

University of
Chester

**DISCOURSES IN STONE: DIALOGUES WITH
THE DISSENTING DEAD
1830 - 1919**

**Thesis submitted in accordance with the requirements of the University
of Chester for the degree of Master of Philosophy**

by

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“Since long life is denied us, let us transmit to posterity some memorial that we have at least lived”.

Pliny the Younger (AD61 - c.AD 113). Letter No.9 to Caninius Rufus.



Frontispiece. Brown Knowl chapel graveyard: memorial to John Wedgwood, Primitive Methodist Preacher and member of the Wedgwood ceramics family

DECLARATION

The material being presented for examination is my own work and has not been submitted for an award of this or another HEI except in minor particulars which are explicitly noted in the body of the thesis. Where research pertaining to the thesis was undertaken collaboratively, the nature and extent of my individual contribution has been made explicit.

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Abbreviations

CALS – Cheshire Archives and Local Studies

CFHS – Clwyd Family History Society

CRO - Cheshire Record Office

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ABSTRACT**DISCOURSES IN STONE: DIALOGUES WITH THE DISSENTING DEAD****1830 - 1919****Alison-Mary Smithson**

Graveyard studies have been rich sources for archaeologists, historians, social scientists, anthropologists, genealogists, art historians and others to investigate a diverse range of interests in death and the mortuary practices of former societies. Evidence from the size, material properties of gravestones and other memorials has advanced theories about characteristics of the lives of earlier people; the environment they lived in; their health; domestic situations; familial and social relationships; status; employment history and personal religious observations and beliefs. Rather fewer are studies that consider what memorial epitaphs and inscriptions can convey about some of these factors, and particularly the meaning and expression of emotion conveyed by choice of text chosen to commemorate the dead.

This thesis engages with the ‘conversations’ on gravestones: salutations (‘In loving memory’ etc.); inscriptions and epitaphs, and imagery (motifs and carvings) on nineteenth- and twentieth-century memorials of four religious Nonconforming denominations. Sample locations offer contrasting social, linguistic, economic and religious environments, and suggest comparisons between practices in west Cheshire and north-east Wales. The research questions are as follows:

- is there a consistently characteristic style of Nonconformist epitaphic and decorative memorialisation in the sample area?
- if not, are there recognisably distinct denominational characteristics?

This study has concluded that each denomination exhibited a number of distinct characteristics earlier in the study period, but these distinctions eroded over time, in particular after the 1880 Burials Act, and under the influences of commercialisation of memorial media; increasing secularisation, and the effects of religious union.

PREFACE

This thesis has its roots in my undergraduate dissertation (- “An Army of Ordinary People” 2010 -), which identified and recorded sites and buildings of Nonconformist chapels and churches in Chester and west Cheshire, whether providing services, or, more commonly, converted to other uses, abandoned or demolished. The dissertation aimed to challenge traditional views that religious nonconforming societies merited historically dismissive descriptions such as ‘narrow, quarrelsome and culturally-impoverished’ (Everitt 1972, 64). ‘The labouring masses’ they may have been when membership was arguably at its highest in the nineteenth century (Wearmouth 1947, 263), notably in agricultural areas such as Cheshire, but it was clear that their buildings and other material culture displayed notable vitality, colour, culture and craftsmanship that endorsed and reflected supposed Nonconformist characteristics of independence of thought, action and belief.

It quickly became clear that few burial grounds at Nonconforming sites within the city of Chester had survived, if any there had been originally; the research undertaken for the dissertation indicated that the situation in the rural environment was more promising. For practical reasons, no attempt was made at the time to survey or record any memorial media, although some of the findings of the dissertation have contributed to this study of Nonconformist engagement with death and memorialisation.

This thesis examines a small sample of Nonconformist sites in their physical and denominational context. However, the main focus is concentrated on memorial ‘messages’ on gravestones derived from epitaphs and incised iconography, with the aim of illuminating those aspects of life and death that the American authors Nelson and Hume George (2000, 264) designated ‘what the survivors considered important’. The thesis also responds to encouragement to make religion a ‘fundamental part of our understanding of post-medieval

archaeology' (King and Sayer 2011, 12), forming part of a growing scholarly interest in Nonconformist burial and commemoration practices.

The thesis is also influenced by calls for a regional and contextual approach to graveyard studies (Mytum 2000) by comparing two burial grounds in Cheshire and two in Wales. While in no way international in context, the study also responds to calls (for instance, Tarlow 2015, 2) for cross-border national and international co-operation in studies of post-medieval burial grounds.

This study also argues (Chapter 3) that, despite the considerable amount of published material about the design, material, imagery, siting and other properties of gravestones and memorial media which have informed conclusions about earlier societies, and about how they experienced and interpreted their worlds, there has been significantly less investigation and discussion of epitaphs and commemorative material. While the practical and technical challenges of handling the resulting large datasets should not be underestimated, excluding such material from consideration reduces the opportunity for interpretation of personal experience and choice at a time of heightened feelings of loss and acute emotional stress. Accordingly, this thesis aims to address some of these dimensions by interpreting the rich vein of meaning from memorial messages that the bereaved of the recent past have left for us to decode.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Death - our own and others' - is a subject of infinite interest to human beings. Hobbes saw his own death as an unpredictable journey: 'a great leap in the dark' (Watkins 1808, 276).

Comforting metaphors of 'rest', of 'sleep' or of 'peace' (Tarlow 1998a) or being reunited with the predeceased in some future existence are common on post-medieval memorial media, together with assertions that the dead had lived a good life, or admonitory reminders that we will have to submit to some higher authority. We may not take the messages literally ('Not dead, only sleeping') but they represent a last opportunity to affirm both human and spiritual relationships.

Until comparatively recently, however, it has been the physical attributes of memorial media that have been exhaustively mined by archaeologists and other commentators to infer such dimensions as status, economic position, and the personal, social and community attributes of the dead and their survivors; some of these studies are reviewed in Chapter 3. In recent years, however, academic interest (for instance, Tarlow 1999, Mytum 2002a and 2011, Sayer 2011b) has increasingly focused on dimensions of memorial practice with which this thesis is concerned: religious Nonconformism, and the identification and consideration of emotion in the archaeological record.

This study builds upon those elements by examination of relatively unexploited memorial resources: decorative motifs; epitaphs and other mnemonic phrases ('In loving memory, for instance: 'salutations' in this study) to infer meaning, belief or feeling expressed in the choice of - or indeed, in the absence of - such inscriptions. In Chapter 5, for example, there is an example where no words could be found to commemorate the grieving parents of pre-deceased adult offspring.

We cannot know, of course, why any particular memorial text was chosen, but there are messages to be decoded in the source of epitaphs: religious and Bible quotations, hymns, poetry and secular expressions chosen by the bereaved to remember their dead. This neglected element of mortuary studies is the major focus of this study.

Since all locations chosen for this study are religious sites (or were such during the study period), epitaphs have been analysed thematically by reference to personal, religious or devotional sentiments, and also by the age, occupation, familial relationships and gender of the dead of the time. How and when the choice, form and content of epitaphs changed at the sample sites is also discussed.

Availability of material for such a project is potentially vast, and decisions about location, denomination, period and sampling have resulted in the choice of four denominationally-diverse Nonconformist burial grounds in west Cheshire and north-east Wales (Chapter 4). The study period is 1830-1919; a time of significant social, economic and philosophical change, and when fluid theological debates and secularising pressures were influencing traditional commemorative beliefs and practices.

Evidence for this study is derived from elements of the early modern and modern periods; prehistoric, Roman or medieval archaeologies are not considered. Within the study area, personal epitaphic material did not seem to appear on gravestones before about the 1820s. For instance, when the first chapel of 1811 at Buckley was demolished, none of the earlier displaced gravestones bore other than biographical information (Chapter 6), while a trawl of surviving eighteenth century gravestones at the Anglican church of St. Oswald at Malpas, Cheshire, suggested that Anglicans of the period observed similar conventions (Figure 1.1).



Fig.1.1 Malpas: St Oswald's Anglican church: eighteenth century gravestone

Focusing on a significant period of social and religious change, this study considers the research questions within the following contexts:

- what can inscriptions and decorative motifs reveal about developments in expressions of personal sentiment or belief applied to commemoration of the individual?
- how did developments in religious belief and practice inform attitudes to life and death, and were these themes commemoratively expressed?
- what evidence exists for the influence of eschatological debates of the time, (for instance, salvation for believers; a theme explored in Chapter 2) and were these denomination-specific?
- were the practical and intellectual challenges of progressive legislation, economic change and scientific thought reflected in memorial media?

Specifically, this study aims to challenge suggestions that Nonconforming religious communities presented 'a shared religious identity' (Sayer 2011a,) or that Nonconformists of

any period were homogeneous entities (Thompson 1972, 1). These approaches have tended to diminish the unique properties and beliefs of any Nonconforming society or congregation, and foster the assumption, no matter how tacit, that Nonconformists thought, believed or acted as a coherent body, and thus that the material culture of any one such society is largely indistinguishable from another. Nevertheless, as the nineteenth century progressed, homogenising influences gained traction in denominational thought, culminating in the establishment of the major Nonconformist unions, and these developments, where expressed in memorial language and imagery, have not been ignored in this study.

To understand the religious context in which the inscriptions and epitaphs considered here were created, the following chapter briefly describes the history, beliefs and organisation of the chosen Nonconforming denominations, followed by a review of published material (Chapter 3); and research methods (Chapter 4). Discussion of the sample sites follows at Chapters 5 to 8, each of which considers the location within its economic, social and religious environment, and offers analysis and interpretation of epigraphic and decorative material.

Chapter 9 draws together and discusses contrasts in memorial behaviour demonstrated at the sample sites, suggesting some interpretation of these differences, and how they changed over time. Any homogenizing tendencies which might be detected in the surveyed graveyards are also discussed in this chapter, which offers conclusions about dissenting populations as a whole where some coming together of thought and practice can be discerned. Chapter 10 reviews the research questions to this study, and considers the evidence derived from this study to support or challenge them.

Throughout this thesis, the terms by which the community knew its place of worship have been respected. Thus 'church' and 'chapel' have not been used interchangeably: Tarporley Baptist in Cheshire and St. John's Congregational in Buckley, north east Wales, are 'churches' throughout, while Brown Known Primitive Methodist (Cheshire) and Penycae Groes Calvinistic Methodist (north-east Wales) are chapels.

The design specification for this project envisaged the inclusion, for comparative purposes, of a non-dissenting religious population. For reasons explained in Chapter 4, it proved impossible to identify any such population with the required degree of certainty, although Overleigh cemetery in Chester appeared to be a suitable candidate before intensive research eliminated it. Nevertheless, it is to be hoped that the memorial practices of the diverse populations of such loci can attract further attention in due course; accordingly some discussion of material about memorial practices in cemeteries has been included in Chapter 3.

CHAPTER 2

NONCONFORMIST DENOMINATIONS IN ENGLAND AND WALES: RELIGIOUS ORIGINS AND HISTORY

Introduction

To understand the religious context in which members of the Nonconformist denominations studied here commemorated their dead in the nineteenth- and early twentieth-centuries, this chapter considers some developments in thought, practice and organisation of these denominations, and how such factors may have affected commemorative choices in the study period. It begins with an overview of the history of Nonconformity from ‘Old Dissent’ of the seventeenth century, and considers some of the moral and religious debates of Victorian and later periods. This chapter will also include a brief discussion of some of the religious, social and economic factors that may have led to an apparent loss of faith and denominational decline.

‘Old’ and ‘New’ Dissent

‘Old Dissent’ refers to Nonconforming denominations in opposition to the Church of England in the seventeenth century, with roots in Elizabethan and Jacobean religious disputes. At a time of significant political change (Brown 1986) the Toleration Act of 1689 eventually granted freedom of worship (Mullett 1994, 206) to Protestant dissenters who accepted the Trinity. By the end of the eighteenth century, Nonconformist numbers had increased significantly, although the pioneers of Old Dissent, principally Presbyterians and Quakers, had been largely sidelined (Ward 1994, 271).

Prior to this, the four main dissenting groups in the UK were the Presbyterians, Independents (later known as Congregationalists), Baptists and Quakers. The latter

denomination, originally known as the Society of Friends, had its origins in Lancashire in the 1640s and was considered as the most theologically radical (Thompson 1972) in its view that God could speak to every person, and in its constant demands for reform of Anglican practices such as tithing. Quaker memorial practices were not included in this study for reasons given in Chapter 4.

The remaining three denominations were Calvinistic in outlook, believing that God alone had the power and authority to determine who could be saved ('predestination'). While not the first or only pioneer of the religious revival known as 'New Dissent' of the late eighteenth century, John Wesley (1703-1791) was probably the best-known (Hibbard 2015, 7). An ordained Anglican minister, Wesley sought renewal within the Established Church, not schism, (Bowker 1997, 639) and declared "In the Church of England I will live and die" (Hattersley 2002, 392). His theology was Arminian, not Calvinistic, believing that individual redemption was available to all who sought holiness in the methodical study of the Bible (hence 'Methodist').

All dissenting denominations shared a common consensus on the importance of the reading and preaching of the Bible, which was widely held to be the highest authority on matters of faith, morals and behaviour (Bebbington 2014, 231). A common term applied to denominations that believed in and actively spread the word of God is 'evangelical', key features of the movement being 'Bible, cross, conversion and activism' (Bebbington 2014, 233).

In addition, all denominations studied here shared a common view on the importance of Sunday School, while their places of worship provided a focus for both social and religious activities. Each dissenting denomination studied for this thesis is described in more detail below. The reasons for choosing these particular denominations are discussed in Chapter 4.

Baptist Churches

Baptists can trace their origins to the late sixteenth century, and divided in the 1630s broadly into those who held that redemption was available to all ('Arminianism'), and who were known as General Baptists, and the Particular Baptists, who held that only the elect, baptised on profession of faith (Bowker 1997, 126), enjoyed the possibility of redemption by the death of Christ (Thompson 1972, 2). However, these distinctions were far from uniformly held, and further differing elements included church membership; biblical criticism; and the effects, welcome or otherwise, of secularity and contact with other Christian denominations (Briggs 1994, 10).

While both Baptist denominations adopted autonomous government, the General Baptists developed a 'more connexional form' (Bowker 1997, 126) of church organisation, with an annual Assembly providing denominational authority, while the Particular Baptists maintained the autonomy of the congregation.

Theological arguments in and between Nonconforming denominations on fundamental tenets of faith would continue through the eighteenth and early nineteenth century. There were also tensions over the question of baptism, particularly that of children, which Baptists maintained should be confined to believers, and a continuing fear and suspicion of popery (Brown 1986, 4).

Organisation was another significant difference between these early denominations. Independents and Baptists promoted autonomy and the self-management of local congregations, while Presbyterianism fostered a system of the "ministry and the governance of elders" (Bowker 1997, 767) with an overarching national assembly. Particular and General Baptist churches amalgamated to form the Baptist Union in 1891, although some congregations declined to surrender their traditional autonomy, and continued to practice congregational independence.

Baptists were adept record-keepers: at Tarporley, Cheshire, General Baptist Church burial registers took the form of hard-back ledgers with pre-printed columns for personal details of the deceased, including cause of death. A 'remarks' column was included, which provided some insight, for instance, into the personal views of the then officiating minister and his clerk, particularly in the instances of the burial of Methodists at in the Tarporley Baptist graveyard (Chapter 8).

Congregationalist Churches

Congregationalism had its roots in Elizabethan separatism: ideas influenced by Luther and Calvin absorbed by those men and women who resisted the pressures of Mary Tudor to return to Catholicism, and who fled abroad to avoid paying with their lives for their convictions (Carlson 1960, 15). Similarly influential was the increasing availability of bibles in English, beginning with Tyndale's New Testament of 1526. For the State, this raised uncomfortable questions about the role of the civil power in ecclesiastical affairs.

After Mary's death in 1558, many exiles returned to England bringing with them the new theology, insisting on a 'free conscience and dissent' for themselves (Carlson 1960, 34). The London Separatist Church was established in 1592, quickly provoking the arrest, imprisonment and, sometimes, execution of adherents, and followed by the enactment of an 'Act to Retain the Queen's Subjects in Obedience' in 1593. Yet again, adherents were forced to conform or be exiled.

In England, Separatists were known as 'Independents' and formed strong links with Puritanism. They were unsympathetic to Presbyterian views on church government, and were heavily represented in Cromwell's victorious Parliamentary army. As with other dissenting societies, Independents were subjected to persecution at the restoration of Charles II, but succeeding Toleration Acts allowed more freedom of worship. However, because of the eighteenth century embargo on graduating from university (Bowker 1997, 233), many

ministers were educated at Dissenting Academies. It was the first denomination outside the Established Church to found a university college: Mansfield, Oxford, in 1886.

By the Victorian period, Congregationalism was the largest Nonconformist grouping derived from 'Old Dissent', and had formed the Congregational Union of England and Wales in 1832 on 'the scriptural right of every separate church to maintain perfect independence of the government and administration of its own particular affairs' (Thompson 1972, 79). The founders of the Union generally considered themselves to be 'moderate Calvinists' (Peel 1931, 27), believing that 'the sentence of death passed on Man at the Fall had been mercifully withheld, and that those who believed in Christ were saved and thus immortal' (Wheeler 1990, 74).

The establishment of the Congregational Union inevitably affected decision-making at the local level, in favour of greater co-operation with other religious denominations and centralised planning. The possibility of a Baptist/Congregational amalgamation was finally extinguished in the 1890s, and it was not until 1972 that Congregationalists combined with Presbyterians and some Methodists to form the United Reformed Church.

In 1833, the annual meeting of the Congregational Union issued 'The Declaration of the Faith, Church Order, and Discipline of the Congregational, or Independent Dissenters'. This document proclaimed the doctrines of faith 'as of Divine authority' and principles of the governance of the Church (Peel 1931, 69). At twenty clauses, The 'Principles of Religion' will not be quoted in full here; it is sufficient for the purposes of this thesis to note the emphasis on 'true believers'; on the Old and New Testaments; on the 'perpetual obligation of Baptism and the Lord's Supper'; the division of the righteous from the wicked at the Day of Judgement, when the bodies of the dead 'will be raised again'. If and how these principles are reflected on Buckley gravestones is examined in Chapter 6.

Wesleyan and Primitive Methodism

By the time of Wesley's death in 1791 the Methodist movement was growing apart from Anglicanism. Further schism within the Methodist movement followed, driven by the preaching of evangelical doctrines and charisma of leading preachers, and by differing styles of worship and organisation. The echoes of these divisions are still discernible today in some settlements, where competing Wesleyan and Primitive Methodist chapel buildings survive, albeit converted to other uses.

When John and Charles Wesley visited north-east Cheshire in 1744, a number of Methodist societies had already been established, mostly under the leadership of John Bennet, an evangelical preacher, and one of the leaders of 'New Dissent'. By 1801, it has been estimated that Methodist membership in Cheshire was in the order of 1.7% of the total county population (Smith 2002, 40).

Among the largest of the Methodist groupings was Primitive Methodism, which grew from a revivalist movement in the border area between Cheshire and Staffordshire. Its establishment is generally dated from 1807, following a day-long open-air meeting at Mow Cop in May (Young 2017, 9), although John Wesley referred to the movement as 'primitive Methodists' as early as 1790. The 'Prims' seceded from Wesleyan Methodism in 1811 over the contentious issue of outdoor preaching (and in so doing, were afterwards known as 'Ranters'). John Wedgwood, whose memorial at Brown Knowl is depicted at the frontispiece to this document, was one of the early evangelical preachers. The social structure of the 'Prims', traditionally seen as predominately of manual lower-middle and working class, has been challenged (Field 1977, 216) suggesting that adherents were as likely to be 'semi-skilled persons or craftsmen'.

The Primitive Methodists espoused anti-authoritarianism and evangelicalism (Hempton 1994, 314) and permitted female preachers, in contrast to the apparent discouragement of female ministry by Wesleyan Methodists in the late eighteenth century (Lloyd 2007, 125).

Calvinistic Methodism

The Welsh Methodist Association, described as ‘an indigenous body in no way indebted to John Wesley’ (Densil Morgan 2009, 22) was formed in 1743 under the chairmanship of George Whitefield (or Whitfield), an English Anglican cleric, a founder of Methodism and an evangelist. The Association formally seceded in 1811 from the Anglican Church following the ordination by Thomas Charles of Bala of the first Calvinistic Methodist ministers (Densil Morgan 2009, 24) and was known as the Calvinistic Methodist Connexion.

Welsh Calvinism was particularly potent during the period of ‘Old Dissent’ in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, both within the Methodist movement and among those who responded to the revivalist preaching (Bowker 1997, 190) of Howel Harris (1714-1733), Daniel Rowland (1713-1790) and others. Both Harris and Rowland, originally both members of the Church of England (Evans 1974, 2) were advised by Philip Pugh, an Independent of Cilgwyn (1679-1760) to moderate their preaching language (Ward 1994, 256). Rowland in particular was a ‘hell fire’ preacher.

Early converts were organised into ‘societies’ or fellowship meetings; north and south Wales formed separate ‘Associations’. By 1811, a crisis provoked by scarcity of preachers led to a decision to ordain ministers of their own persuasion, when the term ‘Calvinistic Methodists’ was adopted. Nevertheless, doctrinal debate continued to divide those who adhered to Wesleyan Arminianism on one hand, or to High Calvinism on the other (Densil Morgan 2013, 72), which led, in 1823, to the agreement and adoption of the Confession of Faith, the main premises of which have been described as ‘the Person of the Redeemer, the work of the Spirit and the union of believers with their Lord’ (Densil Morgan 2013, 76). The Confession directed and sustained its adherents during the nineteenth century, although other voices were beginning to make themselves heard later (Pope 2009, 62). In 1923, the denomination became the Presbyterian Church of Wales.

In 1904-05, religious revival was embraced with great enthusiasm by the Calvinistic Methodists. By that time, of a Welsh population of about 1.8 million, 23% were Calvinistic Methodists (Tudur Jones 2004, 11). Although there were thought to be thirteen Calvinistic Methodist chapels in Cheshire in 1851, the majority lay in west Cheshire where influx of Welsh people and language was greatest (Smith 2002). By contrast, in Wales in 1850, there were 848 chapels or preaching places, and 58,678 ‘communicants’; by 1882, the relative figures were 1,372 and 122,167 (Williams 1884, 234). Calvinistic Methodists were predominately Welsh-speaking, and accordingly the language of memorialisation was and continued to be, Welsh throughout the study period of this thesis, necessitating extensive translation of epitaphs at Penycae Groes chapel (Chapter 4).

Calvinistic Methodist preachers were more likely, at least until about the middle of the nineteenth century, to have a source of income (Hughes 2003, 33) additional to preaching fees; however, Chapter 7 notes that congregations included a number of shop-keepers and publicans buried in Penycae Groes chapel graveyard.

Decline of Nonconformist membership and beliefs

The reasons for the progressive decline of Nonconformist numbers and chapel-going in the latter years of the nineteenth century are complex and continue to be the subject of much debate (for instance Field 2012, Watts 2015, Young 2017). Some commentators believe that Nonconformist congregations as a whole were subject to pressure for inter-denominational union (‘denominalisation’) that influenced most Nonconformist denominations except Primitive Methodism, (Yalden 2004, 322), and which may have added to the march of secularisation.

Other influences included the continuing influence of Enlightenment thinking; the impact of the theory of evolution (published 1859), and ‘higher criticism, alternative ideologies, and doctrinal controversy’ (Field 2012, 147), and progressive Education Acts. Later, as the British Empire expanded, bringing colonial exposure to other beliefs to those

denominations with significant missionary movements, the belief in the eternal punishment of unbelievers was challenged and disputed (Young 2017, 32). Under these influences, it is understandable that the Biblical threat of hell fire (St. Matthew and Revelations have particularly vivid references) as a moderator of individual morals and behaviour held fewer terrors than before.

Resurrection, whether of the body or spirit, was another tenet of faith under Victorian scrutiny. The Wesleyan hymn (Fig 2.1 below), taken from a section entitled 'Death and the Future Life' is ambiguous on these points, but could be read to reflect belief in a physical resurrection, although how widely this was believed by individuals is impossible to say. However, in 1873, John Petty, a Primitive Methodist Minister, while acknowledging that resurrection of the body 'is a doctrine of Scripture' (Petty 1873, 338), continued to argue that while decay and putrefaction of the grave affected the natural body, the spiritual body would be raised. Moreover, some erosion of beliefs in the resurrection of the body may have been generated by the passing of the Murder Act of 1751, which permitted the dissection of the bodies of such offenders, and by the Anatomy Act of 1832 (Cherryson 2010, 137).

The Cremation Act of 1902 (Cherryson *et al.* 2012, 43) may have delivered the coup de grâce for the old theological certainties. Perhaps some faint echoes can be discerned in the frequent choice of 'Re-united'; references to meeting again, and similar comforting inscriptions on gravestones from the Victorian period onwards, belief in which has been condemned as 'unscriptural, all out of hymns and bad lithographs' (Longson 2012. 81).

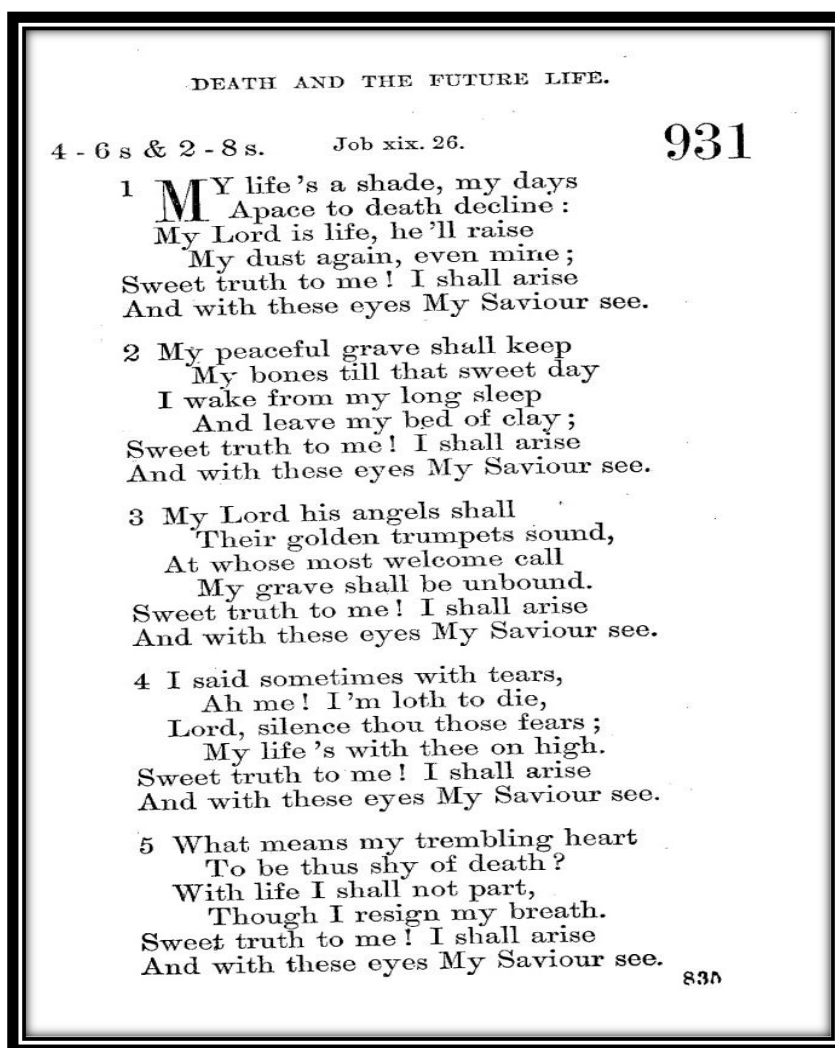


Fig.2.1. Hymn 931 from the Wesleyan Hymnbook 1876

Other doctrines and convictions under assault in the latter years of the nineteenth century were the authenticity of the Bible; the special creation and subsequent fall of man, and atonement centred on the death of Christ. By the end of the century Calvinistic beliefs had been widely abandoned, with only the Baptists clinging to some residual convictions (Adeney 1901, 116).

Numerically, there was a general decline in religious observance, provoking a reduction in Nonconformist numbers from about 1880. Field (2012, 147) suggests that a peak in Nonconformist numbers driven by the increasing power of working-class politics had coincided with the Liberal Party's victory in the general Election of 1906, and followed a number of religious revivals, perhaps the most powerful being the Welsh Revival of 1904-05, during which up to 10,000 people were converted.

It has also been claimed (Hempton 1994, 320) that decline in numbers in both church and chapel was driven by suburbanisation, state welfarism and the competing attractions of leisure activities occasioned by a general rise in living standards. While these factors were influential, it is the case that by the end of the nineteenth century dissenting denominations perceived the need to work together to survive (Briggs 1994), and relaxed some of the sectarian divisions that had separated them in the past.

Progressive legislation may also have had an influence on Nonconformists clinging to any traditional sense of separateness and lingering sense of grievance. The Toleration Acts of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries noted above relaxed state control of Dissenters' worship; in 1847 the Civil Registration Act permitted Nonconformists to marry in their own licensed places of worship, but only in the presence of a civil registrar; this restriction was not overturned until the Nonconformist Marriages (Attendance of Registrars) Act of 1898. The 1880 Burial Laws Amendment Act (extract at Appendix A), the influence of which on Nonconformist burial in civil cemeteries is discussed in Chapter 4, removed the requirement for an Anglican minister to officiate at Nonconformist burial ceremonies. Earlier, the Universities Tests Act of 1871 had allowed non-Anglicans to take up teaching appointments.

The early years of the twentieth century are frequently portrayed as the apogee of imperial power, prosperity and development; a period in which 'innocence could still be enjoyed' (Wilkinson 1986, 21). Dissenting populations may have been encouraged by the Welsh religious revival of 1904-05, and by political gains, but belief in institutional religion was already ebbing (Wilkinson 1986, 55), and would be further eroded by the carnage of the First World War.

In the years before 1914, there was an almost constant debate (Hughes 2015, 7) on the moral rectitude of bearing arms. Nevertheless, in 1914, great numbers of Nonconformists volunteered for military service, perhaps encouraged by Lloyd George (himself a Nonconformist from a Welsh-speaking family), and motivated by a belief that force could be justified in the defence of the poor and oppressed. Conscription, and the savagery of the First

World War forced the re-appraisal of many cherished beliefs and principles, not only of Nonconformists, but of much of the population in general. These factors were probably responsible for the loss of most of Nonconformism's particular character and independence, both already in decline. Denominational assimilation, which had begun in the Victorian period, took on renewed impetus, further affecting the individuality and independence of dissenting populations.

Summary

This chapter has described the origins of some religious convictions held by the Nonconforming denominations studied for this thesis; it will be discussed in later chapters whether there is any reflection of these earlier beliefs in epitaphic material. It might be reasonable to expect some references to other religious themes, such as judgement, forgiveness, redemption, the death of Christ, salvation and virtue, which are not, of course, exclusively Nonconformist indicators of morality or religion.

More than a century later than the period with which this study is concerned, it is difficult to deduce with any certainty if and how the influences of religious debate and developments of the time guided the principles and lives of those whose epitaphs are examined here, or of those who chose inscriptions and imagery on gravestones. It is probably safe to assume that few of them were theologians in the academic sense (and neither is the author of this thesis, which does not presume to trespass on that specialism, except in the widest sense).

Nevertheless, all the subjects of this study were buried or commemorated within a religious environment. Biblical and other religious sources were chosen in considerable numbers for epitaphs, and it seems therefore reasonable to infer that, at least, shared religion promoted social and behavioural adhesive to hold denominational communities together, provided some common cause, and offered comfort to the grieving, although there is evidence at all sample sites for a decline in the popularity of religious epigraphy over time.

Before these issues are examined in the context of individual graveyards, Chapter 3 considers how interest in gravestone studies has developed in the recent past, noting any examination of religious or personal themes inferred from the study of individual memorials, and discusses an increasing scholarly attention that Nonconformism has attracted during the current century.

CHAPTER 3

EPITAPHS AND INSCRIPTIONS: NEGLECTED DIMENSIONS OF MORTUARY ARCHAEOLOGY

Introduction

The treatment, disposal and memorialization of the dead body have generated sustained multi-disciplinary scrutiny, following a long tradition of antiquarian studies. This chapter does not review such sources, nor the extensive literature on medieval and early modern church monuments (Finch 1996, for instance), but focuses on late-modern studies which have applied systematic and interpretative approaches to mortuary commemoration. However, this material has tended to concentrate on the physical attributes of memorial media, gravestones in particular, and disregard that element of remembrance that offered the bereaved a unique and lasting opportunity to express their emotions and beliefs: their choice of epitaph.

