

Newbury Cemetery Preliminary Enquiry Monday 25th January 1847 set up by The Commissioners of her Majesty's Woods, Forests, Land Revenues, Works and Buildings

Intro by Peter Cox

Beck	Pray rise for the Commissioner of her Majesty's Woods, Forests, Land Revenues, Works and Buildings [<i>Whalley enters and stands in front of mayor's chair</i>]
Whalley	I declare this inquiry open. First I need to check that notices have been published. Call the bill sticker, Mr Godwin
Godwin	Henry Beck - do you swear by almighty God that you will tell the truth?
Beck	I do
Whalley	Have you published any notices of this meeting?
Beck	I have
Whalley	In what way did you publish them?
Beck	By publishing them on the walls of the borough, by delivering them in the shops to be placed in the windows, and by leaving them at different gentlemen's houses.
W	How many did you so deliver and publish?
B	I should think there were 100, I did not count them; I should think there were as many as that.
w	You distributed 100 notices in various parts of the town?
B	Yes ; and I posted them on each side of the walls of the mansion-house
W	When did you do that?
B	I think it was a week ago last Friday or Saturday, I cannot say which it was; I could tell if I were at home; it was last Tuesday week I received the bills.
W	From whom did you receive them?
B	From Mr Giles the newsman
W	And when did you publish them?
B	A fortnight last Tuesday week
W	On the same day that you received them?
B	Yes
W	Have those notices remained exposed in the town?
B	Yes they are on the walls of the borough, and in the shop windows, as well as on each side of the mansion-house.
W	Good, Mr Godwin how else was this inquiry publicised?
Godwin	I have here the Reading Mercury of the 9 th and 16 th of January, containing notices of the meeting.
W	Excellent. Now pray continue with your evidence in support of the bill Mr Godwin. Have you (<i>reading from the published queries</i>) "a plan on a sufficient scale to show the sites and areas of existing burial grounds.. the several burial grounds to have their names inserted on the plan,

	and their respective heights above the common-datum line; the plan to have at least two contour lines drawn upon it... the plan to show also by a dotted line the assumed boundary of the urban and suburban district?
Godwin	Here it is (hands over plan) Jabez Hanson - do you swear by almighty God that you will tell the truth?
Jabez Hanson	I do
Godwin	Have you been employed as surveyor by the Promoters of the Newbury Cemetery Company
JH	I have
Godwin	Did you prepare this plan marked No 1?
Jh	Yes
G	Does the plan show the sites and areas of the existing burial-grounds in the town of Newbury?
JH	Yes
G	It does not extend beyond the town of Newbury?
JH	It does not extend beyond the town of Newbury; it includes only the gas-lights
G	Do these plans coloured with carmine represent the various burial-grounds in Newbury
JH	Yes
W	Are the names of the burial grounds inserted upon the plan? And referred to at the foot by number?
JH	Yes
W	Are the respective heights above the common datum level of the place mentioned?
JH	Yes as near as they could be ascertained without the best description of level; a common spirit level has been used; an upright staff which would not admit of adjustment except by hand.
w	To the best of your ability, is that the true height of those burial-grounds above the datum level of the place?
JH	As far as I can ascertain it by means of that level
W	What is the datum level of the place?
JH	The datum level which I have taken has been that of North-brook street. And I have taken that line, because I was in some doubt as to what you would wish to imply by the datum level; whether it were Trinity high water mark, as with railways; so I thought for the purposes of this map that it would be better to take the height of North Brook-street, which is the principal street; I thought the level of that street should serve as the datum level; and above that level all the other heights are figured.
W	Is that the lowest part of town?
JH	Yes

