

Paddington Street Gardens

Date: As a Burial Ground (St George's) 1731-1837; As Public Gardens (Paddington Street) 1885/86
Designer: Fanny Wilkinson, MPGA, 1886

The gardens are on land formerly used for burials and is split into two parts by Paddington Street.

The larger South Garden represents the older burial ground consecrated in 1733. The land was granted by the Earl of Oxford, one of whose conditions that a workhouse be provided, which was erected in 1750-52. By 1771 further burial space was needed and the parish bought land north of Paddington Street, now the North Garden. A larger workhouse was built to the north in 1775, on the present site of the University of Westminster. The burial ground was closed in 1814 when St John's Wood Burial Ground opened. Paddington Street was laid out as a public recreation ground in 1885 and was opened in 1886 by Princess Louise. Most gravestones were removed although a fine C18th mausoleum in the south garden commemorates the wife of Richard Fitzpatrick.

The designer of the Gardens in 1886 was Fanny Wilkinson of the metropolitan Public Gardens Association. The Metropolitan Public Gardens Association was established in 1882. The first Chairman and moving spirit in its foundation was Lord Brabazon, later the first Earl of Meath.

The principal object was stated in its Constitution to be "the protection, preservation, safeguarding and acquiring for permanent preservation for public use, of gardens, disused burial grounds, churchyards, open spaces, areas of land likely to be used for building purposes, strips of land adjoining roads and footpaths, or any land situated within the Metropolitan Police District or in its vicinity." An additional object was, and still is, the provision of seats and the planting of trees.

Initially, the MPGA gave its highest priority to the most deprived inner city areas of London, where overcrowding was at its worst. The opening up of churchyards and burial grounds was important in this respect and was greatly facilitated by an Act of Parliament promoted by the Association. Garden squares were also a concern, threatened as they were by neglect and the threat of being sold for building development as it was not until the 1930s that they were fully protected by legislation.

From the outset, the Association recognised the need for the creation of new public open spaces to keep up with the growth of the urban population and the expanding suburbs. It actively campaigned to preserve open spaces and used its own resources, including its own designers and workforce. The Association often acted as a catalyst between local residents and philanthropic land owners within the MPGA's membership, who made land available for new parks and recreation grounds.

The MPGA, which was recognised as one of the leading charities in its field, helped in the formation and development of several amenity organisations, such as the National Trust and the National Playing Fields Association. It also campaigned for school playgrounds to be made available for public use out of school hours and for private garden squares to be opened to the public at designated times.

Since the inauguration of the MPGA 130 years ago, the emphasis of its work has adapted to the immense changes undergone in London and the suburbs, while at the same time keeping faith with its original objects.

The older burial ground was formed when additional burial ground was needed for the old St Marylebone Parish Church and in 1730 one acre and one rood to the south of what is now Paddington Street, which dates from the 1760s, was granted to the parish by Edward Harley, Earl of Oxford. It was consecrated as a burial ground in 1733. One of the conditions of the Earl's grant was that a workhouse should be provided

for the poor of the parish, and this was erected in 1750-52. After 1775 it was used as the parish infirmary until 1791, a larger workhouse having been built to the north, on the present site of the University of Westminster. By 1771 further space for graves was needed and the parish bought the piece of land on the north side of the street from Henry Portman, which was consecrated in 1772. It was in this area to the north that the new workhouse was built, with a larger infirmary built adjacent in 1792.

The burial ground was closed in 1814 when St John's Wood Burial Ground opened (see St John's Wood Church Grounds q.v.), although the land remains consecrated. It was made into a public recreation ground in 1885, which was opened on 6 July 1886 by Princess Louise. The garden was designed by Fanny Wilkinson, landscape gardener of the MPGA, for whom she laid out over 75 public gardens in London, many of them disused burial grounds. The north area has lime and London plane trees around the roughly rectangular lawn with a simple straight walk around it, as shown on the 1914 OS map. The larger area south of Paddington Street has a fine mausoleum in the form of a square building with an ogee dome, which was erected by Richard Fitzpatrick in memory of his wife Susanna who died in 1730. His daughter Anne, Baroness de Robeck, was later buried here in 1829. There are two circular shelters in the gardens, the one to the north is early C20th, the other perhaps slightly later, although it corresponds to buildings shown on the 1914 OS. There is a drinking fountain, now surmounted by an astrolabe and modern railings around the northern lawn. The sculpture, 'Street Orderly Boy' by the Milanese artist Donato Barcaglia, 1930, was presented and erected here in 1943. The path system is recognisably similar to that shown on the 1914 OS; trees include Cherries, Laburnum, Hawthorn and shrubs, notable London Planes and mature Limes along the western boundary. On the south side of Paddington Green is the St Marylebone Youth Centre Club. The gardens won the Green Flag Award in 2008.

