

Institut Européen des Jardins & Paysages

Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England

Inventory of Great Britain

Jewish Burial Ground, North Sherwood Street

Auteur(s) : Historic England <https://historicengland.org.uk/>

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Name:	Jewish Burial Ground, North Sherwood Street
District:	City of Nottingham (Unitary Authority)
Parish:	Non Civil Parish
label.localisation:	Latitude: 52.964335 Longitude: -1.1529502 National Grid Reference: SK5699141110 Map: Download a full scale map (PDF)
label.overview:	Heritage Category: Park and Garden Grade: II List Entry Number: 1454260 Date first listed: 21-Sep-2018 Statutory Address 1: North Sherwood Street, Nottingham, NG1 4EN

Historique de la conservation

Nottingham occupies an important strategic site on the sandstone cliffs which command an ancient crossing point of the River Trent to the south of the town, the site of the present Trent Bridge. There was no apparent Roman occupation but some pre-C9 history is indicated by its Saxon name – Snotingham, homestead of the Snots. Nottingham was one of the five boroughs of the Danelaw but in 921 it was recovered by the Saxons. The medieval walled town consisted of the French settlement to the west dominated by the royal castle built by William Peverel for William the Conqueror, and the Anglo-Danish settlement to the east dominated by St Mary's Church with the largest market place in England linking them together. The Trent fostered trade and Nottingham prospered in industry and commerce, chiefly wool-dyeing and cloth-making. The medieval town, according to Leland, 'was both a large town and well builded for tymbre and plaister' with thatched roofs.

After the Civil War, two fashionable quarters grew up, one round St Mary's Church, the other round the rebuilt castle, and by the end of the C17, Nottingham was transformed into an elegant town filled with fine brick townhouses, some with generous gardens. A series of visitors left glowing records of the new town created by this rebuilding. Celia Fiennes in 1694 called it 'the neatest town I have ever seen', and Daniel Defoe, thirty years later, said it was 'one of the most pleasant and beautiful towns in England'. Transformation into an industrial city began in the C18 with the commercial success of the domestic framework-knitting industry, salt-glazed stoneware and brick-making at Mapperley. The population nearly doubled from 28,000 in 1801 to 50,000 in 1830, and the gardens, orchards and other green spaces were gradually built over replacing the once green and pleasant town with a congested industrial one. This was largely caused by the corporation townsmen who were not willing to relinquish common land around the town for development. It was only after the reform of the town council in the 1830s and the eventual passing of a series of Enclosure Acts in the 1840s that land around the town was released to allow for the Victorian expansion to begin in earnest.

After the exodus of large numbers of people to the new suburbs, the lace trade took over the streets round St Mary's church for its warehouses, and the area became known as the Lace Market. The 1870s saw a spate of public works, such as Trent Bridge (1871), the first Board School (1874), the first industrial dwellings (1876-1877), and University College (1877-1881); and in 1877 the borough was extended to include Sneinton, Basford, Bulwell, Radford, and Lenton. Nottingham became a city in 1897 but its population increased most significantly when more of the surrounding villages were incorporated in the 1930s

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and 1950s. Nottingham suffered little war damage but in 1942 a Reconstruction Committee was appointed to plan post-war development. There were major slum clearances and an inner ring road was constructed which disrupted the old town's plan. Nottingham was also the home of a Jewish community in the middle ages. Following the expulsion of the Jews from England by Edward I in the C13, there was no established Jewish community in Nottingham until at least the late C18. Although Jewish 'Resettlement' commenced in 1650, it was not until the late C18 that the communities began to significantly expand, often in the growing urban areas of London, Birmingham, Leeds and Manchester. The Jewish community also became more established in Nottingham in the early C19 century and is said to have been founded by David Solomon, a Russian Jew who settled in the city in 1820. The Nottingham Hebrew Congregation was founded in 1823 as a mainstream orthodox Ashkenazi congregation affiliated to the United Synagogue. It was always an initial priority for a community to acquire a burial ground, even before a synagogue was built, since worship could take place in private houses and rented rooms. This was the case in Nottingham up until 1890 when the first purpose-built synagogue was opened. Hence Jewish burial grounds are often the earliest indicator of the presence of a Jewish community in a town. The earliest 'provincial' Jewish Cemetery was established in 1749 in Portsmouth, further ones were created in Penzance and Falmouth in the later C18. Jewish cemeteries were also established in other towns in the south of England in the early years of the C19, such as Bath in 1812 and Cheltenham in 1824.

