



ARTHUR MELVILLE  
R.W.S A.R.S.A

*Set in splendid isolation  
on the edge of the heath*





A Cabbage Patch

### *Finding the headstone and locating the grave*

In the summer of 2019 having just been elected to the Committee of the Brookwood Cemetery Society as Treasurer I had very recently bought a copy of 'London's Necropolis' A guide to Brookwood Cemetery, by John M. Clarke. I was very eager to learn as much as I could and importantly, living locally find my way around the huge cemetery area. Many aspects caught my attention reading John's words, but one phrase stood out and remained in my mind. On Page 194 7.7 Arthur Melville (1855 - 1904) [on the heath] 'Set in splendid isolation on the edge of the heath is the grave of this Scottish artist.' Why it stood out I do not know but what happened in the next couple of weeks was remarkable.

Having started to learn my bearings I was walking near the perimeter, close to Plot 57 off of St Marks Avenue on the lane to the Old Woking Clay Pigeon Shoot. Being midsummer the bracken was at its highest and I could barely see my feet. To the right of the lane close to the Marshall mausoleum I stumbled across a section of broken pink granite, there was writing facing away from me, but I saw it said "In loving Memory of Arthur Melville" with his dates and honorific's. With closer examination under the bracken, I found a second piece, the big stone illustrated in the photograph on page 195 of John's book had been smashed in two with several big chips missing.

My colleagues at the Society soon furnished me with much more information about the grave and what had happened. The section of the original Necropolis land now known as Brookwood Heath was acquired in 1979 by Woking Council and maintained as heath land. The several graves that were on this land at the time of the sale were exhumed and reinterred just off of St. Marks Avenue where I had discovered the broken stone. Why the Melville grave and its splendid stone and kerbing was not moved is not known.

It is pure conjecture on my part but the severe damage to the granite headstone is such that whether by design or accident it was hit with a mechanical digger, broken and the pieces dumped amongst the other work that was being done, the kerbing has been broken on one corner and that was left undisturbed to disappear into the heather over time.

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# *Ceremony Programme*

## PROCESSION TO THE GRAVESIDE

*Highland Cathedral  
Piper Major Iain Raymond*

## WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

*Mary Morgan, Fellowship of Professional Celebrants*

## A BRIEF BACKGROUND

### POEM

*Splendid Isolation*

Set in splendid isolation on the edge of Brookwood Heath,  
Hidden from our eyes under heather and our feet.  
This gentleman lay resting as the seasons changed the land,  
A moving scene of colours, drawn by Mother Nature's hand.

A man who travelled widely his adventures wild and bold,  
Captured with his brush strokes, his stunning art work told.  
Of trials and tribulations, travelling happily on his own,  
A friendly charismatic man had kindness from strangers shown.

Transferring from his eye to hand, from palette onto brush,  
Breath-taking colours he brought to life with the genius of his touch.  
But Arthurs' work was not well received, but his paintings would unfold,  
A Cabbage Garden to Loch Lomond, bathed in the warmth of gold.

Capturing light and colour, his impressionistic themes  
Of ordinary folk of Eastern life, of vibrant Venetian scenes.  
Carefully selected he painted from his heart,  
Eloquently speaking through the talent of his art.

We all die, of course we will but what is left contains,  
The essence of the person that forever will remain.  
And Arthur's paintings stir our souls reveal them from beneath,  
And thus, in splendid colour, he lays resting on this heath.

*© written by Mary Morgan, August 2023*

## A QUIET MOMENT TO REFLECT

*Wild Mountain Thyme  
Sarah Calderwood*

## WORDS OF DEDICATION AND COMFORT

## CLOSING WORDS

## DEPARTURE MUSIC

*Castle Dangerous*



Barges on the Seine

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I then asked the Society Committee if we could consider the restoration of the stone and grave within our ever-expanding restoration projects. Happily, they agreed. Brookwood Heath is a Site of Special Scientific Interest so to carry out the work we needed to do required permissions. The first permission we received was to generally 'tidy' the grave, Marcus Turley of the Surrey Heathland Project visited the site with us and gave us sound advice as to how we could proceed, he also agreed to seek the permissions. This took 12 months and on 31st October 2020, five of us set to work clearing the area of brambles etc. and set up a sign pointing out to the various heath users that this was a grave, whose it was and to please respect it. Noah would have been proud of this day, the heavens opened on us and remained as such all day, we were all utterly drenched.

