



THE FRIENDS OF BURNLEY CEMETERIES

Newsletter 2, August 2013

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Memorial at Padiham St. John's Cemetery - to the Bebbington Family drapers and gentlemen's outfitters of Westgate, Ightenhill Park Lane and Kiddrow Lane.

Jack Bebbington, First Radio Officer Merchant Navy. s.s. *Egyptian* (Liverpool), born 15th March 1921 and lost at sea 6th March 1943 is commemorated on the memorial and also on The Tower Hill Memorial, London.

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HERITAGE OPEN DAYS 2013

As part of this year's events celebrating England's fantastic architecture and culture, the Friends of Burnley Cemeteries have organised heritage walks around Burnley and Padiham cemeteries.

PADIHAM ST. JOHN'S CEMETERY:

Friday 13th September 2013, 10.30am

Meet at the entrance to the cemetery at the junction of Cemetery Road and St. John's Rd.

BURNLEY CEMETERY:

Friday 13th September 2013, 2.30 pm

Meet at the Stone Entrance Arch at the bottom end of Cemetery Lane

BURNLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL will also open the Crematorium on Sunday the 15th September 2013 for tours from 10.00 am to 1.00 pm.

No booking required for any of these events – just turn up on the day.

BURNLEY CEMETERY TREES

Cut-leaved or Fern-leaved Beech (*Fagus sylvatica*, several cultivated varieties collectively named 'Heterophylla'). A form of native beech with narrow leaves variously cut and lobed.



THE MORECAMBE BAY TRAGEDY - On September 3rd 1894 the pleasure yacht, *Matchless*, set sail from Morecambe to Grange, carrying 33 passengers and its sole boatman. It sank just off Jenny Brown's Point, near Silverdale, with 25 drowning. The accident occurred during a Burnley Wakes Week and so it was that 18 of the 33 passengers were from Burnley, and 12 of them lost their lives. Nine, including the boatman, survived due only to the close proximity of two other sailing boats that were able to come to their aid. The accident resulted in Morecambe Bay's largest ever loss of passengers' lives.

One of Morecambe's attractions was to take a sail to Grange on one of the scores of fishing boats that were converted to pleasure boats for the summer season. The *Matchless* was one of the largest, and its skipper, Samuel Houghton, one of the most experienced.

At 10 am on Saturday 3rd September 1894 in the company of seven other boats the *Matchless* set off towards Silverdale and after an hour and twenty minutes the accident happened when the *Matchless* was a mile south of Silverdale. A sudden gust of wind blew the hat off one of the men standing at the front of the boat, then the wind caught the boat broadside. The jib came across the boat, and the *Matchless* was blown onto its side, with no pause in the sail's descent. Within seconds all 34 were floundering in the sea, and the boat turned over and sank.

The gust of wind disappeared as quickly as it had arrived. Three nearby passenger boats were able to sail into the struggling mass of people, and with walking sticks and lines were able to effect a limited rescue. The boatman of one of these, Edward Gardner, commanded that the near-hysterical passengers of his boat should sit down at once, and that the men should get ready for action. Any rescued people were to be held at the gunwale as the rescue progressed, to maximise the number that could be reached, and to ensure that hauling them in could be properly supervised to prevent another capsized. But very soon there were no more above the surface. The three boats sailed back to Morecambe with just nine survivors, and several dead bodies.

An inquest commenced the day after the accident, and was concluded just one day later. It was something of a whitewash. If there was any culpability, it was the Morecambe council (then a Local Board) who might be blamed for failing to put in place the protective bye-laws that some other resorts had – inspecting boats for seaworthiness, limiting passenger numbers, requiring a second crew member, and requiring lifebuoys and lines to be carried. The tragedy had the potential to be a public relations disaster for Morecambe. The coroner called for evidence from the boatman and survivors, but no expert witnesses were called. The foreman of the jury was none other than the man who might most fear the outcome of the inquest, the Chair of Morecambe's council. Unsurprisingly the jury's verdict was "accidental drowning"; the boatman was exonerated of blame; the police and search parties were congratulated for their work; and the rescuing boatmen were recommended for medals.

As soon as the inquest was concluded, the bodies of the deceased victims were sent to their homes via the railways. In Burnley huge crowds gathered at the Bank Top station to witness their return, and at 4 Burnley cemeteries to witness the burials. 5 were buried at Burnley cemetery itself – one of these burials was accompanied by a large number of men from the Social Democratic Federation, to mourn the loss of one of their prominent members, Edmund Clegg. His 4 year old son was buried alongside him.

In an age when "health and safety gone mad" is a popular jibe, we might pause to appreciate the modern measures of public protection that put some limits upon the dangers we face each day.

The Matchless Tragedy has been published as a short book and is available through its author Simon Williams, an amateur local historian, for the price of £5 including postage and packing.

Email: simon@mottramroad.freemove.co.uk

THE HISTORY OF PADIHAM ST. JOHN'S CEMETERY: At the beginning of the C19 most burials took place in St. Leonard's churchyard although there were a small number of non-conformist burial grounds. By the 1850's Padiham churchwardens reported that the graveyard "has been for some time most inconveniently filled with bodies of the dead so that it is extremely difficult to find space for further interment and the corpses are frequently of necessity so near the surface of the ground as to emit pestilential effluvia". In 1852 Mr. Starkie of Huntroyde Hall offered 2 acres of land as a public cemetery. This was to become Blackburn Road Cemetery. On 1st June 1855 all the church graveyards were officially closed although burial in unfilled family vaults was allowed.