W	Is that the level of the water, or how much above it?
JH	I cannot say for certain , I should think about 5 feet above the river
W	Are there any contour lines on the map?
JH	No; Mr Godwin and myself, in looking over the town, thought that it could not be divided in the manner which you proposed; we thought the contour lines were intended to be applied in cases where there were large localities; where there were several districts in a town, which is not the case here.
W	Is there a difference of level within the land described by that boundary?
JH	Yes there is a difference of 4 feet between Bartholomew-street and North Brook-street, it is about 5 feet more at the upper end than at the lower
W	There is a difference of 5 feet between different parts of that district
Jh	Yes
W	Could you not, by contour lines, show how much of that district was upon one level and how much upon the other; how much upon the level in North Brook-street and how much upon the higher level you have named?
JH	Yes, I could have done that, but until now I did not know what you meant by contour lines; you mentioned sectional lines upon the map
W	I mean to show the difference of level, and how much of the district falls under each particular level?
JH	I could have done that, had I known that was the meaning of the term but we thought it meant a division of the place either into districts, or some such an arrangement of that, otherwise they would have been put on the map.
W	Could you supply those sectional lines between this and tomorrow on the map?
JH	Yes [<i>Jabez sits at table</i>]
W	Are you solicitor for the Promoters of the Bill?
Godwin	I am
W	Have you (<i>reading</i>) "a statement of the population of the town and suburbs, distinguishing the numbers in each, that are within and without the suburban boundary"?
G	I have. The town of Newbury contains a population of 6151 persons as taken from the last census, from which we have derived our general statistical information.
W	What do the suburbs contain?
G	The suburbs include parts of the different parishes Speen and Shaw, and the tithing of Greenham, in the parish of Thatcham. The population is, as follows, within the urban district 6151 and within the suburbs

	4938, making the total 11,089.
W	What is the date of that census?
G	1841
W	Do you consider there has been any material variation in the population since that census was prepared?
G	There is some variation but we have not been able to ascertain it, nor have we any sufficient data by which we can ascertain to what extent. I would make this remark, that the whole of the parish of Speen is not included in the population: on the contrary, we have thrown out, in order to equalise the matter as much as possible, the number in the Workhouse, which at this time, amounts to 329, and which at the time of the census amounted to 228.
W	You believe those figures to represent the existing population, as near as you can arrive at it?
G	Yes
W	Now what next? Have you (<i>reading</i>) "a statement of the annual number of deaths in the town and in the suburbs for each of the 10 years to 1845 inclusive"?
G	(<i>reading from a document</i>)The total in the urban district 1359. In the suburban district 850. Total number of deaths 2209.
W	From what source do you collect those?
G	From the clerk of the parish or tithing, and from the different dissenting denominations in the town: or in some cases from the dissenting minsters. (<i>looks at Wilson</i>)
W	Have those particulars been collected under your own immediate superintendence?
G	They have
W	Do you believe them to be correct, as far as the facts can be ascertained?
G	As far as the parties have the necessary information; in the church a very correct registry is preserved, and I am quite satisfied as to the general correctness of the information furnished.(<i>looks at Binney</i>)
W	As regards the others?
G	With respect to the Independent chapel, that information is supplied by the minister of the congregation.
W	Do you believe the returns to be correct?
G	I do. As correct as the information supplied by the parties could render them, and some of the parties are in the room if you wish to ask them any questions. For instance Rev Wilson here.
Rev William Wilson	<i>Stands and sworn by Beck</i>
W	Are you a minister of the Presbyterian chapel?
WW	I am
W	Have you furnished to Mr Godwin a return of the number of burials

	that have taken place at that chapel?
WW	I have
W	Have you got the return?
WW	That is my return (<i>handing it in</i>)
W	Is that return correct?
WW	It is
W	(<i>to Godwin</i>) Is that one of the returns?
G	That is one of the returns, the others have been obtained in a similar manner
W	Have you (<i>reading</i>) "a statement and description of the several burial-grounds within the town proper, distinguished under the following heads; belonging to the Established Church?"
G	I have ; there is only one belonging to the Established Church
W	"To particular sects of Christians"?
G	There are 6 belonging to particular sects of Christians
W	"Common to various denominations"?
G	None
W	"Belonging to individuals or companies"?
G	None
W	What have the particular sects?
G	The Baptists, one; the Independents, one; the Wesleyans, one; the Presbyterians, one; the Friends, one; the Primitive Methodists, one making a total of 7 particular sects; one to the Established Church and 6 to particular sects of Christians within the urban district.
W	What is the total area in square yards?
G	5450
W	(<i>to Godwin</i>) Have you (<i>reading</i>)" a statement of any complaints as to the insufficiency of the existing burial-grounds or of the amount of burial and other charges for interment, or of noxious effluvia arising from the burial ground or other offensive matter therewith"?
G	I have. I call Rev Dr Binney
Rev Dr Binney	<i>Sworn by Beck</i>
G	Are you the rector of the parish of Newbury?
B	I am
G	For how long have you been so?
B	I have been Rector of Newbury since the year 1838; the middle of that year, more than 8 years and a half ago.
G	Do you consider that the Newbury churchyard affords sufficient accommodation for interment of the members of the Established Church?
B	Certainly not
W	I wish you to afford me any information as to the insufficiency of the present number of burial-grounds that may be in your power?