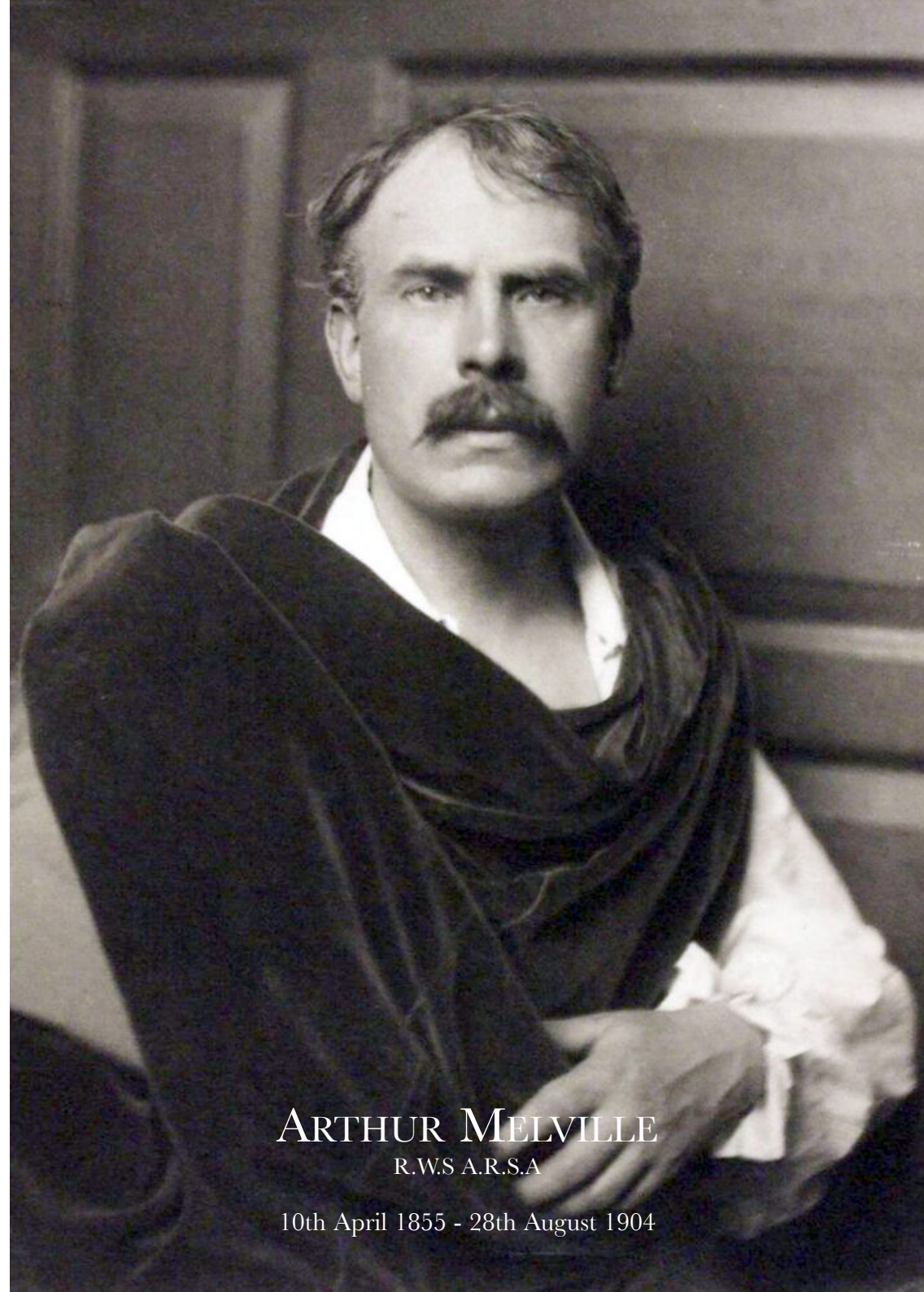
During the year of waiting for permissions I contacted as many people as I could who would be interested in the proposed restoration. It was through these researches I contacted Professor Kenneth McConkey and Charlotte Topsfield at the National Galleries of Scotland, they both gave me invaluable information.

Particularly they were able to put me in touch with Arthurs' extended family, with whom I have had fascinating correspondence, leading to today.

The Society is only able to do restoration work when the donated funds allow it, and we received sufficient money to contact Haven Memorials to survey and quote for the restoration. I never believed the sections of the stone could be joined as the damage was dreadful, however Owen and his colleagues have done a magnificent job in joining the stone and restructuring the kerbing on a new landing.