In 1822, David Solomon's name features on an application made to the town corporation for a piece of ground to be used as a Jewish cemetery. Minutes of the Common Council of a meeting on Wednesday 23 October 1822, note that 'The Committee appointed at the last Hall to treat with persons of the Jewish Religion resident in Nottingham for the Sale or Lease of a piece of Waste Ground to be used by them as a Burial Ground Report That they have agreed to lease to them the above purpose one hundred and forty four yards of the Waste Land adjoining Mansfield Road at one penny per yard annum for nine hundred and ninety nine years.'

On the 26th February 1823, in a special ceremony, the first stone of the boundary wall was laid by the Mayor, Mr Oldknow. It was reportedly an impressive occasion, with Rabbi Moses Levi in his sacerdotal robes leading a procession around the cemetery ground. They recited psalms and prayers for the Royal family, the mayor and corporation, the burgesses and the descendants of Israel. After the opening, the cemetery was walled round and a small building was erected at a cost of £100 for the purpose of prayers and ceremonies prior to the internment.

The Jewish community in Nottingham was not prosperous which is indicated by the marriage registers of the period and, as a further example, the relatively low wages of the officiants. But it grew steadily during the mid-19th century and constituted itself formally as a Congregation in 1845. In the 1830s and 1840s a number of merchants and hosiery and textile manufacturers came from Germany. One of the headstones in the cemetery, with an extensive inscription in both Hebrew and English is of Simon Dreschfeld from Bavaria. Some stayed to become prominent members and benefactors of the Jewish and general community. By 1853 Jews in Nottingham were engaged in a number of trades and included watchmakers, tailors, jewellers, pawnbrokers and lace manufacturers. By the mid-C19 the community was becoming more prominent and the old burial ground was becoming too small for its needs. A member of the community, Jacob Weinburg, bought a plot of land on the corner of Hardy Street and Southey Street for use as a new burial ground and sold it to the congregation for five shillings. An appeal was made in the Jewish Chronicle for financial assistance to build a wall around the new plot. In 1869, the same year they received a visit from the Chief Rabbi, the old burial ground in North Sherwood Street closed and the new burial ground opened.

Details

DETAILS: Jewish cemetery established in the 1820s, enclosed within a coursed rubble sandstone wall, with a series of 15 upstanding headstones orientated northeast-southwest, some with legible inscriptions in Hebrew, English and Latin.

LOCATION: The small cemetery is located between more modern buildings at the north end of North Sherwood Street on the eastern side of the road.

DESCRIPTION: The entrance to the cemetery is through a single-leaf door which is below a simple pediment with a plain tympanum. There is an inscription carved upon a granite slab directly above the door. The inscription reads: THIS BURIAL

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GROUND WAS GIVEN TO THE COMMUNITY BY THE CORPORATION OF NOTTINGHAM 5586 / THE GROUND WAS CLOSED 5629 and below that: 'THE DUST RETURNETH TO THE EARTH AS IT WAS BUT THE SPIRIT RETURNS TO GOD WHO GAVE IT'.