B	The insufficiency of the present burial-grounds for the accommodation of the parish is as glaring as it is possible truth can be; you can scarcely bury a corpse without having to dig up another. There is no question that we want enlargement, but, as a clergyman, I should very much prefer that additional burying-ground should be procured in the usual way by forming more churchyards generally. A cemetery embraces all; and is under very peculiar circumstances. I must admit such a thing is wanted, and if no better provision can be made to meet the evil, I certainly think this cemetery would be desirable. I know the Bishop has a very great objection to cemeteries, and, certainly as a clergyman I feel the same myself. And perhaps I may be permitted to say while I am speaking that it does so happen that in the very place which you passed by to look at the burial-ground, you must have observed an old looking building; it is a place called the Litton, which is supposed to be Saxon for burying-ground, but there can be no question that in the space round that chapel formerly a number of corpses were buried and some have been found interred there. The chapel still exists, but at present it is considered as an appendage to one of the charities.
W	Would you inform me of the amount of the burial fees and the charges for interment in the churchyard?
B	That I really cannot tell; my clerk will give you that information by and by; so little have I concerned myself about those things that I do not know. But while I am speaking of the Litton, I wish to mention also that within 2 miles of the suburbs there is another burying ground; of which there is no doubt it is a clear matter of record; the place is called Sandelford Priory; it was a detached parish and had a burying ground and the very church that was then used has been desecrated and it is now used as a dining room. The first burying ground I alluded to the Litton having a chapel already built would save expense and be more convenient to the town.
W	(making a note) With reference to the existing burial-grounds, are you aware of any complaint as to the effluvia emanating from the ground?
	I have not heard of any special complaint, but, certainly, I think myself it is not healthy for the town
W	Are you aware of any offensive matter affecting health?
B	No, I have heard nothing especial; but still my general impression is that it is unhealthy from the number of coffins and broken bones which are occasionally dug up; and in fact the ground being two feet above the level of the street, is injurious to the fabric of the church itself; there can be no question that we want further accommodation; the only difficulty in my opinion is how it can be obtained.
W	(looking at note) With reference to the Litton ground, what is the extent of that? How many square yards?

B	I cannot tell you how many with anything of a surveyor's eye; it is considerable.
W	To whom does it belong?
B	That is now claimed as part of a charity called St Bartholomew, which like all other charities at the time of the new Corporation Act was put in the hands of certain persons, called trustees of Municipal Charities, appointed by the Court of Chancery; the service is regularly performed in the chapel but only for the inmates of the charity
W	Is that one of the existing burial-grounds?
B	Certainly not; it is now in the possession of the trustees of the charity who do not use it at all except as a drying ground
W	Is it private property?
B	Certainly not; I cannot call charity property private property, except the trustees of charity property can be called trustees of private property.
John Tottie Mayo	<i>Called by Godwin and sworn by Beck</i>
G	?Are you the sexton of the parish of Newbury
JTM	I am
G	?How old are you
JTM	Nearly 70 years
G	?For how many years have you been sexton?
JTM	About 16
G	?Has the churchyard been considered full during the greater part or the whole of the time for which you have been sexton?
JTM	Yes, it has
G	?Do you feel at all puzzled to know where to open a fresh grave?
JTM	I do ; in fact, I cannot dig a grave without coming into contact with some human bones and coffins.
G	?How do you know where you may dig a grave?
JTM	By trying with a spit that we may have, and then we are not exactly certain even then, because, if the top of the coffin is decayed, the spit goes through sometimes, and then when we begin a grave, we are obliged to fill it up again on account of coming into contact with another corpse.
G	?Where do you put the spit?
JTM	We put in different places
G	?What guide have you?
JTM	We have no guide in particular; if we see a level piece of land we try with a spit
G	?Have you ever thrown up skulls?
JTM	Yes, some hundreds in my time
G	?How many at a time?