Most of the material reviewed in this chapter has been published, broadly, in the last thirty years. There are, however, some exceptions, particularly where earlier work, some of which is descriptive and historical or art-historical in nature (Burgess 1963, for instance), continues to be recognised as a seminal contribution in its field; where earlier archaeological studies continue to be relevant, or where a discipline other than archaeology offers a compelling alternative view.

The dominant themes of the studies reviewed in this chapter focus on the interpretation of physical memorialisation: the appearance, material, design, form, and spatial organisation of gravestones, and biographical data of the dead. Conclusions from such studies have promoted theories about the dead: their social and economic standing; familial attitudes and a range of other attributes. However, discussion of developments in memorialisation in response to time, social mores, age, and gender of the dead was less forthcoming. Noticeably,

the challenges of discussing human attitudes and emotions associated with death and dying have only been attempted in the last twenty years or so.

In addition, the influence of religious affinity of the dead (where that could be determined) on choice of epitaph and iconography has been largely unexplored. Specifically, the memorial practices of religious dissenters have escaped examination, despite increasing redevelopment at redundant religious sites: the Archaeological Data Service grey literature website (ADS n.d.) includes over 1200 references, mainly watching briefs, to excavation at Nonconformist locations, many of which have yet to be fully evaluated and synthesised.

It was not until the 1990s that commentators began to focus on Nonconformism in its own right (Bellamy 1994; Mytum 1994, for instance), and only within the last ten years or so have the buildings, gravestones and burial practices of Nonconforming societies received appropriate, sustained and cohesive study. Some of these approaches are critiqued later in this chapter.

In order to position the material discussed in this chapter within modern mortuary approaches, this chapter is presented in four broad themes:

- developments in archaeological approaches to burial and memorialisation;
- gravestones as artefacts, social indicators, cultural icons and research sources;
- contemporary developments in the study of Nonconformist memorialisation;
- the immaterial elements of memorialisation: meaning, metaphor and emotion.

Throughout this chapter a range of disciplines have been evaluated, including history, religious study, literature and the social sciences, in order to include elements of contrasting opinion and flavour to the arguments presented here. Archaeological material predominates, and has been selected from evidence from both above- and below-ground syntheses, and from graveyard redevelopment reports. Post-medieval death and burial studies are foregrounded, together with reports on redevelopment of Nonconformist chapels and graveyards (for instance, Caffell and Clarke 2011; McCarthy *et al.* 2012). Although not specifically

examined in this study, some material discussing civic or other cemeteries has been included where a particularly insight was offered.

An extensive body of material exists on the development and religious history of Nonconformism in general, and of specific denominations, and is not reviewed in this chapter; however, contrasting denominational commemorative practices, and some historical background on the origins and beliefs of the denominations featured in this study has already been discussed in Chapter 2.

Developments in archaeological approaches to burial and memorialisation

As an example of the brief nature of archaeological involvement in chapel sites subject to redevelopment, a watching brief was conducted during the excavation of a redundant United Reform chapel in Reading (Bellamy 1994). No graveyard apparently existed; the memorial stones, twelve under the floor of the vestry and a further number in the corridor behind the chapel, were extensively catalogued (Bellamy 1994, 36-43). Epitaphs were not discussed, neither was there any comment on the unusual intramural burial of Nonconformist bodies, or whether the Reading chapel's earlier Presbyterian ownership had affected burial practices.

In one of the first anthologies of death and burial (described by the editor as 'embryonic') Cox (1998) reviewed the period 1700-1850, contrasting both Anglican and Nonconformist (Quaker) practices; no other dissenting denomination was featured. This choice of denomination is curious since Quakers generally eschewed the building of chapels, and the holding of services with music that appealed to other dissenting denominations.

Within this volume, Rugg (1998, 44-53) challenged the view that the introduction of urban cemeteries was a direct result of the unappealing state of urban churchyards and the only causal factor in the reform of burial practice, suggesting that other forces were influential; the desire for unconsecrated ground for Nonconformist burial; and the need to display status and social standing of urban populations, for instance. Rugg may have

overlooked, however, how the requirement for many urban cemeteries to be profit-making organisations (Overleigh was one) may have influenced their establishment.

In a further anthology edited by Tarlow and West, Buckham (1998, 199) made a case for the consideration of gravestones as both textual and historical evidence. In considering the tensions between ideology and what people of the time may have thought, Buckham contrasts memorial style, design and ornamentation, and the roles of social and economic drivers. Epitaphs and other textual evidence, which could however illustrate some of the theories propounded, were not examined.

In the following year, this anthology was complemented by a study (Tarlow 1999) less concerned with the form and meaning of gravestones, but more with how archaeology could deal with the hidden and transient dimensions of death and burial in the later historical period. Tarlow examines the complex and contradictory emotions of the bereaved; the use of formulaic language and metaphor to ease realities ('not dead, only sleeping'), and recognition of the continuing relationship between the living and the dead. Her approach to some of these controversial themes has generated unresolved debates on the relevance of emotion in archaeology, some of which are discussed below.

Building on a long series of published papers and investigations (Mytum 2004b) complemented an earlier volume on the practicalities of graveyard recording and analysis (Mytum 2000, discussed in the following section) and compared North American and European developments in physical and theoretical approaches to the study of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century graveyards. In this part-handbook, part-synthesis of monumental, social and theoretical issues, epitaphs are mentioned only briefly (Mytum 2004b, 80-81): there is no attempt to classify these inscriptions, or discussion of the significance of such texts to the understanding of relationships between the living and the dead.

Broader archaeological interest in the religious dimensions of mortuary practices emerged later. An edited anthology by King and Sayers (2011) examined the material worlds

of early-modern people through their religious affiliations, material culture and social experiences. This was among the first attempts to apply intensive scrutiny to Nonconformity as a separate element of Protestantism, and as a legitimate and unexploited subject in its own right. The studies of Nonconformist identity and culture (Mytum 2011, 145-163 and Powers and Miles, 2011, 233-248) in one volume added welcome and original texture; however, much of the argument is derived from below-ground archaeology, and less on the potential insights that text and decorative iconography could offer.

In further consideration of the 'cultural history of death and the dead body' (Tarlow 2011), ritual and belief was explored in a multi-disciplinary study encouraging archaeologists to consider dimensions beyond the physical and tangible. The focus is a 'cultural history of death and the dead body' (Tarlow 2011, 5) in the early-modern period. Personal beliefs, exemplified, for instance, by references to a bodily resurrection, might be examples of cognitive dissonance: the irrefutable physical evidence of the corruption of the dead body, in comparison to such sentiments as 'Memory's golden chain shall bind the hearts above to the hearts below till they meet and touch again'.

Such emotional expressions were not, however, the prerogative of 'low church sects' (Tarlow 2011, 198); the epitaph above was that of a man who died aged 37, and was buried at Overleigh cemetery in a family grave in 1891. By this stage, residual beliefs in a physical reunion had been largely diluted by the realities of cremation and other mortuary developments, to be replaced by briefer and less expressive epitaphs such as 'Re-united'.

A further example of contemporary interest in contrasting burial practices (Cherryson *et al.* 2012) discusses treatment of the dead body, but also examined denominational preferences: in the case of Nonconformists, for burial in unconsecrated ground (Cherryson *et al.* 2012, 89-91). The expansion of chapel burial grounds and subsequent effects on burial landscapes are also examined. While the author argues that, in the period under review (sixteenth to nineteenth centuries), it became socially acceptable for burial at sites other than church graveyards, other factors are not examined; increasing populations, and the march of

secularism, for instance, were probably equally influential. It is also likely that burial patterns were affected by the *lack* of other-denominational burial space, since urban chapel graveyards in particular, from about the mid-1900s, were increasingly vulnerable to redevelopment.

In an examination of the varied nature of cultural responses to death, and the treatment and memorialisation of the dead body (Tarlow and Stutz 2013), the legitimacy of studying emotional response and its influence on the material world form a compendium that brings together current thinking on archaeological engagement with mortuary and commemorative practices, and introduces some challenging interpretations of the nature of religious and personal belief (Tarlow 2013, 61-63). Exploring the complex ways in which religion has affected treatment of the dead body, Tarlow calls for recognition that the belief structures of others are valuable and appropriate subjects for archaeological examination and are not invalidated by the beliefs, or non-beliefs of the researcher. Kirk makes a related point (2016, 402) in his call for writing that allows for reflection on personal feelings. However, Kirk recognises that attempts to capture the emotional responses of past individuals invite criticism that such endeavours lack legitimate analytical rigour; in the context of this thesis, for instance, it was impossible to be confident that the commemorated dead shared the religious beliefs of the denomination among whose adherents they were buried. Consensus has not yet been achieved, and may always be elusive.

In a further edited volume (Tarlow 2015), predominately featuring international perspectives of below-ground archaeology, earlier work on memorial media (Mytum 2000, 2004a; Tarlow and Stutz eds. 2013) was reviewed, the editor maintaining that much of post-medieval burial archaeology has not developed much beyond the level of the site report (Tarlow 2015, 5). The recommendation that every element of commemorative monuments - text, imagery, form and design - should be considered legitimate sources for interpreting attitudes to death is particularly innovative.

Referencing the role of religion in mortuary practice, Tarlow (2015, 2) also argued for wider consideration of the power of the major religions, Catholicism and Protestantism in Western Europe in particular, a power not confined to the burial of the body, but also to its commemoration. These two dimensions of Tarlow's argument have encouraged the engagement of this thesis with the memorial habits of societies not observing the rubrics and rituals of the major religions.

The literature reviewed in this section has examined developing archaeological engagement with death and memorialisation in the historical period, focusing in particular on:

- below-ground watching briefs and excavation reports, with an emphasis on redevelopment of Nonconformist graveyards;
- contemporary writing engaging with the nature of feeling and personal belief

There has been little engagement with epitaphic and other textual information in the material reviewed above; however, the following section examines some approaches to burial and commemoration, and indicates where some material, epitaphic elements in particular, have been under-exploited.

Gravestones as artefacts, memorial media, cultural icons and research sources

Among the first to record, describe and classify the memorials of English (and Welsh) churchyards was Frederick Burgess (1963), whose work was felt by the Church Monuments Society (CMS 2017) to be 'the best book on the subject'. Burgess aimed to focus on the memorials of ordinary people rather than higher-status individuals; a source of study which he felt, with justification, to have been largely ignored. His study covers the period 2500BC-AD1900, and calls for the systematic recording of churchyard memorial media (Burgess 1963, 12) in order to rescue them, and art of their stonemasons, from the processes of oblivion. Memorials in civic cemeteries are mentioned only in passing, Burgess seemingly offended by 'Victorian excesses of sentiment and bathos' (Burgess 1963, 229), which were

not, however, the exclusive prerogative of civil cemeteries, many such examples being found in church and chapel burial grounds.

The compass of the volume is rather wider in scope than the title might suggest; some Welsh churchyard memorials are included, and considerable mention is made of prehistoric and later monumental practices and artefacts well before English churchyards were organised in the form recognisable today. Despite Burgess's discussion of memorial media which are neither churchyard nor English in origin, he does not offer any discussion of Nonconformist memorial practices and preferences, although the influence of Methodism (Burgess 1963, 165-6) upon gravestone imagery - particularly depictions of salvation and resurrection - is briefly noted. Which branch of Methodism Burgess focused on was not identified.

Although there is no attempt to offer interpretations of gravestone imagery in terms of choice, location or meaning, Burgess's descriptions and illustrations of imagery designs are comprehensive and accessible. One of the strengths of this work is the compilation of inscriptions and epitaphs, which he treats thematically, but does not attempt, except in limited instances, to attribute to a religious, literary or narrative source. It is hard to avoid the impression that these examples were chosen because they were interesting or quaint, best illustrated by epitaphs relating to a range of (male) trades and occupations, including squire, waggoner and ratcatcher. None of these examples appear to bear epitaphs or inscriptions of a religious or devotional nature.

A less traditional approach was taken by Curl (1972). In a widely-cited study of the Victorian way of death, the author takes an historical overview of the establishment of British garden cemeteries and memorials as an exemplar of a radical reform movement within the liberalising ethos of the time, a time of 'faith and doubt' (Curl 1972, 179). The author was an architectural historian and member of the Society of Antiquaries of both London and Scotland; landscape design and the style and design of monuments and gravestones were major interests.

The volume's title, however, is deceptive. Curl does not discuss the influence of conflicting mores and pressures in other Victorian loci - churchyards and other burial grounds for instance - nor contrast memorial practices in these locations. As with other authors, the interpretative potential of gravestone epitaphs or imagery is overlooked.

However, in a study of regional decorative styles Brears, (1981) examined heart imagery on some two hundred sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Yorkshire parish church gravestones, aiming to identify masons and craftsmen. While the latter objective remained largely unfulfilled, nevertheless the interpretative attention paid to imagery is unusual for a work of the period. Brears discusses the use of the heart motif in western Yorkshire as a symbol of the soul (Brears 1981, 84), as well as its more general use as a love token, but the motif is not interpreted as an agent or depiction of personal grief, or metaphorically as 'broken-heartedness'.

Continuing with the Yorkshire context, Ellison (1993) applied an archaeological focus to memorials in two York burial grounds, aiming to infer local population trends and life-styles from a range of churchyard memorials: it seems to be assumed that all are of Anglican provenance. Discussion is predominately focused on historical development of the location, and the personal and social attributes of the buried population. However, in a call for further studies of iconography and sentiment, the author does not consider the potential of epitaphic material to contribute a broader interpretation.

Bringing method and structure to the study of graves and burial sites, Mytum (2000) rapidly became a standard handbook and reference work for graveyard archaeologists, students and interest groups, and the first to provide a comprehensive overview and classification of memorial type, imagery, inscription and epitaph, including recommendations for recording and planning techniques (superseded, however, by modern IT techniques). Mainly because of its practical focus, there is little scope for interpretation of, for example, attitudes to death and dying, which were addressed in later publications, Mytum (2004a and 2004b) for instance.

Also in 2000, Ames surveyed nineteenth- and early twentieth-century gravestones in an American cemetery to discuss the vocabulary of death in an ‘anti-city of open spaces’, inferring hierarchical social order, family and kinship and the denial of death from memorial dimensions and form; a limited sample of primary inscriptions (‘In loving memory’), and some imagery and decoration. The author promoted the theory that suggested ideologies and meanings could be extracted from an environment chosen by the living to foster some reconciliation with the deaths of others.

Ames suggests that attempts to defy the permanence of death can be seen in the search for some potentially-permanent material (zinc and granite, for instance) for grave markers, interpreting these actions as a denial of the inevitability of our own mortality; an antidote to the human fear that we shall simply disappear at death, or hopes of some form of future (Ames 2000, 654). While Ames’ willingness to discern the metaphysical in material elements of mourners’ choices is refreshing, however, issues of affordability, practicability and availability of memorial material would also have required resolution by the bereaved, and may have been equally influential.

Also within an American context, gravestones and inscriptions inform an examination of New England attitudes to death and commemoration in the late seventeenth- to early nineteenth-centuries (Nelson and Hume George 2000) as part of a wider remit devoted to art and popular culture. Both imagery and epitaph are examined, leading to the suggestion that developments, particularly in the replacement of skull motifs (one of which has a remarkably heart-shaped outline) by cherubs can be interpreted as changes in cultural, religious and social values (Nelson and Hume George 2000, 637). One of the main strength of this monograph is the attention paid to the wholeness of the memorial, as the authors examine both the source of the epitaph and the textual ambiguities required in a socially acceptable statement of mourning and loss, urging the reader to consider image and epitaph as one work of remembrance.

Buckham (2003) discussed memorials in a York garden cemetery established in 1837. As at Overleigh cemetery, a spatial divide between consecrated and unconsecrated ground was provided; the latter the original preserve of dissenting burials. From a sample of gravestones from both areas, the majority of which were headstones, Buckham challenged earlier studies that sought to establish the hierarchical and class-regulated organisation of such sites (Buckham 2003, 166), and argued that memorial choices by the middle classes were not indicative of ambitions to foster and maintain social authority.

Buckham's work is among the first to identify and examine memorial practices of Nonconforming denominations: Baptists, Methodists (of unknown affiliation), Presbyterians and Congregationalists - by coincidence, the four denominations chosen for this thesis. She found no discernible difference in choices of gravestone design, but noted the apparent freedom of choice of memorial permitted in York (as at Overleigh). However, inter-burial in previously-reserved areas, as a result of pressure on space is not examined; this factor can be crucial in establishing a defensible sample. No epitaphs were examined or interpreted, however, which represents a significant barrier to interpretation.

Mallios and Caterino (2011) surveyed a number of San Diego County (Southern California) nineteenth- and twentieth-century cemeteries to suggest that choice of gravestone, in particular size, material and imagery, were influenced by socio-economic factors, such as extreme weather events and health epidemics, and especially the losses of the First World War. The authors relate their findings to the Victorian period in the UK, which, encouraged by the prolonged mourning of its sovereign, was one of 'celebration of sorrow' (Mallios and Caterino 2011, 432). It is noted that later years were characterised by the choice of smaller and cheaper memorials and less-effusive language and imagery, but influences of secularisation and industrialisation on this process were not considered.

Although this paper provides a further international comparator, epitaphic material is not explored. This deficiency hinders any comparison with the adoption of holophrastic phrases such as 'Re-united' in the United Kingdom later in the period, and which

increasingly replaced earlier elaborate and didactic epitaphs. Moreover, the concentration by the authors on the size and type of memorial does not permit any recognition of the influence of religious affiliation that might be inferred from inscriptions and imagery on individual memorials, nor in the data as a whole.

The authors contend that memorials of the early twentieth century became generally less lavish than their predecessors in a demonstration of the ‘avoidance of death’ (Mallios and Caterino 2011, 456), and that Victorian choice of tall and highly decorated memorials is a gesture of popular ‘defiance and arrogance’ toward death (2011, 431). As in the United Kingdom, however, there may have been other practical, personal, and social factors at work, which remained unexplored.

With the exception of Buckham (2003), the examples examined above have in common few references to Nonconforming communities or epitaphic practices. Within the current century, however, there have been signs of increasing engagement with the lives, beliefs and mortuary practices of these under-studied populations, although epitaphic material, however, continues to be under-explored. A sample of the most significant studies is reviewed in the following section.

Memorialising the Nonconformist dead

While an extensive literature exists on the origins, history, religious beliefs and practices of religious Nonconformism as a movement, and of individual dissenting denominations, it is, perhaps, only in the last forty years that memorial practices of Nonconforming societies have been acknowledged and studied, particularly in the present century. Contrasts in denominational memorial practice, however, still largely awaits more comprehensive study. This section begins with some examples of earlier approaches to Nonconformist memorialisation.

In 1966, prior to redevelopment of the site, part of the former Unitarian Chapel and graveyard in Cirencester was the subject of desk-based assessment and field evaluation

(Barber 1966), one of an increasing number of such reports as chapels closed and were re-developed. Unitarianism has no rigid religious dogma but advocates freedom of individual belief (British Broadcasting Corporation n.d.[a]). Archived burial records relating to this site (1750-1801 and 1822-1860) are entitled ‘The Old Presbyterian Meeting House in Cirencester’ (Barber 1966, 26); perhaps this chapel was originally one of a number of Presbyterian chapels in the ‘Unitarian fold’ (Richey 1973, 71) that subsequently changed hands. The report does not comment on any memorial changes such a development may have encouraged, nor is any epitaphic material discussed at all.

In Pembrokeshire, Mytum (1994) contrasted how differing religious denominations memorialised their dead in an examination of the use of the Welsh language on headstones in a number of Anglican and Nonconformist graveyards to the north and south of the Landsker. Mytum defines this area as the cultural division between those Welsh locations that retained their own traditions compared with those more susceptible to influence from England. This study is one of the first to examine differences in denominational memorial practices, and to consider motifs and wording of gravestones as an integrated whole.

However, from a sample of over four thousand headstones, only five inscriptions from pedimented stones are itemised; none of the Welsh language examples were translated. Thus, the language of memorialisation is examined, but not what the language might convey. However, Mytum compares introductory phrases such as the English ‘In memory of’ compared with the Welsh ‘Er cof am’ (‘salutations’ in this thesis), indicating a promising dimension for investigation not, however, fully exploited in the article.

Geographical location and cultural differences in Pembrokeshire were held (Mytum 1994, 264) to be responsible for the particular use of Welsh or English. Certainly, memorial language in burial grounds closer to the Welsh/English border is more likely to be subject to English influence. However, denominational influences on memorial language, not extensively discussed in Mytum’s paper, should not be overlooked. To illustrate, while English is the only language of remembrance at Congregationalist Buckley (Chapter 6), at

Penycae Groes Calvinistic Methodist chapel (Chapter 7) the Welsh language predominates, with some bi-lingual examples. Both sites are within sixteen kilometres of the border with England.

Mytum (1999) built on his 1994 study in a survey of a number of nineteenth-century Anglican and Nonconformist graveyards in Wales, to examine the prevalence of bilingualism, by denomination and by period, in introductory phrases, inscriptions and epitaphs. Specifically, he categorised inscriptions from the Bible into Old and New Testaments, with chapter and verse numbers, to assess consumption of such texts, and as references to death and suffering (Mytum 1999, 220). Other texts relating to religion have been interpreted in his paper as indicating a wide knowledge of the Bible, a natural effect of the key role of Bible meetings and Sunday School, particularly among Nonconformists. However, other religious sources, such as hymns or prayers, were not included in the analysis, but the paper indicted the interpretive possibilities of such elements.

Significantly, this study compares contrasting Welsh Nonconformist commemorative practices, and suggests that commemorative textual material and the source of the epitaph can contribute to debates on death and religion. The author expanded his interest in the memorial choices of minority religions, particularly those of Nonconformist populations in a further study of regional burial grounds (Mytum 2002a), which compared a range of Anglican churchyards and Nonconformist burial grounds in north Pembrokeshire, dating between 1810 and 1970.

These Nonconformist sites were the largest in the area, including Independent (later known as Congregationalist) and Baptist burials. Some smaller denominations were included in the study. Mytum considered memorial design, language and material to suggest denominational preferences and changes in taste and investment (Mytum 2002a, 234) over time, although a greater contrast might have been made if the study had included such factors as gender and age of the dead.



Fig. 3.1 Obelisks at Bwylchgwyn Bethesda Welsh Wesleyan graveyard from the west

Mytum's suggestion (2002a, 221) that tall pedestal monuments in western Wales could denote Nonconformist affiliation was not corroborated in east Wales during the research for this thesis; although all graveyards visited contained some tall pedestals, they were not generally preferred. Perhaps, again, denominational choice is influential: Figure 3.1 above illustrates part of a Welsh Wesleyan graveyard where such designs predominated. Although Mytum is among the first to suggest that home addresses on gravestones (Mytum 2002a, 197) are signifiers of habitus, and of personal and social identity, this dimension is not taken forward in his paper, inhibiting any possible comparison with the practices of the Penycae Calvinistic Methodists, where the most numerous, nuanced and descriptive addresses were noted.

Mytum's study concluded that material and other cultural contrasts between Anglicans and other denominations were slight, although some contrasting styles of gravestone were noted in Nonconformist burial grounds. The preference of Anglicans for crosses, as a possible indicator of high church observances, is suggested (Mytum 2002a, 222), challenging earlier views that the cross was too 'papistical for English usage' (Morley 1970, 7). However, incised crosses or cruciform symbols such as quatrefoils are not considered in Mytum's paper. This is a significant omission, since these motifs are subtle indications of Christian identity; redemption or victory over death (Rancour-Laferriere 2010, 135), or imply protective or apotropaic functions.

Although depictions of the cross may be rare in Nonconformist circles (Petts 2011, 475-476), in a number of guises - carvings and finials for instance - quatrefoils appear on gravestones, chapel buildings and fittings. These symbols are also decorative in nature and can resemble flowers. That they are subtle and lack the immediate visual impact of the elevated cross memorial does not justify their exclusion from consideration, nor suggest that they are always secular in nature.

The feature below (Figure 3.2) at Tallarn Green Primitive Methodist chapel, familiarly known by the congregation as the 'rose window', suggests that consumption of cruciform iconography by some Nonconformists was more frequent and nuanced than the choice of gravestone design alone. It is also noteworthy that the quatrefoil window at Tallarn Green is positioned over the original main entrance of the chapel, conveying some perhaps unconscious apotropaic intention; there are further quatrefoils in the glazing of the main doors. Mytum's paper does not discuss such subtleties.



Fig. 3.2 'Rose window' at Tallarn Green Primitive Methodist Chapel looking east

More significantly, Mytum may have underestimated the number of unidentified Nonconformist bodies in his sample of Anglican burial grounds. This is a common conundrum for researchers of Nonconformist mortuary practices (for instance, Sayer 2011a, 206; Sayer 2011b, 122). It is also possible that Anglicans were buried in Nonconformist graveyards at times of crisis, or for personal convenience (“we bury anybody” Rev. Nic Willis, Minister at Tarporley Baptist church pers. comm.). Whether an ecumenical attitude to other-denominational burial was observed in the past is as difficult to evaluate now as is the number of Nonconformists lying in Anglican graveyards, but the possibility should not be ignored.

Stone (2009) examined imported grave markers in a seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Long Island environment to identify the demonstration of ideological and ethnic choice. About 67% of the sample represented Nonconformists, among ten ethnic groups and

nine recognisable religious sects (Stone 2009, 157). Again, it is predominately the study of gravestone styles and motifs that informs Stone's conclusion that contrasts between the differing cultural groups can be identified through variations in language, particularly that of Dutch within an English sphere of influence, somewhat analogous to the occasional use of English on memorials in a Welsh environment. However, in a rare examination of gender, Stone examines references to Dutch and English wives, the latter being mainly anonymous, a factor attributed to the greater personal and educational freedom enjoyed by Dutch and Quaker women.

Accompanying illustrations selected by Stone suggest that there were few epitaphs on the sample gravestones. While this is a significant finding in itself which is not examined in the article, epitaphs and inscriptions are usually as revealing as factual information about the dead. The absence of epitaphs may have been due to cultural or denominational practice at the time; or sample size, or choice of illustration by the author, and arguments about cultural choice would have been advanced by considering some of these dimensions.

Within both Anglican and Nonconforming communities, Beckerlegge (2010, 61-72) examined expressions of faith in the epitaphs of those influenced by the preaching of John Wesley (1703-1791) and by the hymns of his brother Charles (1707-1788). The research field covers much of the United Kingdom, particularly chapels and churches in Cornwall, and memorials in York cemetery, including examples from the late eighteenth- to the early twentieth-centuries.

While the paper is a contribution to the study of epitaphs, it forms a general narrative and does not claim to be an analytical discourse. Nevertheless, some comment on the apparent gender imbalance between female epitaphs (48), male (35) and children (16), would have been illuminating. Since Cornwall was a particular focus of Nonconformism, some discussion of the influence of regional practices would also have been appropriate.

In a further example of contemporary interest in comparative studies of regional Nonconformism, Sayer (2011a) compared Methodist graves in Berkshire and

Gloucestershire, to Anglican examples in a Reading planned cemetery, investigating simplicity or complexity of design as expressions of identity. The study period of 1880-1920, used Tarlow (1999) as a benchmark, although Sayer did not produce comparable evidence of either imagery or inscriptions on the memorials.

There are some issues with Sayer's methodological approach. It is not clear from which branch of Methodism Sayer (2011a, 115) drew his sample. The use of the general term 'Methodist' obscures the highly schismatic nature of early Methodism during and after John Wesley's life. Primitive Methodists parted from Wesleyanism in 1811, forming the Primitive Methodist Connexion (Bowker 1997, 768 and Chapter 2 of this thesis). Similarly, the Calvinistic Methodists, who broke from Wesleyanism in 1742 (Hattersley 2002, 176), later to become the Presbyterian Church of Wales, became the most numerous Nonconforming denomination in Wales, having 1372 chapels and 122,167 communicants by 1882 (Williams 1998, 234).

Employing the general descriptor, therefore, suggests an homogenous body with common liturgy, policies and memorial practices; an situation that would not have been recognised by early Victorian Nonconformists, whose disinclination for inter-denominational union suggests a lack of the 'shared religious identity' promoted by Sayer (2011a, 131), who does not comment on pressures for denominational union, usually for pragmatic reasons, that arose later in the period. This thesis contends that pre-union denominational memorial differences existed (and some survived unionism) and can be identified to suggest contrasts in memorial practices.

Sayer (2011a, 22) notes how 'the rarity of Nonconformist burial sites' affects studies of this nature. Certainly, when potential graveyards were being identified for this thesis, in Cheshire (as well as North Wales, as Sayer discovered) most Wesleyan chapels lacked a graveyard (a subject ripe for investigation in its own right), and were more likely to be sited in urban or built-up locations. This made them prime targets for re-development as congregations declined. This was certainly the case at Tarporley (Chapter 8).

Primitive Methodism's penetration into North Wales was slight, apart from locations such as Tallarn Green, Broughton and Dodleston close to a fluid Anglo-Welsh border. Nevertheless, there was (and is) no shortage of surviving Primitive Methodist and other denominational burial grounds in the border counties of England and Wales; where the chapel building has been demolished or converted to other uses, the graveyard usually survives.

Sayer's interpretation of developing trends in memorial variation is based on the date, decoration (defined as incised or embossed motifs in the surface of the stone) and design (Sayer 2011a, 123) of sample gravestones; a variation of the Mytum (2000) gravestone typology was used as a basis to illustrate conclusions. No inscriptions or epitaphs were used to construct arguments or to corroborate findings; material which has great potential for the expression of Nonconforming identity, personal conviction and religious affinity.

An increase in decorated memorials after 1880 is interpreted as a reaction to the greater freedom of expression for Nonconforming populations created by the passing of the 1880 Burial Act. Sayer contrasts this (2011a, 131) with a perceived Nonconformist preference for 'stylistic simplicity' before this date to demonstrate religious identity. However, this argument does not take into account factors such as the industrialisation of gravestone production in the nineteenth century under which gravestone design and epigraphy became standardised and probably cheaper.

The issues of identification which arise from the burial of Nonconformists in Anglican graveyards, usually without attribution or record, are noted (Sayer 2011a, 122). However, Sayer, like Mytum (2002a), does not consider whether Anglicans and others buried in Nonconformist burial space was a possibility, and whether this factor might affect his sample. It was not uncommon, in civic cemeteries, for increasing demand to cause separate-area burial distinctions to break down some years after establishment, causing other-denominational burial in unconsecrated ground set aside for Nonconformists; it is unclear whether this was a factor at Reading. However, it would be harsh to be too critical of Sayer's

methodology in view of the unresolved challenges of identifying Nonconformist memorials at Overleigh cemetery (Chapter 4).

Sayer co-edited, with King (2011b), a comprehensive synthesis of post-medieval religion, examining how religious beliefs and observances in the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries developed in an environment of growing religious and cultural pluralism. Noting the predominance of memorial typology studies in historical archaeology, the editors called for a wider locational and topographical approach (King and Sayer 2011, 2) to religious places and practices, encouraging the consideration of physical, social and economic dynamics and how such forces shaped, or were shaped by, religion and society of the time.

This volume focuses on the place of Nonconformism in religious, familial, social and built environments. Shared values of simplicity and austerity are posited for the design and organisation of graveyards, although Sayer does not consider whether church and chapel rebuilding might have altered the original placement of graves. Shared values are also held to be responsible for memorials (Sayer 2011b, 205) and for the relative size, design and decoration of Nonconforming places of worship, compared to those of Anglican churches.

This may have been the case earlier in the nineteenth century for a number of reasons; nevertheless, the appearance and decoration of some chapels became noticeably more ornate later in the century (Rushton 2012); with a seeming preference among the new bourgeoisie of some denominations for buildings that resembled parish churches (Watts 2015, 111).

This trend is illustrated in both urban and rural places of Nonconformist worship in England and Wales: the 1875 Congregationalist Church in Upper Northgate Street, Chester (Figure 3.3) is one such example.

