894, the Vice Consul, Mr. Montagu E. Loftus, stated that there was not even enough money to pay the sexton's wages (which, incidentally, were 82.50 pesetas per month in 1895, having remained almost unchanged for many years). Only twenty-six people were targeted (and of them, three were the American and Swedish Legations and the German Embassy). The sexton himself, Luis Garrido, delivered the letters by hand and the situation seems to have been saved. Later appeals were more universal. In 1982, an appeal to the British residents in Madrid was made with some success. Now, the Trustees, who, historically, by the Consular Act are H M Consul General and the Chaplain of H M Embassy, have chosen to delegate further fund raising and administration to an Association of local British residents formed under Spanish Law and meant to be more representative of the now enlarged British Community and the times we live in.

Early in 1932 there began an anxious correspondence about the future of the Cemetery as new provisions in Spain had been promulgated to "secularise" the private Cemeteries. After prolonged correspondence lasting four years, the Commission of Policía Urbana stated that the law would not apply in the special case of the British Cemetery. That correspondence, conducted in the main by Consuls W J Sullivan and George Grahame, records some interesting details:

518 people in total were then buried there; 135 of those people were not British. The charge - at 1000 pesetas - for burying a person who was not British was double the usual scale of charges. "Running expenses" were 2500 pesetas a year.

The last burials at the time the Civil War began on 18 July 1936 were those of a British lady, Mary Farrell, aged ninety two (4 September 1936) and Mr. Lesley (sic) White (on 2 November 1936), aged forty one, who, the register notes, had a false Australian passport but was probably a Russian: he died in Valdemoro.

It is not surprising that burials stopped in the period from 1936 to 1939, during the Civil War, for apart from the reduced number of Britons who stayed on despite the danger, it so happened that the Cemetery was exposed to the front line of defence of Madrid. The widow of a retired British subject, Amy Constance Gifford, died on 30 November 1936, aged sixty seven years, but she had to be buried in the Cementerio del Este until such time as her family could have her transferred to the British Cemetery, which was not accomplished until 27 November 1939. The first burial after the entry of Nationalist troops into Madrid in March 1939 was that of Maximine or Maxine Levy Chimenes, the daughter of Adolfo Moses Manasse, on 18 June 1939.

The Registers are a wonderful summary of how Spain developed in the course of the nineteenth century and during the two World Wars and the Civil War in the twentieth. The earlier entries are pithy and seem to have been copied out of one book into another in about 1867. There is a wealth of detail for the period 1939 to 1967, with press cuttings in some cases and references to traffic accidents as the cause of death in the more recent years. There were victims of air accidents too. In May 1944, an aeroplane taking the British Minister to Barcelona on Government business about repatriation of prisoners crashed at Prats de Compts near Tortosa and the pilot, Squadron Leader H C Caldwell, and the diplomat, Mr. Arthur Yencken CMG, MC died and are buried in the Cemetery. In 1947, an unidentified traveller was found in the wreckage of the plane "Ruta de Colón" in the Gredos mountains: it was only later his identity

was known: a United States citizen, Mr. Meldon Reed Russell. In total, there were five United States citizen in that crash and four of them came to be buried in the Cemetery.

The early registers have some sad little entries:

"Englishman unknown died in a Spanish (11 April 1856)
hospital"
"A German (sic) subject name-unknown" (24 September 1856)
"A Swedish subject" (3 December 1861)

There were about six burials a year at first. In 1864, there were fewer Britons than other nationalities (two Germans, two Swiss). In 1856 six Britons were buried and also one Prussian, one Saxon (aged only twenty-one) and one Frenchman. Most burials were of males, people in the prime of life or young. To take one year alone: in 1875 there were thirteen burials:

<u>Age at death</u>	<u>Number</u>
75 years	1
60 years	1
54 years	1
32 to 37 years	4
19 to 22 years	2
Infants	4

Six of the above were British, four were Prussian, one was "German" and there was one from Luxembourg and one Swiss. There were few burials of people aged more than seventy, generally only one a year. Although the number rose to about fifteen burials a year by 1880, there came the decline already mentioned to seven a year by the eighteen nineties.

