

Symbolism, Sculptors and Masons



The lily on this gravestone is a symbol of purity. It may signify the returning of the soul to innocence at the time of death. The urn represents the body as a vessel for the soul, a common representation of mourning. You can see the name of the sculptor at the top: Clements of Constantine. Other monuments have sculptors and masons from nearby villages and towns.

Have a look on some of the more ornate graves for the names of the masons.



The symbolic carvings you can see on some older gravestones have particular meanings:

Anchor - often on sailors' headstones

Clasped hands - unity in life, the hope of meeting again in eternity

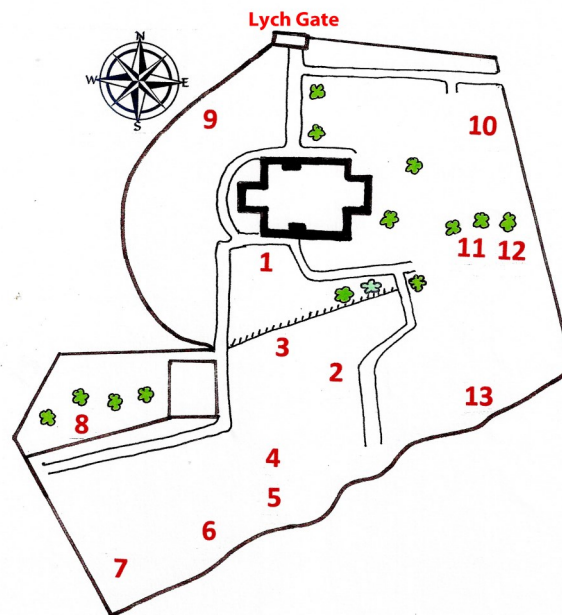
Ivy - immortality and eternal life

Broken branch - an untimely or premature death

Skull and crossbones - is an old way of signifying death and mortality. This example is on an ancient, roughly carved gravestone near the lych gate with the initials R B, dated 1731. Local legend has this as a pirate's grave or possibly a plague victim.

Some Interesting Graves

In this leaflet we describe a number of graves which you might wish to seek out. They include members of wealthy families, fishermen, servants, artists, people who died in tragic circumstances. In searching for those we have chosen you will find many more with indications of poignant stories that you may wish to research for yourself.



The Churchyard contains many memorials of interest. If you are looking for the grave of a particular person, please visit the Parish Council website:

www.mawnan.org.uk/graveyard



members of the society.

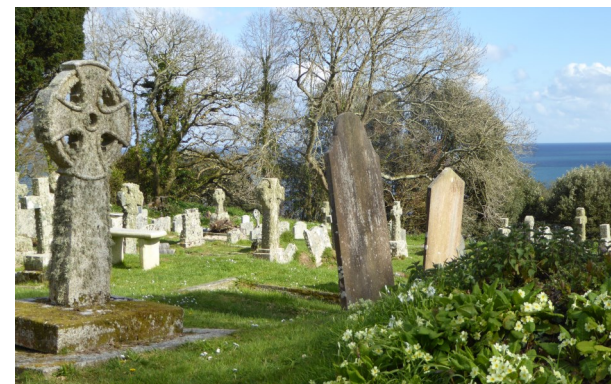
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www.theartsocietyfalmouth.org

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A Walk Around St Mawnan Churchyard

Having spent some time inside this lovely old church, take a look outside at some of the graves of the interesting folk who have lived in Mawnan over the centuries. Overlooking the Helford Estuary and out over Falmouth Bay, the location is spectacular.



The church is built within the site of an ancient fortress and settlement – you can still see evidence of the enclosing fortifications. It would have had a commanding view of advancing dangers. A request from the Trinity Board in 1842 to whitewash the tower as a guide to mariners was fortunately never followed up. Today, with its views of the sea, it is noted as a beautiful venue for weddings and celebrations.

Entering through the lych gate, built in 1881, you will notice the inscription in Cornish “Da thymy nesse the Dhu” (It is good for me to draw nigh unto God). Notice also the coffin rest where the funeral procession would wait for the vicar.