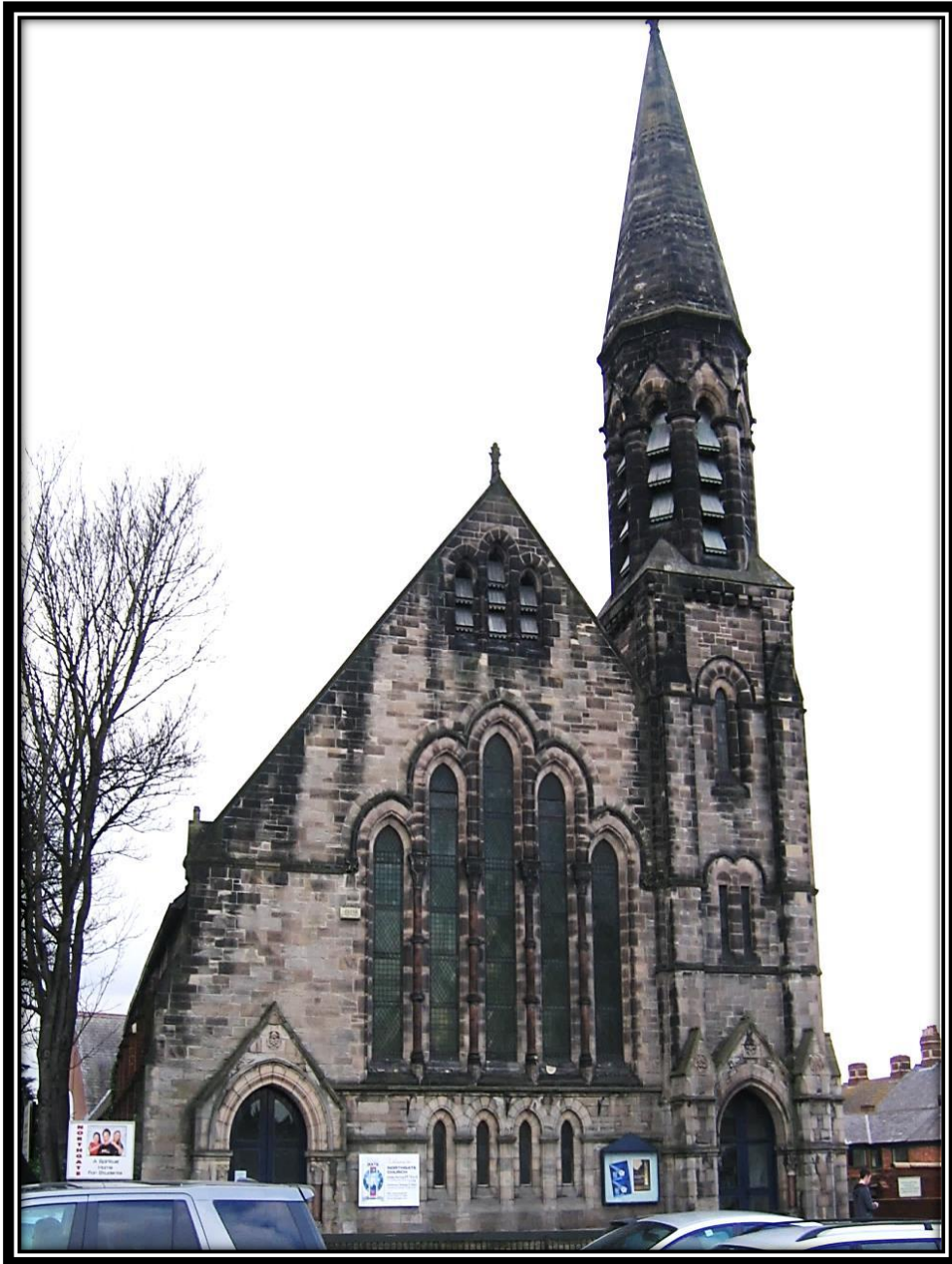


Fig. 3.3 Congregational Church, 1875, Upper Northgate Street, Chester, from the east

However, not all Nonconformists succumbed to this fashion; there may have been financial issues for some Primitive Methodists who were slower to undertake chapel modernisation; for instance, the second chapel at Brown Knowl was not finished until 1913, and where the design for a false campanile on the new building, for instance, was not implemented (Chapter 5). As further evidence, the chapel at Tallarn Green was established in 1893, in succession to the local Temperance hall.

Contemporary with King and Sayers' anthology, Mytum (2011) authored a comparative analysis exercise in cross-border and inter-denominational religious environments, assessing contrasts between Welsh (Pembrokeshire) and Manx memorial practices. Drawing upon his 2002 Pembrokeshire data, distinctions between Nonconformist denominations, and between Wesleyan and Primitive Methodism, were analysed to explore the relative dominance of Wesleyanism on the Isle of Man, although it would appear that, in terms of congregation size, (Mytum 2011, 155) the Primitive faithful were not far behind (7394 to 5538).

Since the notoriously fallible 1851 Religious Census was the source of these attendance figures, there is room for some scepticism. The author admits, for instance, that some Wesleyan and Primitive Methodist places of worship had been, for unknown reasons, omitted from the census. Nevertheless, examination of some of the differences between two of the major strands of Methodism is an encouraging development in the study of denominational contrasts.

Welsh language inscriptions on some Pembroke memorials were examined to explore both contrasts in introductory phrasing that referenced memory or the body, and the frequency of bilingualism on Welsh gravestones, although Mytum did not investigate why this linguistic practice occurred. Unfortunately, the common issue of the burial of Nonconformist bodies in Manx Anglican churchyards, and the poor survival of identifiably Nonconformist memorials, prohibited any comparative study of the Manx language or phrasing, although, as at Penycae, translation of inscriptions from the vernacular would have been challenging.

Continuing with Nonconforming-specific studies, Caffell and Clarke (2011) excavated some sixty-three eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century graves of General Baptists at Priory Yard, Norwich, suggesting that the buried population represented a lower socio-economic class suffering from poverty and poor nutrition (Caffell and Clarke 2011, 258-264), attributed to the economic and social conditions of Norwich at the time. It was not,

apparently, possible to corroborate these findings by contrasting a non-specific population of the same period. It would appear that no inscriptions or epitaphs were considered, if they had survived at all.

Caffell and Clarke's study illustrates the major arguments put forward in this chapter: that inscriptions and epitaphs can convey rich complexities of meaning, and that these sources are being lost, frequently with little archaeological attention or interpretation, by erosion and redevelopment. However, recent innovative thinking on death and memorial practices has engaged with the validity of meaning and emotion to archaeology, including, on occasions, consideration of the contribution of epitaphic material to deeper interpretation. While the debate is still fluid, the paragraphs below consider how some commentators have approached these challenging elements of mortuary practice.

Memory, meaning and emotion

The deaths of others and the contemplation of personal mortality are among the most emotionally-charged of human experiences. When someone dies, complex choices can involve negotiation by and among the bereaved. Potential tensions can include memorial design and size, imagery, inscription, cost and location of the burial. These issues are usually invisible in the archaeological record; when the dead seem to be 'speaking', their voices are mediated through the choices of the living (although Jonathon Catherall at Buckley chose his own memorial and epitaph a year before he died).

The choice of memorial elements in one physical artefact allows and encourages the bereaved to keep alive memories of the dead, and to express and illustrate emotions, religious beliefs and social attitudes within recognised and socially-validated circumstances. Empathetic contributions from other bereaved people, and visitors to the grave, permit the expression of emotion to be recognised, interpreted and emphasised. These contributory dimensions of human behaviour are challenging to interpret, and it is only within the last twenty years or so that sustained attempts to do so have been made.

In 1998, Tarlow (1998a) examined the physicalities of bodily decomposition in the depiction of death in both imagery and inscriptions on eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Orkney gravestones, to debate emotional attitudes to the decaying body of a loved person. The author argues that, although images and descriptions of death (and violent death in particular) are commonplace in the media today, we have become insulated from the practicalities of dealing with dead bodies (Tarlow 1998a, 184), delegating such duties to health workers and undertakers. Her argument might have been enlarged to comment on our modern reluctance to engage with all sorts of death - the sanitised remains of food animals in supermarket packaging, for instance - at a time when we seem to be being encouraged to emote at all times and in all circumstances, and can be thought unfeeling if we do not.

Tarlow notes that disassociation with the dead body can be seen in changes to the Orkney sample, illustrated by the disappearance of symbols and epitaphs denoting fear of the death and corporeality of the dead body in the modern West, particularly from about the end of the eighteenth century. The author argues that these memorial conventions have been replaced by emotional expressions of loss, and grief at enforced separation, encouraging an increased use of metaphors of sleep and rest to suggest or look forward to a future reunion of separated individuals. However, this is not a modern sensibility. Thus Prospero (whose 'every third thought shall be my grave'):

We are such stuff as dreams are made on, and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep. (The Tempest, Act 1V, Scene 1 in Kermode 1964)

Developing this theme of the complex nature of human responses to death, Tarlow (1998b, 39) proposes that the gravestone, and any inscriptions and motifs chosen for it, should not be interpreted in traditional socio-economic terms suggesting emulation of one's betters. Equally, it need not be primarily suggestive of the social standing, aspirations or material wealth of either the deceased or the bereaved. She argues that, since the eighteenth century, the gravestone has evolved to negotiate feelings; to demonstrate a natural desire of the bereaved and others to visit the grave, and the acknowledgement of a personal

relationship between particular people; some living, some dead, in a socially-approved (even encouraged) format and environment.

However, Tarlow does not consider how memorial epitaphs - or the absence of such - offer the opportunity for displays of emotional expression by individual mourners, and how such epitaphs can indicate where cultural or religious affiliation has imposed some social or religious conformity. The potential value of attempting such interpretations has been both the focus of this thesis as a whole, and this chapter in particular, although the complexities of pursuing this approach (Chapter 4) can be formidable.

In terms of archaeological procedure, Tarlow (1998b, 43) recognises the challenge of devising sound methodology to approach emotions generated by death, and by tensions attending our knowledge of the inevitability of our own deaths, but argues that neglecting this vital dimension of behaviour at a time of significant personal stress inhibits a fuller understanding of human behaviour. However, she does not explore how negative emotions - reactions to the less-appealing aspects of the deceased's character, for instance - might be identified and examined. Since memory is always selective, individuals will choose which memories to remember and which to forget (Meskell 2008, 232). For instance, 'Dearly beloved husband of...' might disguise decades of marital discord that mourners, understandably, would choose to ignore or forget. There may also be distant echoes of the power of the dead among traditional societies to engender fear (Parker Pearson 1999, 25).

Tarlow returns to the challenges of recognising and researching emotion in archaeology; describing how she is 'groping towards' (Tarlow 2000, 739) formulating some appropriate methods of writing about the expression of emotion in all its variety. In defending archaeological attempts to try to do so despite the inherent difficulties, she argues that not all archaeologies need, or ought, to consider emotional dimensions, but suggests that where there is scope for an identifiable and justifiable emotional element in the study area, attempts to engage with it should not be suppressed. While Tarlow did not allude to religious affiliations in this article, this thesis will indicate where religious and other references chosen by

individuals, some united by a common religious affiliation, can express extreme feelings at a time of death and separation, negotiating the realities of death by the use of metaphor, described as being ‘informed by emotional values and meanings at a cultural level’ (Tarlow 2000, 728).

No such metaphors commemorated unbaptised babies and other marginalised individuals buried in *cillini* - unconsecrated post-medieval sites for bodies deemed unsuitable for churchyard burial by the Roman Catholic Church. Murphy (2011) investigated these sites both in the far west of the Irish Republic, and in Northern Ireland; some of these unauthorised perhaps clandestine, burials were located at liminal sites: crossroads, deserted religious sites and prehistoric tombs. In some *cillini*, memorial media in the form of metal crosses or stone markers survived, while the absence of headstones (and potential epitaphs) was interpreted as an indication of relative familial poverty.

In the absence of legible emotional expression at these sites, however, Murphy suggests that parental anguish and need for appropriate funerary observances can be detected in the deposition of white stones and grave furnishings and, occasionally, grave-goods in the form of stone figurines, resembling a swaddled child, within the grave assemblage. These practices occurred at a time of opposition by both the Roman Catholic and Anglican Churches to formal funerary rites and commemoration of the unbaptised dead infant; whether such opposition represents echoes of an archaic fear of the unshriven soul is not discussed. It has been estimated (Jones 1976, 305) that opposition to other-burial continued in England into the nineteenth century.

Tarlow (2012) returned to the contentious issue of negotiating emotion in archaeology by exploring some methodological differences between the study of the archaeologist’s own human response to situations and artefacts, and the study of emotion experienced in the past, arguing that some consensus between disciplines could be achieved if there could be some agreement on what constitutes an emotion. In this wide-ranging review of competing multi-disciplinary approaches to emotion, Tarlow suggests that literature on the archaeology of

emotion and affect (defined as a determining factor in thought and action) is both of quite recent provenance and under-studied. She contends that these two factors might be largely responsible for tensions (2012,169) between, for instance, psychological approaches (which understand emotion as a biological and bodily experience common to humans) and constructivism, which maintains that particular emotional states, and thus the material evidence it produces, are a cultural construct.

In particular, Tarlow suggests that use of language and dependence on the evidence of the written word are responsible for the continuation of differences between the ways in which archaeologists and historians approach the emotional lives of past people and societies (Tarlow 2012, 180). However, it is difficult to see how competing views within these disciplines can be reconciled. The written word cannot be avoided, even if, like Humpty Dumpty, we use a word to mean what we choose it to mean. Whether the study of memorial practices lies within the compass of history or archaeology, it is impossible not to be frustratingly aware that what is left to be read and interpreted is not representative of all emotions within the common 'cultural emotional context' (Tarlow 2012,175) of grief and loss.

Suggesting some strategies to aid identification of metaphor and emotions such as fear, hope and love, Tarlow concludes that there is potential for archaeology and other disciplines to move forward in the recognition of the variability of emotion and its expression. While this suggestion is promising, the potential for making things up, over-emoting or indulging in personal introspection would need to be acknowledged. We do, however, have to respect the medium through which an emotion may be being expressed by others. To paraphrase Tarlow (2012, 181) the least interesting thing about a burial ground is that (usually) it has gravestones. The most interesting thing is what memorial information can tell us about social, cultural, historic and emotional environments of the people buried there.

Some of Tarlow's work (1999 and 2012) is referenced in Cannon and Cook (2015), a psychology-based theoretical perspective ('attachment theory') applied to an analysis of

Victorian burials of infants and children under the age of three in Anglican burial grounds in Cambridgeshire. The authors suggest a broad relationship between physical commemoration of the child on the memorial, and the emotional investment, or coping strategies, of the parents (2015, 399). This approach is used to suggest variability and developments in memorial practice, taking into account reductions in infant mortality over the period.

The authors contend that archaeological efforts to detect emotional investment in mortuary practices have been undermined, in most cases, by dependence on textual sources - a broad and undefined term in this paper - and by a lack of theoretical underpinnings. However, Cannon and Cook do not cite arguments put forward in Tarlow (2013), but base their theories on a relationship between the number of recorded instances of infant and young child burial and the economic class of the parents.

Although the theory supporting Cannon and Cook's article is not familiar to the author of this thesis, some observations are merited. The focus on the incidence of infant or young child deaths is not justified or explained. Deaths of older children, and parental grief at such deaths, were not examined to support theoretical arguments, a lost opportunity to explore whether more sustained parental investment affected the commemoration of older children. Buckham's study of York graveyards (2003) was able, for instance, to demonstrate that older children were individually commemorated in some numbers from about the nineteenth century onwards.

Moreover, the specific memorial information collated for evidential purposes is not identified by Cannon and Cook. It seems that only factual information of, for example, dates of birth and death, and/or ages of the child population have been included in the dataset. Specifically, it is not clear how those anonymous child deaths recorded on memorials as 'and their children, who died in infancy', have been accommodated.

Cannon and Cook's paper was produced as a collaborative anthropology/archaeology initiative. Such inter-disciplinary exercises are usually productive, as well-rounded outcomes can derive from a variety of views and sources, some of which will be 'textual' in one form

or another. However, the authors are also curiously ambivalent about the use of ‘textual sources’. These have been held largely responsible for the perceived lack of archaeological insight into the effects of emotional input on mortuary practice (Cannon and Cook 2015, 399); the authors eschew use of any such sources, some of which are described as ‘unavailable to most archaeologists’. These sources are not described; perhaps there are personal or medical issues of confidentiality. To enable a judgement to be made, some description of the type and scope of such source should be offered.

More importantly, perhaps, for the purposes of this thesis, the authors do not seem to have taken account of any memorial inscriptions or epitaphs that might indicate variations over time and by gender of expressions of loss following child deaths (Cannon and Cook 2015, 412). While such information is time-consuming to collect and process, these ‘texts’ are valuable representations of raw emotions of grief and loss, and it is difficult to understand their exclusion from consideration in this paper.

From deaths of children to deaths of soldiers, this chapter concludes with some observations on conflict commemoration, and particularly modern interpretations of Great War epitaphs. Wearne (2016, 2017a), examined epitaphs in cemeteries of the Somme and Passchendaele battlefields, addressing both source and meaning to indicate how the choice of epitaph could contradict official accounts of action, and disguise criticism of the war (Wearne 2017a, 112). A sixty-six character limit applied to these epitaphs; some were added to the memorial years after the cessation of hostilities (Wearne 2017a, 9). The mother of a Canadian soldier buried in Tyne Cot cemetery chose the following quotation from Psalm 133 for his grave, suggesting that she mourns the sacrifice of familial cohesion; the burial of comrades in arms together does not comfort her:

‘Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity’

Further layers of meaning can be revealed, Wearne suggests, where the source of the quotation has been inscribed after the epitaph. ‘Not my will but Thine be done’ was the epitaph of a fallen Lancashire Fusilier who died on the Somme. It is a popular personal

epitaph, usually in the form of a quotation from the Lord's Prayer in Matthew 6:9-13 or Luke 22:42. (For reasons of conformity, it has been treated as a prayer source in later chapters of this thesis). There is a variation in Matthew 26:42 which reads:

‘If this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done’

This alludes to Christ's agony in the Garden of Gethsamene, and has implications of suffering, sacrifice and resignation. Wearne suggests the dead soldier's family (Wearne 2016, 20) were indicating that, while his death may have been God's will, it was not theirs.

Summary

This chapter has reviewed some evolutionary processes in the examination and interpretation of memorial media and gravestones since about the mid-1960s. Much earlier literature tended to focus on physical attributes - size, design, material and position of gravestones - to extract a range of personal, societal and economic indicators about the dead.

It is inarguable that gravestones acknowledge the deaths (and sometimes birth, baptism, and marriage) of individuals and their place in social structures. Biographical information has its place, of course, but can lack insight into the lives of the dead; their affiliations, beliefs, feeling and experiences between birth and death. Recognising this impediment, more recent commentators have been working toward consensus in identifying metaphysical dimensions in mortuary studies, attempting to extract and discuss some of these concealed and challenging elements of human behaviour.

This chapter has also indicated some under-explored avenues of mortuary behaviour:

- the potential of epitaphic material to reveal thought, feeling and belief of individuals both alive and dead;
- neglect of the source of the epitaph as indicator of belief and affiliation;
- the identification of religious, community and personal affiliations;
- the negotiation of language, particularly in border areas.

While examination of these under-exploited dimensions will be the focus of this thesis, the following chapter describes how data was collected and processed.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH METHODS: DATA COLLECTION AND HANDLING, SAMPLING, AND SELECTION OF DATABASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Introduction

Although graveyard and gravestone studies have been common in archaeological and other-disciplinary projects for some years, it was not until the beginning of the current century that recommendations for a standardised approach were published (Mytum 2000). The methodology for the data collection phase of this thesis has drawn heavily, with modifications, on Mytum's work, in order to record and interpret gravestone data from the Nonconformist burial grounds sampled for this study, which is, so far as can be determined, among the first to record and compare, in high volumes, epitaphic and related material from other than high-status church monuments.

In addition, it has been hard to find similar studies which have employed qualitative data analysis software to handle the mass of information produced by the recording processes. However, this study has indicated that, impressive though the power of the software to indicate relationships between things, people, dates and text may be, considerable discipline was required, in this case, in the production of written guidelines (Appendices D and E) to ensure that digitised data entry, and subsequent interpretation of epitaphs, remained consistent throughout.

These and other elements of the management processes designed for this project are discussed in greater detail later in this chapter, which describes the design and operation of the project. It includes details of the parameters of the study; the construction and validation of the sample of burial grounds and memorial data; date ranges used; data collection of memorial inscriptions and imagery; data handling and organisation, and the choice and

development of software to process and interrogate the resulting dataset. Every memorial at each chosen site bearing any date of death prior to 2000 was photographed and recorded in manuscript using the recommended template (Mytum 2000) described above: Figure 4.4 shows an example of a completed recording form from Tarporley.

There are no plans of graveyards in this thesis, nor is there any discussion of the organisation and placement of graves therein to examine issues of variation and religious identity (Sayer 2011b). Notably, at three of the four Nonconformist locations, planned graveyard usage (if any there was originally) had been affected by demolition of the earlier places(s) of worship, and re-siting of the replacement on a new footprint. Where, as at Buckley, the current building was the third on the site, there are obvious effects on the layout and organisation of the graveyard. Where traces of original grave placement can be detected, however, these are noted in the chapters relating to that location.

Where graveyard managers and ministers allowed moss overlay to be removed to reveal otherwise obscured memorials, this was done sparingly (Lacy 2017), and usually by graveyard maintenance personnel. No post-2000 memorials were surveyed at the request of ministers, and no excavation took place at any site.

Where memorials were in a poor state of legibility, burial books and registers, where appropriate, were used to pursue indistinct or missing information about individuals, particularly name and date of death. At Penycae Groes chapel, where burial books did not seem to be available, the Clwyd Family History Society had recorded the graveyard verbatim in 2011, and published the results (Roberts *et al.*, 2011). However, the Welsh language material required translation into English, which was kindly undertaken by the Revd. Tom Wright, BA, BD, M.Ed of Wrexham. Other publications from the CFHS were consulted for St. John's at Buckley (Tyrer *et al.*, 2000) and Tallarn Green (Powell *et al.*, 2000).

Nonconformist burial and commemoration

The Civil Registrations Act of 1837 removed the requirement that Nonconformists be buried by Anglican ministers (Field 2012, 251-252); however, such burials continued to take place in Anglican burial grounds, generating much Nonconformist resentment (Sayer 2011a). This was perhaps most acutely felt in settlements where dissenting sympathisers lacked their own place of worship, or more keenly, where there were functioning chapels without burial grounds. However, during the eighteenth century, some dissenting populations, mainly Quakers and Baptists, had established their own burial grounds; the Baptists of Tarporley established a chapel and burial ground at Brassey Green in Cheshire in the 1700s (Chapter 8), which was not included in this study.

Although the passing of the Act allowed Nonconformist ministers to perform burial rites, some of these ceremonies continued to be performed in Anglican environments for practical reasons (Sayer 2011a, 117), although this practice may have reflected social pressure for the continuing use of familial graves. A modern researcher will discover that, largely because of increasing industrialisation, Victorian and later Nonconformist memorials can be indistinguishable by design, style or wording from their Anglican, Catholic or other parishioner neighbours (Sayer 2011b, 210) although some earlier gravestones will show some local variations in style, wording and material.

The researcher will also discover that, where burial records exist at all, and have survived modern transcription, the religious denomination of the dead is seldom recorded, perhaps for understandably partisan reasons. It would seem that, at the time of burial, any dissenting markers of independence of thought and worship could be forever suppressed. It was not until the passing of the Burial Laws Amendment Act 1880 (Appendix A) that Nonconforming ministers were enabled to officiate at funerals held in churchyards (Sayer 2011a, 115), but tension between Anglicans and Nonconformists rumbled on into the twentieth century (Field 2012, 253).

Constructing and validating the sample: Nonconformist burial grounds

A sample of locations diverse enough to address research questions was required, while offering the required denominational, regional, economic and social diversity. It was also preferable that the church or chapel building survived as a religious focus, both to provide contextual continuity between building and graves, and individuals willing to provide information and records about the site and about the religious environment. It was also important that each location was safe and suitable for solitary study.

The burying of Nonconformists in Anglican graveyards is noted above. The reverse is also true to an equally opaque extent, and may be an indication of strong local community feeling; because a Nonconformist burial ground is within easier reach for the coffin and mourners; because burial and associated fees were lower, or because of the existence of a prior family plot (Mrs Margaret Cox, graveyard manager at Brown Knowl Primitive Methodist Chapel, pers.comm.October 2012). Whatever the reasons, there are obvious implications for any study of Nonconformist attitudes to death and memorialisation.

Accordingly, as soon as a possible sample site was identified, it was necessary to determine as far as possible the potential for the inclusion of Anglican and other Christian-denominated deceased in the data. As one objective of this thesis is to identify any distinct Nonconforming denominational characteristics, it was also necessary to consider the influence or presence (or former presence) of competing places of worship in each location.

However, in the event that records and individuals were unable to provide clarification, the following lines of enquiry were applied to try to ensure the integrity of the sample as far as possible:

- Was there an Anglican church in or close to (one mile or less) the community under study and operating during the study period?
- Were there other Nonconformist places of worship (of the same or different denominational affiliation) with their own graveyards in the vicinity?

- Was there any particular ‘exclusivity’ of the potential Nonconforming denomination?
- Had census, burial registers or other records identifying Nonconforming individuals or families survived?

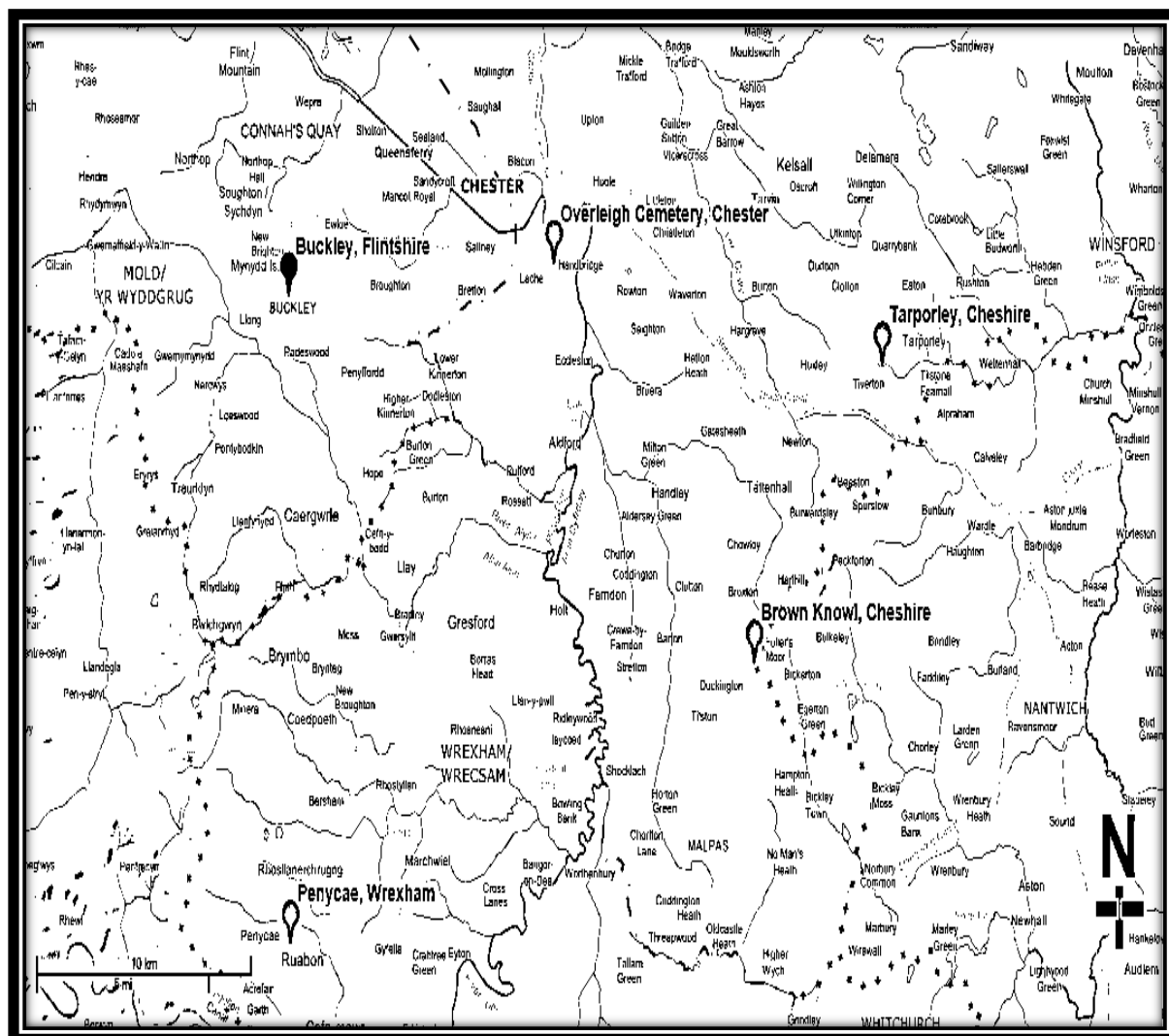
It must be acknowledged that these filters are not infallible and that there were occasions when seemingly suitable sites had to be rejected, or when it became necessary to disregard significant amounts of collected data in the light of new information. At Tallarn Green, for instance, it was not clear until the end of the survey there that the closing date of 1919 chosen for the study would exclude the vast majority of graves at this location. Identifying final candidate sites for the study, therefore, was not without challenge.

In all about fifty candidate sites in east Wales and west Cheshire were visited. Some were rejected for reasons of identity, accessibility, safety and access to basic personal requirements. It was unfortunately the case, however, that some burial grounds that would have been most intriguing to survey, like Minera, north-east Wales, (Figure 4.1 below) were those that offered least by way of accessibility, personal comfort and safety.



Fig. 4.1 Graveyard at The Wern, Minera, east Wales, from the west

Here, as at some other sites in Wales, the chapel had been demolished, leaving only the ground floor base as a platform. Nevertheless, a short-list of about fifteen candidates was identified using the methods and filters described above, and were whittled down to four locations based on their contrasting religious, social and economic conditions.



3

Fig. 4.2 Sample sites studied in this thesis. Ordnance Survey 2011 West Cheshire and east Wales. Edina Digimap. Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2016.

The map at Figure 4.2 above indicates the location of each sample site relative to each other, to Overleigh cemetery to the south of Chester, and to the River Dea, which forms the

English/Welsh border, and dissects the map from south to north. The four Nonconforming denominations and locations are:

- Primitive Methodist Chapel, Brown Knowl, Cheshire, situated within a small rural and agricultural settlement;
- Baptist Church (now Baptist and Methodist Church) Tarporley, Cheshire, in a medium-sized rural market town;
- St.John's Congregational Church (now URC), Buckley, Flintshire, in a former industrial centre for brick and ceramic production and allied industries;
- Groes Calvinistic Methodist Chapel (Welsh Presbyterian) Penycae, Wrexham, northeast Wales, situated in a Welsh-speaking former coal mining and allied industries environment.

Penycae was the only Nonconformist site where the chapel building had been converted to other uses; the accessible burial ground survives. As already noted, the graveyard at Tallarn Green, a Primitive Methodist Chapel now in Wrexham but close to the Cheshire border, was also surveyed, but removed from the sample later. However, some features at Tallarn Green have been discussed in this document to illustrate particular arguments. No Quaker graveyard was considered for the sample; this was mainly due to the difficulty of identifying a location in the sample area where the graveyard had not been grassed over and the memorials moved or removed.

It should be noted, however, that the Welsh communities and their graveyards so selected - Penycae, Buckley and Tallarn Green - would have been subject to contemporary cultural, educational and linguistic influences from England, as a result of their border location. Nevertheless, Welsh was the predominant language for inscriptions at Penycae Groes Chapel; a strong cultural statement in the circumstances.

Constructing and validating the sample: Overleigh cemetery

The original project design for this thesis incorporated the inclusion of a sample of memorials from an urban, non-dissenting Christian population as a comparator to the chosen

Nonconformist locations described above. No Anglican churchyard could be considered, because of the difficulties, previously discussed, associated with the practice of the burial of Nonconformist bodies in churchyards, particularly before the 1880 Burials Act.

Overleigh cemetery appeared promising. A Victorian garden cemetery on the south bank of the River Dee at Chester, it was opened in 1850, sponsored by the then Duke of Grosvenor and other local notables in response to national moves to replace insanitary and overcrowded urban churchyards by planned cemeteries (Curl 1972). It had been intensely surveyed by students from the University of Chester since 2008, and a dataset (albeit in manuscript) was therefore readily available. Moreover, the original Overleigh burial registers had been digitised; the registers (and their digital equivalents) included a column for the identification of ‘consecrated ground’.