There are approximately 15 upstanding stones within the cemetery which are aligned in several rows, with the headstones towards the east of the burial plots and the inscriptions on the west face. Some of the headstones have round headed tops, some square headed and in the main are of slate and are unadorned although several are embellished with carved foliage detailing. The headstones have a variety of inscriptions in Hebrew and Latin, some translated into English in smaller letters below. Several of the stones are heavily weathered and eroded meaning inscriptions are no longer legible and one of the stones is broken so only a portion of the inscription is visible. A further one has broken in pieces and is laid flat. The dates on the stones are given in the Hebrew calendar. Several stones are embellished with small motifs above the descriptions, for example a jug and ewer which indicates a Levite, and one on the headstone of a Cohen, with the symbol of hands giving a blessing which is set in a roundel. Stone inscriptions, where visible and legible, read: 1. REV'D LEWIS/ OF THE HEBREW CONGREGATION NO.../ WHO DEPARTED THIS LIFE/ (Illeg) 19TH A.M. 5618/ AGED 51 YEARS/ DEEPLY REGRETTEED BY HIS WIFE CHILDREN AND ALL WHO KNEW HIM

2. ALBERT M POLAK/ OBIT XX NOV/ MDCCCXXIX/ A. E. XXIII YEARS

3. IN MEMORY OF/ SAMUEL SAMUEL/ WHO DEPARTED THIS LIFE/ JULY 5th 5627/ AGED 81 YEARS

4. Small stone leaning on this one 5611/ AGED 29 YEARS

5. THIS STONE IS PLACED HERE/ THAT IT MAY REMAIN A LONG/ ENDURING MOMENTO AND THAT/ IT MAY WITNESS TO LONG AGES TO/ COME THAT HERE REST IN PEACE/ FUL SLUMBER THE REMAINS OF/ ONE WHOSE IMMORTAL SOUL LEFT/ THIS EARTHLY ABODE IN THE FLOWER/ AND SPRING TIME OF LIFE/ HE WAS THE DELIGHT AND PRIDE/ OF HIS PARENTS THE JOY AND/ ORNAMENT OF BROTHERS AND/ SISTERS, THE PLEASURE AND HO/ NOUR OF FRIENDS. SPRUNG FROM/ THE MOST ANCIENT PRIESTHOOD / HIS NAME WAS SIMON SON OF/ SAMUEL DRESCHFELD BORN/ IN NIEDERWERRN IN THE KING/ DOM OF BAVARIA. HE DIED/ PEACEFULLY AND RESIGNED ON/ FRIDAY THE SECOND DAY OF THE/ MONTH OF WEADER AND WAS/ BURIED ON TUESDAY THE SIXTH OF THE SAME/ MONTH IN THE YEAR 5615 OF THE CREATION/ OF THE WORLD. THE FOLLOWING/ ELEGY BROKE FORTH FROM THE/ HEARTS OF THE MOURNERS

6. LASSERT COHEN/ WHO DIED APRIL 6 1851/ AGED 70 YEARS

7. IN MEMORY OF/ JULIA ESTHER SAMUEL/ THE BELOVED WIFE OF/ JONAH SAMUEL/ WHO DEPARTED THIS LIFE THE 23D MAY 5619/ AGED 42 YEARS

8. SACRED TO THE MEMORY OF/ JEANETTE JACOBSEN/ DIES 7 DAY OF OCT/ ANNO MUNDI 5611/ AGED 25 YEARS/

FOR IN THEE OF LORD DO I HOPE THOU/ WILL HEAR O LORD, MY GOD PS 38.15

Summary

Early C19 Jewish cemetery with coursed rubble sandstone wall, series of 15 upstanding headstones, some with legible inscriptions in Hebrew, English and Latin.

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.

Reasons for Designation

The Old Jewish Cemetery, dating to the 1820s, is included on the Register of Parks and Gardens at Grade II for the following principal reasons: Historic interest: * as the cemetery remains essentially unaltered since its closure in the mid C19; * it is a surviving example of an early Jewish cemetery reflecting the establishment of a community in Nottingham in the early C19; * for the evidence of Jewish burial practices which remain apparent; * it is one of the few surviving dedicated Jewish cemeteries, dating to before the standard inclusion of a Jewish section in public cemeteries.

Bibliographie

Books and journals

Kadish, Sharman, Jewish Heritage in Britain and Ireland: An Architectural Guide, (2015), 159-160