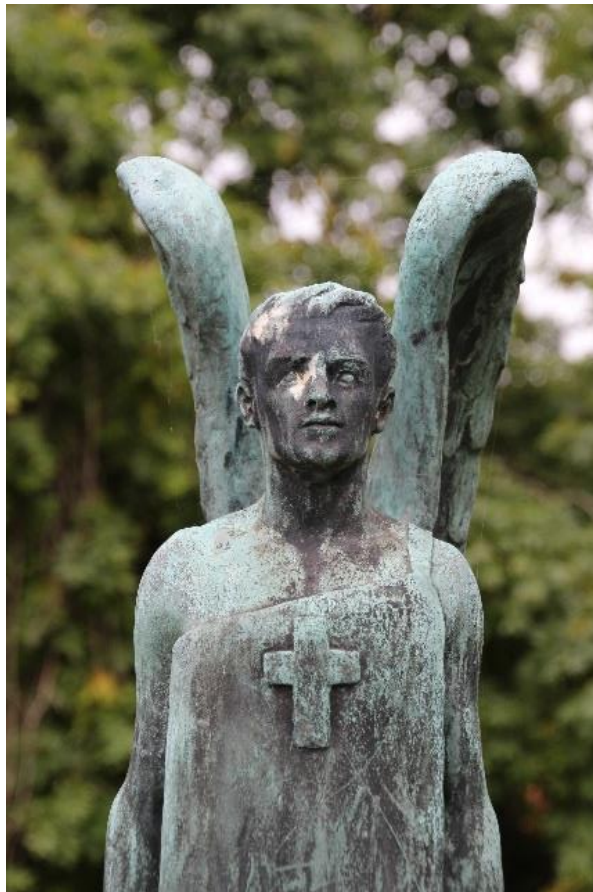


HolyTrinity  
Church

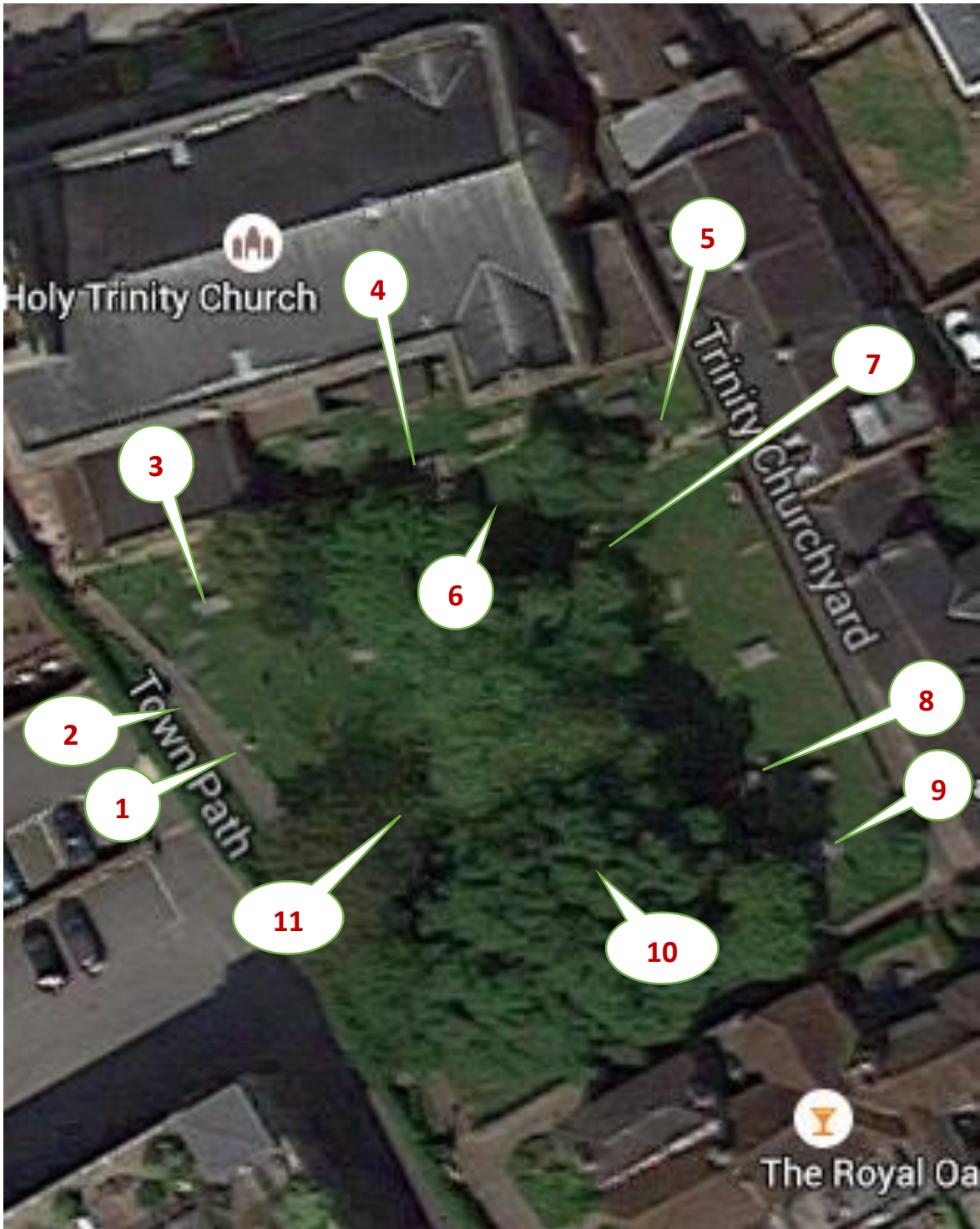
## Discover Trinity Churchyard



Follow the trail



## Map



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**The churchyard is full of stories. Some of the graves are hard to read now, but we hope that by using the map and photographs in this guide you will be able to find them.**

It is impossible now to read most of the gravestones, but many were recorded in 1891 by Philip Palmer, historian and lay sacristan of Holy Trinity.

**In the middle of the churchyard is a large grassy mound. People often say this is where victims of the plague, a dreadful illness, were buried – but actually it is a rubbish tip! Over 100 years ago the church was made larger, and this is where the builders heaped up all the soil and rubble.**



The church was extended in 1887, to provide a chancel for the altar and choir and two chapels, which were later used for the organ and to remember The Queen's Royal Regiment. Any human remains disturbed in making the new foundations had to be kept on consecrated ground and so they were moved here, together with all the soil. Gravestones that were displaced were leaned against the west wall of the churchyard.

**1. This winged angel, or warrior, remembers Geoffrey Brooke Parnell, who was killed in 1916, during the First World War.**

Major Parnell, of The Queen's Royal Regiment, and many men of his battalion died in action on 15 July 1916 at High Wood, during the Battle of the Somme. Parnell was a very popular officer, and well known in Guildford, where he had been stationed at Stoughton Barracks before going out to France. The winged figure was designed by his sister, Edith Farmiloe, and was originally intended to stand inside the church. It is not known why this never happened.