1. Mary Ann Vosper (Died 1857)

Esteemed Servant and Kind Friend

Mary worked for Mrs Pender at Budock Vean for 37 years, clearly becoming more of a friend than a servant. From early in the 18th Century, Budock Vean was owned by the Pender family who built a fine house, recorded as being the largest house in the Parish. The Penders sold it after the First World War.

2. Claud Worth (1869-1938)

Ophthalmologist, Master Mariner, Author



Claud Worth was a renowned ophthalmologist who specialised in amblyopia (childhood squint). He also sailed and designed yachts, and wrote books on yacht cruising. He lived at Helford Passage in Bar House which has a jetty on the beach with a tunnel through for walkers. His son Tom, also a noted world sailor in his boat 'Beyond', is buried with him.

3. "MISS" W E James (1900-1977)

The village schoolmistress for many years, Winifred James is remembered simply as "Miss". The Cornish inscription 'Yn Cres' means At Peace.

4. Cuthbert (d1972) & Moyra (d1988) Fox

Over 200 years members of the Fox family played a significant part in the history of Falmouth. They were merchants, ship agents, consuls and scientists; and they invested in several important industries and commercial enterprises throughout Cornwall. They were horticulturists and responsible for the gardens of Penjerrick, Glendurgan and Trebah. They were Quakers and took a keen interest in philanthropic work. Anna Maria and her sister Caroline Fox founded the Royal Cornwall Polytechnic Society.

5. Tony (d2014) & Eira (d2009) Hibbert

After a distinguished military career during WW2, Tony Hibbert joined his family wine and spirits business.

In retirement he and his wife bought Trebah. They restored and developed the garden, turning it into the public garden it is today and instigated the annual military day in memory of the US soldiers who embarked from Trebah's beach prior to D-Day.

6. Tom Cross (1931-2009)

Artist, Teacher and Author

Widely travelled and respected artist, Tom Cross also taught and lectured. He spent the later years of his career as Principal of Falmouth School of Art & Design, 1976-1987.

7. Patrick Woodroffe (1940-2014)



Artist and Author

'Durgan Fairy'©

An artist with a wonderfully detailed technique, he produced a range of fantastical, mythical and surrealist work for the covers of books and record sleeves in the 1970/80s, instantly recognisable as a key part of the culture of the times. The area around Helford and Mawnan Church inspired a

series of paintings entitled 'The Coastal Path', which includes 'Durgan Fairy'.

8. Mary Plumstead (1905-1980)

Classical Composer

Mary studied at the Royal Academy of Music and her composition "Close Thine Eyes" can be heard on YouTube. A Blue Atlas Cedar was planted in her memory, with a commemorative plaque at its base.

9. George Barnes (1788-1845)

Chief Boatman in HM Coastguard

George, his three sons (ages 22, 16, 13) and Ellen Retallack (16), all of Durgan, were drowned off Swanpool on returning from Falmouth. The inquest stated that a lad's cap had blown off and he was leaning to retrieve it causing the boat to capsize. The funeral cortege was very long including family, coastguards, neighbours and Mawnan schoolchildren. 60 bearers were needed to carry the coffins in relays from Durgan to the church.

10. John Kempthorne (1836-1896)

Gold prospector in New Zealand

Murdered together with 3 other prospectors in the Maungatapu Mountain. They were "waylaid, robbed and barbarously murdered by a gang of four bushrangers" known as the Burgess Gang. The murder was infamous in the region and a memorial to the victims was erected at the scene.

The Wreck of the SS Mohegan 1898

11. Henry Pinfold 12. Charles Wassell

Two adjacent graves record the deaths of men from the



liner Mohegan, bound for New York and wrecked on the Manacles.

Most of the 107 casualties were buried in a mass grave in St Keverne. The bodies of Henry Pinfold and Charles Wassell were found on this side of the Helford.

13. Commonwealth War Graves Commission

A number of graves are maintained by the CWGC, even some not to the official design, including that of Eugene McKeown (1887-1917). He had been serving on HMS Foyle during WW1 when it was sunk off Rame Head. His body was found on Maenporth Beach.