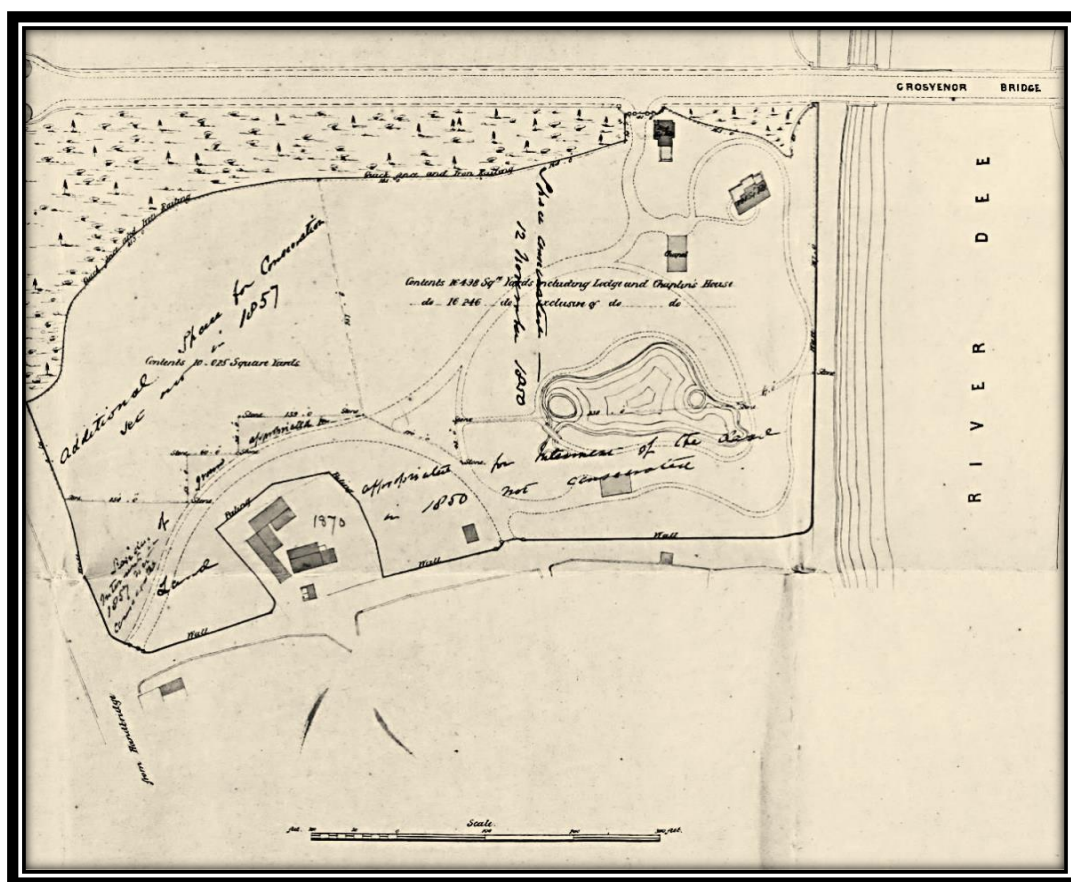


Fig. 4.3 Consecrated and Unconsecrated Area of Overleigh Cemetery in 1857. The Lodge is sited within the area delineated by the semi-circular path to the left of the map. Taken from deeds relating to Overleigh Cemetery, CALS CRO / ZC313/C-10 deposited in Cheshire Record Office and reproduced with the permission of Cheshire Archives and Local Studies and the owner/depositor to whom copyright is reserved.

Overleigh originally provided a discrete unconsecrated area for the burial of Nonconformist bodies, with its own mortuary chapel. At Figure 4.3 above, a plan of the cemetery of 1857 (Cheshire Archives and Local Studies [hereafter 'CALs'] CRO/ ZC 313/C-10) indicates the siting of the area in the east of the cemetery described as 'land appropriate for interment of the dead in 1850 not consecrated'. This area was used for the burial of Nonconformist bodies, and others preferring a secular burial. By December 1888, (CALs CRO/ ZC 313/C-25: not illustrated), the area of the cemetery to the east surrounding the Lodge in River Lane was being described as the 'Dissenters Ground'.

It appears, however, that demand for burial space at the cemetery led to interburying in the Dissenters' Ground, while in 1881, there was a demand from Nonconformists for use of the mortuary chapel and areas outside the Dissenters Ground. This can be illustrated by a legal opinion sought in 1881 by the cemetery company (CALs CRO/ ZC 313/C 1, 2) to establish whether Nonconformists had the legal right to use the mortuary chapel in the consecrated area. As part of its submission the company declared that 'since the passing of the Burial Laws Amendment Act 1880 the Nonconformists have exercised their *right of burial in the consecrated part of the Cemetery* (my italics), having first performed their service in the Chapel in the unconsecrated part'. It seems ironic to a student of dissent that Nonconformists, having objected for so many years to burial in church graveyards should be, seemingly, applying pressure for burial in the consecrated area of a cemetery; this request may, however, indicate that burial space in the Dissenters' Ground was already full, or that this is some early indication of dilution to Nonconformist affiliation.

The implications of the 1881 legal opinion for a defensible sample (Orton 2000) of gravestones at Overleigh were significant. Recourse was made to the cemetery burials database (CALs CRO ZC 313 C) maintained by CALs. This is a transcription of the original manuscript registers, and contains a column with a tick-box for burials as taking place in 'consecrated ground', together with, occasionally, whether the dead had been non-Anglican. It was anticipated, therefore, that an area of the cemetery free of

Nonconformist bodies could be identified by cross-checking the surname(s) on the gravestone to the burial registers.

However, CALS in an exchange of e-mails on 3 February 2013 advised that it is not now clear what was meant by such references in the original Overleigh burial registers from which the database was created, all of which were, in any case, dependent on the accuracy of both the nineteenth- and early twentieth-century burial register compilers and on the more modern transcribers of the database. This can be illustrated by some entries, well into the twentieth century, which have a tick in the 'consecrated' column, long after all such distinctions had disappeared.

A further complicating feature arose when a comparison of names on memorials to register entries revealed numerous examples where more bodies occupied a grave space than were commemorated on the gravestone (Mytum 2002a, 204). Occasions were also noted when individuals commemorated on some gravestones lacked a complementary entry in the register, although these examples were probably a result of the widespread practice of commemorating family members buried elsewhere.

In sum then, at Overleigh, the early hope that graves of dissenters would be confined to the unconsecrated ground area of the cemetery, and that they could be identified from burial registers evaporated in the light of investigation. Since it was therefore difficult to be confident of a defensible sample at Overleigh, attempts to include it in the sample were abandoned.

Chronology of the study

The starting date for the study of 1830 reflects the earliest death recorded on any memorial, excluding however, records of retrospective familial details such as births and deaths, although such memorials were recorded in their entirety to provide context. One such example was encountered in the sample area, at Buckley (B003) and included details of marriages and inhumations, as well as deaths, in the Catherall family. Although this memorial

also notes the death of Jonathon Catherall, a local industrialist and church benefactor, he erected a separate obelisk to himself in 1830, before his death in 1833 (Pritchard 2006, 235). Further discussion of Jonathon Catherall's memorial and his influence on the first Congregational church at Buckley will be found in Chapter 6.

The watershed of the Great War provided an appropriate date to bring the study to a close, not only because of the lasting and momentous social, personal and economic changes caused by the conflict, but also because it was considered that, by that stage, Nonconformity had lost much of its 'distinctive identity and sense of difference' (Wilkinson 1986, 96-115). Hundreds of thousands of Methodists and other Nonconformists died in the conflict, despite pre-war years of debate on questions of the legality of war (Hughes 2015, 7). Attention has been paid to commemoration of the war dead in later chapters on individual burial grounds.

Early in the project it was decided to record memorial information up to and including the year 2000 for use in possible future studies. This end date reflected the wishes of local ministers, where the church was open for worship, that modern memorials likely to be visited by relatives should not be included in the study, a practice observed at each site, even when the church building was no longer in use (Penycae).

Recording and word-processing methods

All introductory phrases and salutations, (expressions such as 'in loving memory of), inscriptions and imagery, typically motifs and carvings, on every pre-2000 gravestone in the chosen burial grounds were recorded. Gravestones were photographed and recorded in manuscript on a standardised recording form (Mytum 2000, 81 and Figure 4.4). The use of a phone app, then being developed by Eachtra Archaeological Projects from Ireland (Chitty 2011) was considered in the (frequently dashed) hope that others might be persuaded to help with the time-consuming and labour-intensive task of gravestone recording. In the event, it was decided that control of the accuracy of recorded information was better served by the use of traditional methods.

Burial ground	TARPOLEY	Memorial number		0	3	6
Name code	S I D D O R N	Condition				
Grid reference		Height				
Denomination	BAPTIST	Width				
Recorder	AW	Thickness / length				
Date	1/11/13	Orientation				
Inscription	In loving memory of Martha, wife of Henry Siddons of Ox Heys Farm, Tarporley Born July 30, 1821. Died May 19, 1891. Her end was Peace. Also the above Henry Siddons, Born June 25 1825 Died May 4 1897 (77) Accidentally thrown from top. Also Martha Siddons, youngest daughter of the above Born June 23 1872 Died April 8, 1909 36 Pneumonia	Materials			9	0
		Memorial type		4	0	0
		Additional elements				
		Shape of text panels				
		Definition of text panel				
		Techniques of inscription				
		Dec motifs, central				
		Dec motifs, margin				
		Letter styles				
		Date of monument and reason				
		Photograph	Ⓛ Feet to E			
Comments / sketch	Semi-circular incised lily/rose motif to top, lightly-incised floral decorations to both shoulders					
Field check	Base check					
BR Vol 1 pg 36 Comments All described as Wesleyan in BR						

Fig 4.4 An example of a completed gravestone recording form

For reasons discussed below, most of the right-hand side of the graveyard recording form, with the exception of the memorial number and type, was not used, specifically date of monument and additional elements boxes. Accurate recording of the gravestone type was clearly vital to any discussion of contrasts in Nonconformist memorialisation, but it was decided before recording began that the recommended 123 memorial codes and subcodes (Mytum 2000, 100-101) were over-detailed for the purposes of this study. Accordingly, a

reduced memorial code template was designed (Appendix B) which worked well in capturing the major typological options without unnecessary elaboration.

These approaches allowed the broad comparison of gravestone types as indicative of stylistic choices across the sample graveyards, and permitted the testing of findings such as increasing secularisation of imagery (Stone 2009, 153); Nonconformist preference for simple memorialisation (Sayer 2011b), or allusions to decay of the body (Tarlow 1998, 183). No further physical data unrelated to imagery and inscriptions (material, size, additional elements, for instance), were collected for analysis, although some particular examples have been discussed where appropriate in this study.

To digitise the mass of manuscript information, word processing templates (Appendix C: in this example from Overleigh cemetery) were created to capture inscriptions, salutations and comments made by the recorder which might advance any subsequent interpretation, but which might otherwise be lost. To ensure the integrity and consistency of the data being transferred from manuscript to word processing format, guidelines were produced (Appendix D).

Subsequently, the origin of any gravestone inscription was identified (and also who was 'speaking' or being addressed: designated 'vocalisation' in this study but not discussed for space reasons). Additionally, an Excel spreadsheet was devised to incorporate personal information, particularly age, gender, date of birth and death, and allowed, for instance, age to be inferred where this information was missing or illegible. Both these datasets have been copied to the DVD at the back of this thesis.

Dates of deaths of commemorated individuals have been used throughout the study, in preference to dates of erection of the monument (Mytum 2000, 127, 2002b), in order to indicate developments in religious observance and personal taste over time. Taking this approach dilutes any dating debate based on appearance and/or imagery of the gravestone, both of which became more standardised as a result of increasing industrialisation during the

Victorian period (Mytum 1999). Moreover, using this method reduced conflicts of interpretation in those cases where two or more deaths were commemorated with epitaphs, often some years apart. This conflict is particularly acute where individual dates of death are not inscribed chronologically; for instance, where earlier deaths were added after commemorations of later deaths (commonly, but not exclusively, children and war deaths). For the purposes of this study, the age of sixteen or younger was used to denote childhood.

Mytum (2002a, 4) suggests that, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, most memorials were erected with a few years of the last recorded death. Homogeneity of style of lettering on the memorial may be confirmation of this assertion, but there are enough examples of variations of calligraphic style on gravestones in the sample area to suggest that many deaths were commemorated relatively soon after they occurred. Since it is largely impossible today to tell whether epitaphs were engraved at the time of death or years later, this study is predicated on the likelihood of the former case being the more defensible.

Validating the sample: all sites

The requirement for a defensible definition of ‘epitaph’ appropriate for this study was quickly recognised and has been documented below. Table 4.1 below has been prepared in accordance with these procedures, and provides a breakdown of the data in terms of the distribution of graves, individuals and epitaphs at each of the sample sites. In this table, the number of graves equates to the number of completed recording forms after rejection of unusable cases, while the number of usable epitaphs has been reconciled with tables analysing epitaphic sources at individual graveyard sites discussed in later chapters.

Table 4.1 Sample sites: Totals of recorded graves, individuals and epitaphs pre-1919

Location	No. of graves recorded	No. of gravestones with epitaphs/ %	No. of individuals recorded (1919 and earlier)	No. of usable epitaphs (incl. 'multiples')
Brown Knowl	95	61 / 64%	204	79
Buckley	113	83 / 73%	250	111
Penycae	158	105 / 66%	317	118
Tarporley	79	39 / 49%	197	55
TOTAL	445	288/63%	964	363

Included in Table 4.1 are:

- epitaphs relating to deaths occurring in or before 1919 on later gravestones;
- phrases such as 'Thy Will be Done' and 'Reunited' where part of the gravestone design or placed on plinths and kerbs;
- partially-legible text where sufficient surviving data survived to allow analysis.

However, the following have been excluded:

- introductory phrases such as 'In loving memory', although these have been recorded and digitised, and are discussed as appropriate in following chapters;
- salutations related to the dead such as 'beloved wife of' although, as above, these have been recorded and digitised;
- cases where date of death was not given on the gravestone and could not be verified from documentary sources;
- totally illegible gravestones.

When all the above inclusions and exclusions had been worked through, the column headed 'numbers of usable epitaphs' provided the data source for analysis by date and gender in the following chapters discussing findings at each sample site. However, it should be noted that the distribution of epitaphs - the critical factor in comparing mortuary 'dialogues' - is unevenly spread across the sample. Absolute parity, of course, was neither sought nor achievable. Since the total number of potential inscriptions for study was not available until

all memorials had been recorded and analysed, it seemed invidious at any earlier stage to arbitrarily remove a number of candidates, particularly at Penycae, where the sample size was larger, for the sake of imposed uniformity.

Thought was also given, early in the recording process, to whether time and effort would be saved, and a more ‘dialogue’-focused result produced, if only those memorials with a substantial epitaph were recorded. While this method had distinct appeal in terms of workload, it was decided that the risk of losing other ancillary information on memorials: addresses; occupations and imagery, for instance, outweighed the benefits. Moreover, employing this method would also have resulted in the unwelcome risk that unsafe conclusions might be drawn from an artificially reduced number of memorials from an already small sample of graveyards.

The sample is also affected by the use of local sandstone for memorials particularly at Tarporley and Brown Knowl, some of which were so heavily weathered as to be indecipherable. This was unfortunate, but unavoidable; Baptist churches were not numerous in the north-west (Thomas 1984, 2) and this factor resulted in fewer Baptist burial grounds in the sample area offering the necessary properties described earlier in this chapter.

Identification of origins of epitaphs and inscriptions

To fulfil the objective of this thesis of capturing and discussing messages between the living and the dead - the ‘dialogues’ of its title -, the source of each inscription was identified and codified into broad categories:

- Bible: Old or New Testament;
- prayers;
- hymns;
- poetry (recognised);
- vernacular verse;
- common epitaphs (war or otherwise);
- unassigned epitaphs.

The King James Version of the Bible and the Book of Common Prayer were used to identify the source of such quotations on the grounds that these books would have been familiar to congregations during the study period. Other inscriptions were identified by reference to hymnbooks (predominately Methodist), poetry anthologies and internet sources. Guidelines (Appendix E) were drawn up to ensure, so far as possible, that sources of inscriptions, where not obvious, were uniformly attributed.

Procedures were required to handle those occasions where one individual had more than one epitaph (usually from different sources), or when one epitaph referred to more than one person ('multiples'). These and other anomalies made the task of trying to reconcile numbers of epitaphs to numbers of individuals somewhat challenging. The handling of 'multiples' and other complexities thrown up by the data are discussed in more detail below.

Selection and design of database management system

While the above procedures were being devised and implemented, appropriate software was being investigated. The successful candidate needed to be able to classify and organise a large alpha-numeric dataset and to be capable of operation and interrogation by a user with basic IT skills. In particular it was vital that any chosen software be tolerant of considerable post-design amendment as ideas and requirements developed and changed.

Further prime requirements necessitated search facilities able to detect relationships between multiple strings of text, so that, for instance, changes to inscription source and wording could be tracked over gender, time and denomination, together with the ability to reproduce such data in chart form. Accordingly, QSR's package 'Nvivo' for single use was chosen, although it was mildly disconcerting at the time to discover how few archaeological applications appeared to have used the software. Nvivo can handle text, video/media files, audio files, social media and digital images, and uses 'nodes' to organise and structure data into related 'folders'. The DVD at the end of this paper contains a complete copy of all input documents and related spreadsheets.

Nvivo offers a powerful query facility based on self-designed questions, and an integrated word and word-frequency search. The single-user package has, however, a data limit of ten gigabytes. When input was complete, the alpha-numeric element of the database comprised nearly eight gigabytes. Because of this restriction, all photographs taken for this study were stored as images in the Word suite of programs.

To illustrate the functionality of Nvivo, and how the structure was designed to both manage the data and create and answer queries, a range of screen prints have been appended to this paper. Appendix F illustrates how data from word processing input forms (Appendix C) was organised into site and grave number order ('sources'). Alterations to these source documents required by new or revised information were effected by the 'Click to edit' feature.

All source and node information is searchable i.e. word or word-frequency searches can be made and memorised, if necessary. Editing the source document by changing, say, memorial type automatically amends the related information at the required node (Appendix G). The blue highlighting on the source document indicates that the information has been coded to the relevant sub-node, in this case, within the 'Inscriptions' node which has been illustrated at node and sub-node level at Appendix H. Differences between the 'sources' and 'references' columns is attributable to the incidence of 'multiple' epitaphs.

Advantage was taken of a number of QSR training sessions, and on-line helpdesk and 'webinars' in order to gain familiarity with the language and structure of Nvivo. To avoid getting too absorbed in the technical complexities of the software, the designed node structure for this study was implemented (and considerably amended with the benefit of experience) with help from a database expert and with expertise from within the University of Chester.

Nvivo has proved to be a multi-functional, flexible and powerful tool for data organisation and manipulation. However, if the potential user has little experience or knowledge of database construction and management, considerable initial assistance is needed to ensure that the planned database structure is robust and defensible.

Management of epitaphic material

The need for procedures to define and manage epitaphs arose during preparation for arranging and inputting ('coding') data into the Nvivo 'node' structure, when the complexities of memorial expressions became apparent, and when protracted attempts to arrive at an incontestable method of reconciling numbers of commemorated individuals to numbers of epitaphs in any one graveyard, or in comparison with those at other sample sites, were abandoned as impractical at best and misleading at worst. Moreover, no published study of epitaphic material of similar scale and complexity was identified that might guide the issues described in this chapter, although more recently (Wearne 2016; 2017a) some epitaphs and sources from Passchendaele and the Somme headstones have been collated and interpreted.

Subject to the inclusions and exclusions following Table 4.1 above, detailed analysis of commemorative expressions at graveyards within this study follows the procedures and conventions documented at Appendices D and E and in this section to manage information consistently, and to control uniformity of treatment and interpretation of epitaphs and memorial language across the dataset. To illustrate the point, for instance, the early presumption that one person equals one epitaph was quickly demolished. It was not uncommon for one (or more) epitaphs to refer to two or more individuals. These have been termed 'multiples' in this study and are discussed below, with further epitaphic refinements. It should not be inferred, however, that the procedures described here represent a recommended way of managing such diverse data, but illustrate the need for structure when comparing and interpreting widely differing texts.

What is an epitaph?

One definition is 'an inscription on a tomb in honour or commemoration of the dead: a eulogy in prose or verse'. The opening phrase seemed too broad for the purposes of this study, since, as we have seen, introductory expressions and salutations have been excluded

from consideration in Table 4.1, although they have been input into Nvivo and discussed in sample sites chapters. Accordingly, for an inscription to qualify as an epitaph for examination in the following chapters, the following definition was applied:

‘an epitaph is an inscription anywhere on a gravestone or other three-dimensional grave furnishing that excludes personal details found elsewhere on the memorial (date of death, for instance) of the dead individual, but includes one or more types of material from a variety of sources to illustrate or enhance the personal attributes of the dead, to engage the reader in fostering and preserving remembrance of what and whom survivors wanted to remember at the time, and to express emotions such as admiration, acceptance, love, loss or separation’.

‘Multiples’

Particularly challenging to interpret were those instances where one epitaph refers to multiple deaths. One such example might be the deaths of three children, who share the epitaph ‘Sleeping in Jesus’. Further examples of ‘multiples’ occur when expressions such as ‘Thy will be done’ also form part of the design of the gravestone and were probably pre-incised, usually at the top of the memorial, or when such expressions were placed on plinths or kerbs, physically removed from personal details of the dead. Additionally, an individual might be commemorated by a personal epitaph, and also included in an encompassing expression such as ‘Thy will be done’ elsewhere on the memorial. To add a further layer of complexity, ‘multiples’ can also appear on gravestones with separate epitaphs memorialising other individuals.

Accordingly, ‘multiples’ have been separately analysed by gender, date of death, and by source of epitaph in the following chapters, because of the distorting effect of unreasonably enhancing the number of instances, and those of epitaphic sources, where one epitaph applies to more than one person: it would be misleading to count an epitaph referring to three people as three epitaphs, for instance.

Issues also arose where placing of an epitaph, after the second death, for instance, could be interpreted as referring to one or any of the individuals commemorated above the epitaph. To add to the debate, some such deaths were not always recorded in chronological order. Changes in inscription font occurring between or in details of separate individuals is not always indicative of an epitaph exclusively for a particular death, although personal pronouns in the epitaphs provided some guidance: the use of ‘he’ or ‘she’ was taken to denote an individual epitaph; the use of ‘they’ was self-explanatory. All cases which could not be identified as single epitaphs in this manner were treated as ‘multiples’ as above.

Split epitaphs

These are those cases where an individual has an epitaph with multiple unrelated elements, which has implications for Nvivo since each constituent of this type of epitaph requires coding to a separate node. Such occurrences have been treated in this study as two references. However, where an epitaph had more than one source was comparatively rare. At Penrycae Groes Calvinistic Methodist chapel (PC 100) an individual had such an epitaph:

‘The memory of the just is blessed
My Redeemer will come on time again to open the entrance to the grave’

The first was from the Book of Proverbs of the Old Testament, and the source of the second could not be identified with any certainty. Again, each constituent part of the epitaph was coded to the Nvivo node appropriate to each source, and where such cases occurred, coding at multiple nodes, and therefore separate analysis of each epitaphic element became the adopted practice in this study.

Summary

The process of recording, processing and validating the considerable body of source information has been described above in some detail. It is not, of course, the only way to conduct such an undertaking. Undoubtedly, the process of data capture would be less labour-

intensive if input data already existed in digital format. Nevertheless, the procedures described here might encourage researchers to consider the rich vein of interpretation that epitaphic sources can add to mortuary studies.

The four following chapters discuss facets of memorial practice at each sample site, with references, as appropriate, to how the choice of imagery and epitaph - the 'dialogues' of this thesis - might reflect denominational or religious influence or affiliation during the sample period. Each chapter follows a broadly similar structure, beginning with a description of the environment, location, history and demographics at each settlement. Demographic data are derived from Nvivo gravestone analysis; since it is acknowledged (Mytum 2002a, 204) that more bodies lie in graveyards than are commemorated on gravestones, no attempt has been made to correlate demographic trends from Nvivo with local or national death rates. However, any apparent peaks in death rates are discussed in the relevant chapters.

Analysis of non-epitaphic memorial data follows, discussing such dimensions as :

- choice of memorial type and imagery;
- attributes and interpretations of memorial design or imagery;
- evidence of attachment to the location or chapel derived from addresses on memorials;
- occupations and professions of the deceased;
- the language of remembrance and of death.

Analysis of epitaphic material completes each chapter, suggesting interpretations of these messages in the light of the contemporary religious, personal and denominational tastes and concerns over the study period. Chapter 9 draws these threads together; emphasising denominational similarities and contrasts, while Chapter 10 discusses and responds to the research questions and suggests some further elements for future study.

CHAPTER 5

BROWN KNOWL, CHESHIRE, PRIMITIVE METHODIST CHAPEL

Location and history

This chapter considers, first, the physical and historical attributes of this small agricultural settlement beneath the Sandstone Ridge, and secondly, its Primitive Methodist chapels, graveyard, memorials, and epitaphic messages. Each following location-specific chapter follows a broadly similar pattern.

Brown Knowl is situated in the parish of Broxton, within 3 kilometres of Bickerton and Harthill, close to Larkton Hill, some 18 kms south-east of Chester (Figure 5.1). This region of Cheshire is still dominated by agriculture, which was the main source of male employment in west Cheshire throughout the nineteenth century (Phillips and Phillips 2002, 64), although male employment in farming and associated trades declined as a percentage of the Cheshire labour force from about the beginning of the twentieth century.

Brown Knowl is close to the former copper mines and sand quarries of Peckforton. It is tempting to imagine that the settlement gained its name from the sandstone liberally available in the area; the settlement itself is not named on early maps (Speed 1610; Greenwood 1819). Neither Omerod (1819) nor *The Cheshire Sheaf* (a local publication of 'Local Gleanings, Historical and Antiquarian' published intermittently between 1878 and 1900: Cheshire County Council and Cheshire Local History Association CD 2006) mention Brow or Brown Knowl (or Knowle or Knoll) at all. The settlement name appears on Ordnance Survey maps from 1870 onwards.

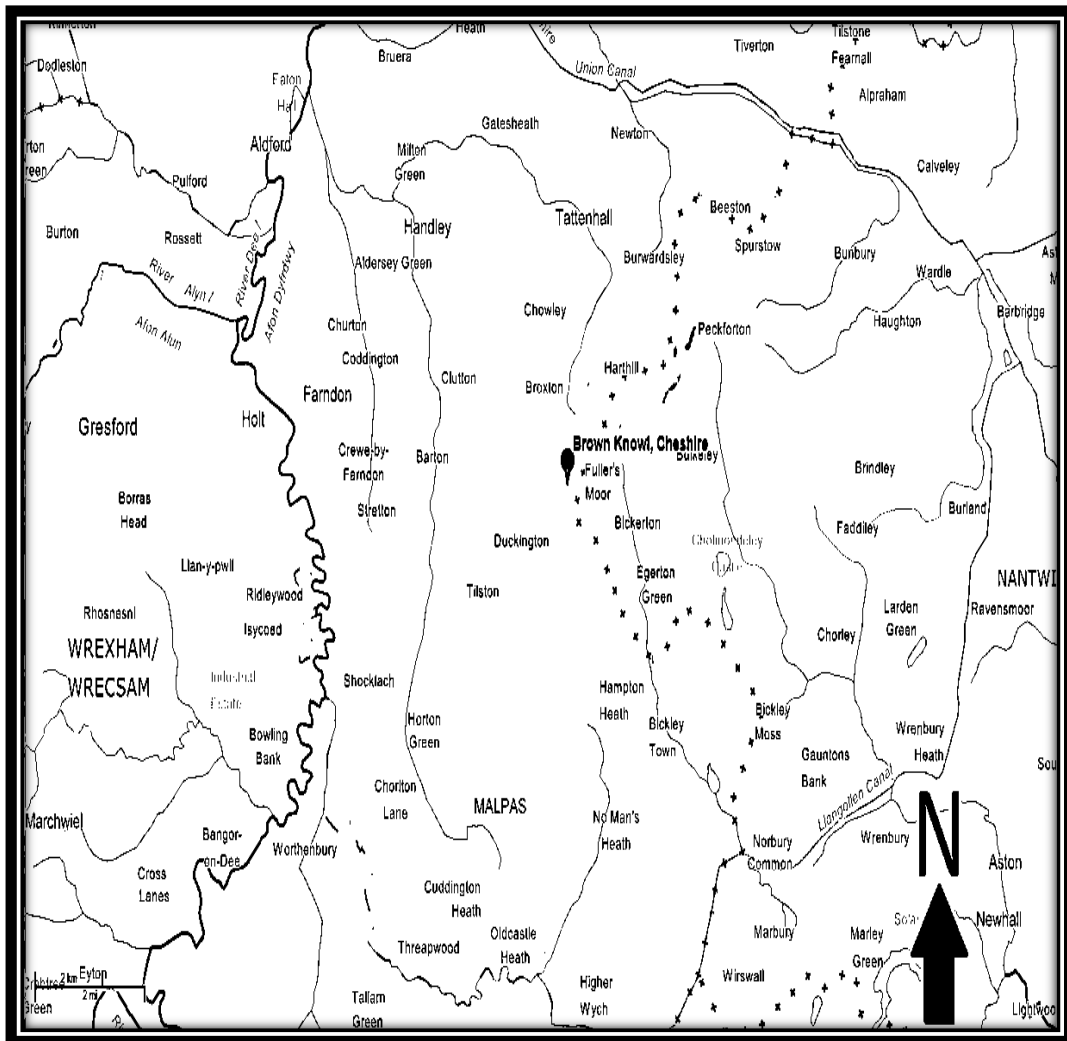


Fig. 5.1 Location of Brown Knowl, Cheshire. Ordnance Survey 2011 West Cheshire and East Wales. Edina Digimap. Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2016.

However, Bryant's map of 1831 refers to 'Brow (sic) PM', clearly a reference to Primitive Methodism, although the site illustrated on this map is empty of buildings. This abbreviation can be seen, perhaps, as an indication of the force and impact of Methodist evangelical preaching, which was active in Cheshire from the early nineteenth century; the Primitive Methodists split from the Wesleyan fold in 1811 principally over the issue of outdoor preaching (Chapter 2).

One of the evangelical preachers particularly active in Cheshire was John Wedgwood of the noted ceramics family. In 1822 he preached at Brown Knowl (Hayns 2011), described as 'a fast-growing community in the township of Broxton', notwithstanding its cartographical

anonymity. A tribute to Wedgwood (Figure 5.2) hangs in the current Brown Knowl chapel and commemorates his life and work, and that of some other early Primitive Methodist preachers active in the area.

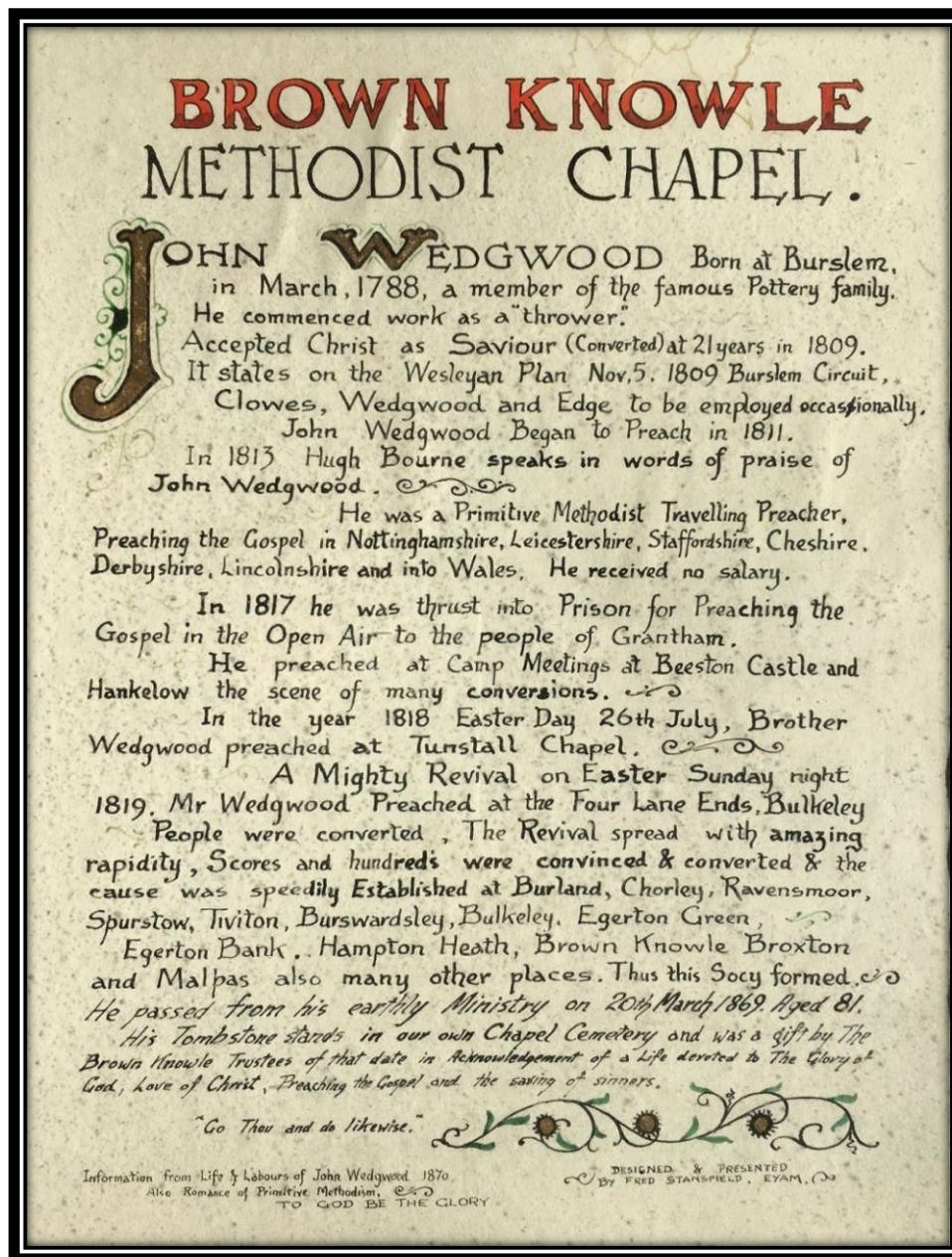


Fig.5.2. Brown Knowl chapel: tribute to John Wedgwood

This item is significant not only for the evident desire of the compositor to leave an accurate and pleasing record for posterity (note the spelling correction in line eight) but also because care was taken (in a different hand) to confirm Methodist religious principles while updating the narrative, after the death of Wedgwood and his burial at Brown Knowl. His memorial is the largest and most ornate in the graveyard, being a marble obelisk on four

plinths, topped by a wreathed urn and within a railed plot, and is illustrated at the frontispiece to this thesis.

