

**LYNCOMBE & WIDCOMBE
AND ST JAMES'S
CEMETERY, BATH**

2024

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Contents

Introduction	1
History	1
Opening	2
The Registers	4
Deceased Online	4
The Register Index	4
The Burial Registers	1
Layout	2
Chapels	2
Lodge	3
Paths	3
Maintenance	3
Occupants	3
Previous Survey	4
Current Survey	4
War Damage	4
Limitations	5

Introduction

This document gives a background to Bath's cemetery for the parishes of Lyncombe, Widcombe and St James. Associated with it is a series of documents which have transcriptions of the memorials.

History

The cemetery is Lyncombe & Widcombe's fourth burial ground. The first two are by and near St Thomas à Becket church and the third is next to St Mark's Church, although it antedates the church.

St James, Lower Borough Walls had a burial ground about 50m west of the church on the southern side of Lower Borough Walls. This small area is now a park and there are no surviving memorials there. St James also had a burial ground for its poor on Lyncombe Hill near its workhouse but this closed about 1850. In the 1850s St James had its poor buried in Lyncombe & Widcombe's third cemetery, this accounting for about 30% of burials there during the later 1850s. In addition, there was a burial ground in Old Orchard. The 'Old Orchard' burial ground was on Lyncombe Hill (*Bath Chronicle* Thu 29 Jan 1857 p8) and may be a reference to the burial ground for the Abbey & St James Poor House. By November 1857, it was admitted at the St James vestry meeting that the parish 'had no burial ground at all' and that 'parishioners were interred wherever they could afford to pay; generally at St Mark's' (*Bath Chronicle* Thu 26 Nov 1857 p3). '*The Old Orchard proper was a burial ground for the parishes of St. James and St. Peter and St. Paul, the two being rectorially and territorially united. For half a century it was the burying place for both parishes until was finally closed in 1848, when they again joined the Abbey parish in purchasing the extra strip of ground, which they used until it was closed in August, 1857.*' (*Bath Chronicle* Thu 3 Mar 1859).

A series of burial acts from 1852 to 1859 attempted to regulate the chaotic state of the management of burial grounds. In Bath it had been established that many of the church-based graveyards were either full or would become so within a few years (*Bath Chronicle* 3 Jun 1858 p3). The legislation empowered the parish-based vestries to appoint burial boards with powers to provide new burial grounds. The Home Secretary was given powers to close old burial grounds, to sanction and regulate new ones, and he could also license burials in closed grounds. There were also rules on the graveyard layout with the specification of the minimum separation and depth. In 1855 three inspectors of burial grounds were appointed under the Act of that year. Section 1 of the Burial Act 1853 provided for the Secretary of State to make representations to the Privy Council for an Order in Council¹ to discontinue burials in any burial ground, with or without exceptions. Section 8 of the Burial Act

1855 provided for the inspection of any burial ground by a person appointed for that purpose by the Secretary of State.

In November 1857 an inspector was sent to Bath to inquire about compliance with the legislation. Complaints had been made that the Order in Council of July 1855 with respect to burials had not been observed. Those responsible were summoned to the Guildhall to state whether or not they were compliant (*Bath Chronicle* 26-Nov-1857 p3). Most stated that they were 'as far as possible'. The result was that a number of graveyards were ordered to close and others to close when full. Other matters that were raised with the Inspector included: St James's and St Michael's parishes not having a burial ground, the inability for nonconformists to be buried in a nonconformist burial ground unless they were members of a particular congregation, the practice of St James's parish to use St Mark's for its poor, Walcot parish having to pay £84 per annum ground-rent on the burial ground while income from burial fees no longer covered this sum with the deficit being paid by the trustees.

By 1859 the situation had become so bad that a public meeting in the Guildhall was convened by the Mayor who presided over it. This meeting brought to the surface a number of complaints about the administration of burials including the near monopoly of the Anglican church and the arbitrary nature of the fees, non-parishioners being charged double. Examples are:

The charge for making a brick grave at Lansdown Cemetery was five guineas, and at Bathwick three guineas, while, at Maldon, without any question being asked whether the corpse was that of a parishioner or non-parishioner, the charge for making a brick grave was one guinea, and the other charges corresponded with it."

"Mr. M. Bartlett, a working man, said he was in favour of memorializing the Town Council to form a general cemetery, as he believed it would be the means of enabling the poor to be buried cheaply, and preventing the necessity of their having to bow and scrape to such gentlemen as Mr. Thompson, at Bathwick, or anyone else."

