

Chronological History of the Development Of Ryde Cemetery

Information taken from the Minute Books of the Ryde Burial Board, and Cemetery Committee.

Notes transcribed by Sally-Ann Garrett between March 2003 and February 2005

Introduction

To write this article, reference was made to the original minute books: Volumes 1 and 2 of the Burial Board covering the period 28 Feb 1860 to 8 October 1872, and Volumes 1-6 of the Cemetery Committee, starting 28 October 1858, as well as the account ledgers of the Burial Board (Volume I March 31 1863 to 30 November 1869), all of which are held at the IW County Record Office. In addition, various directories published from 1844, and the Ordinance Survey maps during this same time period were also reviewed. Acknowledgement is made for the generous support and help from the Archivists in the County Record Office to access these materials.

Most of these volumes were hand written, although later ones contain typed sheets glued onto the pages. The copperplate style of handwriting is easy to read, but the style of constructing sentences is somewhat cumbersome, compared to today's modern English. In some places, I have made direct quotations, and the original language and construction has been maintained, such as in a letter or a written document. Where quotations are made, the text is in italic font. Personal comments are in brackets and justified to the right hand margin. It would have been tempting to transcribe all of the text, but that would have been beyond the time I had available. Instead, much routine detail has been left out, leaving what I hope are the significant events in the history of the development of the Cemetery. Many of the meetings of the two committees were used simply to arrange the payment of bills to tradesmen and businesses, and fees to the clergy, and to grant rights of burial. Initially, the names of people who applied for grants appeared to be a useful resource for family history, and worth transcribing, but the original Grants of Burial books are kept in the Bereavement Services offices at Whippingham, and can be accessed, along with the Burial Registers, and Burial Index books that document all of the burials in Ryde cemetery.

28 October 1858: The first documented meeting of the Cemetery Committee was held

Members of the Cemetery committee were: Benjamin BARROW, Edward THURLOW, (appointed Chairman), William GABELL, Joseph FUTCHER, Thomas DASHWOOD, George RIDDETT.

The first item on the agenda: they resolved that copies of the Burial Acts should be obtained for each member of the Committee.

Burial Act of 1852. The 1852 Act required the General Board of Health to establish cemeteries to deal with the problem, and an immense number of parochial burial-grounds, some open to all, others set apart for the use of special denominations, were opened in various suburban districts all round London.

8 November 1858

Petition to the Secretary for State:

To the Right Honourable the Secretary for State for the Home Department

The petition of the Ryde Commissioners sheveth (sic) that your petitioners are Commissioners for improving the town of Ryde in the Isle of Wight, elected by the Ratepayers by virtue of the Ryde Improvement Act 1854/17 & 18 sic C83/, that the District formed by the said Act is co-extensive with the district for which it is proposed to provide a burial ground, that no Burial board has been

appointed for such district, that an Order in Council has been made for closing the Burial ground and vaults belonging to the Church of St Thomas and the vaults belonging to the Church of the Holy Trinity, both within the said District; that the grounds within the said District now used for the interment of the Inhabitants of the said town is nearly full. Your petitioners therefore pray that they may be constituted as the Burial board for such a District, under the provisions of the 20 & 21 Victoria cap 81.

11 January 1859, the Commissioners of the town of Ryde were constituted as a burial Board.

4 Feb 1859:

Resolved that the Chairman see Sir John SIMEON, to ascertain if he would be willing to part with any portion of the St John's Estate for a Burial ground, and if so, on what terms.

11 Feb 1859:

Mr THURLOW reported that Sir John SIMEON had offered 28 acres of land on the south side of St Johns Road, at the rent of £40 per annum, conditionally for a road to be made at a cost of about £300 and that Mr ESTCOURT would submit the terms in writing in the course of a few days. (The land at Oakfield was described as – *“the copse beyond the Quarry, with rather more than half of the two fields above it, together with a small piece of land below, and also as much of the Quarry piece as would be in direct line below the arable field adjoining Oakfield”*.)

24 May 1859

Letter written by Rev A. J. Wade to the Cemetery Committee

16 August 1859

At the meeting in August 1859, a letter dated 24 May 1859 from the Rev Arthur Wade, about the need for a new burial ground, was discussed

Sir, I take the liberty of writing to you, as I understand that you are the Chairman of the Cemetery Committee of the Town Commissioners.

The state of the Burial Ground in Ryde, now almost full, has long been attracting the anxious attention of the inhabitants and the question is constantly asked "What is going to be done about a new Cemetery? The only answer that we are able to give is that the Ryde Commissioners are constituted as a Burial Board and that with them rests the duty and responsibility.

It was only yesterday that an old inhabitant extremely interested in the affairs of the town suggested that an application ought to be made to the Home Secretary of State on the subject and another just previously spoke about the proposed site. Instead of this, I ventured to write to the local authorities. It ought surely to be born in mind that even after the ground has actually been conveyed etc – a long time of many many months must elapse before the necessary works can be completed to allow of burials taking place. Meanwhile the difficulties are increasing till at last it will soon, very soon be impossible to procure a vacant spot for interment in the present ground.

I am sure you will excuse my thus calling your attention to this subject and expressing a hope that as little time as possible may now be lost before the work be commenced for the proposed new Cemetery.

I am Sir,

Yours

Faithfully

Arthur J WADE

6 September 1859:

On the proposed land at Oakfield, extensive boreholes were made to test soil and subsoil conditions. A report was written September 1859, showing that the land was suitable.