To get to the site with the heavy stones and equipment in the SSSI we were greatly helped by the Old Woking Clay Pigeon shoot who allowed the lorry on to their site so the mechanical arm could place the heavy stone objects in position without disturbing the heath. Thus, Arthur Melville's ashes now not only remain in splendid isolation on the heath, but the stone set up by his wife Ethel on 10th July 1908 to commemorate his wonderful life is restored for us all to see.

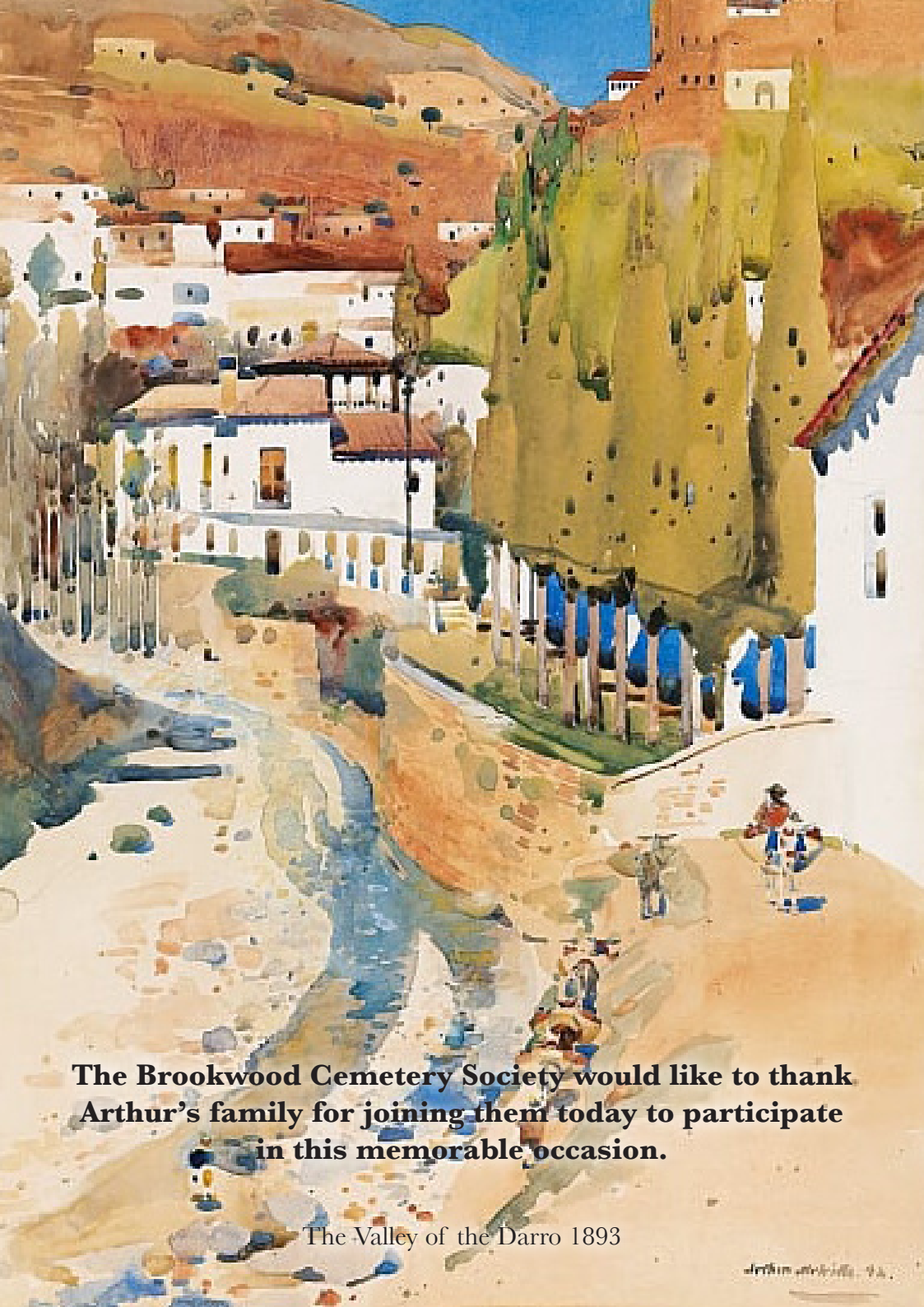
*By Jon Leech, August 2023*



ARTHUR MELVILLE  
R.W.S.A.R.S.A

10th April 1855 - 28th August 1904





**The Brookwood Cemetery Society would like to thank Arthur's family for joining them today to participate in this memorable occasion.**

The Valley of the Darro 1893

Arthur's family, VA.