

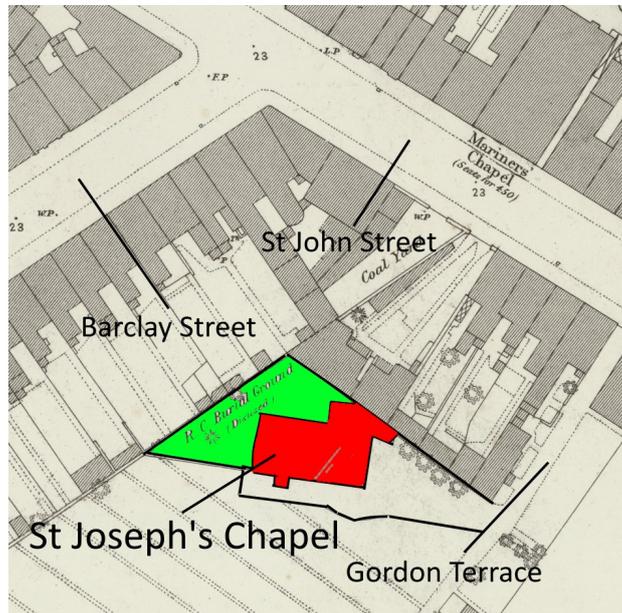
St. Joseph of Arimathea Roman Catholic Chapel, Gordon Terrace, Bridgwater and Sergeant James Hogan, 1830-1878

by
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An Editorial Note

Julian Taylor, who was a Sedgemoor District Councillor for Eastover Ward 1999 to 2015, has deposited in the Blake Museum Archive a binder of papers relating to the exhumation of remains from the burial ground of St Joseph of Arimathea Roman Catholic Chapel, Gordon Terrace, on the re-development of the site for housing in 2006. The remains were re-interred in Bristol Road Cemetery.

We are grateful to Mr Taylor for compiling the documents from which this narrative has been written.



Location of St Joseph's Chapel, from 1:500 OS map, c1880



Seen from Gordon Terrace



The Chapel as an engineering workshop

The chapel was built in 1846 by the Rev J Moore Capes, after his conversion to Roman Catholicism. Before this, he had opened the Anglican church, St John's, Eastover in 1845. The chapel cost £850 to build, the money being raised by public subscription. The foundation stone was laid on 2 October 1845, and it was opened in February 1846. Mr Capes brought with him the organ from St John's Eastover. It was served initially by a priest from Cannington, who travelled on horseback, but later had resident clergy.

By 1870 the congregation, including children reached 200 and in 1878 there were 60 Easter Communicants. In 1882 was the dedication the present Roman Catholic church, St Joseph's on the Quay, in Binford Place. This was designed by Father A. J. C. Scoles, who had been trained by his father as an architect before ordination, and was appointed as parish priest in 1881. When in Bridgwater he bought the whole of the St. Saviour's estate, and built the houses in St Saviour's Avenue and began the swimming baths there. He also built three villas on Victoria Road – Marie Villas.

He went on to be a major Roman catholic church architect, and there is a good Wikipedia article about him and his work – see Alexander Scoles.

The burial ground was in use for 36 years and contained some 40 burials. After the closure the chapel was sold to a wheelwright. In the twentieth century the building was used as a succession of workshops, finally by a firm of steel stockholders and engineers. It was demolished in 1997.

James Hogan

Included in the papers is a series of documents concerning the elaborate military funeral there in November 1878 for Sergeant James Hogan, who had been for 14 years the Sergeant-Instructor of the 5th S.R.C, a Volunteer group based in Bridgwater. The 5th Somerset Rifle Volunteer Corps was formed in Bridgwater in 1860, and in 1861 formed part of the 2nd Administrative Battalion, based at Taunton. In 1882 this became the 2nd Volunteer Battalion of the Somerset Light Infantry.

His army record states that James Hogan was born in Hastings near Hounslow, Middlesex in 1830. (This is probably a clerical error for Heston. TW). His service record shows that he was joined the 81st Regiment of Foot (Loyal Lincoln Volunteers) then based in Jersey, as a Boy on 21 February, 1847 aged 14½, became a Private on 24 January 1848, and a Drummer on 1 July 1848, Corporal on 2 September 1854, and Sergeant on 3 May 1858.

The 81st Regiment of Foot (Loyal Lincoln Volunteers) was an infantry regiment of the British Army, raised in 1793. Under the Childers Reforms it amalgamated with the 47th (Lancashire) Regiment of Foot to form the Loyal North Lancashire Regiment in 1881.

Hogan's army records show he spent almost eight years abroad, including some time in the West Indies, and he served during the Indian Mutiny and received the Indian Mutiny medal. He served almost ten years, in all, before being medically discharged on 23 July, 1861, aged 28 years, for he had weak heart. He must to have come to Bridgwater in about 1864/5. He resigned his position in June 1878. His death certificate states he died from phthisis pulmonalis (pulmonary tuberculosis).

His obituary states that he was in the 2nd Queen's Regiment. This is suspect and his army record shows he served continually in the 81st Regiment.

Bridgwater Mercury 20 Nov 1878

We regret to announce the death of Sergt. James Hogan, for about fourteen years sergeant-instructor of the 5th Somerset Rifle Corps in this town, and whose faithful and efficient services were frequently borne testimony by the former captain (Mr. W. J. Ford). The deceased, who was only 41 [*sic* in fact 48 years. T.W.] years of age, was also a great favourite with the members of the corps generally, and much regret was experienced when, in consequence of ill health, he was compelled to resign the post in June last. He had served with the regulars eighteen years, and three years more with the volunteers. The funeral will take place on Saturday afternoon next, and will be attended by the volunteers.