State of the Ground at Oakfield

The Subcommittee presented the following report as to the nature of the soil of the land at Oakfield proposed to be taken for the Cemetery:

James BOWERS

- 1. Hole in the top field, 8ft deep. Mould 2 ft, clay and gravel 3ft, running sand 3 ft, water 5ft, and water level 5ft.*
- 2. Field adjoining Canada – south side depth 8ft. Mould 1 ft, clay and gravel 1ft 6in, stiff clay 5ft 6in.*
- 3. Field adjoining Canada – south side depth 8ft. Mould 1 ft, brick earth 6ft, gravel 1 ft. Copse north side – depth 8ft. brick earth 7ft, sand and gravel 1ft.*

John GROVES

- 1. Copse south side depth 8ft. brick earth 2ft, stiff clay 5ft, quarry earth 1ft very small stones.*
- 2. Field adjoining Canada north side depth 8ft. Mould 1ft, stiff clay 7ft.*
- 3. Field adjoining Canada north side depth 8ft. Mould 1ft, gravel (dirty) 1ft, gravel (clean and good) 4ft, clay 2ft, not stiff.*
- 4. Holes in copse, 200 yards apart at least*
- 5. Field adjoining Canada south hole, 50 yards from south hedge and some distance from copse. North hole about 40 yards from north hedge.*
- 6. Field adjoining Canada, south hole 80 yards from south hedge and some distance from copse, 120 yards from Canada hedge.*
- 7. Top field – hole middle of the field 1/3 from the western hedge*

(The reference to Canada seems to be the name of a property in the vicinity)

Resolved that the following report be laid before the Board:

Cemetery Committee recommend the Board to make an offer to Sir John SIMEON Bart for the conveyance of the land shown on the accompanying plan subject to an annual rent charge of £40 and that £300 be offered for making a road from the St John's Estate, according to the plan, 40ft wide including footpaths each side. The rent to be redeemable at the market price of money whenever required by the Board. The new road proposed to run from St John's across the top part

of the Cemetery grounds and from thence to be continued on the Smallbrook Road forming a good approach from the south and east parts of the Island and extending the drives in the vicinity of the town.

The Committee have caused several holes to be dug in various parts of the land and find it to be suitable for the purposes for which it is required and plentiful in gravel, stone and sands a great consideration when buildings, roads and walks are contemplated.

The procuration of such a favourable site on such advantageous terms is felt by the Committee to be highly satisfactory and they are of the opinion that by a judicious outlay and arrangement, the Cemetery may be made a source of income instead of expenditure to the town in the course of a few years.

The reserve land that will be left after enclosing that which is necessary for the present requirements of the Cemetery may be usefully and beneficially employed as a place of public resort for health and exercise, an object of such importance that the Legislature has passed an Act of Parliament authorising any town to obtain and hold land for this purpose.

On these and other grounds amongst which is the pressing demand for a more decent and suitable place to bury the dead than we have at present and the real possibility of getting any other land so convenient unless at a very much larger cost or at a greater distance from the town, the Committee after mature consideration advise the Board to make an offer for the land on the proposed terms.

Edward THURLOW

Chairman of the Cemetery Committee

Voted: all in favour, except Mr Riddett - neutral

25 November 1859:

Resolved that the following reply be sent to the Owners of the PLAYER Estate.

Sir, referring to your letter of the 14 ultimo, I am directed by the Cemetery Committee to enquire whether the owners of the PLAYER Estate will be willing to part with the land lying between the present cemetery and the Dustan's Road. The size of the cemetery actually formed under the Burial Acts appears to be as near as possible 1 acre to every 1000 of the population of the District under the controls of the Burial Board, and as the spaces required by the said Acts to be allotted for each interment average 3 square yards, and the land to be properly laid out with roads and footpaths, with an un-consecrated portion set apart to be provided with a chapel for Dissenters the Committee feel that 10 acres of land would be more than sufficient considering the growing requirements of the Town.

9 December 1859

Reply was received from the PLAYER Estate: They were not willing to sell land between the present cemetery and Dustan's Road, but willing to sell about 7 ½ acres on the west side of Ashley Rd, (Rosemary Lane) occupied by Mr CUTLER to the south of his brick kilns – but after inspection, the Cemetery Committee were unanimously of the opinion that the land offered was “*totally unfit for the purpose*”.

17 January 1860

Letter from the PLAYER Estate who were willing to sell land to north and west of present cemetery

providing that sufficient space to be chosen by the owners of the PLAYER Estate is set apart for a vault for their families.

Written application made to Sir Henry OGLANDER to know what terms he would sell 8-10 acres of land for a Burial Ground, and the price he would be willing to part with it.

23 February 1860

Letter from the Secretary for State:

Sir I am directed by Secretary Sir George Lewis to inform you in reply to your letter of 18th inst that it appears to him that it would be better that the meetings and proceedings of the Ryde Commissioners on the Burial Board should be held and kept separate and distinct from their meetings as commissioners.

Letter from Mr ESTCOURT dated 21 February 1860.

“Let it be resolved that Burial Board be summoned for Tuesday evening next:

To appoint a chairman

To appoint a committee

To determine the time and place of the meetings of the Board

To order a seal for the board

To consider the offers of land for the proposed new cemetery

28 February 1860. Present at the first meeting of the Burial Board:

George RIDDETT (Chair), William GABELL, William STRATTON, James FAIRALL, James LITTLEFIELD, William GIBBS, William COX, James HARBOUR, John STANNARD, William CUTLER, Matthew NEWMAN, Edward THURLOW, George OAKLEY, John M. JOLLIFFE, Thomas DENNIS, Joseph FUTCHER, John HARBOUR, Robert BAKER, Thomas HELLYER, James COLENUT, Henry HILLIER, Shem COMDEN, Charles DIMMICK, James WILLIAMS. (24 men)

Agenda:

To appoint a Chairman; to appoint a Clerk; to appoint a committee; to determine the time and place of the meetings of the Board; to order a seal; to consider the offers of land for the proposed new cemetery:

- From the owners of the PLAYER Estate, about 4 acres for enlarging the present cemetery at £250 per acre, land to the north and west of the present cemetery, with space for a vault for the PLAYER family
- From Sir Henry OGLANDER 10 acres of the north part of Smallbrook farm at £50 per acre
- From Sir John SIMEON Bart of about 14 acres part of the St John's Estate on the south side of Oakfield at the rent of £25 per annum, or £600 purchase, and to decide which of the above mentioned pieces of land shall be purchased subject to the provisions of the Burial Act.
- Moved by Mr LITTLEFIELD and seconded by Mr DIMMICK that the Chairman of the Ryde Commissioners for the time being be the Chairman of the Burial Board.
- Mr H PULLEN was appointed Clerk to the Board

- That the following members of the Board be appointed to the Cemetery Committee until the election of the Commissioners in March next, viz. Messer's THURLOW, HILLIER, CUTLER, STRATTON, GABELL, COLENUT, FUTCHER (7)
- Thomas HELLYER was requested to submit a design for a seal for the Cemetery Committee.
- Voting for condition a) (land from the PLAYER estate): Messer's DIMMICK, FAIRALL, HELLYER, WILLIAMS, HILLIER, CUTLER, BAKER, DENNIS, NEWMAN, James HARBOUR, STANNARD, and John HARBOUR (12)
- Voting for condition c) (land from Sir John SIMEON): Messer's RIDDETT, LITTLEFIELD, STRATTON, COLENUT, OAKLEY, GABELL, GIBBS, THURLOW, COMDEN, FUTCHER, and JOLLIFFE, Chairman: Geo RIDDETT (11)
- A decision was made on a majority vote, to purchase land from the PLAYER Estate, adjoining the Old Parish Cemetery.