The tribute is similar in ethos and presentation to the wording on a memorial to the Catherall family in the graveyard of the Congregational church of St. John's at Buckley in east Wales, on which the activities of Nonconforming preachers and divines are described at some length, and which is reproduced in full in Chapter 6.

Neighbouring places of worship include an Anglican church at Bickerton (about 3 kilometres distant) and at Harthill (about 2km), although the latter is now closed. In addition, there were Primitive Methodist chapels at Burwardsley (est.1843); Beeston (1911); Malpas (1850); Tattenhall (1851); Huxley (1860) and Crewe by Farndon (1832), and a large number of other-denominational chapels within 10 km, now mostly converted to other uses.

Brown Knowl Primitive Methodist chapels

Following the evangelical efforts of John Wedgwood and Hugh Bourne in 1822, (Bawn *et al.* 2004), evangelicalism and worship took place in outside locations and in local cottages. The first chapel was built in 1835, funded by public subscription, and was a substantial sandstone and slate single-cell building situated immediately adjacent to Brown Knowl Lane, the major thoroughfare of the village. On the Tithe map of 1836-1851 (CALs n.d.) the chapel does not have a large graveyard. The land around and behind the building is described as a 'plantation', being situated on a steep south-eastern slope.

The chapel burial book records the first inhumation as 1848. The earlier part of this document is a transcription derived 'from personal knowledge and information obtained by William Jones, Broxton' in 1922. Attempts to reconcile the burial book with gravestone recording forms in 2012 indicate that, if Mr Jones' efforts were accurate, a number of memorials have disappeared, if they had existed at all. There are significant gaps between 1856 and 1866, and again in the early 1900s. This situation indicates a truism for the student of Nonconformism, in that records, particularly burial registers, can be indifferently curated.

The earliest death recorded on surviving gravestones occurs in the decade before 1850. It is possible that the demolition of the first chapel in 1913 removed some earlier grave markers, although there was no evidence of displaced memorials at the site in 2012. This may have had echoes in some sturdy opposition, in the 1960s, to a proposal, debated and minuted by chapel Trustees, to remove some headstones and kerbs from the graveyard (Brown Knowl Primitive Methodist Chapel Trustees' Minute Book).

Demolition of the first chapel allowed the current building (Figure 5.3) to be erected on the summit of the sandstone ridge behind it in 1913. The expanded graveyard is thus situated on the steep slope mentioned above; all memorials face south-east toward Brown Knowl Lane. In an act of conscious continuity, the date stone from the original chapel was incorporated in the rear gable on the new.

The second chapel is rather elaborate, demonstrating that, by the early twentieth century, even Primitive Methodists had succumbed to a desire for 'better appointed and more respectable churches' (Yalden 2004, 317), and is comprised of Ruabon brick, with a slate roof and large tracery windows. Later, a stone-banded and crenelated bell-tower was added, although a proposal to add a steeple was not proceeded with. Internally, there is a Sunday School, a kitchen and space for social activities. Heavy wood and glazed partitions form the northern wall of the worship area, and can be removed for events such as heavily-attended funerals. The chapel building, therefore, is a physical manifestation of Methodist teaching in providing congregations with a religious, educational and social environment.



Fig 5.3. Brown Knowl Primitive Methodist chapel from the south-east in 2012

Demographics

Figure 5.4 below depicts numbers of commemorated deaths at Brown Knowl by period and gender extracted from Nvivo gravestone data. In this chart, 73 male, 76 female, and 22 child deaths, 171 in all, are represented. The disparity between these results and the ‘number of individuals recorded’ column in Table 4.1 is accounted for by cases where it was clear that individuals were being commemorated, but personal information such as gender or date of death was lacking, or in the case of children, was obscured by the term ‘and their children, who died in infancy’ where no date of birth or death was given, or was too eroded to be usable. These factors have affected demographic data at other locations, and will not be discussed again.

Children represent 12% of deaths; there were peaks (albeit declining) in the years following 1870, which may reflect a period of weather-related agricultural stress between 1872 and 1879 (Simons 2012, 67). Nine children were commemorated in ‘multiple’ epitaphs (Table 5.5). The apparently low occurrence of child deaths is unexplained; by the time of a religious census in 1902-3 conducted by the Daily News (Mudie-Smith 1904, 24), children in London under the age of fifteen out-numbered both men and women in attendance at the largest Nonconformist denominations’ morning services. Sunday school attendance is excluded; between 1851 and 1901, Primitive Methodist Sunday School attendance quadrupled (Watts 2015, 173).

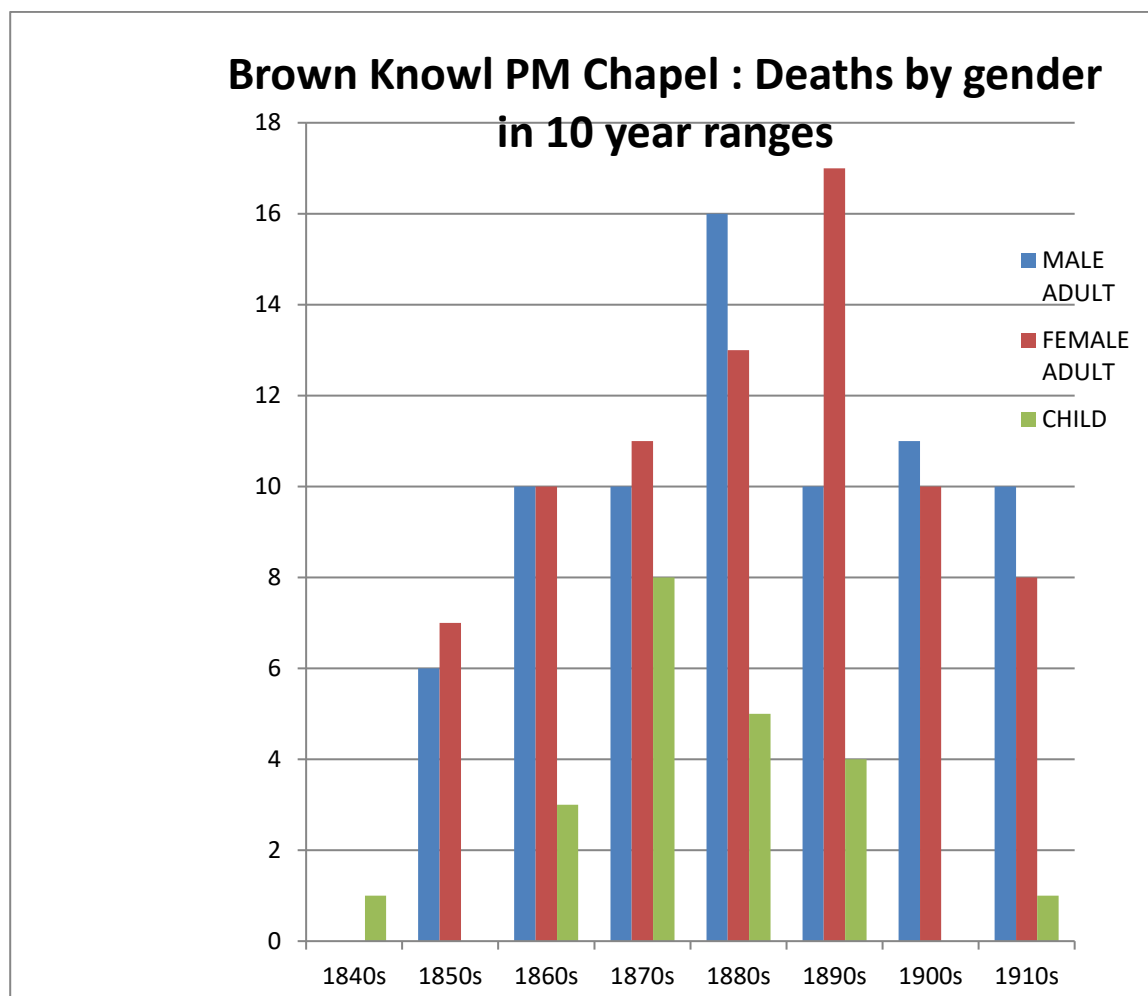


Fig.5.4. Brown Knowl Primitive Methodist chapel: deaths by gender in ten-year ranges

Practical considerations affecting the burial of unusually high numbers of child deaths resulting from environmental or medical factors can account for some under-recording on gravestones, and for the comparative paucity of epitaphs for this group of individuals at Brown Knowl; however, it is difficult to imagine that grieving Nonconformist parents had any lesser emotional investment in their children (Murphy 2011) than bereaved Irish parents.

For males, death rates appeared fairly uniform at about 10 per decade, with the exception of the years 1880 to 1889. Again, the after-effects of agricultural depression may have been responsible for the apparent increase of male deaths in this decade.

Female deaths peaked in the three decades following 1870; in the decade to 1900 female deaths significantly exceeded those of males, reversing the trend of the previous decade. This finding is difficult to explain, since improvements in pre- and post-natal care towards the end of the nineteenth century might be expected to induce a reduction in female mortality. Similar patterns will be noted at some other locations. It may be, however, that this factor is a natural result of the numbers of females in congregations outnumbering males (Watts 2015, 171). Twenty-seven female deaths occurred earlier than related (eg husband/wife) male deaths, at an overall rate of about 2 deaths per annum, another dimension of life and death at Brown Knowl which is difficult to explain.

Memorial types, imagery and decoration

Adhering to the gravestone codes listed at Appendix B, Table 5.1 analyses gravestone types recorded at Brown Knowl from a base of 95 recorded graves that survived out-sorting on grounds of illegibility or date. At all locations studied for this thesis, the total numbers of gravestone elements exceeds the number of graves recorded (Table 4.1), reflecting those graves with more than one element: a headstone and kerb, for instance. This method of reporting all gravestone elements has been applied throughout this study.

The asterisk in the table below (and at similar tables in the following chapters) denotes kerbs or former kerbs where evidence of attachment, mortar for instance, was visible, but where the kerbs had been removed.

Table 5.1 Brown Knowl: distribution of memorial types

Memorial Type	Number	Percentage
Tall Headstone (>1m)	72	67%
Low Headstone (<1m)	14	13%
Kerbs & former kerbs*	13	12%
Cross	7	6%
Other	2	2%

From Table 5.1, it seems that a cross as a primary monument is comparatively rare at Brown Knowl, consistent with Mytum's argument (2002a) that the cross symbol might have most affinity with high church Anglicanism. However, it may be that the Primitive Methodists at Brown Knowl eschewed the obvious Christian symbol as a memorial icon in favour of a more subtle and nuanced reference to the sacrifice of Christ to save sinners, depicted on gravestones as engraved supplementary crosses (10 occurrences) and cross-
iconography such as quatrefoils (14 occurrences). Alternatively, these motifs may be related to the doctrine of the cross as a source of salvation and central to individual behaviour, which was particularly espoused by evangelical Methodists (Bebbington 2014, 231) and eloquently expressed in the Wedgwood declaration (Figure 5.2).

Quatrefoils at Brown Knowl also appear on chapel furniture and window tracery (Figure 5.3) and on door handles (Figure 5.5), and are also carved on internal window and door frames, and on panelling surrounding the Minister's chair in the worship area.



Fig. 5.5 Brown Knowl chapel: quatrefoils forming exterior door handles

While such iconography may not be consciously apotropaic in intention (Lloyd, Dean and Westwood, 2001 and Merrifield 1987), it is nevertheless remarkable that these symbols appear at internal and external entry points of the chapel, as well as on gravestones and interior partitioning. Brown Knowl is not alone in having door handles of this design: the 1909 Tilston Primitive Methodist chapel (undergraduate dissertation Smithson 2010) has the same door furniture, possibly the effect of centralised purchasing, or of some harmonising denominational influence. Nevertheless, evidence in later chapters suggest that it was the ‘Prims’, among the denominations studied here, who exhibited a preference for this style of motif.

The rows of high and low memorials in this graveyard give some weight to the argument that Nonconformist adherence to simplicity is detectable in their gravestones (Sayer 2011b), although only about 25% of memorials at Brown Knowl are without imagery or decoration. The greater number of headstones here has some form of decoration, and there are a small number of examples of a highly-decorated local sandstone vernacular style not

observed at any other sample graveyard (Figure 5.6), and which has engraved quatrefoils to the side panels.



Fig. 5.6 Brown Knowl: local vernacular sandstone gravestone of the Hiley family from the south-east (BK092)

Other imagery predominating at Brown Knowl is tabulated below. As we have seen at Figure 5.6 above, a gravestone can have multiple images or types of decoration. Minimally represented were books, linked hands, angels, shields and lozenges, sickles, grapes and doves.

Table 5.2. Brown Knowl: frequency of gravestone imagery

Design of imagery	Occurrences
Floral arrangement, or individual plant eg rose, ivy or willow	43
Roundels	20
Abstract designs	18
Quatrefoils	14
Supplementary crosses	10
No imagery	30

If it is safe to assume that the design and ornamentation of the gravestone was chosen at the time of the first death, then there is some evidence that complexity of decoration was in decline at Brown Knowl by about the end of the nineteenth century. How much influence, however, the later bereaved were able to have on the choice of imagery and commemorative text at Brown Knowl, was as elsewhere, probably affected by the commercialisation of gravestone production in the nineteenth century, when pre-incised blank memorials increasingly became the norm (Mytum 2002b). Nevertheless, the general preference of the Primitive Methodists at Brown Knowl for large decorated headstones is apparent, suggesting that twentieth century opinions that Nonconformists were ‘culturally-impooverished’ (Everitt 1972, 64) did them a substantial and lasting injustice.

A sense of place

It has been noted above that the name of the settlement does not seem to be cartographically recorded before about 1870. Given the strong association of Brown Knowl with eminent early evangelists, it appears that remarkably few gravestones within the study period bear the name of the settlement itself. Moreover, there are only 38 locational references in the Brown Knowl dataset as a whole, and these are predominately names of local villages and townships

such as Broxton or Bickerton, although there are some occasional mentions of distant locations such as Wrexham, Whitchurch and the USA. Very occasionally the burial book records 'BK' against a burial, but because of transcription, it is impossible to determine whether such annotations appeared in the original.

Where an address was inscribed, these instances were commonly not applied to the first death when the deceased was female: thus 'In Loving Memory of Emma, wife of Frederick Stant of Brown Knowl'. This style of commemoration reflects contemporary memorial culture in which, in those instances that the first death (or, in some instances the only death) was of a female, any address on the gravestone was allotted to the closest male relative, normally husband or father. This convention was observed at all locations in the sample area, and will not be discussed again in the following chapters.

Nevertheless, this practice provoked a debate when designing the gravestone input forms for this study (Appendix C). To whom should any address be allotted in the instance described above? Following supervisory advice, it was decided to allot addresses only to the person to whom such a descriptor was directly applicable. Thus 'In Loving memory of John Woolley of Broxton, who died April 20 1888' would have been recorded as an address, but not the Emma Stant of the previous paragraph. This method accords with the social and memorial conventions of the time, and reduces the need for making irreconcilable assumptions about where an individual was domiciled at death, particularly when inscriptions contain multiple addresses. To ensure conformity, guidelines on the treatment of addresses and other information for inputting data into Nvivo were drafted (Appendix D).

The gender distribution of individuals with addresses as defined above is 30 male and 8 female. Overall, there are only four subsidiary addresses recorded (house name, street etc.), of which three are of males, and one of a female. By contrast, the practice of recording subsidiary or partial addresses appears to be a prominent feature of memorials at Penycae Calvinistic Methodist chapel (Chapter 7).

These results seem to respect conventions on the status of women throughout the period, since dates of death of this group fall between 1856 and 1916. It is curious nevertheless, that the traditional Primitive Methodist tolerance of female preachers (Valenze 1985, 109) within the movement did not seem to extend to memorial treatment of the generality of women, at a time when women outnumbered men in Nonconformist congregations (Watts 2015, 171).

Occupational references

There are five occupations recorded at Brown Knowl, and four of these are military references to soldiers who died in the First World War; each of the latter examples is a subsequent commemoration added to an existing gravestone. In one instance, the death of a grandfather in France in 1916 was added to grandson's memorial of 1998. Epitaphs relating to these individuals are discussed later in this chapter. The burial book does not record occupations.

The remaining reference is to a Preacher, in this case the Trustee and Elder of the Primitive Methodist chapel at Huxley. The lack of ministerial burials at Brown Knowl seems at odds with custom at the other burial grounds, and may reflect the peripatetic nature of the ministry before the end of the nineteenth century, or the influence of the 'circuit' system.

Given the predominance of agriculture and associated industries in this part of west Cheshire, it would be reasonable to assume that the majority of people buried here would have had an agricultural connection. Although this has proved difficult to verify without research beyond the remit of this study, it may be misleading to assume that the more prominent gravestones could not belong to agricultural labourers and their families.

John Warburton was an agricultural labourer (Warburton family n.d.). His memorial (Figure 5.7) may be a replacement for an earlier gravestone, but this could not be verified. This memorial is one of the 25% at Brown Knowl without decoration or imagery, which, if such were chosen, would have added to the cost. At the time of the first Warburton death

(1863) undecorated headstones cost between £2 and £6 plus lettering, depending on material.

Marble would have been more expensive than local sandstone. (Kelke 1851, 42).



Fig. 5.7 Brown Knowl: Warburton gravestone from the south-east (BK084)

Agricultural workers' wages in 1863 were about 11 shillings per week, although a tied cottage and provisions from the farm were sometimes included in the wage agreement (Lindert and Williamson 1983). A headstone such as the Warburton's, therefore, represented an investment of between one month's and three months' wages, if, indeed, this cost was met by the family and not by the employer. Factors such as these illustrate the challenges of drawing assumptions about the status, economic or social position, or income of commemorated individuals from the appearance of the gravestone. By way of illustration, at Penycae, the most elaborate, decorated and heavily-incised monument, with the addition of a

Hebrew inscription at the apex, commemorated a young local publican and his family (Chapter 7).

The language of remembrance

In this study, expressions that begin the narrative on a gravestone such as ‘In loving memory’ are designated ‘primary salutations’, while those instances where the primary salutation has been repeated on the gravestone, preceded by ‘also’ for other deaths, are designated secondary salutations. To investigate how choices of salutation changed over time, Table 5.3 analyses 91 of these expressions by type, gender and period. Not tabulated, however, are the expressions ‘also’ or ‘also of’ not followed by a further salutation, nor salutations of two occurrences or fewer. Some of these are nevertheless discussed below. All legible gravestones bore a primary salutation.

This table also examines whether a ‘warmer’, less formal, wording at particular periods could be discerned, using 1900 as a benchmark. This date was chosen, since, there is evidence (Chapter 2) for a decline in religious observation in the twentieth century, with the exception of the Welsh religious revival of 1904-05.

Salutations evoking ‘affectionate’ memory or remembrance were popular before 1900, but not later, and were more frequently chosen for male deaths, while salutations related to ‘loving’ memory, which were evenly chosen for both men and women before 1900, show a decline in consumption thereafter. This seems anomalous, since ‘In loving memory of’ is possibly the most frequently-chosen modern salutation.

An even gender distribution occurs in the choice of phrases without emotional connotations such as in ‘In memory of’, and is less frequently chosen after 1900. ‘Sacred to the memory’ is an exclusively nineteenth-century choice, and eight of the nine occurrences appear in the period 1850-1863, corresponding to earlier burials at Brown Knowl graveyard.

Table 5.3 Brown Knowl: primary and secondary salutations by type, gender and period

Salutation/ Period	Male	Female	Child	Total	%
In loving memory: pre-1900	12	12	3	27	30%
In loving memory: post-1900	4	8	2	14	15%
In affectionate memory: pre-1900	2	1	0	3	3%
In affectionate memory: post-1900	0	0	0	0	0
In affectionate remembrance: pre-1900	10	5	0	15	16%
In affectionate remembrance: post-1900	0	0	0	0	0
In (the) memory of: pre-1900	9	9	2	20	22%
In (the) memory of: post-1900	2	1	0	3	3%
Sacred to the memory: pre-1900	4	5	0	9	10%
Sacred to the memory: post-1900	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	43	41	7	91	99%

There was only one instance of ‘Here lieth the remains of’ (Figure 5.8). This gravestone commemorated a female death in 1850, and represents an earlier commemorative style (Tarlow 1998a).



Fig.5.8 Brown Knowl: Powell gravestone from the east (BK087)

The stylistic similarity of this memorial to Figure 5.7 is noteworthy; there is a small grouping of similar styles in the graveyard, which may suggest the hand of a local stonemason. There was one secondary reference to ‘This stone also perpetuates the memory of’ (BK 140, male, 1864), following a primary salutation of ‘In memory of’.

The language of death

Table 5.4 classifies the terms chosen to describe the manner of death on gravestones at Brown Knowl. In the sample area, forty different expressions and metaphors for the process of dying were recorded, in addition to those cases where mode of death was not given. A full list of terms observed at all locations can be found at Appendix I. In the table below the term ‘died’ has not been tabulated because of its common usage.

Table 5.4 Brown Knowl: euphemisms for dying

	1841/ 1860	1861/ 1880	1881/ 1900/	1901/ 1920	No date	Total
Died Happy in The Lord		1				1
Departed This (and From This) Life	4	6	7	2		19
Entered into Rest		1	1			2
Fell Asleep			1	1		2
Fell asleep in Jesus	1					1
Killed in Action/Fell in (Location)				4		4
No Reference				1		1
TOTAL	5	8	9	8	0	30

This table suggests some evidence for a tendency for plain speaking that might demonstrate early Primitive Methodist preferences for simplicity and lack of ostentation. At Brown Knowl, choices of such expressions as ‘Fell asleep’ are increasingly more numerous post-1919, while the modern metaphor ‘Passed away’ does not appear before the 1940s. ‘Departed This Life’, which seems to denote confidence or faith in some further or different existence, disappears altogether after 1920; it was at its most popular in the Victorian era. These expressions, and other euphemisms for death at all locations are discussed in Chapter 9.

Summary

This chapter has thus far discussed the physical location and characteristics of Brown Knowl, its chapel, and the design, decoration and salutations on gravestones there. It continues with the interpretation of epitaphs by source, identifying trends in consumption over time in terms of gender and age. It is not the intention to quote every epitaph, but to explore broad themes to suggest individual religious, attitudinal or personal convictions, and how these may have changed over time. These findings are summarised at the end of the chapter. Epitaphs which

commemorate a group of people as a whole at Brown Knowl are considered first, with the source of the epitaph also tabulated.

Epitaphs relating to multiple deaths

Epitaphs to single individuals can also appear on a gravestone bearing a ‘multiple’; these cases are not included in Table 5.5 below but are discussed later in this chapter. Also not included in the table are post-1919 deaths which were included in a multiple epitaph - ‘Thy will be done’ at the apex of a gravestone, for instance. This general rule has been observed in multiple epitaph tables in the following chapters.

Table 5.5 Brown Knowl: epitaphs relating to multiple deaths

Grave no.	Male	Female	Child	Dates of Death	Source
BK 015		2		1879, 1887	Unassigned
BK080	1	1	5	1874,1879(3),1904 1913,unknown(1)	Hymn
BK 107			3	1873,1890, 1898	Unassigned
BK 114		1	3	1905 & ‘in infancy’	Old Testament
BK 157	1	1		1880, 1881	Unassigned
BK 158	1	2		1868(2), 1869	Vernacular verse
BK 199			3	1910 & ‘in infancy’	Old Testament
BK 224	1	1		1908, 1909	Hymn

The predominance of family in terms of women and children is notable and may be a reflection of the hazards of childbirth and infancy: for instance BK080 records the deaths of five young children before the deaths of their parents. The deaths in 1908 and 1909 (BK224) were of the Huxley (Primitive Methodist) Elder and Trustee and his wife. Why they were

commemorated at Brown Knowl is unclear: Huxley has a Primitive Methodist chapel and large graveyard, and is about 12 kms from Brown Knowl.

Thematically, there are three epitaphs (BK015, 114, 107) in this table referencing death as not-death: sleeping, resting, or sleeping in Jesus; two epitaphs reference meeting again, ‘Until the Day Break’ (BK199) and ‘They Meet to Part No More’; the latter being the epitaph of the Huxley Trustee and his wife.

A further vivid epitaph (BK157), the source of which could not be securely identified (‘Unassigned epitaphs’), commemorates a husband and wife who both died in the early 1880s and seems to imply faith, or belief in an afterlife:

‘Zion’s gates have opened for them
They have found an entrance through’

Of the multiples tabulated above, BK158 is an example of vernacular verse at this site, and commemorates the deaths of three young adults, two sisters and a brother, in less than two years of each other (Figure 5.9). Their epitaph reads:

‘Our journey now is ended
Death has brought it to a close
But we were well attended
This our father knows’

The memorial is capitalised throughout, so it is not clear whether the reference to ‘our father’ is spiritual or temporal, but in all probability refers to God the Father. There are elements of death as a journey; either the care or knowledge of God or of a parent seem to be the focus of the last two lines; alternatively these lines could be taken to mean chapel attendance.

Whatever the motivation for the choice of epitaph, the emotions and convictions expressed by the parents - pain, grief, resignation, faith in God - are clear; it is not hard to empathise with the (possibly entire) loss of adult offspring within a short period of time. The parents themselves died in 1882 and 1896, and had no epitaph of their own. Perhaps there were no words left.



Fig.5.9 Brown Knowl: Harrison gravestone from the east (BK158)

Sources of single epitaphs

The data that support discussion in the sections below are derived from Nvivo and analyse, in tabular form, the choices made by survivors when drawing upon religious and other sources to honour and remember their dead, and to provide comfort to the grieving. The tables also suggest some themes, religious and otherwise, for these epitaphs, which represent 31 male, 35 female and 5 child deaths, excluding multiple epitaphs already analysed at Table 5.5 above.

Common epitaphs

These are characterised as predominately short expressions such as ‘Rest in peace’ and ‘Reunited’ and it is not until the late 1890s that they appear on gravestones at Brown Knowl, although occurring more frequently after 1919.

Table 5.6 Brown Knowl: Common epitaphic sources

Ref	Year of death	Gender	Age	Themes
BK107	1898	C	4	Sleeping, Jesus
BK112	1904	F	62	Rest
BK154	1912	M	84	Rest
BK067	1916	F	59	Rest, peace

The three instances above reference elements of rest and peace and demonstrate a trend toward simpler, less-effusive and holophrastic epitaphs which will be noted elsewhere in this chapter and throughout this study.

First World War epitaphs

In addition to the internal war memorial, (Figure 5.10), there are five military deaths commemorated in this graveyard; three have an epitaph.

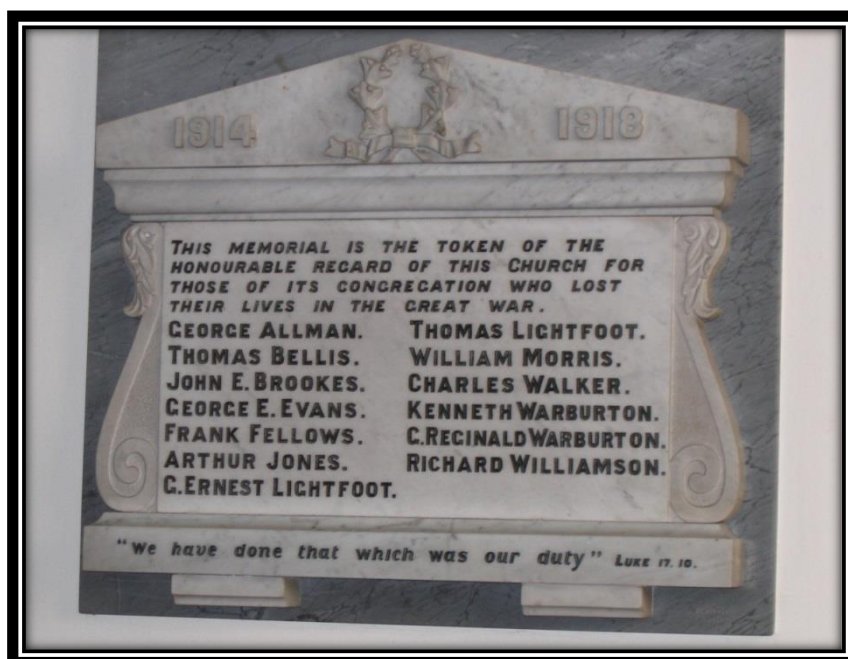


Fig.5.10 Brown Knowl interior war memorial

Of these, the wartime death of John Tydd in Mesopotamia in 1916 was added to a modern memorial (BK196) commemorating the deaths of the soldier's parents in 1941 and 1945, following that of his brother in 1922. Perhaps the Second World War provoked the addition on the later gravestone of the names of the sons: the epitaph 'Reunited' was by that time common on gravestones, although it does not otherwise appear at Brown Knowl during the sample period. It may of course be that the epitaph was intended to be applicable to the family as a whole; for the purposes of this study it has been deemed applicable only to John.

Table 5.7 Brown Knowl: First World War epitaphic sources

Ref	Year of death	Gender	Age	Themes
BK196	1916	M	21	Reunion
BK126	1916	M	26	Perfect peace
BK026	1917	M	20	Willing sacrifice

The first entry on a pink granite memorial (BK026) commemorated a fallen soldier described as 'the lamented son of ...' and his epitaph read 'and he willingly offered himself', a quotation from the Old Testament Book of Chronicles. Since the soldier was aged twenty at death in 1917, it was possible that he had been a volunteer rather than a conscript. Conscription was introduced in 1916, for single men aged eighteen to forty-one.

However, four of the Brown Knowl fallen are commemorated on the war memorial at Bickerton church (Figure 5.11) and described as 'of this parish'. John Tydd's commemoration was incised on the fluted plinth below the south main panel and was presumably therefore added after the war memorial was completed. The remaining First World War death, that of Richard Black (BK074), is not noted at Bickerton; his name was added to a gravestone commemorating his grandson's death in 1998, and bears no epitaph. Moreover his name is not inscribed on the internal memorial (Figure 5.10).



Fig.5.11 Bickerton war memorial from the south-east

Hymn sources

The choice of hymns for epitaphs is concentrated in the years 1880-1917; the ten hymns represented in Table 5.8 are taken from general hymns and from 'Peace, Perfect Peace', which is discussed below. Perhaps surprisingly for a Primitive Methodist congregation, the hymns of John Wesley's brother Charles do not seem to feature at Brown Knowl, although there is one adaptation of a hymn by John Wesley (BK015).