Returning to the theme of the panorama which the Registers afford, during the First World War between 1914 and 1918 there were

only twenty-four burials of which most were of Britons (one was diplomat Major Stewart Bartonbythesea Dyer DSO) and the rest included, obviously, neutrals and the nationalities aligned to British policies. Those were of three French, one Russian (Baron Theodore de Budberg, the Ambassador to Madrid), one United States American and one Swede. The Britons included William and Matilde Parish and other interesting personalities such as Gustavo Bauer Morpurgo, whose family's massive Egyptian style mausoleum (with four burials and room for eight more) dominates one part of the Cemetery.

In the Second World War (1939 to 1945) there were thirty burials of which twenty were of Britons and the other nationalities were

France	2
USA	2
Australia	2
Yugoslavia	1
Netherlands	1
Czechoslovakia	1
Norway	1

- as it were, the time capsule of the Allies in the war.

In 1941, when the Second World War was at its most threatening level, lists were prepared by HM Consulate to show the variety of nationalities - other than British - interred. Summarised these were as follows:

Portuguese	1
Argentine	1
Netherlands	3
Cuban	1
Russian	4
Irish	1
Luxembourg	1
Swedish	4

Norwegian	3
Finnish	1
French	20
USA	23
German	54
Swiss	24

This total of 141 burials of non-British persons may be compared with the figure of 135 non-British burials reported to the Spanish authorities by the Consul's letter of 18 January 1932.

The period following the Second World War was a difficult time for Spain of international isolation and for Britain of austerity, restrictions and efforts at home towards recovery. 1946 saw seven burials in the Cemetery and only two were of Britons. In 1947 there were nine and only two were of Britons. In 1948 there were only two burials, an American dentist aged seventy six, and a Hungarian film director aged forty eight. The tide began to turn when normal conditions returned in 1949 and in that year ten burials took place and six of them were of British people. It seems strange, shocking even, to contemplate that a steady rate of interments indicates a return to normality!

The guardian or sexton kept a secondary register and it is curious to check spelling variations, sometimes neither the Consular Register nor the sexton's register agreeing with the stonemason's version of the name (as recorded on the card index carefully made by recent inspection and copying of each and every monumental inscription that is still remotely legible).

A later sexton, Luis Ruiz, a striking and well-informed person who died in 1992 in his early fifties, kept his records conscientiously with occasional extra detail. He had learned his skills as pupil of the last of the Garrido sextons, a truly remarkable dynasty where the first of them, Pedro Garrido, was sexton in 1862 when he is on record as receiving pay of ten reales a day (the equivalent of ten new pence). Then came Luis Garrido Álvarez who occupied the post from when a young man until his death in

1917 aged fifty two. His sons Antonio Garrido García (who died in 1948 aged forty six) and Manuel Garrido García (1904-1966) took over in succession when their father died.

There are two burial places in the Cemetery with ample testimony on the gravestones of ten members of their family, spanning over one hundred years of service to the Cemetery, during which some would have lived in the lodge on the side of the Cemetery entrance opposite to the Chapel. A small cottage is indeed shown on the line drawing which appeared in "The Illustrated London News" on 14 July 1855, but in 1882 the cottage or "habitación del Conserje" was enlarged and it was those additions which are what had to be demolished in 1994 when they became ruinous and insanitary after the lodge was left unoccupied after Manuel Garrido's death in 1966. The contractors who undertook the demolition of those additions also cleared that part of the Cemetery site and were rewarded by being able to put in decent order a two metre wide strip of ground outside the eastern boundary wall so that the block of flats nearby, then being offered for sale by them, should have a better outlook.



**NOTE ON THE INSCRIPTIONS BY JEAN IBBITSON, WHO
CREATED THE CARD INDEX OF THE MONUMENTAL
INSCRIPTIONS IN THE BRITISH CEMETERY AT MADRID.**

Although you will not hear Thomas Gray's "lowing herd", the British Cemetery in Madrid has the peace and tranquility of an English

country churchyard; surrounded by trees, the silence now and then broken by the call of a bird or the rustle of wings.