Bridgwater Mercury 27 Nov 1878

FUNERAL OF SERGEANT HOGAN.

On Saturday afternoon the mortal remains of Sergeant James Hogan, for nearly fourteen years sergeant-instructor for the 5th S.R.C. in Bridgwater, and whose decease was reported last week was interred in the Roman Catholic burying-ground in St John Street. The funeral was a very imposing one, being taken part in by members of the 5th and 26th S.R.C. and the Foresters to which Order the deceased belonged; and it attracted a large concourse of spectators. Shortly before three o'clock the members of the 5th corps mustered in the Cornhill, under the command of Lieut. Robinson, and those of the 26th corps in the High Street. They were marched therefrom to the residence of the deceased in Wellington Road and were followed by the Foresters, the latter numbering about forty and wearing their mourning scarves. Several of the volunteers had crape bands on their arms, and the drums were draped in black. The procession was formed in the following order:

Band of the 5th S. R. C.

Firing party, with arms reversed

The coffin (covered with the Union Jack, and having the sword, hat and belt of the deceased

Mourning-coach, containing the wife and five children of the deceased Sergts-Major Heron and Ferguson. West Somerset Yeomanry, in their regimentals

Members of the 5th corps.

Members of the 26th corps.

The Foresters.

Mr. W. J. Ford, ex-Captain of the 5th Corps, followed in a carriage behind.

The firing-party consisted of Colour-Sergeant Mansfield (in command), Corporal Bond, and Privates F. Sheppard, Johnson, Turner, C. Hale, N. Hill, Rich, Headford, C. Prior, W. Price, Jones, Fursland, Hayman, Gene, Oaten, W. Hobbs and H. Atwell. The pall-bearers were Colour-Sergeant Alway, Quartermaster-Sergeant Rose and the Sergeant-Instructor of the Wellington corps. The coffin was borne on the shoulders, at different times, of Sergeants Hook, Vickery, Squires, Ferguson, Broom and Strange (5th corps), and Sergeants Gosling, Lock, Bellringer, Dyke and Lee, of the 28th corps. In the order above mentioned, with the band playing the Dead March in Saul, the procession slowly wended its way out of the Wellington-road into the station-yard, and thence into St. John-street to the Roman Catholic Chapel, the whole route being lined with spectators. Only those who took part in procession were permitted to enter the grounds contiguous to the chapel, the latter being nearly filled before the coffin, which was met at the entrance-gate by the Roman Catholic priest (Mr. Corbishley), and two assistants, was carried inside it. Lighted candles were placed upon the coffin, holy water was sprinkled over it, some incense was burnt, and the service, including some chanting, was brought to a conclusion, the corpse was borne to the place of interment, a small enclosure adjoining. and portion of it was occupied. It is understood deceased expressed a wish be buried in this place, where lay the remains of one of his children, and that for this circumstance the ground would not have been disturbed. The burial service having concluded the corpse was lowered into the grave and a requiem having been sung the firing-party discharged three volleys into the air. Some wreaths, including a beautiful one of white flowers, berries and yew, made by Miss Reeves daughter of the drum-major of the 5th Corps and the flowers were afterwards deposited on the coffin as were also some sprigs of myrtle by the Foresters. The deceased, who formerly belonged to the 2nd Queen's, and had been twice married, has left a widow and six children the two eldest belonging respectively to the army and navy.

POSTSCRIPT

Taunton Courier 1 April 1885

The Fighting near Suakin—In the list of killed on Sunday last, the 22nd inst., in action near Suakin, we regret say appears the name of a very promising and heroic young man, Francis Hogan, signalman, belonging to her Majesty's ship *Dolphin*, who although on active duty on board his ship, unfortunately volunteered to go on shore, and help to fight the battles of his country. Mr Hogan was the son of the late Sergeant-Major Hogan, for some years drill instructor of the I company 2nd Somerset Volunteers, and only ten

months ago married the daughter of our respected townsman, Mr Michael O'Brien, by whose family this brave young man is very deeply regretted. - R.I.P

Editorial note

See: *Suakin, 1885 : being a sketch of the campaign of this year, 1886* by Ernest Gambier Parry.

Following the fall of Khartoum, Graham led a second expedition in March 1885. HMS *Dolphin*, a composite sloop, was in the Mediterranean where the ship took part in military operations in eastern Sudan in 1884–1885 at Suakin and took part in defending attacks on the camp there.

This expedition is sometimes referred to as the Suakin Field Force. Its purpose was to clear Mahdist forces under Osman Digna from the region, and to supervise and protect the construction of the Suakin-Berber Railway. A week after its arrival in Suakin, the expedition fought in two actions: the Battle of Hashin or Hasheen on 20 March and the Battle of Tofrek on 22 March. The force was later joined by the New South Wales Contingent, which arrived at Suakin on 29 March. However, within two months the Gladstone government decided to abandon both the railway and its military campaign in Sudan. General Graham and his Suakin Field Force were evacuated from the port city on 17 May 1885. Nevertheless, Britain maintained an ongoing presence in Suakin where between 1886 and 1888 the then brevet Lt. Col. Herbert Kitchener acted out the role of Governor General of Eastern Sudan.