"Mr Edey proceeded to say that a person, who had been a resident in the parish of St. Peter and Paul, recently died in an adjacent parish, and when application was made to the authorities of the Abbey Cemetery for permission to bury her there, they required the payment of extra fees, merely because she happened to die out of the parish, although she had lived in it 40 years. (Shame, shame)."

"Admiral Saumarez again attempted to proceed with his address, but the meeting manifested such

¹ Orders in Council are Orders that have been approved at a meeting of the Privy Council personally by the sovereign. Orders of Council are similar but are made by Privy Councillors and do Issue 4

not require the sovereign's approval. Such orders are published in *The London Gazette*.

impatience that he was at length obliged to sit down."

"Mr. George Cox congratulated the meeting that the "robbery" which had been carried on for the last one hundred years was now about to come to an end. (Applause.) The poor man would now be carried to the grave without being overcharged, and he sincerely hoped they would all agree to an unanimous votes on the question."

"Mr Cotterell then replied—He said, it was a great relief to him to find that they were all agreed that the poor should be buried cheaply, and that the Nonconformists should be considered as well a Churchmen. The question was, therefore, narrowed to Walcot Parish v. the Five other Parishes. Look at the position of the poor families of Lyncombe and Widcombe, and St James's. Were they to be damaged and damnified for a century to come, in reference to their burial accommodation, because certain gentlemen in Walcot chose to have a burial board of their own. (Applause.)"

There was resentment that Walcot parish intended to form a new cemetery for its parish when some people wanted a single cemetery for the city administered by the council (*Bath Chronicle* Thu 27 Jan 1859 p8). In February 1859 there was much debate about whether there should be a single general cemetery or a number of parish-based ones, whether the town council could be trusted with the management of a general cemetery, and which parish should join with which. It was argued that, if there were a single cemetery, wherever it were placed it would be inconvenient for some in the city.

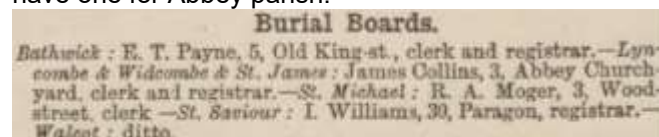
The *Bath Chronicle* of 3 Feb 1859 carried an extensive report on the public meeting in a supplement.

A St James vestry meeting initially considered joining with Lyncombe & Widcombe and St Michael's but it was recommended to wait to see what Walcot parish and the City Act Committee would do (*Bath Chronicle* Thu 6 Jan 1859 p9). The St Michael's vestry also considered this option with the two parishes only, 'since the Abbey parish was provided for' (*Bath Chronicle* Thu 27 Jan 1859). In fact the Abbey Cemetery was exclusively Anglican and made no explicit provision for nonconformists as required by the legislation.

By May 1859 Walcot Burial Board had secured approval to borrow £7,000 and invited investors to lend this (*Bath Chronicle* Thu 5 May 1859 p4). St James parish asked to join with Lyncombe and Widcombe in setting up a burial board (*Bath Chronicle* Thu 19 May 1859 p5) and agreement was reached on the split of costs (St James 39%, Lyncombe and Widcombe 61%) (*Bath Chronicle* Thu 28 Jul 1859).

Only a week after the Guildhall meeting, the vestry of St Peter and St Paul (the Abbey) considered setting up an unconsecrated burial ground as required by the Burial Acts, The Rector proposed some land 'contiguous to the Lyncombe Cemetery' which was his leasehold property and would not require money from the Poor Rate. The opinion of one of the attendees was that the parish did

not want 'to be tacked on to St James's, and Lyncombe and Widcombe (*Bath Chronicle* Thu 10 Feb 1859 p8). While the resolution to set up a Burial Board was carried, the matter was not raised in subsequent vestry meetings and there are no references to expenditure on or appointments to a burial board (from 1859 to 1877) whereas vestry meetings for other parishes, such as St James, Bathwick, and Lyncombe & Widcombe, have references to such expenditure and appointments. Only in 1878 is there a reference to the parish's 'Contribution to Burial Board £100' (without specifying which one) and thereafter no further such references. A list of burial boards (*Bath Chronicle* Thu 22 Dec 1882 p9) does not have one for Abbey parish.



The abodes given in the burial registers show that those buried were not all from the parishes of Lyncombe, Widcombe and St James.

The cemetery opened in 1861, the first burial occurring on 27 Nov 1861. It was consecrated on 6 Jan 1862 (see below). There were about 200 burials per year until its closure in 1937, being superseded by Haycombe cemetery, the numbers buried then falling rapidly. Even in the late 1920s it was recognised that the existing cemeteries were becoming full. The Council Minutes of 21 Jan 1929 (p109) has "New Cemetery. The sub-Committee discussed the question of the acquisition of land for a new cemetery and, in view of the small number of unused grave spaces now available, consider this question has become a matter of urgency."

