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Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England

Inventory of Great Britain

GENERAL CEMETERY

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Name: GENERAL CEMETERY

District: City of Nottingham (Unitary Authority)

Parish: Non Civil Parish

label.localisation: Latitude: 52.957531
Longitude: -1.1595437
National Grid Reference: SK 56557 40348
[Map: Download a full scale map \(PDF\)](#)

label.overview: Heritage Category: Park and Garden
Grade: II
List Entry Number: 1001487
Date first listed: 11-Jan-2001

Details

An Anglican cemetery of 1836 with Dissenters' extension added in 1865, both with their own mortuary chapels, since demolished.

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

The cemetery was set up by the Nottingham General Cemetery Company, which was established by a special Act of Parliament for which Royal Assent was given on 19 May 1836 (Nottingham Civic Society Newsletter). The original site comprised 14 acres (c 6ha); a further 4 acres (c 1.6ha) was added under the 1845 Enclosure Act and is shown on the Enclosure Award map of 1865. The Enclosure Act enclosed fields and meadows used by the burgesses or freeholders of the City to graze their animals and, to compensate for the loss of open space used for recreation, allotted space for a series of places of public recreation and public walks. One hundred and thirty acres (c 54ha) made up of Queen's Walk and Queen's Walk Park (Meadows Cricket Ground), Victoria Park, Robin Hood Chase, Corporation Oaks, St Ann's Hill (Belle Vue Reservoir), Elm Avenue, Nottingham Arboretum (qv), the General Cemetery, Waterloo Promenade, the Church Cemetery (qv), and The Forest were created as public open spaces from the enclosures.

By 1923 150,000 bodies had been buried and the then Medical Officer of Health expressed concern about the future of the cemetery if interments continued. A Bill was brought before Parliament by Nottingham Corporation to close the cemetery if further interments took place except into existing family graves. Due to escalating operating costs after the Second World War the Company made representations to the Corporation to take over the cemetery. The Corporation declined, the Company went into voluntary liquidation, and the cemetery became vested in the Crown. The Crown conveyed the freehold of the cemetery and all its responsibilities to the City Council in 1956 and it remains (2000) in their ownership (Nottingham Civic Society Newsletter).

DESCRIPTION

LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING General Cemetery is located in the centre of the city of Nottingham, immediately to the south-west of the Arboretum (qv), and comprises 7.3ha. The cemetery is bounded by Canning Terrace on the south-west boundary and by Cromwell Street on the north-west boundary, with part of Waverley Street as the north-east boundary. The northern part of the east boundary is made up by Clarendon Street, the mid part by the Friends Meeting

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House and its garden, and the southern part by Talbot Street. The cemetery occupies part of a long shallow valley which rises gently towards the south-west. The setting is urban.

ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES The main entrance is from Canning Terrace on the south-west boundary of the cemetery. The cemetery gatehouse, flanked by almshouses (listed grade II), was designed by S S Rawlinson for the General Cemetery Company. Built 1837-40 in stucco and brick, it has slate roofs and corniced stacks. The facade is symmetrical with a square gatehouse flanked by ranges of almshouses with pedimented centres. The processional route leads from the gates (Falconer and Company of Derby 1839) of the gatehouse north-eastwards along a raised path to the site of the Anglican mortuary chapel (demolished late-1950s). Another entrance off Talbot Street in the south-east leads northwards also to the site of the Anglican chapel. In the north-east corner of the cemetery, at the corner of Clarendon Street and Waverley Street, a further entrance was formerly marked by a lodge (demolished late-1950s) (Nottingham Civic Society Newsletter). From this entrance a path leads north-westwards to the site of the Dissenters' mortuary chapel (demolished late-1950s).

