

A BRIEF HISTORY OF BURNLEY CEMETERY

The cemetery, designed by Manchester architect Thomas Worthington opened on the 1st June 1856. Of the original 18 acres the Nonconformists were given 4, the Anglicans 6, the Catholics 2 acres and the other six were kept in reserve. Three identical chapels allowed all denominations to hold burial services according to their beliefs.

The original 18 acres was inadequate for a growing town like Burnley. More land was acquired and the cemetery eventually stretched as far as Rossendale Road. Within the cemetery are the graves of many well-known Burnley people and memorials to some who died in tragic circumstances.

The new chapel and the Rossendale Road entrance opened in 1923. The War Memorial with its Cross of Sacrifice was unveiled on October 9th 1926.

1. ARCHWAY AND LODGE: The original entrance when the cemetery opened in 1856. The archway was moved from its place adjoining the lodge in 1923 when the new road on the left was installed. They are the only original buildings which remain. For many years the cemetery registrar lived in the lodge but it is now privately owned.

2. HEALEY MEMORIAL: One of several memorials in the cemetery to be erected by public subscription. It commemorates the life of Thomas Healey, a well-known Burnley Musician, who died in 1858.

3. CREMATORIUM ENTRANCE: Until the crematorium was opened in 1956 Burnley people had to travel to Rochdale or Blackpool if they wished to be cremated. Without the crematorium Burnley Cemetery would be much larger than it is today.

4. NONCONFORMIST PLOT: The nonconformists were given 4 acres of land which allowed them to be buried according to their own wishes. In this part of the cemetery are many men who made important contributions to the town. J. H. Scott who gave the money for Scott Park, William Thompson who gave the Thompson Centre and William and Angelo Waddington the architects who designed the Grammar School and Nat. West Bank, the Massey family, brewers and benefactors to name but a few.

5. SITE OF NONCONFORMIST CHAPEL: This chapel was demolished in 1924 and the ground was immediately used for burials.

6. EXAMPLES OF CARVINGS: There are many good examples of carved headstones in the cemetery but John Pollard, bell ringer at St. Peter's Church for 65 years is an interesting example.

7. SITE OF ANGLICAN CHAPEL: Demolished in 1970. In the surrounding area stand many fine examples of Victorian memorials and headstones which also commemorate men such as, mill owner George Slater.

8. SITE OF ROMAN CATHOLIC CHAPEL: The site of the Catholic chapel is now used as a Garden of Remembrance for babies lost during pregnancy or soon after birth.

9. MEMORIALS TO PRIESTS AND SISTERS OF MERCY

In this part of the cemetery there is a memorial to the Priests who served the Catholic community in Burnley and graves of the Sisters of Mercy from the Convent on Todmorden Road.

10. SOLDIER STATUE: Many men who died in battle during the First World War and were buried where they fell are remembered on family graves in the cemetery. This statue is in memory of Private James Booth who died in France in 1917.

11. DAN IRVING: Burnley's first labour Member of Parliament. His grave gives much information about him.

We are now in the newer part of the cemetery and the paths are straight and angular, unlike the original serpentine paths. Also noticeable is the difference between the older headstones and the more orderly modern ones, many made of highly polished black granite.

12. SPANISH DISASTER MEMORIAL

In July 1970 holiday makers from East Lancashire were killed in an air crash near Barcelona at the start of the Burnley Holidays. The memorial commemorates people from Burnley and Padiham who died that day.

13. NEW CHAPEL

This chapel was first planned in 1913 but the First World War intervened and the chapel was finally built and opened in 1923 at the same time as a new entrance on Rossendale Road.

14. HAPTON VALLEY MEMORIAL

Memorial to the men who were killed in the Hapton Valley mining disaster in March 1962 when 19 men were killed.

15. WAR MEMORIAL

The War Memorial was unveiled in October 1926. The Cross of Sacrifice was erected by the then Imperial War Graves Commission and the screen lists the names of men who died as a result of the war and are buried in the cemetery.

oooooooo

The Friends were formed in 2013 to help promote the historic, social, architectural and ecological aspects of the cemeteries in the Burnley District. We hold meetings every couple of months and amongst other events organise guided walks. We aim to publish other walks leaflets and hope that you enjoy this walk which gives a brief introduction to the history of the cemetery.

We welcome new members. Find more about us on www.fbc.btck.co.uk.



FRIENDS OF BURNLEY CEMETERIES



A HISTORY WALK IN BURNLEY CEMETERY