Opening

From the *Bath Chronicle* of Thu 9 Jan 1862:

CONSECRATION OF LYNCOMBE, WIDCOMBE AND ST. JAMES'S CEMETERY

This new Cemetery was consecrated by the Lord Bishop of Bath and Wells on Monday last. It is situated on the Bristol Road, and occupies a fine plot of ground, eight acres in extent, about five acres of which was consecrated, the remaining three acres being set apart for Nonconformist burials. There is an entrance lodge at the gates, and the two chapels in the centre of the ground present a beautiful appearance. These chapels are precisely similar externally, and are connected by a cloister, forming a distinct *porte cochere* to each entrance, between which is an arch supporting the bell-turret common to each building. Half only of the foundations of this turret rests on consecrated ground. The belfry forms a very effective centre, as it is surmounted by an elegant tapering spire, rising to something like 100 feet, crowned at its apex by a metal cross, the beautiful emblem of Christianity. Each chapel is built in the form of a cross, representing that however different the sects to be assembled therein there is presumed to be the same hope. The unconsecrated chapel is fitted up with a tribune at the

extreme end for the minister, with handsome fittings on either side, with a robing-room in one transept, and special seats for the chief mourners in the other, both spots being railed off from the chapel by beautiful carved screens. The consecrated chapel, of the same plan, is divided into a chancel and nave by a marble step; the east end, or apse, is paved with encaustic tiles, the liberal gift, together with the cross on the spire, of Mr. John Rainey. At the extreme end is a simple communion table, and on the north and south sides are lecterns for the officiating clergymen. The remainder of the building is arranged as the other chapel. The style of the edifice is that which prevailed during the reign of Edward III.

Mr. C. E. Davis is the architect, and Mr. D. Aust, the builder. The handsome structure certainly reflects great credit upon the artistic tastes of the former, and the workmanship of the latter. The carving of the stone work has been skilfully executed by Mr. G. Porter, of this city. The ground has been laid out by Mr. Butler, of Widcombe, nurseryman.

Lord Auckland arrived at the Cemetery at two o'clock, and a petition was at once presented to him, praying that he would consecrate a portion of the Burial Ground. On his Lordship signifying his consent, a procession, formed in the following order:—

Children of the Parochial Schools of Lyncombe & Widcombe and St, James.

Architect and Clerk.

The contractors.

Members of the Burial Board.

Churchwardens of the Three Parishes.

Clergy in Gowns.

The Lord Bishop and Officers—

proceeded from the gates to the chapel. The clergy present were the Revds. G. E. Tate, J. Wood, J. M. Dixon, H. T. Cavell, J. W. Sproule, F. Pocock, E. C. Osborne, J. Colwill, A. Medland, J. Buttanshaw, and — Phelps. In the chapel, the ordinary form of service was read, and the Bishop and Clergy, followed by the other persons present, afterwards repaired to the ground to be consecrated, and walked round the same, repeating alternately the 49th Psalm. On returning to the chapel, the Bishop stood underneath the bell-turret, and the Registrar (Mr. Davies) then read the sentence of consecration, which was, thereupon, signed by his Lordship. The Bishop next repeated the following appropriate prayer:—

“O God, who has taught us in Thy holy word that there is a difference between the spirit of a beast that goeth downwards to the earth, and the spirit of man which ascendeth up to God who gave it; and likewise by the example of Thy holy servants, in all ages, has taught us to assign peculiar places where the bodies of Thy servants may rest in peace, and be preserved from all indignities, whilst their souls are safely kept in the hands of their faithful Redeemer; Accept we beseech Thee, this charitable work of ours in separating this portion of land to that good purpose; and give us grace, that by the frequent instances of mortality which we behold, we may learn, and seriously consider, how frail and uncertain our condition here on earth is, and so number our days, as to apply our hearts unto wisdom. That in the midst of life thinking upon death, and daily preparing ourselves for the judgment which is to follow, we may have our part in the resurrection to eternal life with Him who died for our sins, and rose again for our justification, and now

liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end.”

Four verses of the 39th Psalm were sung, and the proceedings terminated with the Bishop's benediction.

Before leaving the ground, the Bishop expressed his approval of the eligibility of the site selected for the Cemetery.

The Registers

Bath & North East Somerset Council's Bereavement Services Department inherited the burial registers of the ward-based Burial Boards including those of Lyncombe & Widcombe and St James's Cemetery.

