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Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England

Inventory of Great Britain

BOSTON CEMETERY

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Name: BOSTON CEMETERY

County: Lincolnshire

District: Boston (District Authority)

Parish: Non Civil Parish

label.localisation: Latitude: 52.991246
Longitude: -0.024206431
National Grid Reference: TF 32717 45594
[Map: Download a full scale map \(PDF\)](#)

label.overview: Heritage Category: Park and Garden
Grade: II
List Entry Number: 1000935
Date first listed: 18-Feb-2003

Details

The main Boston town cemetery, laid out by J P Pritchett of Darlington for the Burial Board in 1854.

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

The Burial Board Act of 1854 authorised the setting up of burial boards outside London and in that same year the Boston Burial Board agreed to purchase a twelve acre plot which at that time stood about a mile north of the town. It was to be used as the future public burial ground for the parish and the architect J P Pritchett of Darlington was commissioned to design it. He provided the layout for the grounds and the plans for twin gothic chapels, one for Anglican services set on the consecrated ground to the south of a central walk, and the other on the north side for Nonconformist burials, together with designs for the main lodge building. The Anglican ground was consecrated by the Bishop of Lincoln on 13 August 1855 and the first interment took place the same month. Initially the town mortuary stood just outside the boundary of the cemetery although the building was used to align the main central lime avenue walk which ran east-west from the arched lodge. In 1885 the size of the cemetery was increased to include the mortuary building to the west and some additional land to the south, the added land being enclosed by a yew hedge. The central walk and lime avenue were also extended to lead up to the mortuary. Further extensions to the cemetery were necessary in 1928 and in 1940, again spreading west and south (beyond the area here registered). The Nonconformist chapel was demolished in 1961 but the Anglican chapel survives although is no longer in use. In 1966 a crematorium was built to the south-west of the original cemetery and since the 1990s the main entrance to the site has been moved from the old lodge on Horncastle Road to the crematorium entrance off Marian Road on the west side of the site. The cemetery remains under local authority ownership and management.

SITE DESCRIPTION

LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING Boston cemetery lies on the north side of the south-east Lincolnshire town of Boston in a location which was originally rural but which has since been enclosed by urban development. The 7.5ha site occupies generally level ground which is bounded to the east by a brick wall along Horncastle Road, to the north by railings and trees along Red Cap Lane and to the south and west by later extensions to the cemetery. The boundary

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of these extensions is marked by a slight bank on which stands yew hedging later allowed to grow into mature trees. The level ground and enclosure of the site preclude views into or out of the cemetery.

ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES Originally, and up until the 1990s, the main entrance into the cemetery was from the east off Horncastle Road. A red brick and slate gothic style lodge, flanked by brick walls, spans the main drive, the two parts being linked at the first storey forming an entrance arch over the drive. The building was designed by the architect J P Pritchett and was erected in 1854-55 in time for the opening of the cemetery. The drive runs west, across the length of the cemetery ground to the mortuary building where, up until the early-C20, it terminated. Following the extensions to the cemetery, the closure of the chapels and the opening of the crematorium in the 1960s, the drive was extended beyond the mortuary, turning south-west to link to the main crematorium buildings and car park. When the crematorium was built, it was served by a second entrance which had been created off Marian Road to the south in c1935. Since the 1990s this has become the main entrance.

PRINCIPAL BUILDING The main building on the original cemetery site is the Anglican chapel, designed by J P Pritchett and erected in 1854-55. It is constructed of brick and slate in a gothic style, with a tall spire rising over a covered arched entrance lobby on the north front. An identical chapel for Nonconformists (demolished in 1961) stood on the north side of the main drive, designed to form a symmetrical picture with the entrance lodge when viewed from the west end of the central lime avenue.

CEMETERY GROUNDS The layout of the C19 cemetery (within the boundary here registered) has not altered since the cemetery was opened. The central drive from the Horncastle Road lodge, aligned on the mortuary chapel, is flanked by an avenue of mature lime trees, each row terminated by a Wellingtonia at the east end. An engraving of the cemetery made in c1860 soon after it was opened shows the young limes flanking the drive, confirming that they are part of the original design. From the central straight walk two looped paths run through the burial grounds to north and south, meeting back in the centre of the main walk where the chapels were located, to form a loose figure of eight. The northern and eastern boundaries are lined with a variety of mature tree species and across the whole area many mature trees and shrubs survive, including four varieties of lime, tulip trees, monkey puzzles, red oak and varieties of pine. J P Pritchett the architect was responsible for the layout of the cemetery but it has been suggested (Horton, undated) that a local plant collector by the name of Mr Speake may have been responsible for supplying the wide range of plant species.

The boundaries of the cemetery extension which came about in 1885 bringing the mortuary chapel into the grounds, are marked by mature rows of yew, now grown into large trees, with other tree species evident along the southern boundary of this area. An additional circuit path was added through the extension area and this survives as laid out.

There are several memorials of particular interest within the original cemetery, the most notable of which is the burial site of Sir Herbert Ingram MP for Boston, the founder of the London Illustrated News, who came from the Boston area and drowned along with his young son on Lake Michigan, North America in 1860. Sir Herbert's body was returned for burial to Boston and the grave is marked by a granite obelisk set with a cast of the face of his son, whose body was never recovered.

REFERENCES Boston Crematorium and Cemetery guide book (undated) Horton J G, Trees in Boston Cemetery (undated pamphlet) L.BOST.718 Lincoln Local Studies Library Potts M, The flora and fauna of Boston Cemetery Old Part (cemetery office information leaflet) White's Directory of Lincolnshire (1856) 284 Wright N R, The Book of Boston (1978) 107-108 Maps OS 6" to 1 mile 1st edition published 1887 2nd edition published 1904 OS 25" to 1 mile 1st edition published 1888

Archive items The records of purchased graves and register of burials, together with the original plans of the burial plots are kept at the crematorium office. The borough council burial board minute books are retained at the town hall and are not currently available for study.

REASONS FOR DESIGNATION Boston Cemetery is designated at Grade II for the following principal reasons: * Boston Cemetery is a good example of an early High Victorian (1854) public cemetery for a provincial town. * The buildings and layout form a notable ensemble and were by the eminent Darlington architect JP Pritchett who specialised in cemeteries in the region (including York, qv). * Notable survival of C19 planting including an original lime avenue, evergreen trees and shrubs. * Social interest is expressed in an artistically rich variety of C19 monuments including many St Helens worthies. * The cemetery layout survives intact including its twin Gothic chapels and gateway including lodges linked by an arch. * The site includes

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various memorials of interest including Sir Herbert Ingram MP for Boston, the founder of the Illustrated London News, who came from the Boston area and drowned along with his young son on Lake Michigan, North America in 1860.

Description written: January 2003 HJ comments: February 2003 Owners comments: March 2003 Register Inspector: EMP
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.