There are inscriptions in many languages - English, French, Spanish, Dutch, German, Polish, Roumanian, Russian, Hebrew, Greek and Latin - because here are buried those of many lands and beliefs. Lying here are diplomats, soldiers, sailors, airmen, doctors, lawyers, bankers, journalists, businessmen, engineers, a circus owner, teachers, governesses, and nannies. Sadly, in the early days of the Cemetery there are so many graves of tiny children and their young mothers.

The inscriptions range from the verbose to the concise - a cross or headstone covered with words, to a simple stone bearing only a name and date.

Here is the grave of an American artist "who loved Spain and painted much of her beauty"; of a colonel in The Hussars "who greatly distinguished himself in the battles of Aliwal and Sabroan" in the Sikh Wars; of a man who "loved the sun"; of a woman of seventy-six "who lived every minute of her years"; of a "sweet and loving child". Particularly charming is the tribute of five young Spanish girls to their British nanny:

"For the kindness you bestowed on us,
For all the sweet wise words you spoke,
For all your loving ways,
Our hearts go out to you in gratitude and praise.

Hilda, Mimi, Paz, Zena and Rocío."

and a tribute to a young wife:

"So comfort to the stricken heart!
Take solace in the thought that she
you mourn was called by God to such
High Dignity"

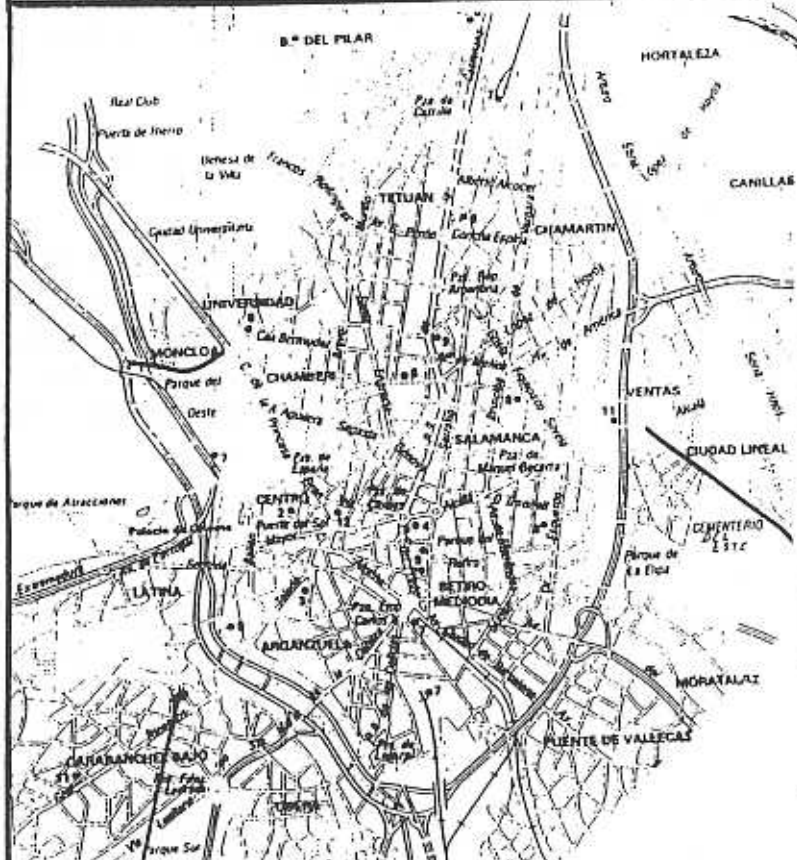
Five graves record the names of Americans killed in the "Ruta de Colón", an aeroplane which crashed in the Gredos Mountains in 1947, and two more those of two young aviators killed flying over Madrid. Here too are war graves - of a young private of the Royal Army Service Corps, and a British Minister and a Royal Air Force pilot killed in an air crash flying from Madrid to Barcelona to meet British prisoners-of-war repatriated from Germany. Buried here also is a foreign correspondent of "The Times" newspaper who worked in Spain and had lived through the assault on Madrid. Finally, an inscription on an early grave of the Englishman, George Fitch, - a colonel- who may possibly have fought in the Carlist Wars and who "died at Madrid on the 14th of July 1882 after many years of honourable service in the Spanish Army and a lengthened sojourn in this country. This stone has been erected by those who knew him and appreciated his labour towards the establishment and maintenance of this Cemetery and his constant care for the interests of the British congregation".