A request by Bath & North East Somerset Council's Bath Record Office to have summary information on those buried in cemeteries administered by the council was refused. On asking for a justification of this decision, the Bereavement Services' manager stated that records could be made available under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act but:

- it would be limited to some, not all, cemeteries under the Council's management,
- would not include ages, as this would require looking them up in the register and would take more than the maximum of 18 hours set by the Act for provision of information
- it would not be possible for volunteers to visit the office to photograph the volumes; instead it would be necessary to pay for the pages to be scanned.

The scanned images provided have been transcribed. These images were for the index and not the actual burial registers. The transcription took in excess of 1,000 hours. The missing ages have been added where this is possible. This is only possible where there is an unequivocal match. Where there are two people of the same name who died in the same quarter of a year it is not possible to determine the age. As the cemetery was for the two parishes and charges for non-parishioners were significantly higher than for parishioners, the majority of those buried have burial registrations in the Bath registration district. The records have been merged with a list of names that appear on the memorials collected by other volunteers. This reconciliation has highlighted that some entries in list of names on the memorials have been misinterpreted. For example, some married daughters appear with the maiden name possibly because of being referred to as 'daughter of' without giving a surname.

The presence of a name on a memorial does not necessarily mean that the individual was buried in the cemetery. In some cases, this is obvious where the inscription states that someone was buried elsewhere. The absence of a burial register number indicates that the person was not buried in the cemetery, even though the date of death may appear on the inscription, and the records have been adjusted accordingly.

Deceased Online

In 2016 it was announced that B&NES Bereavement Services had provided the burial information for a series of cemeteries to Deceased Online Ltd who were making these available at a pay-per-view website. This includes scanned images of the register. The initial launch was for four cemeteries including *St James*

Cemetery (formerly Lyncombe, Widcombe and St James), 24,400 records, 1861 to 2011. A further four cemeteries were to follow but by late 2022 these had not been added.

In the light of the provision of burial registers to a third-party, a Freedom of Information request asked whether or not the contract precluded the provision of the same information to other organisations and, if so, for how long. The response was that there was no contract.

The Register Index

As noted above, the burial records are held in a series of burial register volumes held by Bath & NE Somerset Bereavement Services. There are over 24,000 entries for the cemetery. These registers were not accessible to the public and access to the index was only granted under provisions of the Freedom of Information Act. Scanned images of the index were provided by the council on payment of a fee for scanning. It was not possible to photograph the index. The index volumes have the name, date of burial and burial location. It does not have the ages. To determine the age the corresponding death registration has been used; where an unequivocal match can be made the age has been added.

The checking against the death registration has the benefit of reducing transcription errors. Such errors can occur when transcribing from the scanned images but it has been found that in some index entries the original is in error. Nonetheless in some cases a corresponding death registration has not been found.

The original index was completed by a series of people from its opening in 1861. The handwriting is very variable. In particular in the late 19th century records it can be difficult to distinguish between 'I' and 'J'. In practice, the survey of the cemetery has established that I and J are used interchangeably with only a single section between H and K.

Between 1894 and 1904 the register was maintained by George Cox. His characteristic handwriting appears in the 1891 census where his name is given as an enumerator.