**2. William Elkins and his wife Mary lie in this splendid tomb. William was mayor of Guildford three times in the early 19th century.**



The Elkins, a brewing family, owned much land in and around Guildford and William's son, William Edmund (also buried here), was himself mayor four times in the mid-19th century. William died in 1848, and there continued to be burials in this fine barrel-topped tomb even after the closure of the churchyard in 1856. The tomb is listed as being of architectural interest, Grade II. Several of the nearby

gravestones commemorate other members of the Elkins family. The earliest is dated to 1741.

**3. John Bullen, who died in 1908, was one of the last people to be buried in this churchyard. He was a busy man – among other things he was jailer of a small prison in South Hill, not far from here.**



John Bullen was a clothier by trade, as well as being an auctioneer's clerk, a Poor Law guardian and serving as parish clerk here at Holy Trinity for over 50 years. He set up allotments, was involved in Guildford Institute, and took on the authorities for anyone with a problem. As parish clerk, one of his duties would have been to bury still-born babies. These tiny infants were not given funerals because they were unbaptised, but the clerk would have found them a place in the churchyard and would have recorded them in the register of deaths.

**4. These two tombs belong to the Sibthorpe family. It is now nearly impossible to read the writing on them, but it tells us that Sarah died “in the same hour” as her husband, Thomas, on 27 March 1795. Sarah was 59 and Thomas was 65.**



*Only the tomb furthest from the church is pictured*

Though the inscriptions on these tombs are now illegible, they were recorded in 1891 by Philip Palmer. The memorial to Thomas, who had been town clerk until his death, and Sarah was erected by their “afflicted children”. The family had lived in London until about 1770, where Thomas was a solicitor and a member of the Middle Temple.