JTM	Why, sometimes 5 or 6 perhaps only in digging one grave
G	Have you ever seen skulls, thigh-bones, or human hair thrown up in the course of digging a grave in that ground?
JTM	Bones of all descriptions; in fact skulls with the hair on.
G	Have you ever felt the ground giving way beneath while the service has been performed?
JTM	Yes, in two or three instances
G	As though from the subsidence of a coffin?
JTM	In 2 or 3 instances I have observed that.
G	Do persons ever watch the process of the sexton in digging a grave; the relatives of those who have been lately buried?
JTM	Very frequently
G	Have you ever known them identifying any coffins or plates, or remains of that kind?
JTM	Why generally if we see a coffin plate we hide it, because we would not give them reason to complain of their relatives being disturbed.
G	?What is the usual depth of a grave?
JTM	4 feet and a half; we cannot go more than 7 feet in our ground before we come to water
G	?Have you found the water which you use contaminated?
JTM	No, not what I have
G	?Is the water good, wholesome and pleasant which you use?
JTM	Yes. What I drink in general wants a little added to it
G	?But nothing taken from it?
JTM	No
W	?Are you aware of any noxious effluvia that arises from the ground?
JTM	Yes; if you go early in the morning or late of an evening you will find it, particularly in the warm weather
W	?Are there any complaints of that?
JTM	It has been spoken of by 3 or 4 different people living near, and passing through the churchyard
G	?Is there any space to enlarge the present burial ground?
JTM	No, not as I can see; there is not a portion of it but what is occupied.
	WW again
W	?Rev Wilson. Will you state the present condition of the burial ground attached to your chapel?
WW	The portion of it which is appropriated to burials is full, or very nearly full, that is all I have to say about it
W	?Do you consider the existing burial grounds of the town insufficient for the purpose of interment?
WW	Oh, yes they are quite inadequate to the demand of the increasing population.
W	?Will you state what you know with respect to the insufficiency of the burial grounds attached to the other meeting houses in town?

WW	I would state then that they are very small compared to the extent of their respective congregations; that they lie in the very centre of a densely crowded neighbourhood, and that serious alarm has been felt and expressed by many members of the respective congregations, and by the town at large , whenever burials have taken place of persons who died from typhus fever or any other supposed contagious disorder; and we have had within the last fortnight in the history of the town , some painful proofs of the necessity of interment somewhere out of town.
W	?Will you state any instance that has occurred?
WW	?Well I will , if asked. It is a case that has excited much attention in the town. I refer particularly to the death of Mr Clarke, a grocer; of course I must be understood not to express an opinion, but certainly it is a fact that Mr Clarke died of typhus fever, and that he was interred in the neighbourhood of the dwellings of a resident population, which has led to the supposition that contagious fever has arisen from that circumstance; in fact one or two cases in the immediate neighbourhood of the burial-ground have occurred of typhus fever; I am not pronouncing my opinion on it ; it may be an error of opinion.
W	But there are apprehensions entertained?
WW	Decidedly and very strongly felt and expressed.
	John Freeman called by Godwin and sworn by Beck
G	?Have you been grave-digger for the Baptist congregation?
JF	I have attended the Baptist funerals for 10 or 12 years
G	?Do you superintend the digging of the graves?
JF	I see to it; I do not do it; I see it is properly done.
G	?How low do you dig in your burial-ground before you come to the water?
JF	It depends upon the season of the year, in this season of the year about 4 feet.
G	?Where does the water come from?
JF	It finds its level through the earth; in wet sort of weather the water follows the level in the earth
W	?The level of what?
JF	The level of water will follow that in the earth
G	?Is it the level of the river?
JF	We might say that as the pressure of water comes on the earth, the water rises in the earth (some hand movements here?); sometimes it is not above 3 feet; I have known it not more than 2 feet under the surface
G	?Have you much room in your burial ground?
JF	No not much room
G	?Are the coffins generally supposed to lie in water?
JF	Sometimes they are in the water at about 4 feet deep