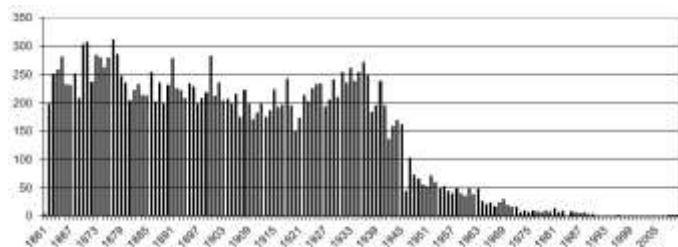


Examples of idiosyncratic letters in 1890s' records

LYN—WID. & ST. JAMES CEMETERY
INDEX TO BURIAL REGISTER

NAME	DATE OF BURIAL	NUMBER OF ENTRY IN BURIAL REGISTER	LETTER AND NUMBER OF GRAVE SPACE	
			LOCAL	ORIGINAL
Brown, Ellen Caroline	1st Dec 1852	23849		PD 51
Beaton, Lydia	1st Dec -	23852		LD 36
Bushman, James	26/12/52	23859	TE 10	abode
Burgor, Frederick James	21/1/53	23868	VE 14	
Burwell, Charlotte Mary	20/2/53	23875	ED 47	
Burton, Alice Mary	21/2/53	23880	MB 28	
Beer, Rowland Johnson	18th April 1853	23888	EB 41	(66)
Bright, William James	20th April -	23893	LA 19	
Bless, Charles Stephen Paul	2nd October -	23917	LD 2	
Brown, Millie Ann Leah	18th Nov -	23920	GF 17	
Burge, Daisy Helen	1st January 1853	23920	MB 31	
Burge, Edith Annie	1st April -	23922	YF 3	
Burrows, Ellen Elizabeth	31st Aug -	23947	2K 26	abode
Burton, Eric Ellen	2nd June -	23948		H. B. 80
Burton, Mabel Blanche	2nd July -	23957	KA 17	
Baker, Esther Jane	26th August -	23963	2J 45	
Bush, Kate Constance	1st October -	23968	NS 22	
Burke, Emily	2nd January 1853	23982	DA 24	
Burton, David	1st April -	24002		O. G. 51
Burton, Jerry	27th May -	24009		O. S. 50
Bull, Emma Elizabeth	30th June -	24011	TE 40	
Bignell, George Richard	1st August -	24018		H. F. 49
Burke, Cecelia Mary	1st September -	24019		PB 53
Burly, Ada	1st September -	24021		YD 61
Burly, Percy Arthur	25th October -	24027		QF 10
Burton, Daisy Isabel Kate	1st November -	24029		PM 52
Burton, Frederick Edward	1st November -	24032		RG 28
Booth, Mary Elizabeth	1st November -	24034		AD 42
Burgess, Robert Nathaniel	1st December -	24036		GA 20

Example of a page in the index to the burial register.



Numbers of burials by year

From its opening in 1861 until its closure the average number of burials per year was about 200. The cemetery was formally closed in 1937, Haycombe taking on the role as the sole municipal cemetery for Bath. Burials still took place after 1937 for those with an existing family grave. Nonetheless a burial occurred in June 2013.

The Burial Registers

Almost 10 years after access to the burial registers had been denied, they became available when they were transferred from B&NES Bereavement Services to B&NES Record Office. This included the scanned images of the registers. There are two sets. The first set has: entry number, name, place of abode, rank or profession, sex, age, place of death, plot, and signature of officiating minister. The 'rank or profession' has occupation and, for children, the father's name and occupation. For women it can be an

occupation or more frequently spinster, widow or the name and occupation of her husband.

Year range	Entry range
1861-1868	1-1981
1868-1874	1982-4091
1874-1880	4092-6321
1880-1890	6322-9039
1890-1900	9040-11985
1900-1911	11986-14775
1914-1926	15525-18383
1926-1937	18384-21273
1937-1960	21274-24267
1961-1990	24268-24755

There is a gap for the period 1911-1914 for which it is necessary to use the name index for the plot numbers and the second set of registers for the abode.

The first four volumes of the second set of registers has name, abode, date of burial, age and minister but does not have date of death, the plot or the 'rank or profession'. The remaining two volumes are copies of the full registers.

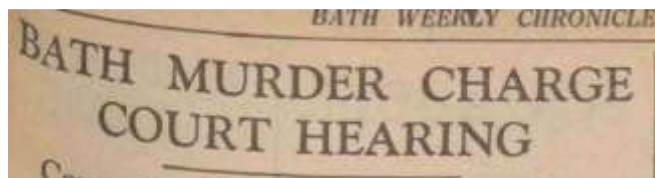
Year range	Entry range
1874-1882	4104-6790
1882-1897	6791-11051
1897-1917	11052-16227
1917-1929	16228-19121
1929-1940	19122-22127
1940-2011	22128-24815

The level of detail and style depend on the clerk and this changes over time. Initially, abodes were given with the parish and, as the parishes were subdivided, the parish and the district. (St James had a St Paul's district and later a Trinity district and Lyncombe had a St Luke's district.) From about 1900 the abodes are shortened and omit 'Bath' and from 1914 mostly omit the parish and the city, if it is Bath. Some names given in the name index as first forename and then initials are mostly given in full in the first sets of registers. The rendering of 'road', 'buildings' and 'Royal United Hospital' also depend on the clerk and are sometimes in full and at other times in a shortened form. The use of apostrophes also depends on the clerk. They are mostly absent in the early decades and then used in an inconsistent way.

The set of records from the index have been enhanced by adding the missing information from the registers. This has also given the opportunity to add the missing forenames and check the plots and ages.