**5. This slab is in memory of William and Sarah Shaw and their family. It used to be the top of a tomb, but when Douglas Hurd, a Member of Parliament, came to Guildford the police were worried that it might give cover to terrorists, so it was lowered to the ground.**



Douglas Hurd was Secretary of State for Northern Ireland and then Home Secretary during the violent “Troubles” in Northern Ireland. When he came to speak at a Lent Lecture in the church, the Shaw tomb was deemed to be a security risk and so it was

dismantled and the top slab laid flat. The gravestone commemorates many members of the Shaw family from the 16th century to the 19th century. It is very unusual for a family to live for so long in one place.

**6. These two stones, close to each other, record the**



**deaths of Bernard and Catherine Richardson and of three of their young children. The youngest two, Bernard and Robert, died within weeks of each other. Perhaps they had the same illness.**



Bernard Andrew Richardson was born in 1818 in Pocklington, near York. At some point he came to Guildford and ran a “fancy repository” in the High Street, selling everything to do with sewing, as well as gifts. He married Catherine Ellis at Godalming in 1843. She had been born in Sussex in 1816.

The memorial for their three children, all too legible, is a vivid reminder of the high infant mortality of earlier generations. In 1849 the Richardsons’ daughter Catherine died aged 1 year 4 months. Then in 1852 Bernard (1 year 10 months) and Robert (6 months) died within six weeks of each other. Perhaps there was an epidemic – certainly cholera was a serious problem at the time. It is possible that Catherine herself died in childbirth – the date, 6 November 1851, is very soon after Robert must have been born.

**7. On this headstone you can see a weeping woman, leaning on an anchor. We often find figures like this on the graves of sailors. The inscription tells us that it is the grave of James Gunner and his four children, James, Harriet, Elizabeth and Thomas.**



This nearly illegible inscription was recorded by Philip Palmer in 1891. James Gunner died in 1817, aged 52. If he was in the navy it is possible that he was at the Battle of Trafalgar in 1805. The four children all died in infancy, once more emphasising the high mortality rate of those days. Two graves on the other side of the burial mound date from the 1760s and mention William and John, sons of Francis and Elizabeth Gunner and brothers of James.

**8. This tomb records the names of some of the Booker family. Charles Booker built Booker's Tower on The Mount – the steep hill on the other side of the River Wey – in memory of his two sons, Charles and Henry, who died young.**



Charles Booker (died 1849), whose name is on the top of the tomb (though now impossible to read), was a corn merchant and three times mayor of Guildford. His two sons, Charles and Henry, both died young and he built Booker's Tower in 1839 "to perpetuate his name after fate had robbed him of his two sons". The elder son, Charles, died of smallpox in 1824 at the age of 15. Three years later Henry was drowned in the River Wey, near the Town Wharf, also aged 15.

**9. Several members of the Haydon family are buried in this splendid tomb. They lived next door to the sisters of Lewis Carroll, who wrote *Alice in Wonderland*.**



This fine tomb was originally surrounded by a railing. The Haydons were a well-known Guildford family. In the 1740s and 1750s William Haydon (died 1784), who was a successful draper, built Millmead House, near the River Wey and now part of Guildford Borough Council offices. In 1765 he established Haydon's Bank in the High Street, the first bank in Guildford. In the 19th century, some of the Haydons lived next door to the Misses Dodgson, whose brother Lewis Carroll wrote *Alice in Wonderland*.

**10. This is one of the oldest gravestones that we can still identify. It belongs to William Hoall, who died in 1726, nearly 300 years ago. William was a maltster, someone who would have been involved in the making of beer.**

The inscription also mentions Elizabeth, the wife of Peter Flutter, and Henry Flutter, their infant son. The Flutters, like William Hoall, were brewers. Peter Flutter, then mayor of Guildford, laid the foundation stone for the present church in



1749, and in 1769 he gave a new tenor bell as part of the fresh ring of eight bells.

**11. John and Ann Russell lie here. Their son, John, became a famous artist but a story tells how, when he was only about 10 years old, he climbed the church tower while it was still being built – when he came down he found his father waiting at the bottom to punish him!**



*The gravestone on the left belongs to John and Ann*

John Russell, the father, was mayor of Guildford four times. He died at the age of 92 in 1806. John Russell, the son, was educated at the Grammar School in Guildford and became famous as a portraitist, working in oil and pastels. His work can be found in many galleries but the largest collection is held here in Guildford, in the Guildford House Art Gallery.