PRINCIPAL BUILDING The southern, Anglican mortuary chapel (demolished late 1950s), located 150m north-east of the Canning Street entrance (Nottingham Civic Society Newsletter), was built in a neo-Greek style with a tetrastyle Ionic portico approached up a flight of steps (Brooks 1989). The northern, Dissenters' mortuary chapel, located 100m west of the north-east entrance, was built in English Gothic style (Nottingham Civic Society Newsletter)

OTHER LAND The cemetery has an informal layout of grass and mainly native broadleaved trees, with winding paths and simple headstones, some of Swithland slate. A path runs from south-west to north-east through two-thirds of the cemetery. This meets the serpentine path which connected the two former chapels. Further paths lead off the main serpentine path. A memorial obelisk (1838, listed grade II) stands north of the path 100m east of the gatehouse. Built of ashlar, it stands on an inscribed square pedestal and base with a flight of four steps leading up to it. The obelisk was erected by the Directors of the Cemetery Company to a fellow director, D S Churchill, who died in a shipwreck off the Farne Islands. Standing south-east of the site of the Anglican chapel is a family memorial (c 1908, listed grade II) to the members of the Bright family who died between 1871 and 1928. By the north-east entrance to the cemetery stands a war memorial (listed grade II).

A draft Enclosure map of January 1848 shows the area north of the General Cemetery marked as 'Proposed Dissenters Cemetery'. The narrative of the map states that 'A Dissenters and a Church Cemetery (the situation not yet fully decided upon) will relieve the overcrowded burial places of the town'. By 1865 the Nottingham Enclosure Award map shows the General Cemetery with an area to the north-east between the General Cemetery and Waverley Street marked thus: 'Jas Smith Baldwin & others by direction of the Mayor Aldermen and Burgesses of Nottingham Dissenters' Cemetery'. The division between the two parts of the cemetery is shown clearly on the 1865 map. The Dissenters' area lies in the north-east part of the cemetery, the boundary between the two marked as a continuation of Clarendon Road (formerly Cemetery Road) running northwards. The boundary continues for a short distance north-westwards, possibly on the line of a continuation of Shakespeare Street (formerly Lark Dale Road), to the north-east edge of the cemetery (Enclosure map, 1865). The 1st edition OS map of 1883 shows the cemetery laid out with the main serpentine path from the Canning Terrace entrance leading to the Anglican chapel, and on past an unidentified building (gone by 1901, OS) which stood at the junction of a path running alongside the north-west side of the Friends Meeting House garden and the main serpentine path, then so to the Dissenters' chapel. A further building stood immediately south-west of this chapel. At this date, 1883, the whole cemetery was scattered with trees.

REFERENCES

Mellors R, *Gardens, Parks and Walks of Nottingham and District* (1926), 148-51 Gray D, Nottingham, *Settlement to City* (1953, reprinted 1969), 66-8 Pevsner N and Williamson E, *The Buildings of England: Nottinghamshire* (2nd edn 1979), 243 Nottingham Civic Society Newsletter, no 72 (April 1987); no 80 (September 1989); no 81 (January 1990) Brooks C, *Mortal Remains* (1989), 171 Brooks C, *English Historic Cemeteries*, (English Heritage theme study 1994), 79 Beckett J, Nottingham, *an Illustrated History* (1997), 49

Maps Sanderson G, *Twenty Miles Around Mansfield, 1835* (reproduced in Beckett 1997) Dearden W, *Plan of the Town of Nottingham, 1844* (reproduced in Beckett 1997) Nottingham draft Enclosure map, 1848 (Nottingham City Archives) Nottingham Enclosure Award map, 1865 (Nottingham City Archives)

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OS 25" to 1 mile: 1st edition published 1883 2nd edition published 1901 1920 edition

REASONS FOR DESIGNATION Nottingham General Cemetery is designated at Grade II for the following principal reasons:

* Nottingham General Cemetery is an early garden cemetery (1836) to serve a provincial town, with a High Victorian extension (1865). * The entrance lodge and attached almshouses were designed by the local architect S S Rawlinson.

Description written: October 2000 Amended: February 2001 Register Inspector: CEB Edited: December 2009

Legal

This garden or other land is registered under the Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act 1953 within the Register of Historic Parks and Gardens by Historic England for its special historic interest.