(It is interesting to think what Ryde might look like, if the land offered by Sir John SIMEON had been purchased: 14 acres on the south side of Oakfield.)

20 March 1860

First meeting of the official Cemetery Committee was held. Appointment of the Burial Board – Resolved that a printed form be sent by the Clerk to every owner, lessee, and occupier in the vicinity in order to obtain their consent or dissent from the land being used as an addition to the present cemetery. Present: Edward THURLOW, Joseph FUTCHER, William CUTLER, Henry HILLIER, James COLENUTT.

23 April 1860

Order of Business – to appoint a committee, to receive a design for a seal from Mr T. HELLYER

Moved by Mr DIMMICK, seconded by Mr HILLIER that the following gentlemen form the Cemetery Committee: DIMMICK, FAIRALL, NEWMAN, WILLIAMS, ALDERSLADE, HARRINGTON, JOLLIFFE (7)

8 May 1860

To move that the resolution passed 20 February 1860 accepting the offer of the owners of the PLAYER Estate of about four acres for enlarging the present cemetery subject to the provision of the Burial Act be altered and that the remaining portion of the four acres west of the sandpit be purchased on the same terms and conditions.

14 May 1860

Order of Business: Standing Orders proposed and decided; Seal approval; Propose acceptance of purchase of land.

Amendment moved by Mr GABELL – that three acres of land are sufficient for the requirements of the town as a burial place – *that the interment of the dead in such close proximity to the living is dangerous to the health, and that to give £750 for three acres when fourteen acres every way more suitable is obtainable for £600, is a most unjustifiable waste of the rates of the town.*

Not carried: For the original proposal, 13, against 3, neutral 1.

19 June 1860

A letter was received from the Home Office, 4 Old Palace Road, Westminster, regarding the Inspectors queries. The Burial Board gave the answers below in response.

1. What is the population of the district for which the ground is intended? *Taking the census of 1851 as the basis for the number of inhabited houses at the time being 1266 and population as 7147, there now being 1686 houses, the population would be 9518.*
2. Average number of deaths annually for 7 years, how many interments expected per year to take place? *Average 154 deaths per year. Number of interments expected 130.*
3. What is the proposed area of the ground? *2 acres, 3 rods, 1n*
4. What is the distance from the nearest inhabited part of the Burial district from the map of the population and also from the remotest part of the district? *85 yards from the nearest half-mile map of population. 1 and one quarter miles most remote.*
5. What is the distance from the nearest dwelling house to the boundary of the grounds? *85 yards*
6. Are there any, and how many dwellings within 100 yards of its boundary and have the consents of the owners, lessees and occupiers been obtained? *Seven houses within 100 yards. Consents all obtained.*
7. Are any persons known to object to the site proposed? If so, for what reasons? *There are persons who object.*
8. Describe the existing means of access to the ground and state whether it will be necessary to make a new road to it. *Nothing written * Deferred*
9. What is the nature of the soil as ascertained by trial holes eight feet deep? *A sand pit exists near the east boundary – sink about a foot deep. The soil of the side of the pit consists of one foot sandy loam and gravel six feet.*
10. Is water found, and at what depth? *The site is not level and water is found at five feet at the west and seven feet in the centre. None at 8 feet in upper part.*
11. Can the ground be thoroughly drained and if so, will the drainage flow into any water now used or likely to be used for domestic purposes and at what distance from the nearest pump or well from the boundary? *There is a private well distant 165 yards and a public well and pump distant 245 yards * Deferred*
12. Has any other ground been proposed? If so, why has this been selected? *There has been other sites proposed but the majority of the members of the Burial Board have decided in favour of this.*

*Replies to 8 & 11 were deferred for enquiries to be made of the owners of the freehold respecting the drainage and the road.

Requested to:

- Send a plan or tracing of the ground drawn to scale with a sufficient description for its identification naming the position of the trial holes marked upon it and showing the situation of the ground with respect to the town and adjoining property and points of the compass.
- Send Surveyor's certificate stating whether the ground can be thoroughly drained to the depth of 7 feet at least, and as to the outlet for the drainage mentioned in query 11.
- Provide the number of the tythe map or description by which the site may be clearly distinguished

26 June 1860

The owners of the freehold refused to allow the drainage of the proposed land to be carried westwards. They said they would give a 20ft road to the south side of the present cemetery as an access to the new ground. Site visit planned to look at the levels to see if drainage could be done eastwards. (Access on the South side would have meant an entrance into what is now Adelaide Place)

12 July 1860

Letter from Mr HELLYER, Bouverie House, Ryde:

(Bouverie House is on the north side of Melville St, between Trinity St and Monkton St)

“Gentlemen, I have obtained an estimate for cutting the seal as proposed by me and approved by you inclusive of the bedplate or counter die and beg to report that the same executed in the first style of art will not exceed the sum of seven pounds.”

Resolved that the price be agreed to.

Surveyor’s Certificate

“I herby certify that the proposed site for a new cemetery adjacent to the present burying ground, can be efficiently drained in the High Street sewer, by placing a drain at the west end of Hill Street, 20 feet below the surface, The length of the drain from the lowest point of the land to the main sewer will be 499 yards.” – Francis NEWMAN, Town Surveyor.

(I wonder how they would have constructed such a deep hole to put in the drain? It would have been dug by hand, and shored up.)

25 July 1860

That a further application be made to the owners of the PLAYER Estate to increase the quantity of land for enlarging the present cemetery by their giving up the corner piece of the field lying to the south of that already offered by them and to continue east as far as the line of the next walk of the present burying ground, leaving a sufficient space to allow Cemetery Street to be extended to the western hedge.

(Cemetery Street is now known as Milligan Road. To the west, the road is known as Adelaide Place)

14 August 1860

Refusal to accede to purchase additional land: letter *“instructed by Captain BRIGSTOCKE, that the owners of the PLAYER Estate cannot accede to the application of the Burial Board for the purchase of the additional land”*.