Table 5.8 Brown Knowl: hymn sources

Ref	Year of death	Gender	Age	Themes
BK015	1880	F	72	Holy figures, redemption
BK126	1886	C	15	Safety
BK090	1890	M	61	Parting, friendship, redemption
BK081	1895	F	63	Perfect peace
BK009	1905	M	41	Perfect peace
BK207	1907	M	46	Perfect peace
BK008(1)	1907	F	73	Servant, sleeping in God's care
BK008(2)	1908	M	74	Morning, angels, love, loss
BK102	1915	F	74	Voice of Jesus, rest
BK063	1917	M	55	Perfect peace

In terms of gender and age, general hymns were chosen for two males, three females and a child. Evidence for common themes in such limited examples is not compelling but the epitaphs for the two males (BK008(2) and BK090) are as follows:

‘And with the morn those angel faces smile
Which I have loved long since and lost awhile’

‘Farewell, dear friend, a long farewell for we shall meet no more
Till we will rise with Christ to dwell on Zion's happy shore’

There also seems to be a common theme suggesting resurrection or being re-united in both these epitaphs and also in that for a woman whose epitaph (BK015) is an adaption of an eighteenth century hymn by John Wesley. The inscription is too weathered for illustration, but reads:

‘When came the Angel and the Holy Ghost to claim my mansion in the sky
Even then this shall be all my plea, that Jesus hath lived and died for me’

This epitaph references two of the three members of the Trinity, and it contains the sole reference in the entire dataset to the Holy Ghost despite the association of the phrase with baptism, blessing and benediction; the Holy Spirit is mentioned once at Penycæ. However, there is some concentration, in female epitaphs in this category, on religious figures; ‘Father’, ‘Angel’, ‘Holy Ghost’ and ‘Jesus’ and on resting, sleeping, safety, and encircling arms, as in the example below:

‘Safe in the arms of Jesus’ (BK126)

The epitaph ‘Peace, Perfect Peace’, which will be widely encountered at all sample graveyards, is chosen for four epitaphs at Brown Knowl. It is a repeated refrain from a hymn written in 1875 by Henry Bickersteth (1825-1906), quondam Bishop of Exeter, and author of an influential tome entitled ‘Yesterday, Today and Forever’, published in 1866, which sold over 75,000 copies during his lifetime. Bickersteth was an evangelical Protestant, and a ‘Millenarianist’ - a believer in a future Utopian period (Wheeler 1990, 91). He continued to try to make the world fit into the biblical story throughout his life.

This study has not attempted to investigate how influential was Bickersteth’s book in informing attitudes to life, death and worship. However, the refrain of the hymn, which concentrates on the redemptive power of the Saviour, is the among the most frequently chosen epitaph noted in this study, and continues to be popular in modern, more secular times.

Old Testament sources

Choices of epitaph from this source (Table 5.9 below) are the most numerous at twenty-three; of these thirteen quote Psalm 37:37; ‘Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace’, usually abbreviated to ‘His/her end (BK154 has ‘her last end’) was peace’. Abbreviations like these may have occurred because of the additional cost of extra lettering. It is notable that Old Testament sources occur predominately before 1900 and none was chosen for a child.

Table 5.9 Brown Knowl: Old Testament sources

Ref	Year of death	Gender	Age	Themes
BK087	1850	F	71	Nearness of death
BK159	1856	F	37	Innocence, evil
BK140	1864	M	61	Perfection, righteousness, peace
BK124(1)	1872	M	67	Peace
BK097	1873	M	26	Finding the Lord
BK154	1877	F	51	Peace
BK124(2)	1879	F	73	Peace
BK084	1879	F	71	Peace
BK129	1884	M	78	Peace
BK095	1884	F	69	Praise from husband and children
BK033	1886	M	75	Redemption
BK116	1888	M	69	Power of God
BK141	1890	M	83	Peace
BK064	1890	F	60	Peace
BK092	1892	M	52	Peace
BK160	1893	F	73	Peace
BK152	1896	F	44	Peace
BK125	1896	M	69	Peace
BK136	1904	F	85	Sleep
BK009	1905	F	41	Reunion
BK151	1906	M	78	Peace
BK131	1913	M	66	Blessings, piety
BK026	1917	M	20	Sacrifice

Of the ‘sleep’ metaphor there is a single instance of Psalm 127:2, ‘For He giveth his beloved sleep’ (BK136); another such epitaph is a ‘multiple’ discussed above. Some epitaphs from Psalms focus on safety and redemption. The last of these (BK033) from Isaiah, features redemption strongly:

‘The innocent is taken away from the evil to come’ (BK159)

‘Blessed is every one that feareth the Lord: that walketh in His ways’ (BK131)

‘Fear not, for I have redeemed thee, thou art Mine’ (BK033)

Within Old Testament epitaphs, there are two examples of the source of the text inscribed on the gravestone: BK131, and BK095, the latter of which is taken from Proverbs and commemorates the death of a mother in 1884:

‘Her children rise up and call her blessed, her husband also and he praiseth her’.

The second death recorded on this memorial also bears the New Testament source of the epitaph; this habit is not widespread at the studied locations. It may be that populations steeped in the Bible were confident that readers of epitaphs would recognise their provenance without prompting.

Since many Psalms were set to music, it is also possible that this may have influenced the choice of epitaph among congregations for whom singing was important. Brown Knowl has a fine organ, and had choir stalls in the worship area, before they were removed during the twentieth century (John Vernon, pers.comm 2012). It is curious that Psalm 23 (The Lord is my Shepherd), frequently sung at religious services then as now, appears only once in the dataset, at Buckley (B084).

Job Lea of Peckforton died in 1888 aged 69 (BK116). From the Book of Job, his family chose 'Behold, He taketh away: who can hinder Him'. It would be tempting to infer some gentle family humour being suggested here. BK087 from Amos is rather more admonitory: 'Reader, prepare to meet thy God' although 'Reader' does not appear in the biblical text and the final phrase - 'O Israel' - , which does, has been omitted. Since this gravestone had the 1850 primary salutation 'Here lieth the remains' discussed above, these choices may be indicative of earlier attitudes to redemption. The adaptation of biblical and other source texts to suit personal circumstances and preferences, observed at all sample graveyards, suggests that the bereaved had little reluctance in amending established texts to express personal preferences and circumstances, and did not consider the Word inviolable. Alternatively, considerations of cost may have been influential.

New Testament sources

These epitaphs are predominately chosen for women and children who died before 1900.

Table 5.10 Brown Knowl: New Testament sources

Ref	Year of death	Gender	Age	Themes
BK053	1853	F	36	Reward for a moral life
BK144	1858	F	56	Reward for a moral life
BK084	1863	C	16	Belief, repentance, fear, reward
BK133	1864	F	82	Reward for a moral life
BK085	1867	M	86	Reward for a moral life
BK140	1874	M	40	Readiness for death
BK094	1881	C	13	Children, access to Jesus
BK160	1883	M	71	Reward for a moral life
BK033	1884	F	71	Reward for a moral life
BK095	1899	M	81	Reward for a moral life, redemption
BK014	1907	F		Submission to God's will
BK131	1914	F	65	A better, future life/experience

St. Matthew's Gospel is chosen twice, for male deaths: 'Well done, thou good and faithful servant. Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord' (BK095), and 'Be ye also ready' (BK140); the full text of the latter is 'Therefore be ye also ready, for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of Man cometh' and is used in full at other locations, particularly at Penycæ. Luke is also chosen twice: 'Thy will be done, O lord, not mine' (BK014), and 'Suffer the little children to come unto me, for such is the kingdom of Heaven' (BK094).

Six are from the Book of Revelation: 'Blessed are they that die in the Lord'. Charles Hopley died in 1867 (Figure 5.12). His epitaph was perhaps one of those carved by a local tradesperson since his epitaph begins 'Wright blessed are they....'. His wife Hannah predeceased him in 1858 and had a secular admonitory epitaph addressed to the reader; the memorial bears a heavily-incised IHS within a quatrefoil and roundel.



Fig. 5.12 Brown Knowl: Hopley gravestone from the east (BK085)

References to the Letters to the Philippians, and the Gospel of Mark occur once each. Respectively ‘To be with Christ, which is much better’, which is relatively common at Buckley and Penycae, occurs only once at Brown Knowl (BK131) while ‘If you believe, repent and fear, there will be a crown for you’ (BK084) from Mark, is one of the only two direct allusions to repentance on gravestones at Brown Knowl. The relatively early date (1863) may be a reflection of the belief in ‘conversion’ of early Evangelicalism, to which might be linked another theological term ‘justification’ or ‘justification by faith’. These expressions were held to refer to the ‘divine forgiveness of a sinner’, (Bebbington 2014, 232) on first trusting to Jesus.

Prayer sources

There are six instances of choice of prayers at Brown Knowl, one male, four female and a child (Table 5.11). They are all ‘Thy Will be done’ from the Lord’s Prayer. Although the gospels of Matthew and Luke also contain the text, it has been treated as a prayer throughout this thesis to reduce confusion, except where extra text has been included to change or amplify the meaning.

Table 5.11 Brown Knowl: prayer sources

Ref	Year of death	Gender	Age	Themes
BK042	1870	C	16	Submission to God’s will
BK139	1898	F	30	Submission to God’s will
BK151	1900	F	70	Submission to God’s will
BK134	1904	M	80	Submission to God’s will
BK197	1910	F	37	Submission to God’s will
BK126	1913	F	66	Submission to God’s will

Three of the six deaths occurred after the age of sixty-six; the other three deaths took place before the age of forty, and were all female, which may suggest some acknowledgement of early deaths. However, the choice of this epitaph may be more indicative of a trend later in the nineteenth century toward simpler, cheaper, holophrastic epitaphs; its relative lack of frequency at Brown Knowl is nevertheless surprising, since all children in Sunday School would have been taught to recite the Lord’s Prayer, even if they were unable to write.

Poetry and vernacular verse sources

There are no allusions to mainstream or published poetry at all at Brown Knowl (nor to established literature), although, as we shall see later in this study, some other denominations were fond of poetry, particularly in the Welsh tradition. The lack of recognised poetry may be because of illiteracy rates in rural Cheshire, although both the Church of England and the Nonconformist movement established elementary schools during the nineteenth century.

However, there was an acute shortage of school places in the rural townships of south Cheshire (Higgins 2002, 105), which may explain the lack of literary allusions at Brown Knowl.

Here there are eleven instances, in addition to the Harrison ‘multiple’ epitaph discussed above, of a style that has been entitled ‘vernacular verse’ in this thesis. This term has been chosen so as not to wound the dignity of either the dead or the commissioners of the epitaph. An unkind description might be ‘doggerel’.

Table 5.12 Brown Knowl: vernacular verse sources

Ref	Year of Death	Gender	Age	Themes
BK100	1850	M	26	Grave, remembrance
BK146	1851	F	36	Slumbering in the ground, resurrection
BK092	1854	M	40	Religion, sinning, preparation for inevitability of death
BK143	1857	M	64	Family and friendship, redemption
BK085	1858	F	79	Grave, preparation for inevitability of death
BK140	1861	F	61	Relief from life’s afflictions, being saved
BK150	1869	F	26	Freedom, being saved by blood of the Lamb
BK165	1878	M	19	Relief from life’s afflictions
BK106	1879	M	49	Serving God in heaven
BK134	1888	F	78	Grave, preparation for inevitability of death
BK117	1890	F	33	Meeting again at heaven’s gate

These tend to be richly descriptive epitaphs, but some are not unique and have been noted at other Cheshire locations, such as at the Anglican church of St. Mary’s at Tilston. It may be that there was at the time a sort of pattern book of such verse, similar to stone-masons’ patterns books of grave designs (York Archives and Libraries CEM/5/14), although this study failed to identify one. Alternatively, these epitaphs may be evidence of an oral tradition, not necessarily local.

Although these epitaphs defy rigid classification, they all suggest an early narrative style not chosen after 1890 and are evenly spread according to gender, excluding, however, children. There are some common themes. Viewing the grave by others is one of them:

‘All they who come my grave to see
Must prepare to follow me’ (BK085: illustrated at Figure 5.12 above)

‘When on this stone you cast your eye
Remember me as you pass by’ (BK100: illustrated at Figure 5.13 below)



Fig.5.13 Brown Knowl: Hughes gravestone from the east (BK100)

‘Reader, stand and spend a tear over the dust that lyeth here.
Consider well this state of mine, which will another day be thine’ (BK134)

Suggestions of redemption, or being saved, were also popular:

‘Religion was his chiefist (sic) care, and sinning greatest dread,
Reader, be like him thyself prepare, for a pious man is dead’
(BK092: illustrated at Figure 5.5 above)

‘Thanks be to God for the evidence given,
He having gone from us to serve God in heaven,
The work of the Lord was his joy and delight
Henceforth he will serve Him day without night’ (BK106)

‘And now I’m saved by grace divine, the Lamb has set me free,
I feel the precious Saviour mine, He shed his blood for me’ (BK150)

These epitaphs are notable for the maintenance of references to spiritual matters, with allusions to religion; sinning; piety; God, Christ, the Lamb; Saviour; heaven; and golden gates. The misery of human existence is also well attested, although even within these melancholy sentiments, belief or faith in a better after-life can be discerned:

‘My feeble frame, though long oppressed, has now obtained a lasting rest,
My soul, through Christ has gained the shore,
Where pain and grief are felt no more’ (BK140)

‘The winter of trouble is past, the storm of affliction is o’er,
His struggles are ended at last and sorrow and death are no more’ (BK165)

Again, it may be that the cost of extensive lettering, and a move to more succinct expressions were responsible for the demise of these colourful commemorations. It may also have been felt by better-educated mourners that the time for epitaphs of this nature had passed.

Unassigned epitaphic sources

These are epitaphs where the source or origin could not be securely identified. There are two of these, and both refer to females.

Table 5.13 Brown Knowl: unassigned sources

Ref	Year of Death	Gender	Age	Themes
BK132	1887	F	72	Waiting for the Saviour
BK027	1919	F	32	Suffering, home, understanding

These epitaphs reference attaining a heavenly after-life, using terms such as suffering; home; repentance; and waiting:

‘She lies waiting for the coming of her Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ’
(BK132: illustrated at Figure 5.14 below)

‘After much suffering, Jesus called her home.

Sometime we will understand' (BK027)



Fig.5.14 Brown Knowl: Harrison gravestone from the east (BK132)

If these epitaphs were chosen for the implication of passing to a higher state, some belief in resurrection of the spirit may be being demonstrated here, since this tenet of faith had replaced archaic beliefs about bodily resurrection, under assault from scientific thought and practice, the increasing use of cremation and its legalisation 1902 (Tarlow 2011, 145). Nevertheless, in these epitaphs the use of personal pronouns is noticeable: 'her', 'she' and 'we'. These may perhaps be instances of cognitive dissonance: in these cases, at the same time holding contrary beliefs about the process and aftermath of dying. Perhaps we might call it faith.

Epitaphs at Brown Knowl: summary

At Brown Knowl, sources chosen for the 79 legible epitaphs were principally of formal religious provenance: the Bible, (the Old Testament being the most popular choice), prayers and hymns, accounting for some 70% of total epitaphs. Themes of rest, peace, sleep, submission to God's will, righteousness and redemption are the most numerous. Vernacular verse epitaphs tend to be the most colourful, allowing survivors to freely express attributes to, and personal feelings about, the dead person.

At Brown Knowl about 48% of individuals recorded (including those commemorated in multiple epitaphs) have an epitaph, while 39% of gravestones have no epitaph at all. These findings provoke some caution when attempting an interpretation of personal faith or religious belief by individuals, or to the then congregations as a whole. Nevertheless, it has been demonstrated above that few epitaphs at this site are wholly secular, and most contain some religious reference, particularly from the Bible, or from another such religious source. These factors seem to indicate that a strong acceptance by Primitive Methodists of the authority of the Bible in matters of faith and practice (Bebbington 2014, 231) has been reflected in the choice of epitaph at this graveyard, and that echoes can be detected of the evangelical ethos of the earlier preachers such as Wedgwood and Whitfield, who believed and preached that all could be saved.

It would appear that this practice was in decline before the end of the nineteenth century in favour of shorter and more formulaic expressions. It may also be that increasing availability of pre-incised blank memorials inhibited (not least, on grounds of cost) the loquacity of earlier Primitive Methodist generations, who took such pains to express their loss and bereavement in the colourful and elaborate inscriptions described above.

Although it is now difficult to determine how many memorialised individuals commemorated at Brown Knowl (or at any of the sample sites with the exception of Tarporley) were members of the congregation, or, indeed, held any particular religious convictions, nevertheless, they were buried in a religious environment, and some had

epitaphs chosen for them. We do not know if the dead chose their epitaphs in advance, nor whether they would have been content, in life, with the choices made for them in death. We have, for the most part, only the survivors' voices.

CHAPTER 6

BUCKLEY ST. JOHN'S CONGREGATIONALIST (INDEPENDENT) CHURCH

Location and history

Buckley (Bwcle in Welsh) lies on a foothill of the Clwydian range of hills, in the north-east of Flintshire, about 14kms west of Chester and about 4kms east of Mold (Figure 6.1).

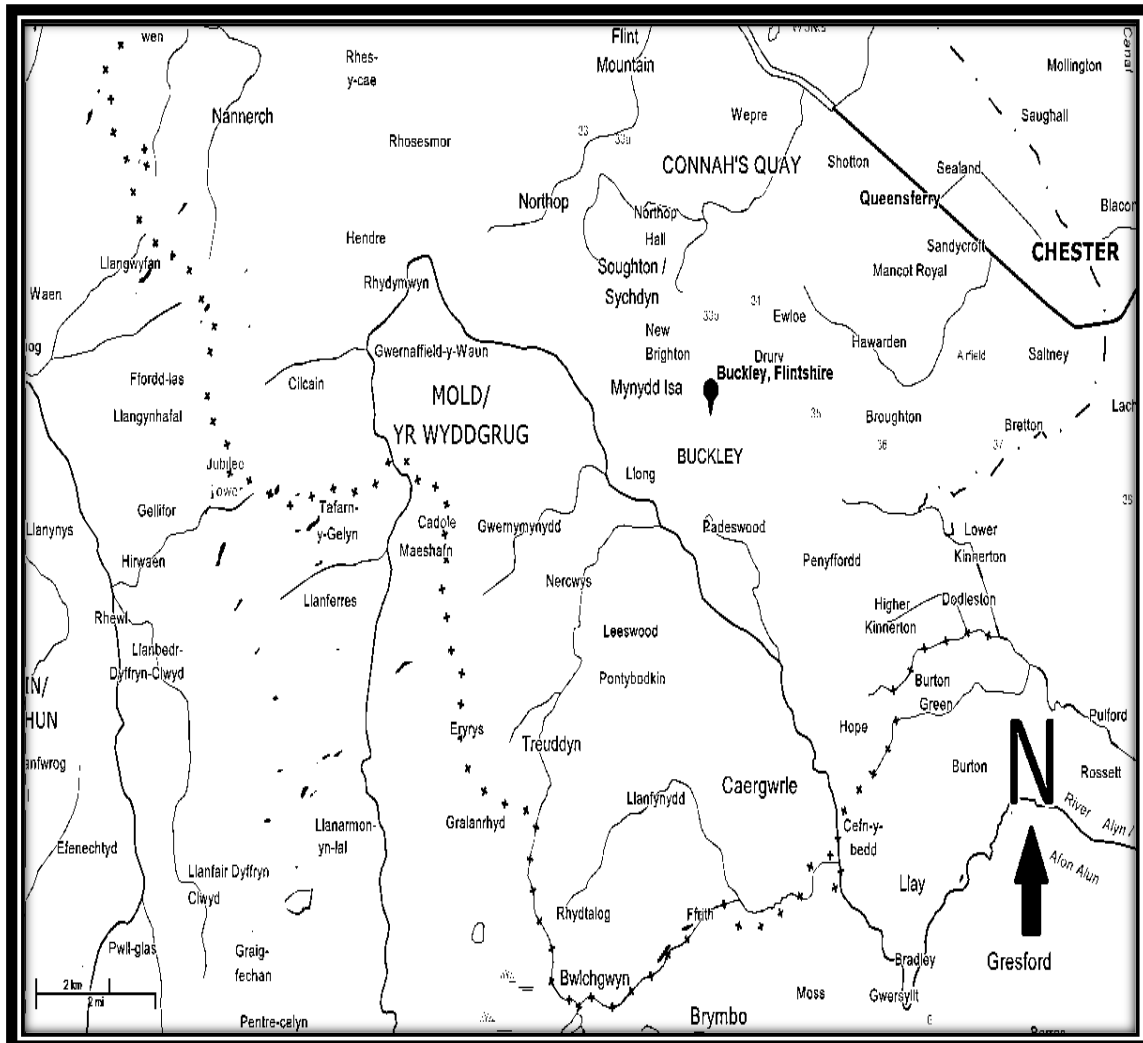


Fig. 6.1 Location of Buckley, Flintshire. Ordnance Survey 2011 West Cheshire and East Wales. Edina Digimap. Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2016.

First mined for open-cast coal in the early fourteenth century, the peak of coal production was reached during the nineteenth century; the last industrial coal mine closed in the 1930s (Pritchard 2006, 87). Allied to coal, seams of fire-clay were plentiful, driving Buckley's brick, tile, pipe and cement factories. Although there was some agriculture, nineteenth-century Buckley would have presented a picture of collieries, pit-machinery, furnaces, steam locomotives and wagons, horse and donkey-drawn carts and wagons, trams,

chimneys, slag pits and tips, and workers' cottages. In something of a frontier society, immigrants to the coal fields and factories included Irish and Scottish workers and displaced agricultural workers.

The established church (the parish church of St. Matthew was founded in 1822) and Nonconformism offered spiritual guidance to this new demographic. The evangelist preacher George Whitefield (or Whitfield, whose contribution to Nonconformism is described in Chapter 2) preached at Buckley in the early 1750s (Shepherd u/d, 13) and is commemorated in the extract below on a Catherall monument (B003 - described in greater detail later in this chapter) at St. John's Congregational church:

'Miss Prescott kept a day school where Peter Jones's tavern is. Her father, Bartholomew heard Whitfield preach under the sycamore tree, nearly a mile north from this place'

Into this environment Jonathan Catherall was born in 1761, of an Anglican family in the pottery and brick manufacturing business, for which he was forced to assume responsibility on the early death of his father in an accident. It is said that he was influenced by the preaching of an un-named Dissenting preacher at Hawarden (who may have been the unfortunate Mr Sellers), where Nonconformity was ill-tolerated. The monument described above also corroborates this distaste:

'Mr. Sellers of Chester with a few friends came in a boat to Sandycroft then up to Hawarden to preach where he was shamefully abused bad eggs etc. thrown at him'(sic)

Jonathan Catherall was to become a life-long Nonconformist, and founded the first Independent (later Congregationalist) church at Buckley. Other Nonconforming denominations also established themselves at Buckley; Methodists were licensed from 1785 (Pritchard 2006, 166); the first Wesleyan chapel was built in 1818, followed by the Methodist New Connexion in 1823, and the Primitive Methodists built a chapel at Alltami in 1836 following the customary meetings in barns and cottages and in the open. Jonathan Catherall was sympathetic to the Calvinistic Methodists and provided the land for their chapel to be

built in 1834. English Presbyterians established a chapel in 1869; the Baptists built their Ebenezer chapel in 1889, and a Bethel chapel in 1890. To add to the denominations competing for religious provision, a Roman Catholic church was opened in the last decade of the nineteenth century. It is with the Congregationalists of Buckley, however, that the remainder of this chapter is concerned.

Buckley Congregational churches

Early places of worship for Buckley Congregationalists included a former pottery shed on Buckley Common occupied by a Mr Lamb, which became the first licensed Nonconformist meeting house in Buckley. A memorial to George Lamb who died in 1855 (B007: Figure 6.2 below), the infant son of William and Margaret Lamb, bears the epitaph ‘The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away’ and suggests that a professional stonemason was not engaged for the task. The calligraphic convention of inscribing an ampersand on its side, and decorating the stem of a ‘t’ with triangles can be seen on Figure 6.2, and on other early gravestones at Buckley and also at Tarporley.

After Catherall was prosecuted for holding unlicensed worship in his dining room, he purchased land in 1811 for the erection of the first chapel, called Buckley Mountain Congregational Church (Pritchard 2006, 165) abutting Hawkesbury Road and opposite Buckley Common, on the present site. This brick chapel had an entrance porch to the south, a bell turret and a burial ground, and was inadequate for the number of worshippers by 1870.



Fig.6.2 Buckley St.John's: Lamb gravestone from the south. Note the insertion of the final two letters of 'away' above the text of the last line

A new chapel was completed in 1873. It was made of yellow brick in gothic style with red tile-topped buttresses and a tiled steeple (Figure 6.3). Its entrance faced east across Hawkesbury Road to Buckley Common, and was situated to the south and west of the earlier chapel; the new building may account for the low survival rate of earlier gravemarkers. A brick School Room was added in 1885. Internally, the new building had a raised preaching area, pine pews and a gallery with wrought-iron balustrading. Later an organ was added. Stables and accommodation for carriages were provided to the rear of the building, which demonstrates the elevated social position of some of the congregation, who may have travelled some distance to worship (Shepherd u/d, 36). This area is now the modern graveyard, and was not surveyed for this thesis.

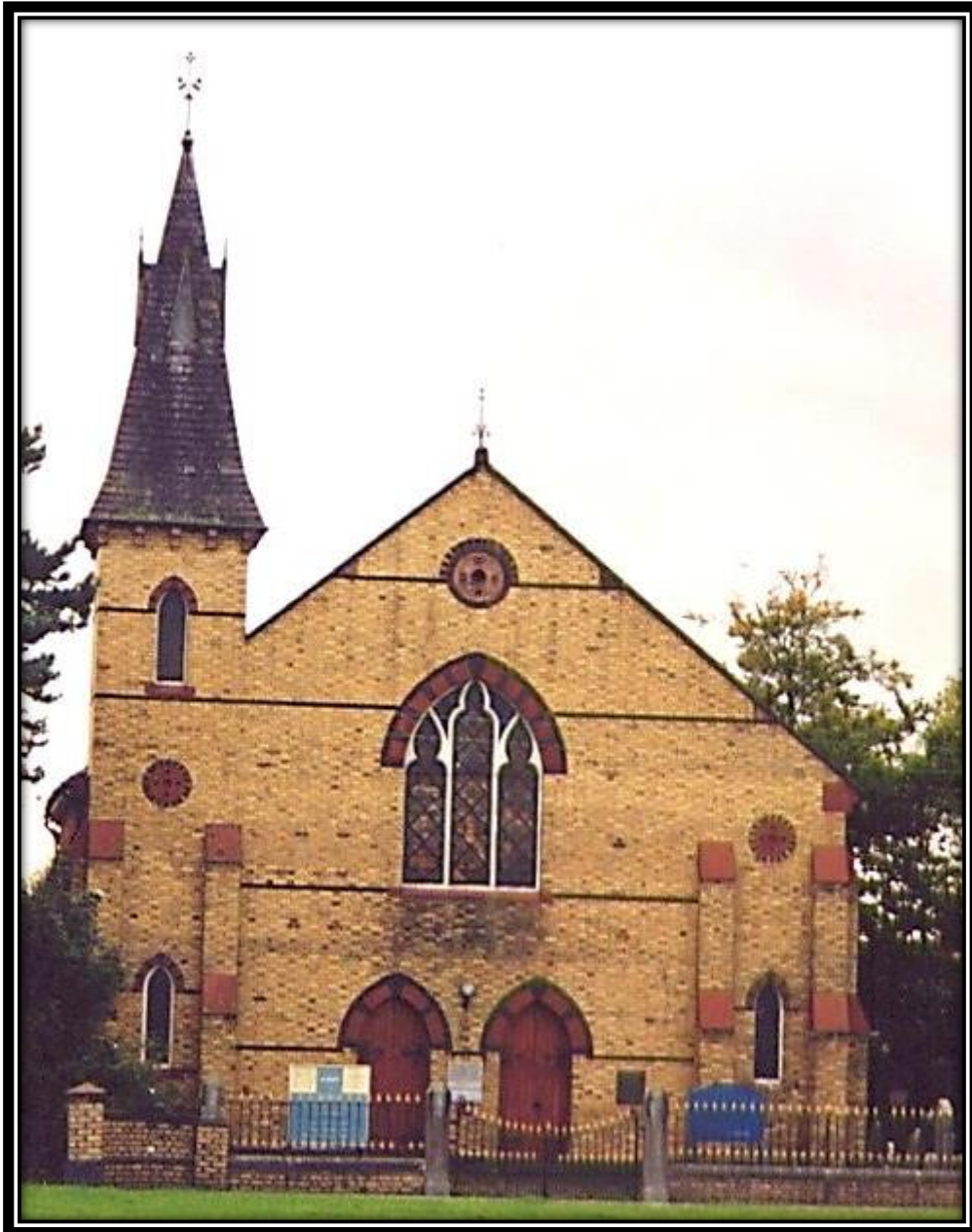


Fig 6.3. Buckley St. John's second Congregational Church built in 1873. Reproduced with the permission of The Buckley Society and the owner/depositor to whom copyright is reserved

By the end of the twentieth century, the second church was beyond economic repair, and ministering to a smaller congregation. It was demolished in 2001 and replaced by a brick church of modern design; however, incorporated in the fabric of the new was a commemoration stone from the old (Figure 6.4). Also conserved and placed in the new church were the highly-decorated gilt war memorials which were attached to the pulpit in the second church, and which are discussed later in this chapter. It is notable that on the

commemorative stone the first building continued to be referred to as a ‘church’, and its larger and more imposing successor a ‘chapel’, despite the traditional Congregationalist preference for the former term.



Fig 6.4 Buckley St.John's Congregational Church: anniversary plaque from 1942 incorporated in the new church building.

Also preserved and placed in the new church were six wooden chairs from the preaching area of the second church, decorated with quatrefoils and cross motifs, and a memorial table, demonstrating, as at Brown Knowl, thriftiness or a desire for continuity.

Demographics

Figure 6.5 below illustrates deaths commemorated at Buckley by period and gender. Derived from Nvivo, 82 male, 68 female, and 72 child deaths are represented; 222 in all. In addition there were eleven post-1830 deaths from the Catherall memorial (B003), which also itemised a further five pre-1830 deaths excluded from the above figure and from Table 4.1. There are of course, a larger proportion of commemorated deaths at industrial Buckley than at

agricultural Brown Knowl; it is noticeable that there seems to be little correlation in the chart below with the peaks in deaths at the latter location during period of agricultural depression following the 1870s.

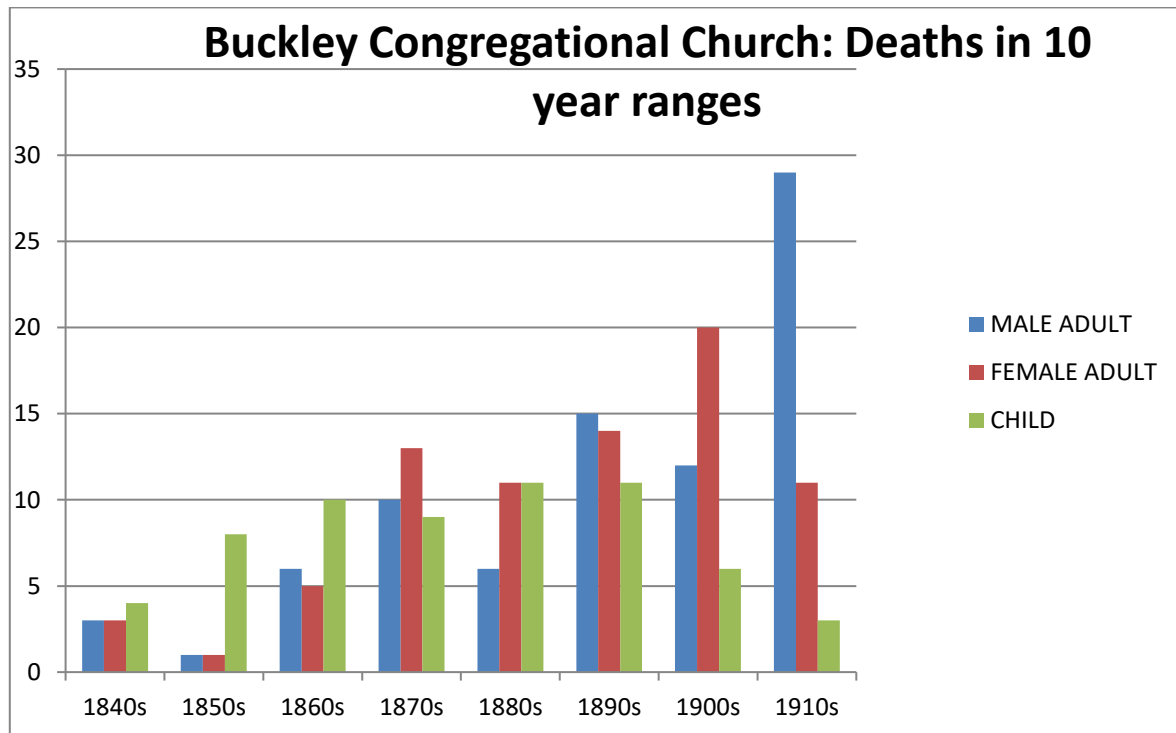


Fig.6.5. Buckley St. John's: deaths by gender in ten-year ranges

Evident from this gender breakdown is that the incidence of child deaths is greater than or comparable to adult deaths in the decades before 1889, with the exception of the dicennial beginning 1870. Overall, this effect may have been attributable to the employment of children in circumstances of industrial pollution, poverty or economic deprivation. Child death rates significantly reduced after 1900; the early years of the new century were marked by falling coal prices, and industrial unrest as a result of wage reductions (Pritchard 2006, 110), which may have had an influence on the employment of children in industrial environments. Improved child care and progressive legislation were probably equally influential.