G	At the time of burial
JF	Yes
G	?Have you ever heard the splash of their coming into water?
JF	I have seen it
W (to G)	?Are you prepared with " a statement (for each burial-ground) if more than one corpse is buried in one grave at a time; and what is the greatest number of corpses buried in one year in one grave; or what is the usual period to allow a corpse to remain undisturbed in its grave?
G	In none of the burial grounds in the town of Newbury or the suburbs is more than one corpse in one grave at a time, except where two relatives happen to have died at the same time; as regards to usual period to allow a corpse to remain undisturbed in its grave, I would observe in reference to Newbury churchyard that as soon as the sexton's spit penetrates the lid of a coffin, a grave may be dug in the same place, and the sexton is present to corroborate this statement
W	(To G) have you " a statement of any springs or wells that are in the vicinity of the burial-grounds , and whether the water is contaminated thereby"?
G	I have[statement read]
W	(to JH) ?Have you made enquiry into this subject?
Jabez H (stands)	Yes; it is doubtful whether the water is affected by the river, or what it is, but it is affected by something
W	?To whom did you enquire in respect of the churchyard?
JH	I applied only to Mayo, the sexton; his information I considered to be equal to that of half the parish (looking to JTM)
W	(To JTM) ?
	Are there springs and wells in the vicinity of the churchyard?
JTM	Not that I know of
W	?How are the inhabitants supplied with water in the neighbourhood of the churchyard?
JTM	I suppose they have wells upon the premises
W	?That is the question I asked you, whether there were not wells in the vicinity of the churchyard?
JTM	Yes, not in it; it is surrounded by houses on the outside
W	Have you ever tasted water from any of the wells in the neighbourhood of the churchyard?
JTM	It is most likely I have, because there are 2 breweries.
W	?Do you happen to know whether the water in the wells , which are in the vicinity of the churchyard, is contaminated?
JTM	No, I never found anything of it
G	?Did you not inform Mr Hanson that the water in those wells was contaminated?

JTM	No, never; it was not me, I am certain, because he never put the question to me..
Job Hanson called by Godwin and sworn by Beck	
W	What are you?
Job	I am a builder
W	How long have you lived in this town?
Job	36 years
W	?Have you any reason to think that the wells which are in the vicinity of the churchyard are connected with the river?
Job	I have
W	?What is the name of that river?
Job	The Kennett
W	?Do the wells of which you speak lie between the churchyard and the river, or does the churchyard lie between them and the river?
Job	The churchyard lies between them and the river.
W	Could the river affect these wells , without also affecting the water in the churchyard
Job	I should think not
W	?Do you know of any breweries in that neighbourhood?
Job	Yes
W	In what position are they?
Job	They are shown on the plan; one of them lies here and the other there [points on plan] they are close to the churchyard; Mr King's brewery is here.
W	With reference to the brewery which lies between the churchyard and the river, do you know from whence it draws its supply of water?
Job	It draws its supply from a well upon the premises, sometimes from the river; I have no certain knowledge of the nature of their water, for I never tasted it, either mixed or unmixed
W	?Have you any information to give as to the springs and well in the vicinity of other burial grounds in the town?
Job	No I have not, but running my eye over the various wells, I know some for instance going up to the workhouse on the top of the hill; I find one there ; I think we sunk 30 feet for water. Coming lower down the hill, precisely opposite where the ground for the proposed cemetery is, we have a well 60 feet deep.
Para 366 left out re map of town	
W	?Have you "plans of any particular modes proposed for laying out the new burial grounds and proposed mode of interment?
Jabez	(Coming forward) I have
W	Is there any explanation you wish to give?
Jabez	It is to be divided in the centre; the nearest half to the town is to be appropriated by the Church of England, and the other half to the various dissenting congregations. Chapels are to be erected in each of

