



Did He Jump from the Steeple?

For many years the story has persisted in Derry Hill and Studley that a man had jumped (or fell) from Christ Church spire - and on his headstone is a small window behind which is said to have been a slice of his heart or brain.

Well, the headstone is that of William Lansdale (Lansdall in the census records) who was born in Marylebone, London, Middlesex. William worked as a copy holder (a good job - proof reading publications in the Georgian era).

He died aged 80 on the 22nd April 1868, had a pension, was a widower and was living in Norley Lane, Studley. He had a son and a daughter (who married into a branch of the Angell family). He had at least two grandsons.

His headstone is an expensive one for a well thought of man. The circle of glass represents a large early Victorian magnifying glass, the tool of his trade as a copy holder.

Mystery solved!

OPC Note

At the time of writing this article it is not known how the legend of the jump or fall from the spire started.



← Headstone of William Lansdale in the churchyard of Christ Church, Derry Hill

Close up of the cracked glass panel representing the tools of the deceased's trade. →