11 September 1860

Approval by the Secretary of State that piece of land, 2 acres, 3 rod and one pole as the new burial ground for the town of Ryde provided that it is effectively drained, so as to prevent water remaining in any graves or vaults and that the interments therein be conducted in accordance with the official Regulations of which a copy is enclosed.

Clerk to be directed to apply to Captain BRIGSTOCKE to know if he is willing to accept a mortgage for the amount of the purchase money and the rate of interest he would request.

21 December 1860: letter from the Owner of the PLAYER Estate

“In reply to your letter of the 14th instant, I beg to inform you that the owner of the PLAYER Estate would prefer receiving the purchase money for the land required for the enlargement of the Ryde

Cemetery on completion of the sale to the Burial Board in lieu of accepting a mortgage of the rates for the amount and they desire me to add that they will be happy to allow the Burial Board to have a road into the land in continuation of Hill Street upon the understanding that such a road is formed at the expense of the Burial Board and considered a public road and that the land to the north of the road is fenced off by the Burial Board with a post and rail or other sufficient fence.”

The Cemetery Committee recommended that an estimate of the expense of enclosing the burial ground with a stone wall fence and providing the necessary chapel accommodation, drainage, roads, footpaths, and planting be obtained in order that an application be made to her Majesty's treasurer for power to borrow the money required for the above purposes.

Estimate for works: F NEWMAN

- Main drain from lower end of Hill Street to western side of the cemetery of stoneware pipes the branch drains of agricultural pipes 8 feet below the surface: £380.
- Enhance roadway, roads, and footpaths with raising ground at northwest corner, lowering that next to the sandpit, and partially filling the pit: £270.
- Stone Boundary wall, 5 feet high above the surface with pair of entrance gates, arched gateway and foot gate (the materials from north and west walls of old cemetery allowed for in this estimate): £340.
- Planting: £50.
- The cost of the chapels, lodge and mortuary house necessarily depends on their size as well as the Architectural character but buildings equal to those usually found in cemeteries of this size for the following sums:
- Episcopal and Dissenters chapels with porches and robing rooms, connected by an Archway (Allowance is made in this estimate for the materials of the old chapel): £800.
- Lodge with tool house: £200.
- Mortuary House: £50

Total £ 2090

7 January 1861

Resolved that the Cemetery Committee after careful consideration of the Surveyor's suggestions and recommendations, the Board to secure the sandpit so that the land may be made available for burials hereafter and that plans be submitted by the surveyor be also recommended to the Board for Adoption.

18 January 1861

Recommended by the Board that the plan be accepted and that the sandpit be added to the land - to be filled in with soil from excavations of graves and levelling parts of the Old Parish Cemetery.

29 January 1861

Sandpit agreed to be purchased total 3 acres, 3 roods (sic – should be 3 rods?)

(An acre is 160 rods, or 4,840 square yards, or 43,560 square feet).

19 February 1861

Moved that the Clerk be directed to apply to the Churchwardens of the parish of Newchurch requesting them to bring the subject of the transfer of the present cemetery to this board before the next vestry meeting. Clerk to be directed to apply to the Churchwardens and Overseers of the Vestry of Newchurch referring them to their Resolution of 30 November 1858 and requesting them

to inform the Burial Board when the Vestry will be prepared to transfer the present cemetery to them and upon receipt of their reply the deed of transfer will be submitted to them.

Salary of clerk to the Burial Board, Mr PULLEN, to be amended to £20 per annum, and £10 for past services

Request from Rev John TELFORD, to allocate portion of the ground for the burial of Catholics

Resolved that a surveyor be requested to furnish Mr RATCLIFFE with a tracing of the ground and that he meet with Mr LANGDON to stake off the land.

1 March 1861

That application be made by this Board to the Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury for the power to borrow a sum not exceeding £3000 for purchasing and laying out the Burial ground and erecting suitable buildings thereon.

16 April 1861

Letter written on 4 April 1861, from Treasury Chambers

Sir, the Lord Chancellors of Her Majesty's Treasury having had before them a memorial from the Burial Board of the Parish of Ryde in the County of Southampton dated 2nd ultimo requesting their Lordships approval of a sum of money being borrowed for the purpose of carrying out the objects of the Burial Acts, their Lordships desired to signify to you of their approval of a sum not exceeding £3000 being borrowed by the said Burial Board and the payment thereof being charged on the future Poor's Rates of the Parish of Ryde in accordance with the terms of the same Acts, Your Obedient Servant, George HAMILTON.

14 May 1861

Moved that the part of the Report having reference to the Conveyance of the land be adopted.

18 June 1861

That Mr ESTCOURT be instructed to prepare the necessary conveyance of the land for the proposed Burial ground from the Owners of the PLAYER Estate (Miss PLAYER and Mr BRIGSTOCKE).

That an advertisement be inserted in the Isle of Wight Observer inviting parties to furnish the Boards with plans and estimates for the erection of two chapels on the new Burial Ground, the cost of the same not to exceed \$400 and that £5 will be given for the plans which may be approved of by the Board – to be sent in by the next monthly meeting.

That at a Vestry held at Newchurch 30 May 1861, it was proposed that the following resolution be sent to the Ryde Burial Board

That the undersigned Churchwardens and Overseers recommend that the Burial Ground at Ryde be conveyed by the parish to the Burial Board on condition that a portion of the unoccupied grave spaces be set aside and used for the interment of the Parishioners of Newchurch not included in the district of the Ryde Burial Board.

Signed by William JACOBS, Edward THURLOW, Churchwardens

R.H. SMITH, Robert CRISP, Henry KNIGHT, Overseers

Dated 15 May 1861

That Mr ESTCOURT's opinion be taken as to the legality of transferring the Old Cemetery to the Board.

16 July 1861

Selection of the design of the Chapels:

A secret ballot was held, and design "A" called "ars longa, vita brevis" was selected. This was the work of Mr Francis NEWMAN, Borough Architect and Surveyor, who was then appointed for the erection of the chapels, following a vote moved by Mr DIMMICK and seconded by Mr JOLLIFFE – that Mr F. NEWMAN be appointed to superintend all works required to be done in the erection of the chapels on the proposed ground and in fencing, draining and laying out the same ground, and that he furnish all necessary specifications and plans – carried unanimously.

