

Martha's funeral, on 5th February 1828, was the scene of another tragedy. One of the mourners had entrusted his pony to a boy to hold but the boy decided to ride it. The horse bolted towards to edge of the quarry and, whilst the boy managed to dismount in time, the animal fell and was fatally injured. Next door lies their son, Joseph, whose stone has been crudely mended with lead plugs to keep it together.

We're almost at journey's end! Go two rows to the west to find a Joseph with another symbol of death, skulls, decorating his headstone. **Enter his occupation into row 1 of the grid.** Finally, walk towards the gate out of the west side of churchyard and stop at the last slate headstone you encounter. Margaret Clifford Margaret was the mistress of the infamous and murderous 4th Earl Ferrers. Whilst he had no children with his wife, he had four daughters with Margaret: Margaret, Anna Maria, Elizabeth and Mary Clifford. Her carefully worded tombstone has no reference to past events which would have been considered scandalous at the time.



To unlock the secret code, take the date of Margaret's death and her age and write them as numerals down the side of the grid, e.g. if she died on 1st April 1819 at the age of 22, write 14181922. Take the corresponding letter from each row (e.g. 1st letter from the 1st row, 4th from the 2nd, 1st from the 3rd etc.) to reveal the hidden word relating to our church.

Row 1							
Row 2							
Row 3							
Row 4							
Row 5							
Row 6							
Row 7							
Row 8							

1	P	2	A	3	S	4	S	5	C	6	O	7	D	8	E
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Congratulations! We hope you have enjoyed this trail. If you want to check your answer, please look in the back of our visitor book in the porch (which you are of course welcome to sign!)

Breedon Priory Graveyard Trail

The trail begins at the churchyard gate shown in the picture. You will need something to write with so that you can complete the grid. Follow the trail to learn more about the fascinating lives of past parishioners. Along the way, collect the hidden words and solve the riddle to discover the *hidden passcode*.



Walk up the path until you find the son of Thomas and Ann Mason. Like many of the graves, the name of the engraver is on the bottom of the stone. Quarried slate would be usually transported to local engravers who would then carve it to the bereaved's specifications. Slate was often used in graveyards as it was durable, split easily into stones and was relatively easy to carve. There are two main sources for the slate in the graveyard: markers with rough, uneven backs are from the nearby Charnwood Forest, those with smooth backs are from Wales, whose quarries eventually undercut the local slate on price as well as quality.

Continue on the path until you find four daughters (Sarah, Elizabeth, Hannah & Jane) forming the start of a row on your right. Leave the path here and go six stones to the south, passing a Shakesrear amongst the Shakespears (engravers were not above the occasional mistake!). Stop when you encounter the gravestone of Thomas Allt and his wife, Sarah. **Insert the name of Thomas & Sarah's 1st son into row 8 of the answer grid.** As his epitaph suggests, Thomas engraved many of the stones in the graveyard and restored and painted the Shirley tomb inside the church. Thomas' undoubted skill can be seen on the next two stones, one for his parents, and the other for his younger brother, George. He was also a bit of a rogue – in 1847 he stole 112lb of lead from the church roof, for which he was sentenced to 12 months hard labour and in 1854 he stole a hen, receiving a sentence of 4 years imprisonment with hard labour.

Continue along the row until you encounter an Elizabeth who died aged 56. By 1851, she was the innkeeper of the Royal Oak Inn at Osgathorpe. **Insert her husband's full name (without spaces) into row 7 of the answer grid.**