There are several gravestones at Buckley denoting the deaths of multiple infants ('and their children who died in infancy'). Of these children, eight had individual epitaphs, while

seven were included in a 'multiple' epitaph, which is discussed below. Six Catherall child deaths occurred over the years 1797 to 1847 and seem to have been added to the complex memorial (B003) for reasons of family continuity; they may not have been buried at Buckley. This memorial is also discussed below.

Incidences of female deaths peaked in the early years of the new century when they significantly outnumber those of males, although both before and afterwards the rates for both genders were broadly comparable. It will be noted that at Brown Knowl (Chapter 5) there was a similar pattern of high female mortality, albeit in the ten years to 1900. Although *maternal* mortality ratios in the UK peaked between 1890 and 1900 (Chamberlain 2006), and declined thereafter, it is not always clear from inscriptions whether the commemorated females had been mothers. Equally, it is not always possible to infer whether female deaths related to pregnancy and childbirth, although age of the female can be a guide. The disproportionate number of commemorated female deaths at Buckley between 1910 and 1919, therefore, remains unexplained, despite extensive research, and help from the Buckley Society.

Male deaths show a low but erratic pattern until the decade beginning 1890 when there is a slight increase similar to that of female deaths. There is no direct evidence that this could be related to the effects and after-effects of a period of agricultural depression noted in Chapter 5. However, in the period following 1910, male deaths reached a peak of about twenty-nine not noted in any earlier period at Buckley. There does not seem to be a Welsh mining accident (Wrexham Archives n.d [a].) in the wider area during the period in question: in any event, lists of killed or injured workers on the Wrexham Archives website do not include specific addresses. Moreover, deaths in the Great War commemorated in the graveyard could not be responsible for the increase: there are only four such at Buckley, which are also commemorated on the war memorial inside the church (Figure 6.10). It is possible that influenza in 1919 which targeted younger people in particular was responsible;

about six deaths per 1000 in Flintshire have been estimated (British Broadcasting Corporation n.d.[b]).

Memorial types, imagery and decoration

The gravestones examined in Table 6.1 below are those that remained after illegible or undated examples had been out-sorted; few memorials from the first chapel graveyard survived in situ. However, in a published survey of the graveyard of the second church (Tyrer and Harrison 2000) the Clwyd Family History Society (CFHS) documented displaced gravestones that had been collected and placed against the wall of the new church after the demolition of the original building.

There are fifteen of these, ranging in date between 1823 and 1884, and commemorate fourteen infants and young people, two adults, and two others, details unknown. ‘Here lieth the body (or the remains)’ was recorded on eight of these gravestones dating between 1823 and 1861, demonstrating that this form of introductory phrasing (Tarlow 1998b) survived until the middle of the nineteenth century at Buckley. None of these memorials had epitaphs.

However, by 2013, when the graveyard was being surveyed for this study, most of these gravestones had disappeared, and have not, therefore, been included in Table 6.1 below, which analyses types of memorials at Buckley from a base of 113 gravestones (Table 4.1). Again, the total number of gravestone elements (139) in this table exceeds the number of graves in Table 4.1: this is because at Buckley proportionally more graves had multiple elements: an occurrence less common at Brown Knowl during the sample period, although it is possible that there kerbs had been removed or destroyed. The asterisk in the table below denotes kerbs or former kerbs where evidence of attachment, for instance, was visible, but where the kerbs had been removed.

Table 6.1 Buckley St.John's church: distribution of memorial types

Memorial Type	Number	%
Tall Headstone (>1m)	70	50%
Low Headstone (<1m)	21	15%
Kerbs and former kerbs*	25	18%
Cross	8	6%
Obelisk	10	7%
Other	5	4%

Memorial distribution at Buckley indicates a slightly higher preference for low headstones, usually attached to kerbs, than noted at Brown Knowl. Similarly, at Buckley there are ten obelisks (7%) compared to the single example at Brown Knowl illustrated at the frontispiece to this study, demonstrating, perhaps, middle-class aspirations among some Congregationalists (Chapter 2), or indicative of some preference in Wales (Mytum 2002a) for this type of memorial (see Figure 3.1 for example). Consumption of crosses at both sites is similar (7%), although it was apparent that some other crosses in the Buckley graveyard had been damaged and left on the ground, mostly face down, and were not recorded.

There were six examples of a particular 'roofed' design of gravestone; others occur in small numbers at Tarporley. This design resembles the gable end of a house (Figure 6.6), recalling the symbolic association posited by Hodder (1995, 43) that in a European Neolithic environment, tombs could have visible associations with the style and functions of dwellings.



Fig.6.6. Buckley St. John's: 'roofed' gravestone design from the south. (B171)

It seemed unlikely, however, that these designs at Buckley were chosen, however subliminally, to suggest domestic associations, since only one commemorates a family, and most record the death of a single individual. These designs are concentrated in the period 1857-1870. From this gravestone it is clear that the archaic sideways ampersand was still in use about 1868.

Imagery (decoration on gravestones) is tabulated below. Notable is the number of gravestones with no imagery at all.

Table 6.2 Buckley St. John's: frequency of gravestone imagery

Design of Imagery	Occurrences
Floral arrangement or individual plant e.g. rose, ivy or willow	34
Abstract designs	18
Roundels	13
Quatrefoils	7
IHS	5
Supplementary crosses	4
No imagery	59

However, there seemed to be less appetite for supplementary crosses and quatrefoils at Buckley than among the 'Prims' at Brown Knowl, although as noted earlier in this chapter the furniture from the second chapel, now in use in the third, is carved with quatrefoils and crosses.

Minimally represented were depictions of hands (3), urns (3), books, scrolls, shields and a single masonic emblem. There seems to be little explanation for the seeming preference for undecorated memorials, since the deaths recorded thereon range between 1830 and 1917, although they do seem to appear in clusters in the graveyard. This effect may be rather less to do with familial preference than available burial space.

A sense of place

Unlike at Brown Knowl, use of place-names on memorials is relatively frequent (28 occurrences: 25% of memorials). 'Buckley' occurs on twenty occasions, and there are a further four recordings of close settlements such as Alltami, Bistre and Bryn Y Baal. The

gender split is 22 male: 6 female; eleven of the male addresses contain a subsidiary address: ‘New Stores’; The Common; Plas-Major Farm etc., while of the three females with subsidiary addresses it is notable that two of them are outside the immediate location, at Flint and Wigan.

From such small numbers no firm conclusions can be drawn, but it is notable that, unlike at Brown Knowl, three of the six female commemorations do not include familial connotations such as ‘wife of...name and address’ although all three husbands are commemorated as ‘husband of the above’ lower on the gravestone. Since all but one of the female deaths occurred after the Married Woman’s Property Act of 1882, it would be tempting to interpret these minor occurrences as indicative of nascent female emancipation.

There is a small cluster of five addresses on memorials between 1867 and 1876; predominately, however, the placing of addresses seems to be a late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century habit with 23 occurrences between 1880 and 1919. This may be a reflection of the industrial prominence of Buckley during this period, and of the social position of some Congregationalists, as suggested by their interest in land and tithe reform in the nineteenth century (Hughes 2003, 33).

Occupational references

Within the study period, there is only one non-ecclesiastical occupation recorded - that of surgeon who died in 1914 aged 47, and whose memorial is one of the crosses to survive intact at Buckley (Figure 6.7 below). Three occupations are linked to church activities – Deacon; Choir Leader/ Sunday School Teacher, and Pastor. The term Minister does not seem to have been preferred before the 1920s.

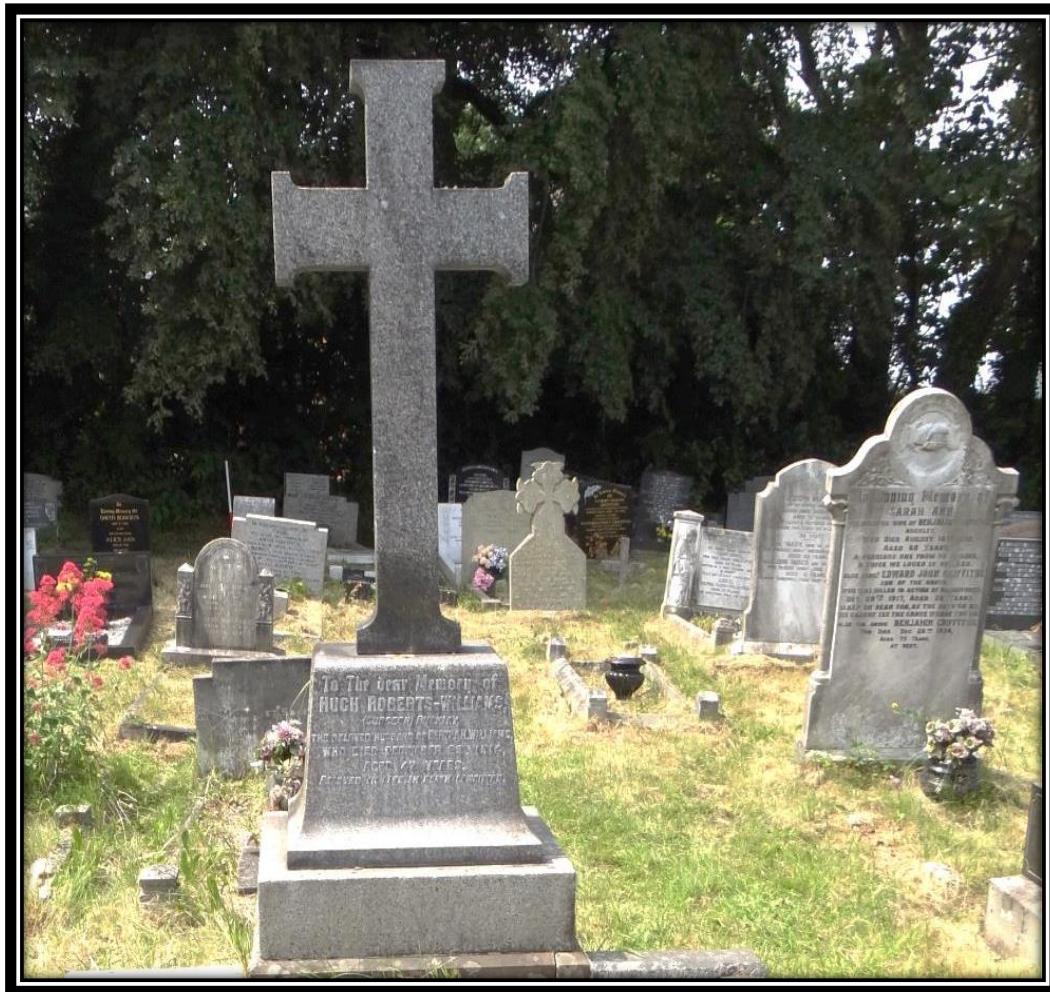


Fig. 6.7 Buckley St.John's: memorial to a surgeon (B045)

The language of remembrance

Table 6.3 analyses 94 primary and secondary salutations at Buckley; of the latter there were only two. Salutations of two or fewer examples have not been tabulated, but are discussed below. Notable in the table is the relative frequency of the two common salutations of 'In loving memory' and 'In memory (or memery [sic]) of' in comparison to other examples. Preference for the common salutation 'In loving memory' or 'remembrance' appears to be marginally greater, as at Brown Knowl, before the end of the nineteenth century, and again this is difficult to explain, given the modern popularity of the phrase.

Table 6.3. Buckley St. John's: primary salutations by type, gender and period

Salutation/ Period	Male	Female	Child	Total	%
In loving memory or remembrance pre-1900	18	10	4	32	34%
In loving memory or remembrance post-1900	17	6	1	24	26%
In memory (or memery) pre-1900	7	8	8	23	24%
In memory (or memery) post-1900	1	2	0	3	3%
Sacred to the memory pre-1900	3	1	2	6	6%
Sacred to the memory post-1900	1	1	0	2	2%
In affectionate memory/ remembrance pre-1900	2	1	1	4	4%
TOTAL	49	29	16	94	99%*

*Differences due to rounding

Also difficult to explain is the relatively high incidence of 'In memory' applied to children who died before 1900, which phrasing, to modern sensibilities, may seem to lack appropriate demonstrations of parental grief. Since there is evidence of loving salutations to lost children in the same period, it may be that the former preference is a reflection of the high child mortality rates described earlier in this chapter. Alternatively, there may have been some local contemporary preference or practice attached to this wording.

There were also two occurrences of 'here lieth the body' (B002 and B197, both males) and one each to 'Underneath lie the remains of' (B194, male) and 'In hope of a joyful resurrection lieth the body of' (B192). The latter commemorated a female death; all these deaths occurred in the 1840s, corroborating the decline in consumption of such phrases noted at Brown Knowl. Also notable was the comparative paucity of salutations (4) referring to affectionate memory or remembrance, all occurring before 1900; there were 18 occurrences

of these choices at Brown Knowl for a smaller population. Perhaps Congregationalists preferred the warmer expressions of ‘loving or affectionate memory’ although ‘in memory of’ was also popular at Buckley, particularly before 1900.

The language of death

Table 6.4 below examines the terms chosen to describe the manner of death at St. John’s in 20-year ranges. As before, because of the frequency of its use, the term ‘died’ has not been tabulated, which, as at Brown Knowl, was the term of greatest choice for the individuals recorded at Buckley.

Table 6.4 Buckley St. John’s: euphemisms for dying

	1841- 1860	1861- 1880	1881- 1900	1901- 1920	UNDATED	TOTAL
Departed this (and from this) life	5	7	3	1	1	16
Departed this life uncomplainingly	1					1
Died in the Lord	1					1
Entered into rest			1			1
Fell asleep		2				2
Fell asleep in Jesus/Christ			3	1		4
Killed in action or fell in (location)				4		4
No reference					2	2
TOTAL	7	9	7	6	3	31

The modern expression ‘passed away’ does not appear here until after the 1920s. Here, as at Brown Knowl ‘Departed this life’ was the most frequently-chosen phrase after ‘died’, and is not chosen after about 1920. There are marginally more allusions here to Jesus (or ‘Lord’ or ‘Christ’) in comparison to Brown Knowl, which is probably a factor of the greater number of individuals recorded at this site. Nevertheless, it is clear that here the

greater preference is for the simple descriptive term, although the higher cost of additional wording may have been influential.

Last words

There is only one inscription recording last words at Buckley, although there are two instances at Penycae.



Fig.6.8 Buckley St.John's: Bellis and Roberts gravestone from the south (B159)

This is a family memorial (B159: Figure 6.8 above), the first death being that of John Bells, who died in 1883 aged 22. His last words were:

‘Crossing the water. God is good. Forgiven, forgiven’.

It is hard not to be moved by these sentiments, while acknowledging the depth of conviction that inspired them.

Summary

This chapter has engaged thus far with the location, environment and demographics at St. John's before 1919, and considered preferences for style of gravestone, imagery and commemorative wording. The sources of epitaphs chosen by Buckley's Congregationalists will be examined next, where changing appetites for religious and other inscriptions will be examined; these issues are summarised at the end of this chapter.

Epitaphs at Buckley

Here, a larger population of gravestones with epitaphs (83 of 113 recorded - 73%) and individuals (250) than recorded at Brown Knowl produced a total of 111 usable epitaphs, including 'multiples', suggesting that the Congregationalist bereaved of the nineteenth- and early twentieth-century were generally more prone to choose and inscribe an epitaph than the 'Prims' of Brown Knowl, and displayed no reticence in entrusting their thoughts and sentiments to memorial media. Of the Catherall memorials, B003 is discussed at the start of the following section, before the examination of gravestones with epitaphs relating to two or more individuals (Table 6.5)

The Catherall memorials

Although there are Catherall gravestones throughout the burial ground, the obelisk (B003) commemorating births, marriages, deaths and interments of family members occupies a prominent position in an area of the graveyard dedicated to the family, and would have been originally sited behind the first chapel. Some of the wording on the east face of this obelisk (Figure 6.9) has been reproduced earlier in this chapter. Although not a 'multiple' as defined in Chapter 4, since it lacks an epitaph applicable to any member of the Catherall family, it is remarkable for the commemoration of 23 martyrs and ministers.



Fig.6.9 Buckley St.John's: south face of Catherall obelisk

Before the account of early preachers at Buckley and the abuse of others is the following statement:

'This testimonial to the memory of Wycliffe who died 1384, Cranmer 1556, Ridley 1555, Latimer 1555, Hooper 1555, Coverdale 1568, Knox 1572, Grotius 1648, Calvin 1564, Luther 1537, Arminius 1609, Wesley 1791. Doddridge, Hall, Robinson, Armitage, White, Reynolds, Luke, Thorpe, Knill, Bridgeman Chester, Lewis Jenkin Wrexham' (*punctuation verbatim*)

On the north and west faces of the memorial are recorded 16 Catherall family members from 1792 to 1882, perhaps deliberately intended to position the family within a time and milieu of martyrdom and religious repression (there could be echoes here of Jonathon's experience in being prosecuted for holding unlicensed worship meetings) and to be a statement of social standing, heritage and contribution, since it includes information about Jonathon Catherall's predecessors and those who died after his death in 1833.

The obelisk is unusual in recording dates of birth for those commemorated, and it records the death of Timothy Catherall who died in 1807 aged five, of whom it was recorded:

‘This Timothy inclosed (sic) in a lead coffin buried 15th Decr. at Holywell where Catherine, Jane, Richard and the former Timothy were interred’

Some detail may have been inscribed before the individual concerned had died - ‘Elizabeth, wife of Wm. Catherall died (blank) aged (blank) buried at Hope’, alternatively some forgetfulness on the part of the mason might be inferred.

Epitaphs relating to multiple deaths

The thirteen multiple epitaphs at Buckley, are, however, rather more conventional, and are summarised at Table 6.5. Unlike findings at Brown Knowl, commemorations for men and women are broadly similar in number, although there are marginally more child deaths (15) commemorated than those of males or females (10 and 11). Across the sample period as a whole, religious sources predominate in these epitaphs; an indication, perhaps of the enduring power of religion to this congregation.

One source (B227) ‘By faith we cling to Thee’ follows this pattern, taken from a poem by Charlotte Elliott (1789-1871); the other (B123) is Bickersteth’s ‘Peace, perfect peace’. The only epitaph (B200) to reference the dead people has elements of divine watchfulness:

‘No mortal woes can reach the peaceful sleepers here
While Angels watch their soft repose’

Table 6.5 Buckley St John's: epitaphs relating to multiple deaths

Grave no.	M	F	Child	Dates of Death	Source
B 063	1	1		1917	Hymn
B 115	1	1		1908,1912	Old Testament
B 123		1	1	1904, 1912	Hymn
B 152	1	1	1	1862, 1874, 1911	Prayer
B 159	1		1	1886, 1905	New Testament
B 163	1		3	1861,1868,1873	New Testament
B 167			2	1880 (2)	Prayer
B 169			4	1869,1872,1875, 1880	New Testament
B 200	1	3	1	1841,1877,1879, 1909, 1915	Hymn
B 217	2	1		1893,1894,1896	Prayer
B 225	1	1		1895, 1917	Prayer
B 227		1	1	1901, 1902	Poem
B 235	1		1	1897 (2)	Old Testament

There are five additional references to sleep, rest or stillness; a further three quote 'Thy will be done' from the Lord's Prayer. Two of the latter commemorate families with children, and one (B167) notes the deaths of two children aged 7 and 18 months, so there is some slight evidence here of submission to God's will. The New Testament epitaphs, predominately chosen for children, including four from the Parsonage family who all died before the age of three, contain elements of Luke 18:16, although in two of the three epitaphs only the last phrase has been inscribed:

'Suffer the little children to come unto Me, for such is the Kingdom of Heaven'

Sources of single epitaphs

Epitaphic sources chosen for 53 males, 35 females and 10 children are tabulated and discussed below. Religious and secular themes are suggested for these epitaphs; multiple epitaphs from Table 6.5 above are excluded. Adhering to the structure established in Chapter 5, this component of the thesis begins with short, commonplace expressions such as ‘At rest’ or ‘Re-united’.

Common Epitaphs

There are only three of these at Buckley within the sample period, although there were sixteen occurrences after 1919, adding further evidence of the decline of individualised epitaphs from about the latter years of the nineteenth century.

Table 6.6 Buckley St.John's: common epitaphs

Ref	Year of death	Gender	Age	Themes
B179	1885	F	18	Sleep after a moral life
B040	1913	F	14	Re-unity
B140	1918	F	88	Rest; peace

All were chosen for females, and reference sleep, resting or being re-united with family members. Only the earliest has a religious context - ‘Fallen asleep in Jesus’.

First World War epitaphs

There are five First World War deaths commemorated in Buckley graveyard. They will be discussed here together with a wider examination of commemoration of the war dead of the area. One such was William Cecil Catherall who died in Palestine, and while he had no epitaph per se, he ‘laid down his life for his country’. His memorial is one of the obelisks at Buckley (B004) and is placed in that part of the graveyard with a concentration of Catherall graves, next to the memorial (B003) described earlier in this chapter, firmly placing his

sacrifice within the familial milieu. His mother, who died in 1901, is also recorded on the obelisk, together with later familial deaths.

Sergeant Edward Griffiths was killed at Armentières in 1917; his epitaph (B064) was inscribed after his mother died in 1918. It could be inferred by this positioning and by his epitaph (below) that his mother died not knowing his fate; it may be that he was posted missing in action.

‘Sleep on, dear son, as the years go by, We cannot see the grave where you lie’

Table 6.7 Buckley St.John’s: First World War epitaphs

Ref	Year of death	Gender	Age	Themes
B004	1917	M	21	Sacrifice for country
B252	1917	M	19	Submission to God’s will
B064	1917	M	26	Sleep; grave inaccessible
B240	1918	M		Memory; beauty

The remaining military epitaphs are less vivid. Joseph Oliver Rowlands, who appears on the war memorial inside the church (Figure 6.10) as ‘Olive’, a conundrum only resolved during the research phase of this study, died of wounds in a hospital at Rouen in 1918; his epitaph (B240) reads ‘a beautiful memory left behind’, while Stephen Price, killed in 1917, was later commemorated with ‘Thy way, O Lord, not mine’ on a headstone (B252) on which the deaths of his mother and father in 1947 and 1948 were already inscribed.

The church’s bronze and gilt war memorial, which was empanelled on the pulpit of the second church, is now attached to an interior wall of the third (Figure 6.10).



Fig.6.10 Buckley St. John's: interior war memorial

The four soldiers discussed above are also commemorated here, together with eleven others who have no memorial in the graveyard; all, except G H Lewis, are commemorated on the town war memorial, (Figure 6.11) together with five other Catherall fallen, who are not commemorated in any way at St. John's.



Fig 6.11 Buckley Town War memorial

Hymn sources

Hymns are quoted in sixteen epitaphs; these commemorate ten males, five females and one child. Six of these are taken from Bickersteth's 'Peace, perfect peace' and are clustered after 1904, the year of the only child death in this category. While, again, these choices could demonstrate a preference for shorter epitaphs, it is marked that this phrase was not chosen at all at Buckley during the years of conflict; in general, hymns were more frequently chosen for men after the beginning of the twentieth century.

While it may be that words and music of certain hymns were of particular significance to the bereaved, it appears that the more colourful themes occur before 1900. The epitaph of a young man (B158) reads 'Life is the time to serve the Lord', from the 1707 hymn by Isaac Walton. This focuses on a life well lived, containing such sentiments as 'And while the lamp holds out to burn, the vilest sinner may return', which sentiments may have some resonance with earlier Congregational views on redemption (Chapter 2).

Table 6.8 Buckley St.John's: hymn sources

Ref	Year of death	Gender	Age	Themes
B193	1855	F	21	Sorrow; redemption
B184	1869	F	31	Danger; diseases; tomb
B158	1871	M	29	Service to God
B187	1879	F	65	Safety; protection of religion
B188	1892	F	91	Hope; resurrection; meeting again
B138	1896	M	79	Praise; worship
B123	1904	C	<2	Perfect peace
B144	1906	M	59	Perfect peace
B184	1906	M	67	Perfect peace
B241	1908	F	66	Perfect peace
B165	1910	M	75	Perfect peace
B084	1910	M	17	Waiting; stillness; sleep
B016	1913	M	63	Security
B006	1913	M	68	Perfect peace
B085	1915	M	57	Submission to God's will
B252	1917	M	19	Submission to God's will

'Rock of Ages' (B016), promises release from sin, fear and sorrow. This gravestone was one of those with a secondary address - Brunswick House, Buckley - while an epitaph of

a seventeen year old man (B084) chosen from the hymn ‘On Resurrection Morn’, of 1887, reads ‘Waiting in a holy stillness wrapped in sleep’. In addition to the reference to sleep, examples of which have been discussed earlier, this epitaph also seems to express a faith in meeting again, or perhaps of resurrection of the spirit, since by this date, widely-held faith in resurrection of the earthly body was uncommon. Meeting again is also suggested in an epitaph which has been encountered before at Brown Knowl: the commemorated female, who died in 1892 at ninety-one, had the traditional Christian name of Kezia, and was described as the ‘relict’ of her pre-deceased husband:

‘And with the morn those angel faces smile,
Which we have loved and lost a while’ (B188)

‘Praise the Lord’ (B138 in 1896) and ‘Thy way, O Lord, not Mine’ (B085 in 1915 and 1917) suggest faith and trust in a higher power; the latter of these is the war death (B252) described in the previous section. Only one female death (B241) is commemorated with ‘Peace, perfect peace’; she died in 1908, when this epitaph was becoming common.

There is some concentration on safety or lack of it. B184 commemorates a death in 1869 of a wife aged 31:

‘Dangers stand thick through all the ground
To push us to the tomb
And fierce diseases wait around
To hurry mortals home’

A further example is ‘Safe in the Arms of Jesus’, the epitaph of a female aged 65 who died in 1879, and which might also hint at some hope of a heavenly reward; perhaps in a similar vein, a death in 1855 of a 21-year old woman whose epitaph (B193), which was also chosen at Brown Knowl, hints at a worthy life :

‘Why should our tears in sorrow flow when God recalls his own
And bids them leave a world of woe for an immortal crown?’

Old Testament sources

There are twenty-one Old Testament epitaphs, representing ten male, eight female and three child deaths.

Table 6.9 Buckley St. John's: Old Testament sources

Ref	Year of death	Gender	Age	Themes
B001	1830	M	70	Forgiveness of sin
B007	1855	C	<1	Resignation, shortness of life
B202	1875	M	26	Untimely death
B165	1877	C	8	Brevity of life
B156	1877	F	28	Submission to God's will
B220	1888	M	45	Dying, peace
B147(1)	1894	F	64	Sleep after a moral life
B170(1)	1896	F	45	Rest, hope
B237	1899	F	49	Dawn
B177	1899	F	57	Rest, waiting, comfort of religion
B149	1899	C	<1	Sacrifice, safety for the vulnerable
B170(2)	1900	M	47	Stillness, presence of God
B004	1901	F	35	Resignation, shortness of life
B147(2)	1902	M	75	Dawn, retreat of shadows
B242	1902	M	46	Refuge, comfort, eternity
B173	1906	F	77	Rest, comfort of religion
B022	1910	M	45	Dying, peace
B140	1910	M	78	Dying, peace
B107	1911	M	68	Righteousness, hope
B160(1)	1911	M	64	Righteousness, remembrance
B160(2)	1916	F	76	Sleep after a moral life

Catherall's memorial obelisk of 1830 (B001), and which, as already noted, he erected before his death, contains the proclamation 'A Nonconformist', followed by 'Blessed is he whose transgressions are forgiven' (Psalm 32). There are only two references to sin or transgressions in the dataset as a whole; the other is at Tarporley. It seems slightly anomalous that there should be so few allusions to this element of human behaviour among populations so convinced, in the earlier nineteenth century (Chapter 2) that believers' sins would be forgiven. There are, however, two references to the 'righteous' at Buckley; references like these are more common among the Calvinistic Methodists at Penycrae.

There are few Old Testament epitaphs at Buckley before 1875 and are well represented thereafter. While the reasons for this are obscure, it may be that Welsh revivals of 1904-05 were influential or that a particular preacher was dominant. However, Old Testament epitaphs are by a small margin the most frequently chosen class of source at Buckley; peace, sleep, rest and hope are common themes. Psalms predominate with 12 occurrences: 'His end

was peace' was chosen for three males; 'He giveth His beloved sleep' for two females (B147 and B160); both these epitaphs were among the most numerous at Brown Knowl, and appear frequently elsewhere. 'Rest in the Lord [and wait patiently for Him]' was chosen for two females (B177 and B173). For a child 'I am gone like the shadow that declineth; the days of my youth Thou has shortened' (B165 in 1877) was particularly appropriate.

Other books of the Old Testament are represented by single examples. Isaiah is chosen for a child 'He shall gather the lambs with His arms' (B149 in 1899) and in the same year 'The morning cometh' for a female (B237). From the Book of Job 'The Lord giveth and taketh away' commemorated the death in 1855 of the child of the Lamb family illustrated at Figure 6.2 above, while 'My days are past, my purposes are broken off, even the thoughts of my heart' (B004) was chosen for a female member of the Catherall family (Figure 6.12 below); both epitaphs seem to contain elements of submission to other-worldly authority.



Fig. 6.12 Buckley St. John's: Frazer/Catherall obelisk from the south (B004)

New Testament sources

These Books provide 19 epitaphs; ten male, six female and three children. This class of epitaphs (Table 6.10) tend to lack the imagery of those of the Old Testament, and are concentrated before 1900. There is certainly less scope in choice: there are five instances of variations of ‘Be ye also ready, for in such an hour that ye think not, the Son of man cometh’ (three males and two females); the wording may suggest unexpected deaths since two of those (B240 and B161) commemorated young people. There are five occurrences of ‘With Christ, which is far better’ commemorating two males, two females and a child all of whom died between 1887 and 1912. The first phrase ‘Having a desire to depart, and...’ has been omitted from four of these.

Table 6.10 Buckley St. John’s: New Testament sources

Ref	Year of death	Gender	Age	Themes
B168	1859	C	4	Children, access to Jesus
B174	1868	M	70	A better, future spiritual life/experience
B172	1876	F	62	Readiness for death
B184	1879	F	41	Rest for the faithful
B203	1880	M	69	Readiness for death
B124	1882	M	40	Readiness for death
B222	1887	C	7	A better, future spiritual life/experience
B196	1889	F	33	A better, future spiritual life/experience
B221	1890	M	44	Submission to God’s will
B177	1890	M	90	A better, future spiritual life/experience
B205	1899	M	64	Sleep, redemption
B231	1899	C	14	Love of God
B240	1901	F	18	Readiness for death
B107	1907	F	63	A better, future spiritual life/experience
B005	1907	F	60	Sacrifice
B120	1911	M	83	Reward for a moral life
B077	1912	M	38	Submission to God’s will
B157	1912	M	71	A better, future spiritual life/experience
B161	1912	M	18	Readiness for death

There is little continuity among the remaining epitaphs, which reference rest, sleep and love, but there are two which merit further examination. ‘She hath done what she could’

commemorated the death in 1907 of a female member of the Catherall family, aged 60. This memorial (B005) carries the sole example of this epitaph at Buckley although there are several instances at Tallarn Green Primitive Methodist chapel (not included in this thesis); three at Penycae and one at Tarporley. The epitaph was followed by one of only two Buckley examples where the source of the epitaph was inscribed on the gravestone.

While naturally an epitaph for females, it is an instance of a ‘hidden’ message (Wearne 2017b, 407). If the text were unfamiliar, it might be inferred that the wording was slightly dismissive in tone, but the text (Mark 14:8) describes the sacrifice to Jesus by a woman of a precious and costly possession (spikenard; an unguent for anointing a corpse), and is therefore commendation of the highest order, and references treatment of the dead body.

The Letters to the Hebrews provided a unique epitaph. From a chapter of the Book predominately devoted to exhortations to wisdom and endurance, ‘For here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come’ is the only example of this text in the entire dataset.



Figure 6.13 Buckley St. John's: Williams gravestone (B174)

The gravestone (B174 above), decorated with a stylised cross or quatrefoil (Figure 6.13), commemorates a male death in 1868. Note ‘Thy will be done’ at the apex. The message is one of pilgrimage and life after death.

Prayer and poetry sources

As at Brown Knowl, there are no examples of mainstream poetry at Buckley. There are however, 17 epitaphs derived from prayers from three origins (Table 6.11). ‘Thy will be done’ predominates with ten occurrences, seven of which commemorate males between 1870 and 1919, and three females (1896-1902). From the Burial service, ‘In the midst of life we are in death’ applies to three males (1882-1904), one female (1894) and one child (1914), while from the same source ‘In sure and certain hope of the/a blessed resurrection’ commemorates a 1852 male and a 1892 female death.