17 September 1861

Tenders for the total work of building the chapels, laying out the drains and roads, and building the walls was provided by:

○ Mr Thomas SIBLEY, Ryde:	£1449
○ Mr Thomas R WHITE, Landport:	£1450
○ Mr James GRIMES, Southsea:	£1492/17/1
○ Mr Thomas DASHWOOD, Ryde:	£1587
○ Messrs James and John LANGDON, Ryde:	£1700
○ Mr John MEADER, Ryde:	£1700
○ Mr James COLENUTT, Ryde:	£1727
○ Mr Josiah CUTLER, Ryde,	£1893/9/10
○ Mr Joseph CHAPPELL, Ryde:	£1935
○ Messrs James SMITH & William JACKMAN, Ryde:	£1940.

Mr Thomas SIBLEY provided the lowest tender at £1449. Various builders submitted tenders for the component parts of the whole project.

	Drains	Roads	Chapels	Walls	TOTALS
Cutler	£528/16/0	£429/19/4	£560/14/6	£320	£1839/9/10
Smith & Jackman			£500	£350	£850
Grimes	£306	£215/17/1	£540	£430	£1492/17/1
Chappell	£385	£388	£613	£549	£1935
Langdon	£335	£314/10/0	£653/12/0	£396/18/0	£1700
Sibley	£399	£271	£441	£338	£1449

24 September 1861

Discussion on the prices tendered for the various components of the estimates. Requests made to enquire whether the men would submit/accept individually doing part of the work at the estimated lower cost. The splitting of the costs to lowest bidders was not acceptable when put to the vote of the to the Burial Board, and eventually Mr SIBLEY'S estimate for all the work was accepted in October 1861.

Discussion about the total amount of money to borrow: £3000 for purchase of land, laying out of the grounds, and erecting suitable buildings.

30 September 1861

Special meeting

- To consider the propriety of paying Mr BRIGSTOCKE'S moiety of the purchase money for the proposed New Burial ground, " *to Captain BRIGSTOCKE on his and those members of his family competent to do so, giving a Bond of Indemnity to the Board, instead of paying the money into consols as directed by the Lands Clauses Consolidation Act 1845.*"
- Presentation of a schedule of repayments for a mortgage of £2800, showing instalment of principal and interest.
- Moved that the Mortgage deed of which £2800 is to be borrowed of the Royal Assurance Office, having been read the terms of the security to be approved and the seal to be affixed thereto and for the receipt of the money – carried unanimously.
- Moved that the mortgage deed be transmitted to the London and Westminster Bank, Lothbury (?) to be handed over in exchange for the £2800 to be paid into the National Provincial Bank of England at Ryde, to the credit of the Ryde Burial Board.

21 January 1862

Agreement for vault of George PLAYER of Ryde House – grave space numbers 74 to 78 in the New Cemetery.

11 Feb 1862

Letter received from R. GRAINGER, regarding application to the Secretary for State relating to a proposed new churchyard for the ecclesiastical district of Swanmore. The Board arranged to meet Rev. DUMBLETON, and Mr. HAMILTON. Discussion and decision that this was not needed, as the people of that district came under the jurisdiction of the Ryde Burial Board. Subsequently, Rev. DUMBELTON signified his intent not to proceed.

April 1862

Changes to boundaries agreed, and land transfer accomplished between the Burial Board and the Lind Estate.

July 1862

Request to purchase part of Mr KENT'S garden for £25, to widen a proposed new road.

Clerk to be directed to write to the Architect requesting him to urge the contractor to complete the cemetery works, and that the land be cleared of weeds.

August 1862

A Burial Rate of two pence in the pound ordered to be made.

9 September 1862

Estimates requested for Planting – trenching, levelling, seeding and planting, of around £150.

Mr James HELLYER to be appointed as Collector of the Burial rates, at a salary of £10 per year, and a bond of £100.

20 October 1862

Estimates for planting were provided by the following people:

Person/firm	Price for work	Price for renewing
F. COOKE, St John's Nurseries, Newport	£95/0/0	£10/0/0
Charles DIMMICK, Ryde	£115/0/0	£7/10/0
William STARVEY, Ryde	£139/10/6	£8/5/0
Charles GUY, Ryde	£140/10/0	£5/0/0
Maurice YOUNG, Godalming	£140/14/0	£6/10/0

Mr F COOKE'S estimate of £95 was accepted, and planting was renewed the autumn of 1862

28 November 1862 at 1:30 was selected for consecrating the ground and chapel. Notice put in County Press. Southern portion bounded by chapel road to be consecrated for Church of England rites. The northern portion and chapel were to be un-consecrated – *for any duly authorised or recognised Minister or preacher of any Christian congregation.*

20 November 1862: Regulations of the Burial Board

[Link](#) to document copy of the Regulations and table of fees

24 November 1862

Present: Rev R.K. EDWARDS, C. DIMMICK, Thomas WHITE and Thomas DASHWOOD.

That the Clerk be directed to apply to the superintendent of Police for three policemen to attend the ceremony of consecration.

That the Crier be directed to attend in uniform, and have charge of the keys of the Chapel.

That a Superintendent be appointed at £1 per week until the Lodge is erected, afterwards at 17/- per week.

28 November 1862

Reverend Charles RICHARD, Bishop of Winchester, consecrated the southern portion and chapel; the northern portion and chapel remained un-consecrated.

5 December 1862

Vote for the First Superintendent – Names of men who applied for the position:

Frederick FOUNTAIN, age 45, Sandown, Road Surveyor

George REID, 26, Ryde, gardener

Joseph WARDER, 31, Ryde, late stationmaster

Thomas GUY, 32, Ryde, labourer

James JAMES, 27, Ryde, gardener

Henry IMPORT, 60, Oakfield, gardener

James Elias SELLARS, 37, Ryde, labourer

James WHITNEY, 32, Ryde, gardener

John SALTER, 38, Ryde, gardener

George ROBINS. 40, bath chairman

Mr Henry IMPORT, age 60 of Oakfield, was selected by ballot. To be paid a weekly wage of £1.0.0

Tender for building the Lodge requested. Tenders submitted by

- Thomas SIBLEY, Ryde: £333;
- James SMITH, Ryde: £375;
- John DENHAM £330;
- James COLENUIT £322;
- John MEADER £299.