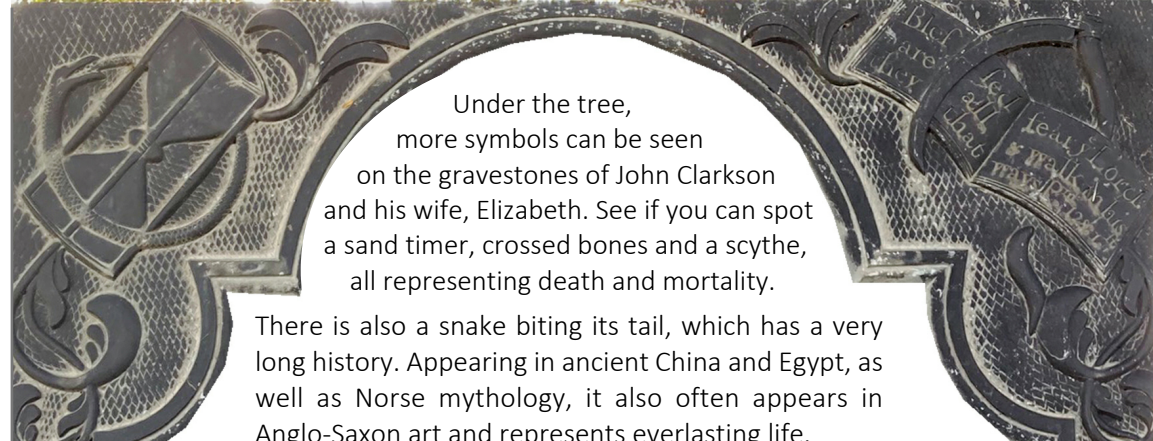


From here, go two rows west to find the memorials decorated with ivy. The flora decorating gravestones was often carefully chosen for its meaning, ivy for example is an evergreen and so can symbolise immortality and eternal memory. Now go north until you find individuals whose surname suggests an “*agricultural*” background then go one row west to a cluster of three graves.

The inscription of the southernmost, to Mary Berridge, tells us she, like Thomas Allt's mother Fanny, unfortunately died of breast cancer. In the 18th century, the physical manifestation of cancer could be seen although the cause was not understood, with doctors thinking it was due to an accident, tight clothing, or even an excess of melancholy. The sufferers of the disease would also have had few options available to them, as surgery was high risk, undertaken without anaesthetic and rarely successful.

Two gravestones to the north lies John Johnson, **insert his office into row 4 of the grid.** His grave gives few clues to the violence of his end, or its cause. In 1760, his employer, the 4th Earl Ferrers, Laurence Shirley, shot and killed John due to a financial disagreement. Already known for his violent temper, the Earl was arrested, tried before the House of Lords and hanged (popular myth states the rope was made of silk, but contemporary accounts say this wasn't the case). He became the last peer to be executed and his death is said to have averted a popular revolt like the contemporary French Revolution, as the law could be seen to apply to all with not even an Earl being exempt.

From here, head southwest to the large yew tree. Like ivy, the evergreen yew is associated with everlasting life, but it was also sacred to several pre-Christian religions. It was also the tree of choice to make longbows and there is a tradition that, as their berries are poisonous to animals, they were planted in churchyards to supply this demand. However, given the number of yews needed, this is improbable, particularly as the yews survived to the present day!



Under the tree, more symbols can be seen on the gravestones of John Clarkson and his wife, Elizabeth. See if you can spot a sand timer, crossed bones and a scythe, all representing death and mortality.

There is also a snake biting its tail, which has a very long history. Appearing in ancient China and Egypt, as well as Norse mythology, it also often appears in Anglo-Saxon art and represents everlasting life.

Who was John Clarkson very kind to? Enter the answer into row 5 of the grid.

Now go west to the white cross. This commemorates Lance Corporal Claude George Taylor, one of two World War I casualties remembered (the war grave of the second casualty, Bert Bonser, is to the north of the church). The son of the Breedon schoolmaster, Claude was killed during the Battle of Delville Wood, his body was never recovered and he is commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial. His sister, mother and father are buried here, **enter the first names (without spaces) of his sister – who died aged only 3 - into row 2 of the grid.**

Walk along the path to the church looking for an “*artist*” who died March 29 1883. Immediately behind his stone are the graves of Elizabeth and Francis Commins. As his gravestone relates, Francis was born in Breedon but travelled to London, where he made his fortune, rising to become a Master Mason and living in St George's Hanover Square, a parish containing some of the most fashionable areas of London. Elizabeth Commins' will suggests that the church wardens were to thank for this by apprenticing Francis after his father died in 1690, as both she and her husband left a substantial sum for a schoolmaster at Breedon on the understanding that one boy every four years was to be apprenticed to a trade. Whilst girls could also attend the school, they were ‘to have only two years education in reading, working (maths) and writing’! **Find the tomb's engraver and enter into row 3 of the grid.**

Continue west to Mary and Benjamin Hart. Benjamin carved the stone immediately to the north, which commemorates his father, also called Benjamin, who met a tragic accident on 25th August 1838. Along with three other men, he was trying to free burning lime that had become stuck in the kilns once situated at the bottom of the hill. Unable to free it from the top, they attempted to do so from below, only for it to fall on them setting them alight. Whilst the others survived, Benjamin suffered for 8 days before succumbing to his injuries. Move north along this row to the grave of John and Martha Shakespeare. **Put the month John died in row 6 of the grid.**