Although those of many races and religions are buried here, there has been no particular plan to divide the Cemetery into racial or religious sections. There is, though, one block of graves, dominated by the imposing Bauer family mausoleum, where many of the stones bear the star of Judah and have inscriptions in Hebrew.

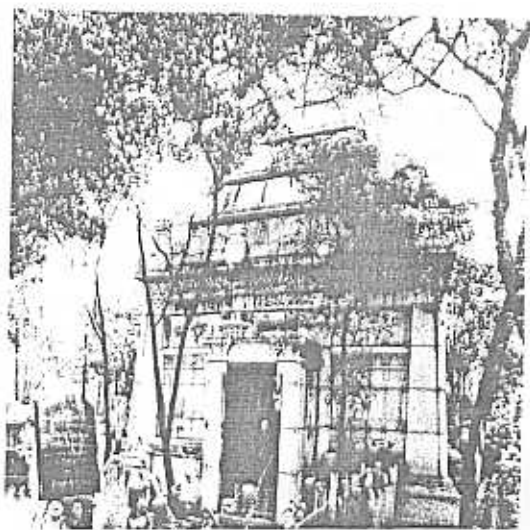
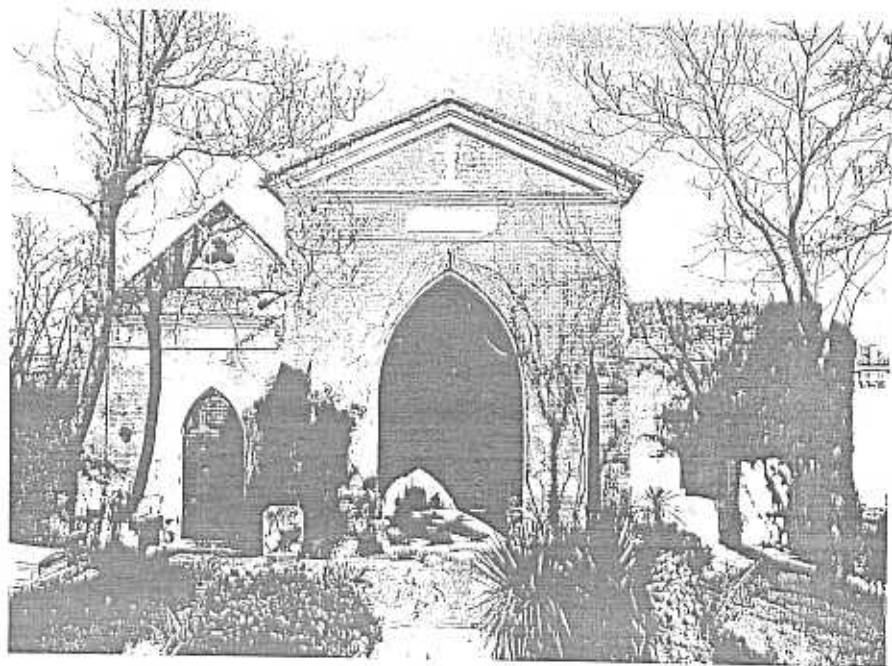
The only other mausoleum is a Masonic one of the family Tertsch.

With the passing of time many of the inscriptions have become unreadable and the stones themselves misplaced, but with reference to the Consulate registers it has been possible to decipher and record nearly all of them. It has also been possible to identify many of the dedications on the stained glass windows in the British Embassy Church of St. George with graves in the British Cemetery.

LOCATION OF BRITISH CEMETERY IN MADRID



BRITISH CEMETERY
CEMENTERIO BRITÁNICO



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