John MEADER was selected to erect Lodge – approved 14 April 1863

January 1863:

Minutes record that 200 Locker's patent imperishable ground indicators be obtained for marking the grave spaces.

(Very few of these markers survive, or can be seen now.)

March 1863

Land was reserved for Catholics, in the north west corner, in sections X & Y, and the borders U & A, and portion of border M.

(See map of the cemetery)

6 May 1863

The Reverend J. TELFORD requested permission to erect a cross in the centre of the land allocated to Roman Catholics and to place seats and border tiles, also small boundary stones at the angles.

A boy was paid 1s 3d for picking stones.

August 1863

Letter received from Reverend GRIDDLESTONE Vicar of Newchurch, complaining of damage done by some person to a gravestone in the Old Parish Cemetery. The Clerk was ordered to inform the Vicar that the Board had no jurisdiction over the old burial ground.

7 September 1863

Henry IMPORT to take possession of the Lodge 14 September 1863 – *one armchair, and nine other chairs to be obtained for Lodge, and a table with a drawer, and druggett, an ink stand, and roller, and Holland blinds to the windows and a seat for outside, with a mat and scraper with fender and irons and hat pegs, were ordered for his use.*

3 round stones to be put in to mark off the old graves.

Order for Gravel for paths, "mold" for borders and edging white bricks for the borders on the side of the roadway.

2 December 1863

Letter from Rev John TELFORD regarding damage to a headstone – he enclosed a sketch – John BLAKE's tombstone – notice to be put up cautioning parties of the penalty for damaging or disfiguring the tombstones and tablets. Also to be noted that dogs will not be admitted to the cemetery

2 January 1864

Letter from Constable for removal of the body of Mary Ann PHELPS, for further surgical examination

(No further reference found to explain why)

April 1864

Inscription for the Roman Catholic Cross was approved.

12 July 1864

Plan for a bell in the covered archway between the two chapels. A bell of 2 cwt to be obtained from Messr's John WARNE and Sons, of "*as deep a note as possible.*"

September 1864

Payment to W. Jolliffe for a bier £1/15/-

October 1864

Proposed by Francis NEWMAN, for covered way between the two chapels with doors at each end.

(No evidence that this was agreed or achieved)

(NB: Dated Minute entries in 1864/65 nearly always listed people who had applied for a grant of burial).

For example, in September 1865, those requesting grants were:

- Edgar JAMES of Ryde, Green Grocer, 449D
- Frederick WILLIAMS, mariner, 1551K
- Thomas DAMP, Blacksmith, 2790, 2822S
- B. HALL, gentleman, 559E
- Robert MCSPARROW of Ryde, Waiter, 765E
- Philip WESTPHAL, Vice Admiral, 527E
- James GRIFFITHS of Haylands, labourer, 2672, 2673, 2674, 2675, 2676
- Sarah PINE of Ryde, widow, 3271X
- Fanny EDWARDS of Ryde, Spinster, 620E

(The Grant record books can be found in the Bereavement Services offices, and contain information regarding the name and occupation of the person concerned.)

September 1865

Board to receive a report from the Cemetery Committee respecting the management of the Burial ground

16 April 1866

Ordered that a new skeleton grate with fire bricks be put up in the scullery of the cottage (lodge) and that the ceilings of the lower rooms and passage be whitened, the sitting room papered, the passage and staircase papered and varnished two coats, also that the six seats be cleaned and varnished before they are placed out of doors.

Ordered that 100 of Locker's patent ground indicators be obtained for purchased sites.

August 1866

Mr IMPORT was reported to be ill. Mr GUY was employed at £1 per week including Sundays, to include digging the graves in the un-consecrated ground, also that *"he is to give up all his time to the duties required of him and that he employ what labour may be required in digging the graves in the consecrated ground and to include keeping the chapels clean."*

That the brickwork of the chapels be *silicated*

(I don't know what this means – some kind of waterproofing?)

22 September 1866, Mr Henry IMPORT, first Superintendent died

The Committee decided that no fee was to be charged for his burial. (We have not located his grave yet)

October 1866

Ballot to determine the selection of the new superintendent from the following men:

Henry MEW, Ryde, Gardener

Ryde, Labourer

Charles PHILLBRICK, Ryde, Gardener

Henry BUTCHER, Ryde, Gardener

James WHITE, Southampton, master of Sailors Home

Henry MUNT, Ryde, Gardener.

Mr Henry MEW was selected to commence duties as the second Superintendent on 15 October 1866.

22 October 1866

That Mr PAUL and Mr George BUSHELL, Haylands, Gardener, Thomas GUY, DIMMICK be deputed to give directions as to the removal of the trees and shrubs in the old and new ground.

That it be recommended to the Board that the graves in the old and new cemeteries be levelled and that indicators be placed to the graves that are without headstones.

That notices be given to all persons requesting them to remove iron wires from the graves belonging to them unless the fees for enclosure are paid.

That the Town Surveyor be requested to prepare a plan of the old cemetery showing the position of the graves.

11 December 1866:

List of petitioners requesting not to level unattended graves

This entry listed the names, addresses and occupations of 103 people who objected to the proposed levelling of unattended graves.

(As this seemed to be an opportunity for a “mini census”, I wrote the list and it can be found as a separate page link [here](#).

Feb 1867

There was lengthy discussion about the Inscription for the headstone of Walter SEARLE, Chorister of St Michael's, Deceased on the Feast of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin, 1866, age 13 years. No record exists of the requested inscription, but the Bishop of Portsmouth decreed it “objectionable”.

August 1867

That the old chapel be passed over to the Sanitary Committee of the Ryde Commissioners for the purpose of fitting it up as a Mortuary House.

13 August 1867

Letter from Mr John GUY, who had been a sexton for 25 years and “now at the age of 82, I feel my time on this earth is not long and if you will in your generosity grant me some small allowance to enable me to pass the remainder of my days without absolute want you will receive the heartfelt thanks of Your Obedient Servant, John GUY”

17 September 1867

The two Elm trees in the old ground near the entrance to be removed.

The two middle adult spaces in section T un-consecrated be subdivided with three children's spaces the whole length of the section.

(Near this entry, I found the grant of right of burial of my G.G. Grandfather

Henry BENNETT: grant number 349, for space 593 E.)