The new public cemetery was cause of consternation for non-conformists as services had to be conducting to Church of England rites and fees paid to the incumbent. When the vestry attempted to levy an extra rate on the whole parish to pay for enclosing and laying out the cemetery a public meeting was held (October 1856) and it was resolved that a separate piece of land for non-conformist burials be acquired. A plot of 2 acres was available in, what was then, Hapton from Charles Towneley's Estate. £470 was raised by public subscription and the Burial Board in London approved the cemetery in January 1857. A local Burial Board was formed comprising two representatives of each of the dissenting places of worship and three ratepayers. It was reported that 'the estimate for enclosing and draining, chapel, dwelling-house, etc. is about £700'. No information about the designer/builder of the cemetery is known but the first burial was that of Ann Law on the 23rd February 1857.

In April 1891 the remaining members of the Burial Board wrote to Padiham and Hapton Local Board asking them to take over the ownership and management of the cemetery. The transfer was completed in August 1893 when 2,778 interments had taken place. In June 1891 the Local Board had written to Lord Abingdon about buying 1 to 4 acres of Towneley Estate land adjacent to the cemetery.

In 1902 the remaining vacant land at the cemetery was laid out for use. Padiham Urban District Council received approval in 1908 for a Parliamentary Bill for 'Street Works, Cemetery lands, gas lands and lands for Refuse Destructor' and began discussions with Lord Abingdon to acquire the land adjoining the cemetery. Formal approval for an extension of 4 acres was not given until 3rd January 1924 and in 1933 when approval was given for a small section of this land to be used as Catholic burial grounds only 2 acres had been laid out (the extent of the cemetery to-day).

David Helm one of the original Trustees of the Burial Board was appointed as registrar in 1873 and held the post until his death in 1917 when his son Walter became registrar. In turn, his son George followed from 1942 to 1967.

CEMETERIES:

Burnley Cemetery and Crematorium
Padiham St. John's Cemetery
Padiham Blackburn Road Cemetery
St. Peter's Churchyard (closed)
St. Leonard's Churchyard (closed)
All Saints Habergham Eaves Churchyard (closed)
Holy Trinity Churchyard (closed)
Mereclough Burial Ground (Closed)

EPITAPH

Life's race well run
Life's work well done
Life's victory won
Now cometh rest

To find out more, how to JOIN AND HELP conserve and promote the historical, social and ecological value of the cemeteries visit www.fbc.btck.co.uk

Parish of West Burnley.

Habergham Church grounds.

Almost six years ago, as parishioners, we became concerned at the run down state and loss of lettering of the Cross of Sacrifice prominently stationed at the entry to our church. Questions at our annual vestry meetings were asked and lobbying of PCC members took place. The ownership of the memorial was in doubt.

In the United Kingdom National inventory of War memorials UFNWWM Ref 10644 states it



is responsibility of All Saints Church. Quotations for the remedial work and cleaning were prepared and the Cross was restored two years ago.

The Cross of Sacrifice to-day



Then



Now

Our church grounds contain two CWGC graves to which the parish receives a yearly £20 donation. Unfortunately, for years, this has disappeared into the church running expenses and the graves had become neglected.

However since joining the Friends group, this has changed and troughs bought to bring into line with Burnley Cemetery and will be maintained.



Ten other Grave commemorations for both WW1 and WW2 have been identified and are in process of cleaning and restoration prior to the 1914/18 commemorations.

USEFUL INFORMATION

Friends of Burnley Cemeteries:

www.fbc.btck.co.uk

Chair: Roger B. Frost M.B.E 01282 435836

Secretary: Susan Barker 01282 423016

E-mail: burnleybarker@btinternet.com

Next Meeting: Wednesday 9th October 2013 at Padiham, 7 pm (Venue to be confirmed)

Bereavement Services: Cemetery Offices
01282 477148 & 477232,

www.burnley.gov.uk, Email:

bereavementservices@burnley.gov.uk

Cemetery and Crematorium Grounds

Opening hours: every day 9 am to 8 pm (or sunset whichever is earlier) ***Please note that at times vehicle access may be restricted***

Family History Burial Records:

Cemetery Office holds Registers for Burnley Cemetery and Crematorium and for Padiham Cemetery. Burnley Central Library hold basic burial records on microfiche. Please Telephone to arrange to view.

156 YEARS AGO - Adverts in Burnley Advertiser Saturday 10th January 1857

FUNERALS supplied at the Vine Leaf Wine Stores, with a first class OLD PORT WINE, also splendid Lemon and Raspberry Juice, nothing can excel the above for such occasions, No. 64, St. James' Street, Burnley.

JOHN SALMON, Proprietor

HORSE & HEARSE FOR HIRE.

AT MR. GEORGE DAVYE'S, Clock Face Inn, St. James-street, Burnley. Terms to the Cemetery 6s.

GEORGE DAVYE, Proprietor