

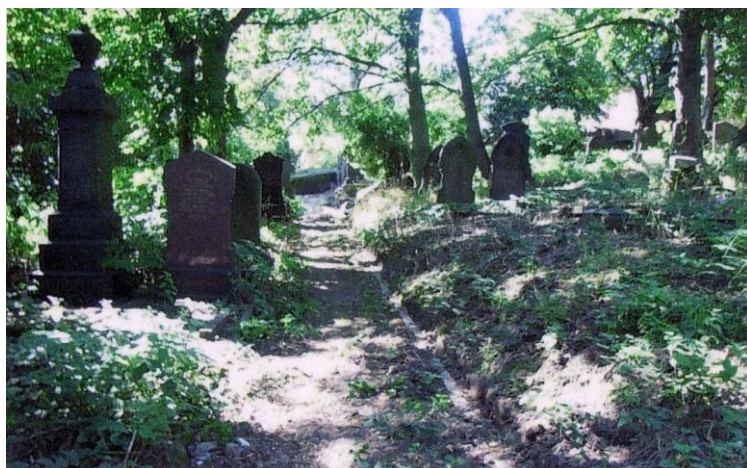
Friends of Darfield Churchyard Newsletter - Autumn 2007



Hello and welcome to the second newsletter from the Friends of Darfield Churchyard. We have quite a lot of news for you this time.....

We have all heard about the makeover shows on the television - first it was the gardens, then the homes - but now at Darfield we have had the Churchyard makeover.

The Bottom Path:



It was just over 12 months ago when a dream began to take shape of tarmac-ing the path down at the bottom of the Churchyard. After meeting with various people who knew how to obtain a grant, we filled in the forms and waited and waited. During this waiting time the volunteers were busy with their work of cleaning up the

churchyard and getting the path ready for when the money would finally be in our bank account. During the summer the path was eventually cleared and we were ready and waiting when we finally received a grant from the Community Chest. The BIG cheque arrived just a few days after our display stand at the Darfield Amenities Exhibition at the end of August (see below). It was for £8749. The chairman, John Kendall, then contacted the company who were to complete the work and within a few days work began.

John had to get up early for a few mornings to let the workmen into the Churchyard. We had big diggers, small diggers and a roller to complete the work. Then, after a short time, we had a path to be proud of.



The work of form filling and digging out the old path are behind us and we now have a good path. Our small group of volunteers still work in the churchyard on a Monday afternoon, so if anyone has time to spare - will we see you there??

The Wall:

During all this above action on the path, another project was started. The wall



that was holding back the graves beside the bottom path (just below the Houghton Main monument) had collapsed and was in need of full restoration.

This work was undertaken by Mr Tom Valentine of Turnstone Walling, with the help of a friend at times. It is not quite yet finished as the top stones still need to go on, but it will provide the final touches to that particularly untidy end of the path.

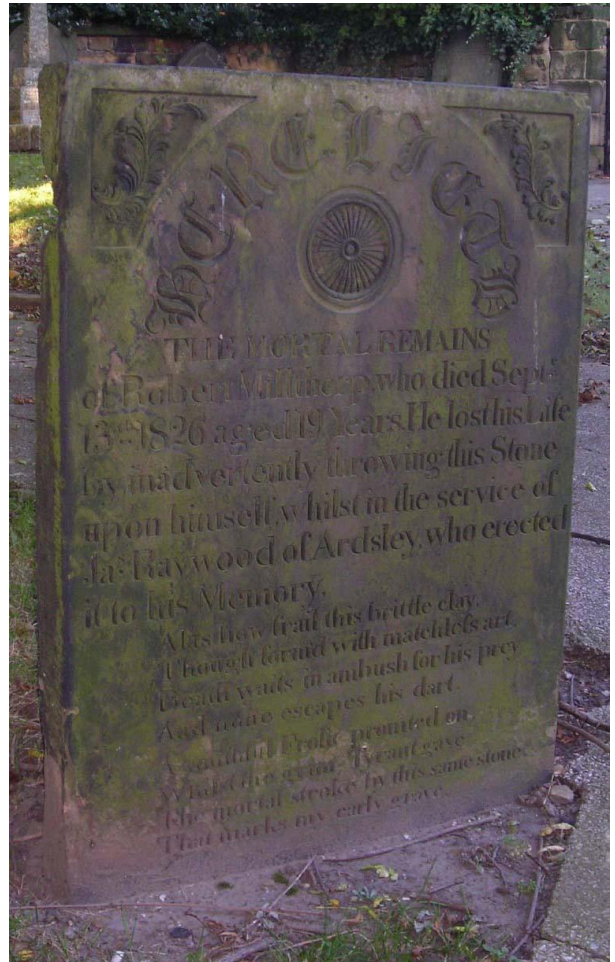
The Amenities Exhibition:

On the weekend of August Bank Holiday the Darfield Amenities Society holds an annual exhibition. This year Friends of Darfield Churchyard had a stand with a display of photographs and details of our work. We also sold a few items to make a little money for our cause and would like to thank all of you who supported us over those two days. The most popular part of the display was a printed guided tour of some of the most interesting aspects of the churchyard. We still have copies of this tour available so if you would like a copy, please ask one of our committee.

BBC History Magazine Competition - Mysterious Memorials:

Darfield Churchyard even managed to get a mention on a Radio 2 breakfast show

and made national press in the Daily Mirror. This was all thanks to Mr G Hutchinson nominating one of our graves for the above competition. The grave was that of Robert Millthorpe who died by 'inadvertently throwing this stone upon himself'. It made the final 20 in the competition and has been featured on the BBC History Magazine web site. We tried to obtain more background information on Robert Millthorpe, or on his employer, James Raywood of Ardsley, but drew a blank. All we have been able to ascertain is that James Raywood appears to have been a farmer or maltster. This means that the age old story which many of we Darfielders were told as youngsters - that Robert was mending the tower roof when the stone fell on him and that you could still see the blood marks on the edge if you looked carefully - was just a figment of someone's imagination! Incidentally, this grave also got a mention on The South Bank Show a couple of months ago when Ian McMillan, poet, was the subject. The show started in the churchyard and I have to say that the churchyard looked absolutely beautiful.



This is your churchyard. Let us, together, make it one that we can use and appreciate and be proud of.