Oct 1867

(I found a payment to be made to my G.G. Grandfather, Henry BENNETT, who was a Wheelwright, for a “handle to rammer” – 2 shillings and sixpence.)

January 1868

That a book of grants be obtained from Messrs Knight & Co, for the use of the Board.

(These books, as already mentioned, are kept in the Bereavement Services offices at Whippingham. Each page in these books had two sections to be filled out –

one kept in the book for the records and one for the person purchasing the plot. When all the second forms had been given out, the cover of the book was cut in half, so that only half the book remains!)

February 1868

Clerk to be directed to write to the Surveyor to know why the Mortuary House contractor has not completed his work.

March 1868, Notice to be placed outside cemetery

Open to the public on weekdays from eight o'clock in the morning until sunset and on Sundays from one o'clock in the afternoon until sunset. Children must be accompanied by some responsible person. Dogs not admitted and smoking strictly forbidden. Persons must keep to the gravel roads and must not touch the shrubs or flowers. Every person committing and damage or injury or picking flowers, or behaving indecorously will be liable to a fine of five pounds. Persons desirous of planting graves with flowers must apply to the Superintendent for permission to do so and must remove all litter and refuse in planting from the cemetery. Graves planted with flowers must be kept in a trim and tidy condition or the permission to plant will be withdrawn.

By order

An inscription proposed to be placed on the headstone of Jane COOK was submitted and not approved on the grounds of its being "*ungrammatical and un-metrical*". (No details of the actual wording could be found)

March 1868

Cemetery Committee recommend to the Burial Board that an application to be made to the owners of the PLAYER Estate for the terms on which that would be willing to sell the land on the west side of the cemetery as far as the Dunstan's road under the powers contained in the land's clauses consolidation Act: section 6-15 both inclusive for the purchase of land by agreement – incorporated with the 15 & 16 Victoria: @ 85 section 27 to the extent of 4a 3r 8 p.

April 1868

The Cemetery Committee recognised that the Cemetery was filling up.

(Details of the numbers of burials since opening will be collated in a separate document)

Under these circumstances, the Committee deem it advisable to recommend to the Board to make an effort at once to secure the land on the west side of the Cemetery as far as the Dustans Road – about 4 3/4 acres.

May 1868

Instructed by the Owners of the PLAYER Estate to inform "*that they are unable to entertain the application of the Ryde Burial Board to purchase land between the existing Cemetery and the*

Pellhurst Road as it would interfere with their arrangement for the appropriation of their property in that neighbourhood.”

January 1869

First meeting of the Council of the Borough of Ryde acting as the Ryde Burial Board.

Sept 1869

Grant of Right of Burial for Rev John Baptist CAHILL of Ryde – Catholic Priest – grave space 3332 in section X

Jan 1870

An inscription proposed to be placed on the headstone of Jane COOK was submitted and not approved on the grounds that it was “un-grammatical and un-metrical”.

Section A to be reserved for vaults and section B for brick graves.

Resolved that the bell on the Mortuary House be disposed of following complaints from neighbouring property owners.

February 1870

Resolve that a doorway be made in the passage at the Lodge in order to afford a more convenient access to the water closet in addition to the access from the lavatory.

26 May 1870

That section I two rows of adult spaces be subdivided into children’s spaces as section K is nearly filled up.

January 1871

Mr RADCLIFFE attended the meeting and stated that his clients (the Owners of the PLAYER Estate) were prepared to entertain the proposal of the Cemetery Committee for acquiring more land for the purpose of enlarging the Cemetery.

Resolve that application be made to the owners of the PLAYER Estate for the terms on which they are willing to sell the land for enlarging the present Cemetery – about 9 acres.

3 February 1871

Resolved that the plan on the table prepared by the Borough Surveyor for enlarging the present cemetery to the extent of about 9 acres be submitted to the owners of the PLAYER estate.

Reply: 10 March 1871

The owners of the PLAYER Estate are not disposed to entertain the second application of the Burial Board for the enlargement of the cemetery, but are willing to sell the land comprised in the first application dated 19 January last, consisting of rather more than 4 acres, except a strip 15 feet wide adjoining Pellhurst Road, which they propose to reserve for planting, at a price which would, if purchased into consols, be sufficient to yield an income of £100 per annum.

14 March 1871

Resolved that an offer of £50 be made to the owner of the PLAYER Estate for the remainder of the land according to the plan, taking off 120 feet depth from Pellhurst Road frontage, reserving 30 feet for access from the road to the cemetery, subject to approval of the Board.

16 September 1871

Ordered that

- All locks and fastenings be repaired and put in working order
- The tool house door in the old cemetery be painted and the rollers of the coffin stand in the chapel be put in good order
- The lamp at the entrance gate be removed to the south pier in order to light the entrance to the cemetery lodge.
- All deciduous trees to be removed

21 November 1871

- Resolved that the upper row section G in consecrated and section V in un-consecrated be reserved for brick graves.
- Ordered that a piece of wire rope be ordered for the Chapel bell.
- Resolved that the Mortuary House entrance doors be painted and grained, the stonework cleaned and the windows repaired and wired outside, and the Iron Gate to the Old Cemetery painted.

December 1871

Moved by the Vicar, seconded by J COLENUTT that the negotiations for obtaining land for the extension of the Cemetery be renewed

24 January 1872

Letter from Mr RADCLIFFE re enlargement of present cemetery:

“Instructed by BRIGSTOCKE Estate to inform you that they are willing to grant to the Burial board the land coloured green and red upon the accompanying plan and consisting of about 4 ½ acres for the purpose of enlarging the present Ryde Cemetery, in consideration for rent charged at £100 per annum to be well and properly secured to them upon condition that the Burial Board are willing to plant and keep forever hereafter properly planted the strips of land on the south and west and coloured red on the said plan and to enter into a covenant with the owners not to make any entrance or approach onto the land on the south and west sides thereof from any road or roads now existing or hereafter to be made or from adjoining or abutting the said land. I am desired to add that the owners will not consider the terms I have named binding upon them unless they are accepted within 21 days from this date and that they cannot entertain any further application for any additional land for the enlargement of the cemetery beyond that specified.

27 January 1872

Deputation to visit owners to consider allowing the Burial Board to let the portion of land fronting Pellhurst Road for building instead of planting

23 May 1872

Mr James COLENUTT be directed to obtain written consents of the owners, lessees, and occupiers of all lands and houses within 100 yards of the proposed extension of the cemetery. Notice of this was published in IW Observer, IW Times, and Ryde News.