	the burial-grounds; and there is to be a porter's lodge in the centre, which porter is to be sexton and porter too; both the grounds are to be inclosed by a wall, and in the front there will be iron railings, with two entrance gates near the porter's lodge; also at the further extremity of each ground there is to be a carriage drive, so that carriages may go in at one gate and out at the other.
W	Have you " plans of any proposed reception houses for corpses, or other buildings, as chapels etc, proposed to be connected with the cemetery"?
Jabez	None at all. We shall put in 4 plans relating to a chapel
W	Have you " a statement of the area of the proposed burial-ground and the number of graves it is calculated to contain, and the number of square feet allowed for each"?
Jabez	The area is 4 acres, 1 rod 33 perches.
W	?Is that the measurement?
Jabez	That is the measurement; taken from the tithe map the area is computed
W	Can you give the number of graves?
Jabez	It is calculated it will contain 5,400 at 6 feet 6 inches by 2 feet 3 inches for each grave.
W	You believe that to be a correct estimate?
Jabez	I believe so; I have taken as the basis the London cemeteries generally
W	Have you "a statement of the nature of the soil of the proposed burial-grounds. The intended greatest and least depth of graves; whether the subsoil is wet and requires draining, and describing how that is to be effected, and how the drainage water is to be disposed of"?
Jabez	The nature of the soil is black mould and gravel
W	Do you know whether the subsoil is wet and requires drainage?
Jabez	It is dry, as is all the soil in the neighbourhood, except only upon the top of the hill and between the workhouse and the bottom of the hill; in fact there are a great many springs near the road that have not been drained, and they are constantly wet; in all other places it is dry.
W	Supposing there should be springs in this ground, how do you propose the drainage to be effected?
Jabez	Do you refer to surface drainage?
W	I refer to effectual drainage, whether by surface or by deep drainage; how do you propose it should be effected?
Jabez	I do not find any means of getting the water off
W	Is it upon a declivity?
Jabez	Yes
W	That then is the mode of draining it; carrying the water down to the lowest point?
Jabez	Yes, I should carry the water down to the lowest point. That is the plan

	that has been estimated for. That stream has been had with a view to that.
W	There is a stream upon the foot of the land?
Jabez	Yes
W	Into which the drainage water would be conveyed and disposed of?
Jabez	Yes
W	Can you inform me where the stream empties itself?
Jabez	In a culvert near the railway, or immediately upon the line which has been formed by the railway, and thence discharges itself into the Kennett at a distance of 200 to 300 yards considerably below the town.
W	Did you consider any houses are supplied with water by it?
Jabez	Certainly not
	<i>Overnight Whalley visits proposed site and various burial grounds. This is weird as in January it would be dark early - maybe they went before proceedings started at 10.00am</i>
	<i>Mr Richard Robinson called by Godwin and sworn by Beck</i>
G	Are you a surgeon in extensive practice in the town of Newbury?
RR	Yes
G	Do you hold the situation of surgeon to the poor-law union?
RR	Yes, to the poor-law district
W	Could you inform me of the sanitary condition of the town of Newbury?
RR	It is very dirty generally, and in a very bad state
W	Do you speak generally, or merely of that part of the population which are affected by it?
RR	I may say, generally, I think it not only affects the lower classes, but it affects other classes of the population
W	Is there any district in which disease is particularly prevalent?
RR	There are some parts of this town where disease has been prevalent, such as fever
W	Have you found such disease at all connected with the localities of graveyards in any way?
RR	There has been fever in one locality, that is the Quaker's burial ground; and here there has been fever, but not under my immediate attention
W	In the neighbourhood of the church?
RR	Yes
W	Have you considered the state of the burial grounds in the town, and do you think they have exercised any influence upon its sanitary condition?
RR	I should think they must
W	Have you any knowledge of the state of feeling among the lower classes with respect to the burial-grounds of this town?