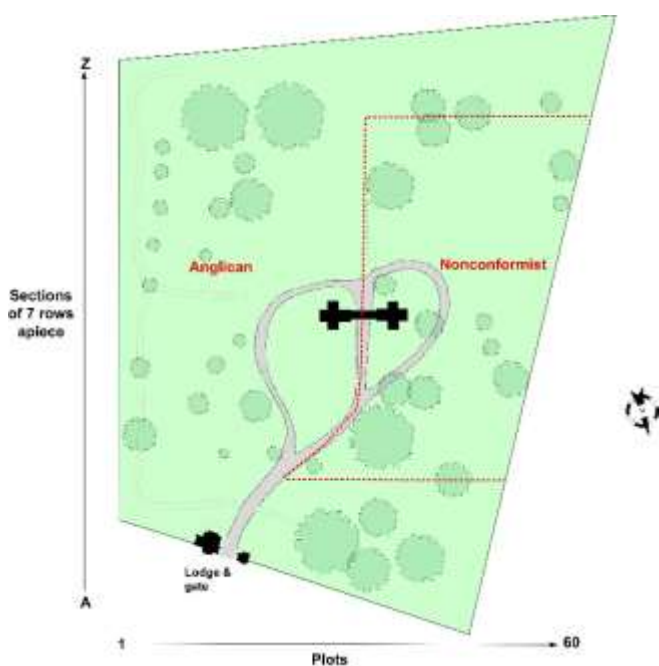
In the enhancement of the index records with the additional information from the registers, the *Bath Chronicle* has been searched for relevant references. This has yielded information about inquests and the burial records amended to give pointers to the press

reports. There are various tragic reports of accidents and suicides. There were also a couple of cases of murder: Gould 1933 in which a husband killed his wife ('Husband's suicide after shooting his wife dead'.) and Pullen in 1933 in which someone was charged with murdering his father-in-law. In the latter case the inquest took eight sessions before, based on circumstantial evidence, the son-in-law (Hinks) was charged with murder, the trial took place at the Old Bailey where he was found guilty and he was hanged at Horfield.



There are many burials where the place of death is given as 'Frome Road House'. This was the new name given to the Bath Union Workhouse in 1914 (see description of its cemetery).

Layout



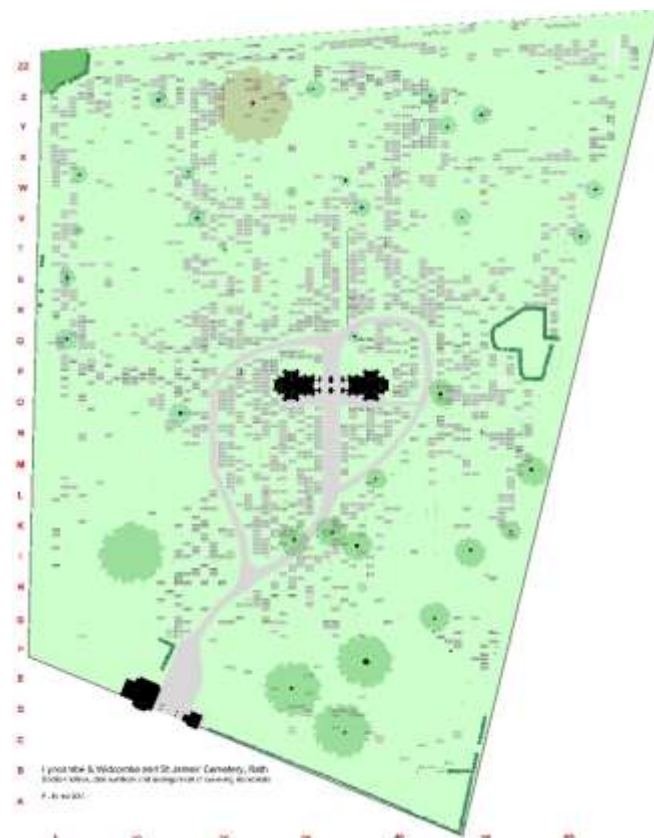
Sections, rows and plots

The area of the cemetery is a rhomboid with, near its centre, Anglican and non-conformist chapels joined by a cloister. Its area is about 3.2 ha (7.8 acres). The ground is almost flat, rising only by only about 10 metres going from north (the entrance) to south (the railway line).

The cemetery is divided into sections labelled A to Z with A starting by the gate and Z by the railway line to the south. Each 'section' comprises 7 rows labelled A to G. The numbering of the plots within each row starts at 1 on the eastern side of cemetery. The rows are at right-angles to the eastern wall, as is the orientation of long axis of the chapels.

The cemetery is divided into consecrated and unconsecrated parts. In general terms, the plots 1 to about 30 in each row are consecrated and 30 to about 60 unconsecrated. There are exceptions to this general scheme. All plots in sections A to D and T to Z are considered to be consecrated.