28 May 1872

Owners and ratepayers adjoining the Cemetery, all in Arthur Street, protested at the extension:

G A HARRIS	Clement FRAMPTON	William WATSON
David PORTER	Harriet BROWN	Charlie FLINT
Joseph RASHLEY	G E PHILLBRICK	Charles WELCH
Joseph LOADER	Elizabeth LEWIS	Hester DE SA
William PRAIN Jr	Henry TURTLE	Leonard K GARRETT
James TAYLOR	Albert YOUNG	William SPENCER
William GUY	Henry WILLIAMS	Sarah HARVEY
John THOMPSON	Alfred COOMBS	Henry WHEELER
Thomas F ROACH	Robert McSPORRAN	T H MINTER
Charles SHEATH	George STAINER	Henry JENKINS
Thomas JENKINS		

Letter received from Mr B. J. MARVIN of West Street, complaining at the tolling of the bell after the burial service

July 1872

Resolved that Mr ELLERY provide a sketch of the metal cross for the grave of Lieutenant General SLADE

That the practice of tolling the bell at the end of the service be discontinued.

Nov 1872

Proposed that a notice be prepared by way of an advertisement to ask what land is available in or near Ryde for an extension to the present cemetery

6 December 1872

List of tools and equipment

20 December 1872

Notice to be put in the IW Observer, IW Times and Ryde News:

Borough of Ryde, wanted to purchase in the immediate vicinity of Ryde a suitable piece of land for a cemetery, particulars to be sent to the Town Clerk's office at the Town Hall.

January and February 1873

Offers of land for the extension of the cemetery:

- 26 acres near High Park in Oakfield proposed at cost of £300 per acre – Josiah CUTLER
- Compares favourably with proposed land from BRIGSTOCKE, viz. £100 per acre for 4 ½ acres
- Offer from John HARBOUR – 27 ½ acres at £150 per acre, or 14 ½ acres at west if part of whole is too much (no location given)

Plan to obtain more land was abandoned. From this date until land was purchased, many attempts were made to make the best use of the space in the cemetery.

August 1873

Forms were introduced for the written application for a memorial and its inscription

Feb 1874

Resolved that two centre rows in Section N be divided into three rows for the burial of children.

April 1874

Much lengthy correspondence between the Cemetery Committee, the Ryde Borough Council, and the Privy Council, from April 1874 through to November 1876, regarding the position of the Ryde Borough Council and the legality of the council being the Burial Board. Eventually a notice was to be placed in local newspapers, in the Ryde News and Observer, regarding an application for an Act of Parliament to constitute the Borough Council as the Burial Board.

Resolved that the correspondence between the Town Council and the privy Council in reference to the Burial board, be laid before the Council at its next meeting and that it be recommended that application be made to the Lords of the Privy Council that the Town Council of the Borough of Ryde and the whole of the parish of Ryde with the exception of that portion within the boundary of St Peter's of Havenstreet as described in the Newchurch Parish Act and delineated by the accompanying plan and the common seal of the corporation be affixed to the following petition and that the same be forwarded as early as possible....

January 1876

Application for the consecration of sections L, O, P, & Q be made to the Bishop of Portsmouth.

Resolved that all common graves be dug 8 feet deep.

April 1876

Resolved that footpaths between sections H, I, & K be utilised for internments, one for children and one for adults.

August 1876

Letter from the Bishop of Portsmouth – it is not possible to consecrate ground already declared un-consecrated.

October 1876

All soil removed from the cemetery be deposited on the enclosed land near the Esplanade.

Reported that Mr PAIN had created a disturbance at the cemetery whilst drunk and used abusive and obscene language to the gravedigger, who was urged to issue a summons.

February 1877

Any vacant spaces in OPC to be utilised for any children under five years of age at discretion of Mr MEW (superintendent)

26 February 1877

Letter to BRIGSTOCKE Estate to request what terms they would sell about 6 acres of land between the west wall of the cemetery and Pellhurst Road, the width of the present cemetery

3 April 1877

Further letter to BRIGSTOCKE estate to ask them to sell about 6 acres

May 1877

Inscription for Harry MORRIS: *Resting in Christ, Harry MORRIS, late chorister of St Michaels who fortified by the last sacrament of the church fell asleep February 10 1877 aged 10 years. Also his sister Ida, who fell asleep the same day, aged 5 years. "He shall gather the lambs with his arms"*
RIP

30 June 1877

Sections O, P & Z consecrated by Bishop MCDOUGALL.

(Despite what he had written previously that he could not de-consecrate land already consecrated; there was no evidence of why he changed his mind)

July 1877

Graves of people interred at expense of parish or union be 8 feet in order that 2 persons may be interred in the same grave.

Clerk to obtain consent of the owners, lessees and occupiers of all dwelling houses within 100 yards of the proposed extension.

The extension of the Cemetery included the purchase of land from Mr William GROVES – a piece of land at the rear of his property in Arthur St, on which he placed a value of £1415.

A section to be set aside for burial of infants under one month of age.

July 1877

Reply from BRIGSTOCKE Estate – willing to sell land between west wall and Pellhurst Road for the sum of £2500, with the proviso that a strip of land 25 feet be planted with trees and shrubs, and not permit any corpses to enter the land on the SE or W sides of the proposed extension.

March 1879

New Regulations drawn up, including that headstones were only allowed on the graves where an exclusive right of burial was purchased, and no bare earth was to be left exposed.

May 1879

New contract with the Superintendent was drawn up, but he refused to sign it. Following further discussion, he agreed in June 1879.

July 1879

Draft agreement drawn up regarding the purchase of the land and the conveyance was to be prepared, and that was sealed in April 1880.

June 1880

Section R in the un-consecrated section to be used for the burial of children

October 1880

Council to take possession of the land, and plans for fencing and drainage to be drawn up

Request received that the Council forgo the fees for the erection of a monument to the late Superintendent of Police, Mr BURT. This was agreed.

To be continued, using additional volumes of the Cemetery Committee.

The convention of capital letters for last names has been used throughout the text but this is not how the names appeared in the minutes.

Currency at the time of these transactions was written in pounds, shillings and pence. The figures are separated by a slash, e.g. £2/10/6 is two pounds, ten shillings and six pence.