RR	Not at all; I know there are several yards in this town that are very thickly inhabited, and there is but one privy for all the inhabitants. I should say there are 20 houses at least, and that privy running out into a ditch in several places. There are some yards where there is none at all, and they make one heap of it, that is not exactly in this parish, but in the adjacent parish of Greenham, where there is one heap made of the excrements of the bodies of the persons who inhabit this yard.
W	That is not in Newbury?
RR	No; but in Newbury, in Parr's yard, there is a case of a ditch running out with everything that is bad and contaminating; and I have seen the gas arising from that ditch in bladders bursting with hydrogen gas
W	How long have you resided in this town?
RR	I do not reside in the town; I reside at Speen
W	How long have you been connected with the town?
RR	13 or 14 years; it is 14 years next May
W	Are you acquainted with the site of the proposed cemetery?
RR	I am
W	What is your opinion of the eligibility of that site?
RR	It appears to me to be a very eligible site
W	What do you estimate the distance to be from the spot where we are , the Town Hall
RR	About half a mile; not quite that
W	?It lies immediately between this and the union workhouse?
RR	Yes
W	?You are the medical officer of the union?
RR	Yes
W	What is the number of interments that take place from the workhouse?
RR	I am sure I cannot answer that question
W	?20 or 30?
RR	More than that, because we have an infirmary attached; I should think there may be as many as 50 in the course of a year.
W	?They are not all buried in Newbury churchyard?
RR	No they go to their various parishes
W	?In what manner are the bodies disposed of?
RR	They are taken to the various parishes; the parishes of this union are 18 in number
W	?Are they taken a considerable distance?
RR	As much as 7 miles, some of them 8.
W	Do you happen to know the reason of that expense being incurred?
RR	I believe in consequence of some objection that has arisen to burying them here; I do not know ; I am not certain of the reason; it is a recent alteration
W	Whatever these objections are, do you think they would be removed by

	the establishment of this cemetery?
RR	I should think not
W	A chapel ground called the Litton has been pointed out to meas a more eligible site for the cemetery than the ground in question?
RR	I should think not; I should think that it is very possible , provided the town increase, as it is likely to do, since the inclosure of the commons, that it will be surrounded by houses in the same manner as the churchyard is now
W	Is the clerk of the union present? Or any party representing the guardians? The union's interests are surely affected by the Bill.
Binney (steps forward)	I am one of the board of guardians and am happy to give any information in my power
W	Are you one of the Board of Guardians?
B	Yes
W	Can you inform me of the arrangements that are at present made with respect to the interment of the poor from the union workhouse?
B	As far as I am aware it is the custom for the Board of Guardians in Newbury to allow 22s or 22s 6d in a lumping sum for burials
W	For all expenses of funerals?
B	For all; that includes the expense of coffin and everything in fact connected with it until it is put into the ground and the service performed over it. By the charge of some carpenter or some jobbing or other in Newbury, a greater sum has been laid out for coffins than ought to be allowed, and the consequence is that it has cut down the sum left to the clergyman considerably below the portion of fees that ought to come to the church. When a person dies it is a common thing for poor people to come to the sexton and importune him at once to dig a grave; the sexton says, How am I to be paid? The rector will expect his proper dues, the church must be paid. Oh the people say, we will pay. The sexton says , I have been told so very often, but it has never been forthcoming; still I do not like to send away the corpse unburied; I would rather trust to what bargain I could make with the Board of Guardians for burying. The relieving officer says, I have just so much allowed; if I undertake to pay, I will give that and no more; and the sexton takes what he can rather than refuse the body burial, or trusts the people to pay him
W	What number of paupers is buried in the churchyard in one year; can you give an opinion on that?
B	I could not tell without referring to the books; I could tell with certainty from the books; I should think not one a week; I should say about 20 in a year. Many are buried in their own parish.
W	?Those who are buried in their own parish are buried there at the