For section Z many of the entries are qualified by 'above' or 'below'. This arises because the sequence ZA-ZG was used twice, presumably due to an expansion of the cemetery southwards. For the Bath Burial Index, these two 'Z' sections are designated as 'Z' and 'ZZ' with the latter being by the southern boundary.



Arrangement of surviving memorials

Chapels

There are two chapels, one Anglican, the other nonconformist. They are identical in layout and are joined by a roof with two arches. Originally, at the centre, was a large spire. This is reported to have been taken down because of concerns about its stability and now rests in one of the chapels.



Chapels

Lodge

On the eastern side of the entrance gate is the lodge for the cemetery's superintendent. This two-story building has a door by the gate. This is believed to have been unoccupied for some time and it was sold in 2013.

In the 1881 census at the Cemetery Lodge: Joseph Flagg, aged 45, superintendent of cemetery, wife Elizabeth A, aged 43, and nine children.



Lodge

Paths

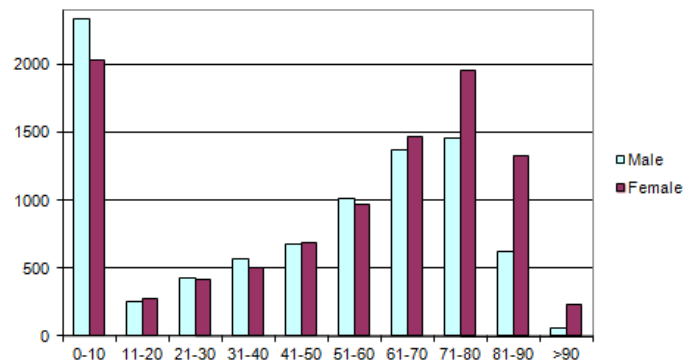
It is possible to drive into and around the roadway that leads to and around the two chapels. There are some paths that lead off this. Some of these are evident from the maps of the sections. These paths, which once would have been gravel, are generally now covered by turf.

Maintenance

The maintenance of the graveyard is carried out by Bath & North East Somerset Council's Bereavement Services department. This involves strimming at about monthly intervals during the summer. During 2013 the

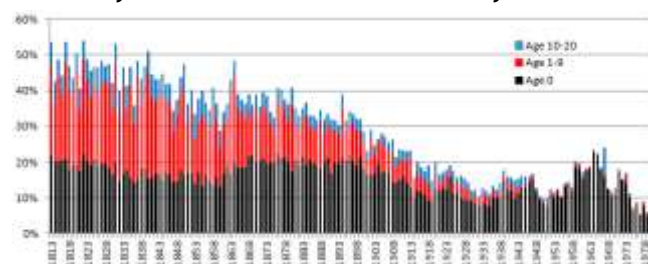
Council employed some of those sentenced to carry out community work as part of a 'community payback' scheme to clear undergrowth and remove saplings, particularly in the southernmost area by the railway.

Occupants



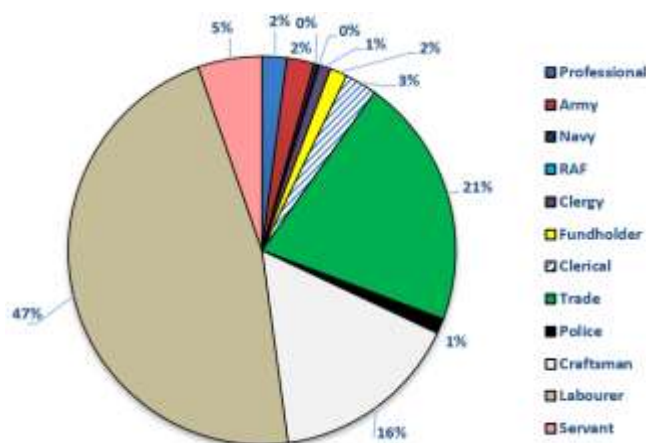
Age profile of those buried

The age profile of those buried show that about 25% were aged under 11 and 29% aged over 70. This is different from Widcombe parish's earlier cemetery at St Mark's where over 40% were aged under 11. Using the agglomeration of about 200,000 burial records for most of Bath cemeteries, the figure for this cemetery is broadly in line with the rest of the city.



