

The Cavendish-Bentinck Mausoleum St. Giles Churchyard



The Mausoleum in 2020



Map showing Mausoleum



The impressive entrance doors



The chest tomb of Mary Augusta



Elizabeth Cavendish Bentinck

In the corner of St. Giles Church yard South Mimms lies the Mausoleum of the Aristocratic London Society family of the Cavendish Bentincks. But why is it there? seemingly they had no connections with the South Mimms area, the nearest link was Ruth Evelyn Burns nee Cavendish Bentinck who resided at North Mymms House, different parish.

The Mausoleum was built to the requirements of Mrs Elizabeth Cavendish Bentinck of Richmond Terrace, Whitehall. The architect was Robert Weir Schultz who normally designed in the arts and crafts style, so this example of classical design of his comes as something of a surprise. It seems likely, therefore, that the choice of the classical design was that of the client rather than the architect. Coincidentally Weir Schultz was involved in restoration work in St. Giles at the same as the Mausoleum was constructed.

Elizabeth came from New York and had married William George Cavendish Bentinck *d.1909* in 1880, MP for Penryn and Falmouth between 1886 and 1895, a Dorset JP and a trustee of the British Museum. They had two daughters, the first of whom, Mary Augusta, *d.1913*. Perhaps it was after her death that Elizabeth Cavendish Bentinck, by this time a widow, decided to have built a family Mausoleum. It is understood she subsequently moved back to New York, and in 1928 the title deed of the Mausoleum was conveyed to her second daughter Mrs. Ruth Evelyn Burns, Elizabeth returned from the USA at some time as she is shown in the 1939 census and later died in North Mymms House in 1943,



Postcard of Dame Nelly Melba with her friend John Gorman Ford Monte Carlo 1904



Ruth Evelyn Burns nee Cavendish-Bentinck



Major General. Sir Walter Arthur George Burns, GCMG, CB, DSO, OBE, MC,

The Mausoleum also contains Elizabeth Cavendish Bentinck *d.1943*. her daughter Ruth Evelyn Burns, *d.1978* grandson Sir George Burns *d.1997* and the chest tombs of Mary Augusta Ford, *d.1913* (living at that time in Hove Sussex) and her husband John Gorman Ford, *d.1917* who lived at no 54 Richmond Terrace Whitehall. He and his family were American diplomats serving in Washington & Constantinople. Mary and John were both interred in the Mausoleum on the 16th October 1917. Perhaps the Mausoleum was only finished at this time.

Clearly Elizabeth Cavendish Bentinck's intention was that she and her daughters and their families were to be interred in the Mausoleum she had built, but why locate it at St. Giles South Mimms? St. Mary's North Mymms, near to where her daughter Ruth resided would have been a more logical place.

It is understood that either the then vicar of North Mymms, the Revd. Charles Gordon Ward, refused the request or perhaps the Bishop of St. Albans did not agree with private Mausoleums?

It is possible with the Cavendish Bentinck's considerable influence, the Bishop of London, whose Diocese St. Giles South Mimms was in at that time, and the resident Vicar the Revd. Allen Hay, agreed that a Mausoleum would be a fitting addition to St. Giles's churchyard.