Tombs in the great cemetery on the south side of Paddington Street



The 1950s marker stone recording the history of the gardens in Paddington Street Gardens south

In a large cemetery on the south side of Paddington-street (consecrated in 1733) is a large mausoleum, erected by the Hon. Richard Fitzpatrick, to the memory of his wife Susanna, who died in 1759; and the tombs of the following persons:

Frances Rothery (sister of Dr. William Nicolson, Archbishop of Cashel, and mother of Joseph Rothery, Archdeacon of Derry), 1740;

Matthew Gossett, Esq. a gentleman-pensioner, "well known for his skill in some of the polite "arts," 1744;
Gideon Gossett, Esq. 1785;
John Reynolds, masterpainter of the ordnance, 1752;
John Lawson, Esq. 1753;
Hon. Enoch Hall, Chief Justice of North Carolina, 1753;
William Russel, Gent. of Rowley Regis Staff., 1756;
John Castles ("late of the "Great Grotto", whose great ingenuity in shell-work gained him universal
applause"), 1757;
Michael Weston, Esq. 1760;
Rev. Thomas Morice, 1762;
Henry Lathom, Esq. of Lancashire (who married Abigail, daughter of Richard Twiss, Esq.), 1764;
Archibald Bower, 1766;
William Morehead, Esq. 1766;
Anne, relict of Captain George Edwards, of the Royal Navy, 1767;
Sir Andrew Chadwick, Knt. 1768;
Dame Margaret Chadwick, 1783;
Elizabeth Humfrey, her sister (no date);
Captain Thomas Butler Cole (whose daughter Mary married James Winder), 1769;
Anne, daughter of John Dupree, Esq. and relict of John Reynolds, 1770;
William Guthrie, Esq. 1770;
James Dubisson, Esq. 1772;
Captain Enos Dexter, 1772;
Rev. Francis Brissan, 1772;
William Wynch, Esq. 1774;
Frances, daughter of John Russell, Esq. and wife of John Rivett, Esq. (bedchamber woman to the Princess
Amelia) 1775;
George Mercer, Esq. 1776;
Robert Adams, Esq. 1778;
Mary, wife of the Rev. Edmund Gibson, 1779;
George Lee, Esq. 1782;
Captain George Taylor, 1782;
Jessintour Rozea, Esq. 1783;
Jessintour Rozea (junior), Esq. 1791;
John Anthony Koch, apothecary, 1784;
Rev. John Carpenter, rector of Bignor, and vicar of Pagham in Sussex, 1785;
Mr. Thomas Chaplin, of the Secretary of State's Office, 1788;
Robert Achmuty, Esq. Judge of the Admiralty in New England, 1788;
Constant Decharme, merchant, 1788, and others of his family;
John Berthon, Esq. 1789; Thomas Malie, M. D. aged 89, 1789;
Mrs. Hester Fitzmaurice, sister of Lord Westcote, and relict of John Fitzmaurice, Esq. 1790;
Hester, wife of Capt. George Martin, 1790;
Matthew Stourton, Esq. 1792;
Sir Thomas Mills, Knt. 1793.

Tombs in the cemetery on the north side of Paddington Street



Paddington Street Gardens North (looking south)

In the smaller cemetery on the north side of Paddington-street (consecrated in 1772) are the tombs of:

Joseph Tullie, Esq. of Yorkshire, Receiver-general of the Duchy of Lancaster (and Deputy-usher of the Exchequer), 1774;

Anthony Relhan, M. D. 1776;

Frances, relict of Colonel Leonard Gwynn, 1776;

Edward Cauldwell, Esq. Captain in the Navy (who married Anna Maria, only child of Thomas Clark, Gent.), 1777;

Anne, wife of Marco Nasso, Esq. 1779;

Thomas Clark, Gent. of Westminster, 1780;

Stephen Riou, Esq. 1780;

Mary, widow of Captain Edward Horne, of the Royal Navy, 1781;

John Jefferson, Esq. 1782;

James Craig, Esq. 1784;

Dame Leonora Rush, daughter of Brigadier-general Sutton, and relict of Sir John Rush, Knt. 1785;

John Sarson, Esq. 1786;

David Aquiton La Rose, 1786;

Malcolm Macpherson, Esq. 1787;

Jonathan Court, Esq. commander of a ship in the service of the East India Company, 1787;

Alice, wife of William Baillie, Esq. 1788;

Mr. Frederick Baillie, 1793;

a child of James Stuart, Esq. (who married Anna Maria Baillie), 1790;

Priscilla, wife of John Wilkinson, Esq. 1788;

Henry Bradley, Esq. 1789;

James Watson, Esq. 1790;

Honour, wife of Lieutenant-colonel Harnage, 1790;

John Gale, Esq. 1790;

Matthew Purling, Esq. 1791;

Anne, wife of Major-general William Martin, and daughter of James Gordon, Esq. of Boston, 1793;

Thomas Day, Gent. 1794;

Captain John Bower, 1794.

Sources

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