

Famous Burials in Doncaster

Notes from a talk by Frank Morley on 29 April 2009

Frank is a local man, from Bentley, who gives talks about Highgate Cemetery in London. A few years ago, he was giving the Highgate Cemetery talk at one of the D&DFHS monthly meetings when he was challenged by one of our members to do a similar talk about the rich and famous people buried in Doncaster Cemeteries. He returned tonight to do just that.

The following articles are about some of Doncaster's famous, and infamous ancestors, buried in our area. They were identified during Frank's talk.

George Thomas Tuby was born at Long Newland, near Selby, the son of a railway worker. He was educated in Goole. His father was a railway worker at the Plant but he left that relatively secure job behind to venture into a completely new occupation, travelling around entertaining people. George ended up following his father's lead and went on to make his money as a showman. He eventually operated a fleet of seven Burrell showman's engines, most of which carried names according to the position he achieved in the local government. These included *Councillor*, *Alderman*, *Mayor* and *Ex-Mayor* (this engine survives today).

He was appointed Mayor of Doncaster on a number of occasions and generously gave money to the poor and needy. King George V and Queen Mary were so impressed by his charitable actions that they invited George and his wife to London to have a private tea with them and awarded George a medal. His portrait hangs in the Mansion House today. In 1922, he was the last Mayor of Doncaster to actually live in the Mansion House. He died on 16 April 1932 and his resting place is in Hyde Park Cemetery, one of the few immaculate graves in a much devastated cemetery.

Hugh Eardley Childers (1827 – 1896)

Hugh was the son of the vicar of Cantley who had a prominent career in British politics. He became the First Lord of the Admiralty in 1868 and was responsible for the construction of the ill-fated HMS *Captain*, in defiance of advice from experts at the time. The ship was clearly unstable due to the heavy, rotating gun that it carried. Determined to prove his critics wrong, he moved his son, Midshipman Leonard Childers, on to HMS *Captain*, but it sank on the night of 6 September 1870. Leonard was one of the many who lost their lives on that day.

Childers suffered ill health as a result and subsequently resigned from his post. However, he later went on to become Secretary for War, Chancellor of the Exchequer and Home Secretary. When he died, he was buried in Cantley cemetery at his own request.

The name Childers is associated with the Flying Childers pub at Cantley, named after a racehorse bred by Colonel Leonard Childers of Cantley Hall in 1704.

Archbishop William Rokeby

William was the Rector at St Oswald's church in Kirk Sandall from 1487 – 1502. He went on to be the vicar of Halifax and then Lord Chancellor of Ireland and the Archbishop of Dublin in 1512. He left money in his will to pay for the chapel at St Oswald's to be built and most of his body (but not his heart) is buried here. On the north wall of the chapel is the monument to William Rokeby himself. It is made of marble but is badly eroded. There is also a small brass to the Archbishop in the east wall.

Edmund Becket Dennison (1816-1905)

Edmund Becket acquired the name Dennison as part of a deal on his marriage to an heiress. He was educated in Doncaster, Eton and Cambridge, before becoming a lawyer and a QC. He was on the Board of the Great Northern Railway Company and was instrumental in getting train building sited in Doncaster. He lived at The Hall, on South Parade in Doncaster. He became the first Baron the Lord Grimethorpe and is buried in Christchurch cemetery, next to the church door.

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Editor