	expense , partly, of their friends?
B	I do not know
W	When buried in their own parish, the expense is considerably increased I presume?
B	I should suppose there may be some expense incurred in carrying them there; poor people are very fond of helping one another, if they have a coffin they get a lift in a waggon. There is a kind of bier on which they bring them down to Newbury; whether the guardian would allow that to be used to go to other parishes I cannot tell. The sexton really gets nothing for digging the grave; I am told that he actually pays twice as much; he seems to submit, and of course I do not trouble myself about the thing - it has gone on from time to time- hoping that things will be better regulated at some time of day.
	Edward William Gray catches Godwin's eye who tells Whalley he is ready to speak. Called by Godwin, sworn by Beck
W	?You are vice-chairman of the Board of Guardians?
EWG	Yes
W	In what way are those who die disposed of?
EWG	Supposing a person dies in the workhouse there is an allowance made I believe, of 27s 6d for a hearse to convey the body away to any distant parish where the pauper may wish to be buried.; supposing a pauper wishes to be buried at Speen, there is an allowance for a horse to take the corpse in a hearse that is attached to the workhouse; I believe 3s or 4 s are paid for that; but if they are buried in a neighbourhood , 22s 6d is allowed. So much for the coffin, so much for the shroud, so much for the under-bearers; 3s 6d for the fees for the sexton. At Speen the vicar takes no fees whatever for a pauper burial, none whatever; there are some parishes where it is the same.
W	There is no fee taken here?
EWG	Yes there is a fee goes to the Rector. 2s to 2s 6d is the fee that is taken upon common burials.
W	If you were obliged to pay 5s at the proposed cemetery, would it interfere with you burying there? As a member of the Board of Guardians, can you suggest any objection to it?
EWG	Certainly not; I have no objection, as an individual member, to that fee being paid.
G	Do you consider a cemetery to be necessary?
EWG	Yes
G	Are you a shareholder?
EWG	At present I am not, but I shall subscribe.

W	<i>Ladies and gentlemen, I call this enquiry to an end</i>
Narrator (Peter) enters	Whalley wrote his report based on the evidence presented over these two days. The Newbury Cemetery Act was ratified in May 1847, setting up the Newbury Cemetery Company - which continued for over 100 years. Now let us find out what happened to the characters you have met here this evening. Rise gentlemen. George Hammond Whalley
Whalley	I moved over to Ireland to establish fisheries to help feed the population in the famine, which had already started when this enquiry began. Later I became MP for Peterborough. I died in 1878 in my home at North Wales. <i>(sits)</i>
Narrator	Reverend William Wilson
WW	I died of heart failure just 3 years later in 1850 and was the first person to be buried in the new Newbury cemetery - in unconsecrated ground <i>(sits)</i>
Narrator	Henry Godwin
HG	I died in 1874. And was buried in Newbury cemetery. The stained glass window in the Anglican chapel is dedicated to him <i>(sits)</i>
Narrator	The Reverend Doctor Hibbert Binney
HB	I remained Rector until my death in 1857. The Cemetery Act of 1847 protected my income by making sure I was paid a fee for all burials in the new cemetery, whether present at the service or not. I was buried in St Nicholas church. <i>(sits)</i>
Narrator	Henry Froom Beck
Henry Beck	I was a Constable of the Borough for 40 years and also often described as "the best town crier in England". I died, aged 70, in 1872 and am buried in the consecrated section of Newbury Cemetery. <i>(sits)</i>
Narrator	Jabez Hanson
Jabez	I returned to Lancashire when this project was finished. The cemetery turned out to have many springs and accounts show constant payment for men to drain the site. Various partnerships in Liverpool were dissolved and by 1862 I was declared bankrupt in Speenhamland. I died from TB in London in 1866 aged 48. <i>(sits)</i>
Narrator	John Tottie Mayo
John Tottie Mayo	I died age 82 and was buried at St Nicholas church where I had been a gravedigger for so long <i>(sits)</i>
Narrator	John Freeman
John Freeman	I died aged 76 in Newbury. <i>(sits)</i>
Narrator	Job Hanson
Job Hanson	I died in 1874 and am buried in Speen cemetery. <i>(sits)</i>
Narrator	Richard Robinson

Richard Robinson	I continued to practice as a surgeon and general practitioner, living on Northbrook Street. In 1867 I was charged by the Lunacy Commissioners for keeping a lunatic in my house without a licence to do so. I appeared at Berkshire Assizes in 1868 where I pleaded guilty (having already obtained the required licence). I died aged 91 in 1883 and am buried at Speen. <i>(sits)</i>
Narrator	Edward William Gray
Gray	I bought 10 cemetery company shares later that week. In 1856 I procured one of the guns captured at the end of the Crimean War and had it brought to Newbury. Unfortunately I had not budgeted for transport in Newbury and the gun was left at the station for some time, before being displayed first in the market square and later by the clock tower. I am buried at Enborne St Michael and All Angels. <i>(sits)</i>
Narrator	Ladies and gentlemen, this cemetery is now yours to look after! Goodnight