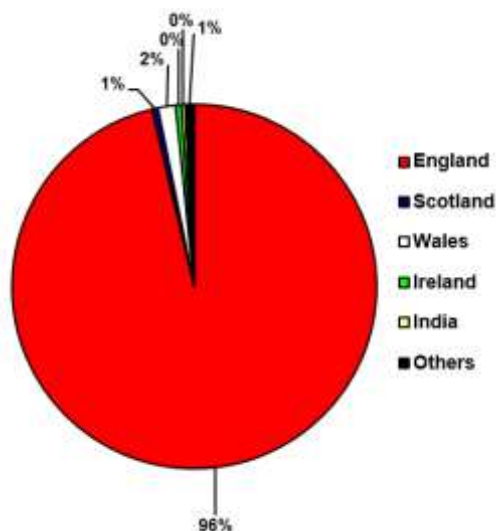
Percentage by age band for most of Bath's cemeteries.

Occupations for over 5,000 of buried have been determined, either from the burial register or census information. The profile is in contrast to expensive cemeteries such as Lansdown, St Mary's Churchyard and Abbey where there is, as one might expect, a much higher percentage of: professional, Army, Navy, clergy and fundholders.



Occupations

The country of birth has been determined for about 20% of those buried and is about 96% England with 1.6% Wales, 0.5% Ireland, 0.3% India and 0.5% Scotland.



Country of birth

It is evident from the location index and the small number of memorials, the cemetery contains many common graves. Even some family graves have been placed on what were common graves.

Albert Miles (1862-1884), known as Young Rough Jack, was stabbed at the Malt & Hops Inn. His attacker was hanged at Taunton.

There are a few cases of bargemen being drowned and others who fell into the river or canal.

Checks against *Bath Chronicle* have revealed various inquests, some distressing case of suicides and children drowning in the river or canal.

A large number of people died at the Workhouse which was renamed 'Frome Road House' in 1914 (see *Bath Chronicle* 25-Apr-1914 p5 'The word Workhouse to be dropped'.) As discussed in the documentation of Locksbrook - St Swithin's, a death there doesn't necessarily mean that the person was destitute as people took advantage of the infirmary there or were sent there if the Royal United Hospital couldn't accommodate them. However, there are certain streets/buildings/passageways where the chance of the death having taken place at Frome Road House is very high, mainly the poorer areas of St James and Widcombe.

A report on the workhouse infirmary that appeared in the *British Medical Journal* of 1894-5 condemned its facilities and level of staffing.

Previous Survey

A survey was carried out circa 1982. It was one of a number carried out by the Bristol & Avon Family History Society. While not providing a layout with the location of memorials, it listed the names appearing on memorials, grouping these together for each memorial. This paper list was used with the

transcription of the index entries as the basis for searching for memorials, producing maps and highlighting where memorials would be expected.

Current Survey

The index entries give the location of graves but there was no information as to the meaning of the sections, rows and plots. The numbering scheme had to be deduced by obtaining a sample of names and, from the declared locations of these, inferring the ordering. Maps could then be produced giving the template on which the shapes of memorials that were found could be added. With the burial registers becoming available, it has become possible to check the locations.

In total there are 1,993 memorials, 4,243 names on memorials and 24,753 burials. Thus only 17.4% of those buried have their name on a memorial.

War Damage



Bombs and bomb damage

Four high-explosive bombs fell on the north-western section of the cemetery during the 1942 bombing of Bath. The map of the locations of bombs show that these fell on the northern part of the nonconformist section of the cemetery and this area now has very few memorials.

Limitations

In the index there are the following limitations:

1 Ages

The index does not have ages and these have had to be obtained from the corresponding death registration. For some entries it has not been possible to find an unequivocal match. This has been revisited in 2024 using the burial registers which have the ages.

2 Missing Memorials

The results of a survey carried out circa 1982 have been used to indicate whether or not there is a memorial. As the survey progressed this was refined.

False positives: The original survey identified various memorials which cannot now be found. It is possible that some of these were small memorials such as vases which may have been moved and lost in the undergrowth. Others may be slabs which have become overgrown with turf and whose presence is not apparent. One slab was found under 10cm of turf.

False negatives: Some memorials have been found which are not on the original list.

3 Suspect Locations

Some grave locations are at positions that do not conform to the layout. Once the burial registers became available, the locations were been checked and amended where needed.

A small number memorials have been found at locations which differ from that specified in the index.

The sequential numbers assigned to memorials in the 1980s survey suggest that, in a few cases, a location is suspect because two memorials occur at the same location. Also a person buried in one location may be memorialised elsewhere on a memorial for another family member.

4 Incomplete inscriptions

Some inscriptions are incomplete, chiefly because of the growth of turf over kerbstones. Also some inscriptions evident 30 years ago have now become illegible due to weathering or delamination. Names from the previous survey have been added where this is the case.



Courtesy of Bath Presentation Trust