Table 6.11 Buckley St. John's: prayer sources

Ref	Year of death	Gender	Age	Themes
B197	1852	M	49	Hope, resurrection
B172	1870	M	61	Submission to God's will
B202	1878	M	26	Submission to God's will
B138	1881	F	66	Submission to God's will
B124	1882	M	40	Death in the midst of life
B213	1888	F	49	Death in the midst of life
B155	1892	F	60	Hope, resurrection
B216	1894	F	77	Death in the midst of life
B148	1897	M	49	Submission to God's will
B220	1901	F	48	Submission to God's will
B157	1902	F	32	Submission to God's will
B204	1904	M	36	Death in the midst of life
B241	1910	M	73	Submission to God's will
B224	1914	C	14	Death in the midst of life
B039	1914	M	57	Submission to God's will
B233	1916	M	82	Submission to God's will
B034	1919	M		Submission to God's will

While most of these epitaphs confirm to a trend toward shorter texts noted before, it is the power of the Book of Common Prayer being demonstrated here. The Lord's Prayer

would have been said at every service, and at Sunday School meetings, in Nonconformist as in Anglican places of worship.

Vernacular verse sources

These ten epitaphs, evenly represented by date, allow the bereaved to express their emotions in an individual manner; each example appears once at Buckley. Again, selected epitaphs will be quoted, and are examined thematically. Of the four male twentieth-century deaths, one is the 1917 war death (B064) examined above. Work and social position are referenced for male deaths (B017 and B153):

‘Life’s race well run, life’s work well done’

‘In wealth and strength he left his home
Not thinking death so near
It pleased the Lord to bid him come
And in his sight revere’

Table 6.12 Buckley St. John’s: vernacular verse sources

Ref	Year of Death	Gender	Age	Themes
B192	1848	F	58	Sleep, bodily decay, rising again
B171	1868	F	20	Love, repentance, shortness of life
B166	1878	C	1	Death, love, divine punishment, eternity
B153	1890	M	23	Social standing, unpredictability of death
B241	1899	C	11	Care, patience, love, shortness of life, eternal rest
B203	1909	F	82	Acceptance of divine purposes
B098	1910	M	65	Love, divine ineffability
B093	1914	M	55	Mourning, love, rest, shortness of life
B064	1917	M	26	Sleep, grave inaccessible
B017	1918	M	67	A life well-lived

Among male deaths love is mentioned twice: both epitaphs occur in the twentieth century. Since the epitaph on memorial B093 is capitalised, it may be that either earthly love or the love of God is being invoked:

‘Mourn not for me, my time is past, I loved you while my life did last,
I always strove to do my best, and now have gone to take my rest’ (B093)

‘Thy will be done is hard to say
When those we love are called away’ (B098)

The ledger below (Figure 6.14) with an epitaph commemorating one of two female deaths was one of the earliest in the graveyard. Mary Taylor ‘departed this life uncomplainingly’ in 1848. Her epitaph (B192) reads:

‘My flesh shall slumber in the ground till the last trumpet’s joyful sound
Then burst the chains with sweet surprise and in my Saviour’s image rise’



Fig. 6.14 Buckley St. John's: Taylor gravestone from the east (B192)

The two epitaphs for children (B166) and B241) feature expressions of love and care and raw emotion, although the earlier (1878) seems archaic in a century in which belief in a vengeful God was in decline:

‘Farewell our little one, farewell
Whom we have loved we fear too well
And God to scourge us took away
To dwell with him in endless day’

The older child was eleven in 1899 (Figure 6.15). His epitaph reads:

‘If love and care could death prevent
His days would not so soon be spent
Life was desired but God did see
Eternal rest was best for thee’

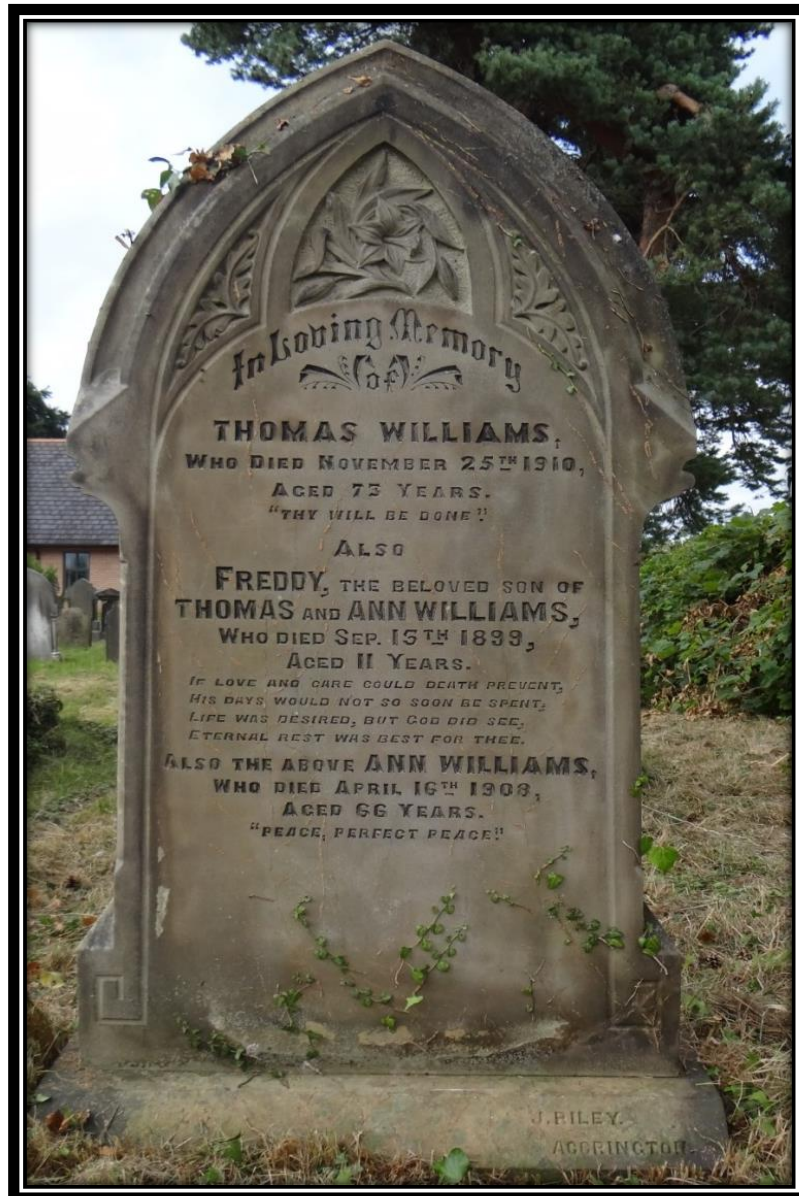


Fig. 6.15 Buckley St. John's: Williams memorial from the east (B166)

His commemoration, and that of his mother, was added to the gravestone of his father who died in 1910: neither parent, however, had such an expressive epitaph. His mother, who died in 1908, was aged 46 when her son was born, so it is possible that he was her only child or only surviving child. There are no siblings mentioned and the epitaph alludes to parental

love and resignation to God's will. The monumental mason was not local: J. Riley of Accrington.

Although vernacular verse epitaphs in general do not appear to derive from religious sources, more than half make reference to God or the Lord, with the exception of male deaths in the years 1914 - 1918, which are secular in tone. Although the overall numbers are small, there is some slight homogeneity: two female epitaphs (B192 and B171) are among the oldest in the graveyard and both make allusions to lying or slumbering in the ground; there is some mention of repentance and salvation, which all occur before 1900. The gradual late-Victorian shift of memorial practice away from the sacred to the secular posited before in this study may also be evident here.

Unassigned epitaphic sources

These examples could not be positively allotted to the above classes of epitaph: all occur after 1904. B240 is the war death already discussed above. Of the remainder, four have some suggestion of belief with references to heaven and eternal life: 'There is sweet rest in heaven' was chosen for two female deaths in 1904 and 1906, while a male (died 1919) had 'Beyond the veil (sic), eternal life'.

Table 6.13 Buckley St. John's: unassigned epitaphic sources

Ref	Year of Death	Gender	Age	Themes
B221	1904	F	58	Rest in heaven
B165	1906	F	67	Rest in heaven
B045	1914	M	47	Love, lamentation
B215	1915	M	30	Truth, good and evil
B032	1916	F	72	Redemption, grace, eternity
B240	1917	M		Memory, beauty
B064	1917	F	60	Love, loss
B216	1919	M	71	Eternal life after death

The female epitaph (B032) has implications of redemption as well as eternal life: 'Saved by Thy grace, Thine may we be, all through the days of eternity'

while B215, Socratic (339 BC) in origin, is unique at Buckley in being of classical provenance, and is illustrated at Figure 6.16: ‘Know this of a truth, that to a good man, no evil thing can happen’.

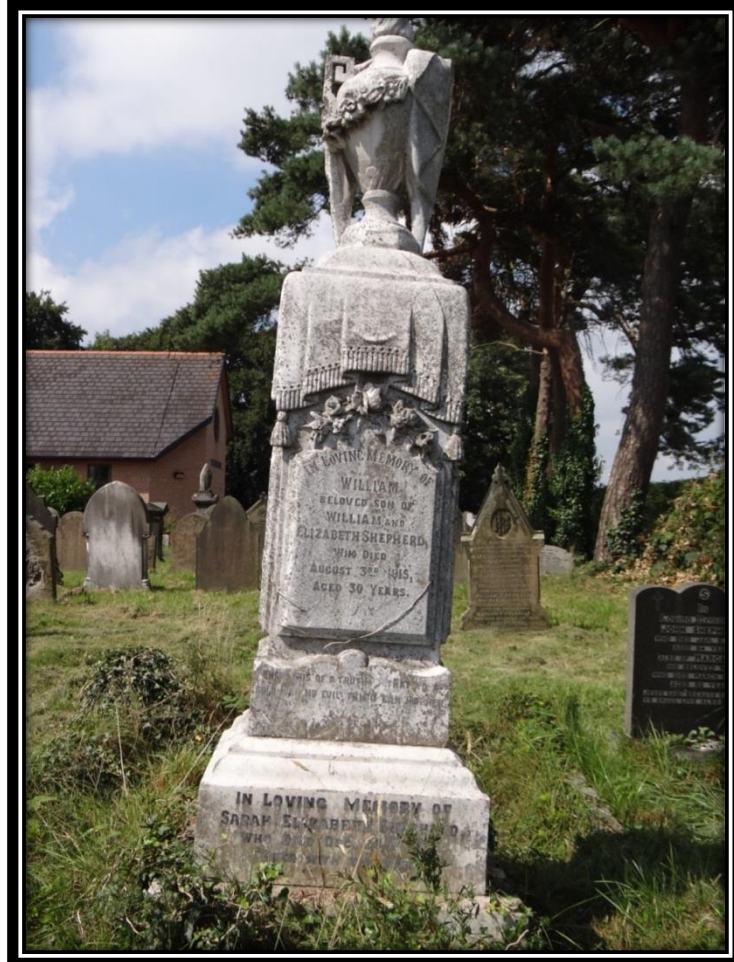


Fig. 6.16 Buckley St. John's: Shepherd memorial from the east (B215)

This is an elaborate family obelisk with a draped urn and kerbed plot and is one of three such designs at Buckley. It also commemorates the young brother of the above, his mother, and a related minister of two Congregational churches. Some familial position and status may be being displayed here.

Epitaphs at Buckley: summary

Of the 111 epitaphs examined above, 85 (77%) are sourced from hymns, the Old and New Testaments and the Book of Common Prayer; the Old Testament being marginally the most frequently-chosen source. Most epitaphs make direct reference to religious figures or

concepts, and, thematically, concentrate on peace, redemption, submission to God's will, and a better future life or experience. There is more articulation of death than at Brown Knowl, while vernacular verse at Buckley tends to be worded in equally expressive and colourful terms.

Taking 1900 as a benchmark, there is some slight evidence for a reduction in the choice of epitaphs from these sources later in the sample period, while increasing preference for briefer epitaphs is evident. About 25% of the total are predominately secular, but contain references to earthly (or possibly divine) love; loss, rest, and sleep.

There seems to be in these epitaphs more suggestion of an 'established' church than at Brown Knowl. The influence of the extended Catherall family is widely apparent. There are proportionally fewer examples of vernacular verse; there is little appetite for Bickersteth's hymn and other short and common epitaphs, but where these appear they are concentrated after 1900. Most noticeable, however, is that the language of religion continues to be used late into the sample period, and that some of the precepts of the 1833 Principles of Religion (Chapter 2) survive, relating in particular to the equal power of the Old and New Testaments. Allusions to redemption and the forgiveness of sins are frequent in epitaphs, suggesting that, although the pressures of secularisation were undoubtedly at work here as elsewhere, the Congregationalists of Buckley maintained and demonstrated their faith and hope, at least in the terms with which they chose to remember their dead, well into the twentieth century. The following chapter considers the Calvinistic Methodists of Penrycae, also situated in north-east Wales, but very different in character.

CHAPTER 7

PENYCAE GROES CALVINISTIC METHODIST CHAPEL

Location and history

Penycae is a village in north-east Wales about eight kilometres from Wrexham (Figure 7.1), and close to the larger town of Rhosllanerchrugog ('Rhos' in this study). Close to these settlements lie deposits of brickclay, coal and other minerals, attracting immigrant labour to exploit them during and after the Industrial Revolution.

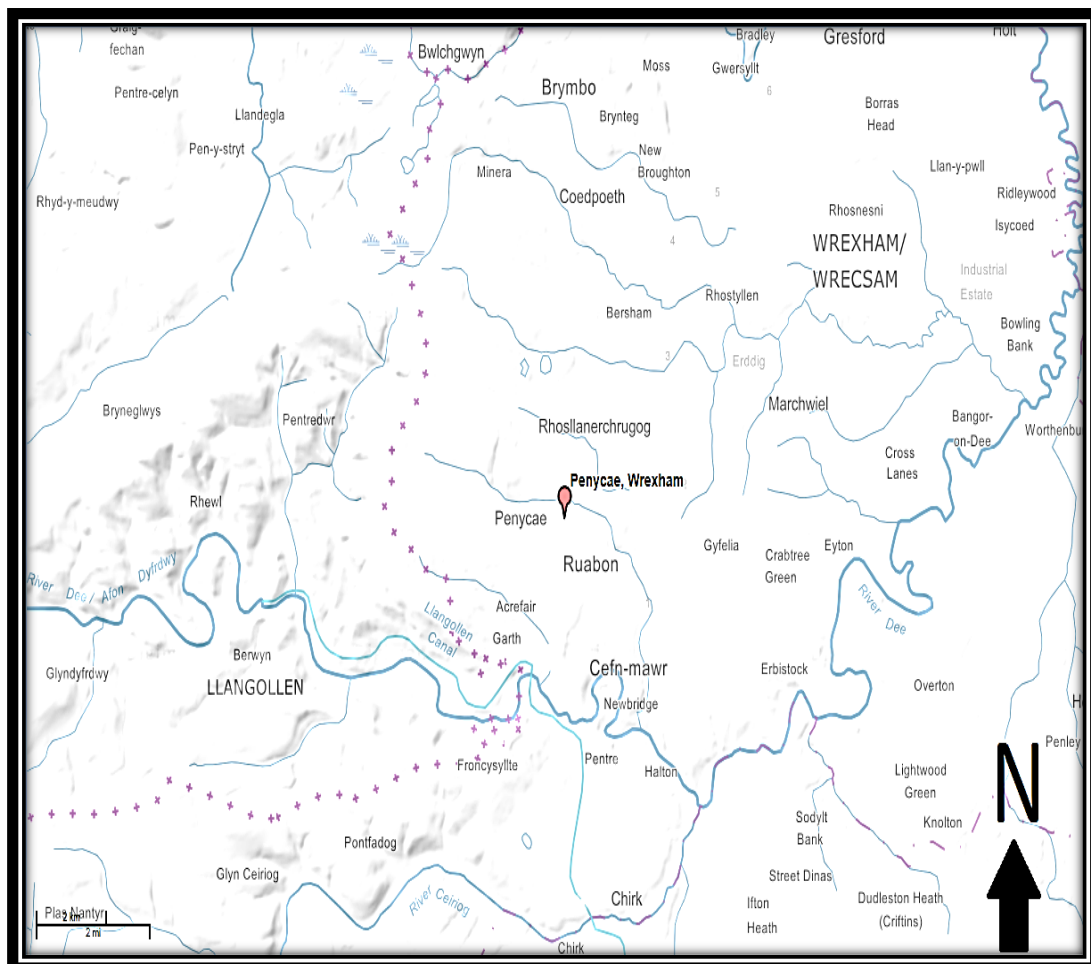


Fig. 7.1 Location of Penycae, Wrexham. Ordnance Survey 2011 West Cheshire and East Wales. Edina Digimap. Ordnance Survey data @ Crown copyright and database right 2016.

Many of these immigrants were Nonconformists, and brought their religions with them. In 1905, a Royal Commission on Places of Worship identified twenty-one chapels in

Rhos (Anon, Capel Newsletter 1992, 1); of these the Welsh Presbyterians, Welsh Baptist and Scots Baptist were the most numerous (Coflein C420912). In the 1870s a Wesleyan and a Primitive Methodist chapel were also established, the latter replaced by a Calvinistic Methodist chapel on the same site by the 1900s. The Welsh religious revival of 1904-5 was particularly enthusiastically received in Rhos (Tudur Jones 2004, 299). Because of a shortage of accommodation, many workers built houses on the surrounding hills; these were called ‘Tai-un-nos’, or houses put up in the course of one night (Pen-y-cae History Group 2015, 28). These communities would provide rooms for religious activities, and later, chapels were built in the surrounding villages.

In Penycae, the Welsh Baptists were among the earliest to set up in about 1770, building their first official chapel in 1806, superseded by the current building in 1878. Methodist chapels were established at the neighbouring communities of Tainant in 1824 and at Penybryn in 1840, and Wesleyans built a chapel at Stryt Issa in 1838. The parish church of St. Thomas was consecrated in 1878, and a Zion English Baptist church was established in 1889.

Penycae Groes Calvinistic Methodist chapel

The first Calvinistic Methodist chapel was built in the Y Groes area of Penycae in about 1863 (Pen-y-cae History Group 2015, 28) on the present site, which included a large graveyard to its east (Figure 7.2). It is not known whether the requirement for so large a graveyard was envisaged when the first chapel was planned; it may be that demand for the burial of Calvinistic Methodist dead from other settlements was predicted: the relative frequency of ‘Rhos’ and other local settlements as addresses on gravestones, discussed later in this chapter, may corroborate this theory.



Fig 7.2 Penrycae Groes chapel and side elevation from the east, with possible remains of the original chapel to the rear

In 1905 the current chapel was erected; it closed in 2007. Figure 7.3 shows the chapel in 2014 before its conversion to apartments. The Calvinistic Methodists (the Presbyterian Church of Wales since 1923), a denomination unique to Wales (Robbins 1994, 374) were mainly Welsh-speaking; at Penrycae, Welsh is the predominant language on gravestones, which, for the purposes of this study, required translation (Chapter 4).

The building occupies an elevated position, and is constructed of Ruabon brick with some external blue and buff bricks. Before conversion into apartments began in 2016 (Wrexham Archives n.d. [b]) the interior, which was organised into two aisles, contained twelve rows of pews in three blocks. It would be tempting to suggest that this arrangement was a nod both to the twelve disciples and to the Trinity (described as ‘the blessed persons of the Trinity’ in the 1823 Confession of Faith discussed in Chapter 2).



Fig. 7.3 Penycae Groes Welsh Calvinistic Methodist chapel from the south

Entry doors directly faced the preaching area, containing the raised pulpit, enclosed within a panelled and spindled wooden surround. The walls were clad in wooden dado to window cill level; there was no gallery. Behind the pulpit a further room with a fireplace may have been the school-room. From external appearances, it may be that this room occupied part of the site of the earlier chapel, since the remains of the external walls are not brick (Figure 7.2); before a new floor was laid during conversion to apartments, it was at a lower level than the body of the chapel.

All surviving gravestones face east. The earliest recorded death occurred in 1863, shortly after the first chapel was established; the graveyard is still in use today. A Clwyd

Family History Society survey of the graveyard (Roberts, J. *et al.*, 2011) was used as a guide during the current project; it was clear from this document that the CFHS had had access to burial registers, which were apparently unavailable for this graveyard study.

Demographics

Gravestone data from Nvivo produced the following gender distribution: 128 male, 132 female and 57 child deaths: 317 in all between 1863 and 1919. These deaths are analysed by gender in ten-year ranges in Figure 7.4 below. To compare Penycæ with Buckley, which is its closest economic comparator in this study, more overall deaths were recorded at the former over a shorter period.

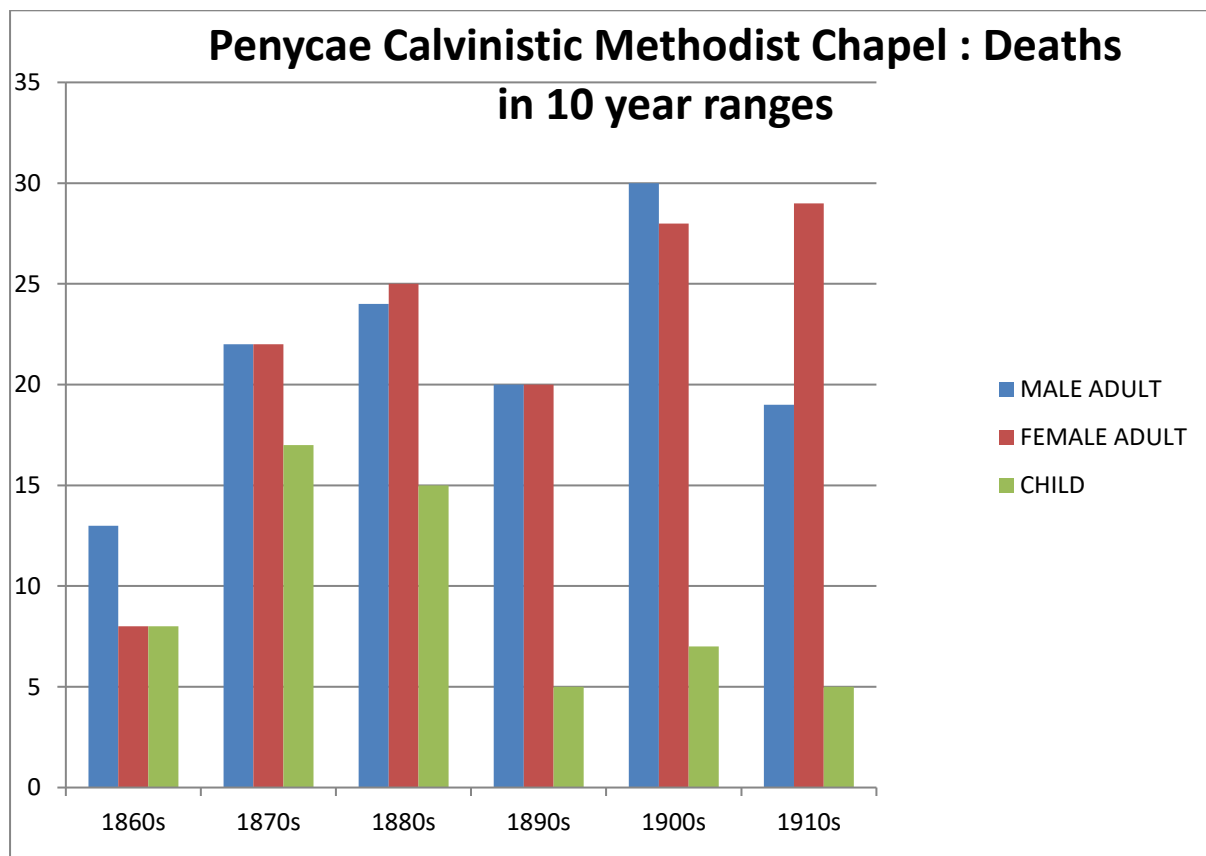


Fig.7.4 Penycæ Groes: deaths by gender in ten-year ranges

Commemorated male and female deaths at Penycæ were broadly comparable at 40% and 42%; children account for 18% of deaths: significantly lower than at Buckley (28%), and broadly comparable with Brown Knowl (13%). Apparent low deaths overall in the 1860s may

reflect a lower takeup of grave spaces while the chapel was becoming established. Child deaths peaked in the ten years from 1870, perhaps allied to economic and agricultural distress discussed in Chapter 5, and declined considerably thereafter.

Male deaths occurred at reasonably comparable rates between 1870 and 1899, but peaked in the years after 1900. Male deaths from 1910 included four First World War dead who are memorialised in the graveyard, and discussed later in this chapter. There was little evidence for deaths resulting from coal-mining accidents; the Wynnstay mine was closest to Penycæ, being 1km south of Ruabon. There were accidents here in 1863, 1868, and 1873 (Wrexham Archives n.d.[a]). However, there is only one mining-related recorded death in the graveyard at Penycæ: Thomas Jones was killed in 1885 (Figure 7.5).



Fig. 7.5 Penycæ Groes: Jones gravestone from the east (PC035)

Female deaths at Penycae peaked after 1900, similar to death rates at Buckley, but continued at or about this level in the following decennial, which has been difficult to explain, despite intensive research. Before 1842, women and children under ten years old worked in coalmines; in 1860 the age limit for boys was raised to twelve. There is no suggestion in the Penycae data that any female or child deaths were mining-related.

Memorial types, imagery and decoration

Memorial types from a base of 158 graves (Table 4.1) are analysed at Table 7.1 below. The asterisk denotes kerbs or former kerbs where evidence of attachment could be discerned. Most remarkable at Penycae is the preference for tall headstones (80%) and the low instances of any other type of memorial, with the exception of low headstones (8%). Comparable figures at Brown Knowl are 67% and 13%, and 50% and 15% at Buckley.

Table 7.1 Penycae Groes: distribution of memorial types

Memorial Type	Number	%
Tall Headstone (>1m)	137	80%
Low Headstone (<1m)	14	8%
Kerbs and former kerbs*	9	5%
Obelisk	6	4%
Book	3	2%
Cross	1	<1%
Other	1	<1%

Of the sample graveyards, Penycae comes closest to Sayer's suggestion (2011b,) that Nonconformist graveyards reflect a 'uniform, austere aesthetic' (Figure 7.2). However, many of the tall headstones at Penycae are highly decorative. Figure 7.6 below commemorates six members of the Jarvis family including Matthew, aged 32, a publican of Y Stryd Isaf, who died in 1876 'from fractures and internal injuries received by falling under the wheel of a stage cart', according to his death certificate. Matthew may not have been the publican of the Black Horse Inn at Penycae: 'Moreton below Ruabon' is recorded in the 'where died' column of his death certificate. A Moreton Inn at Ruabon still exists: it has not been possible to verify whether this was the site of Matthew's death.



Fig.7.6 Penycae Groes: detail of Jarvis gravestone from the east (PC107)

His is one of the two epitaphs on this gravestone – 'Be ye also ready, for in such a time as ye think not, the Son of Man cometh', which has been encountered before in this

study and which is distressingly appropriate for such a young death. The second epitaph is a 'multiple' commemorating the death of his children, and is discussed in a later section.

The motif of sickle and severed branch also suggests an early, unexpected death.

Alternatively, this may be an allusion to biblical quotations alluding to the harvesting of souls: 'On a cloud, one sat like unto the Son of Man, having on his head a golden crown and in his hand a sharp sickle' (Revelations 14:14-19). The verses continue with allusions to sickle-bearing angels urging the 'one with the sharp sickle' to 'reap the earth'. Also in the New Testament is the familiar 'Whatsoever a man doeth, that shall he also reap' (Galatians 6:7), further references in the book of Mark (4:29); and in the Old Testament Book of Joel (3:13).

The incised ribbon or scroll at the apex includes a Hebrew inscription that has largely defied translation, but contains the words, on the right-hand side, an oracle/prophet; Jareb (a king of the Assyrians mentioned in the Book of Hosea) and hand or place. On the left, your home or rest, and to contend/ an adversary. There are a further three gravestones with similar imagery at Penycae which lack the Hebrew inscription; one is inscribed in English, not Welsh, and there is only one further example in the dataset as a whole, at Brown Knowl, where the sickle encloses a bouquet of flowers. Further Hebrew allusions in this graveyard are noted later in this chapter.

At Penycae, obelisks were chosen less frequently than at Buckley, in contrast to one example at both Brown Knowl (that of Wedgwood) and Tarporley. It may be that the obelisk as a choice of memorial (Mytum 2002a) was more of a Welsh tradition (see Figure 3.1 for example); the Calvinistic Methodist graveyard at Rhewl (not surveyed for this thesis), has a number of different designs of this type of memorial (Figure 7.7).

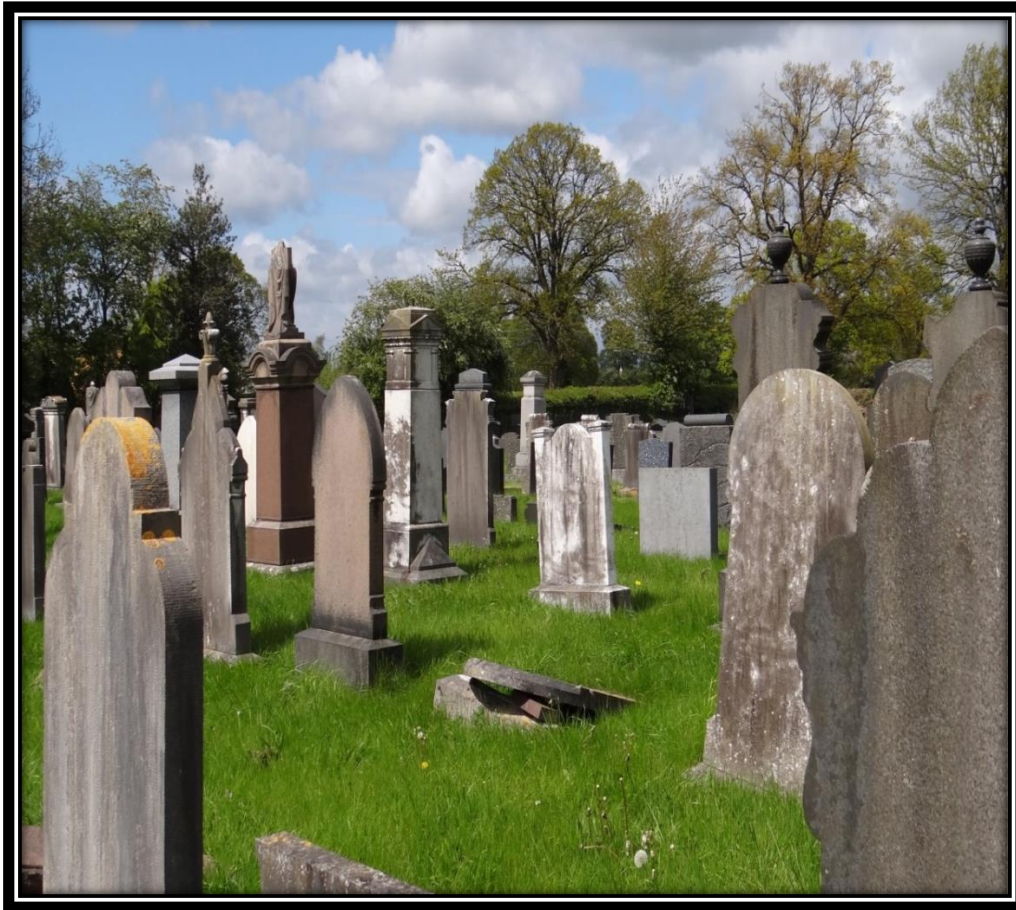


Fig.7.7 Rhewl Calvinistic Methodist graveyard from the south west

Among the smaller categories of gravestone typology at Penycae, one book-shaped memorial (PC133) is an additional element placed within a kerb attached to a low headstone commemorating deaths in 1913 and 1921. The book element commemorates the death of a grandmother who died in 1901 and a grandson (1886-1888), although the latter date may be misleading since there is a query against it in the CFHS survey; when the grave was recorded for this study the date of death, which was inscribed, like all personal information, in lead lettering, had fallen out. The grandson's epitaph is Bickersteth's 'Peace, perfect peace' of which there is only one other example within the sample period at Penycae, in 1902, although there are later occurrences.

In this case, it is possible to see a desire on the part of the mourners to emphasise and maintain familial continuity. However, it is possible that the book element has been imported from elsewhere, since its material does not match that of the remainder of the grave. The grandmother's address, the first named on the headstone, is given as 1, Cemetery Road, Rhos;

close to that location is a Baptist chapel, a parish church with a graveyard, and a large (as the street name implies) civic cemetery. It is therefore significant that these burials and commemorations took place at Penycae.

Contemporary maps suggest that there was no graveyard at the Rhos Calvinistic Methodist chapel; burial and commemoration at Penycae, therefore, could be interpreted as a compelling personal desire to emphasise continuing religious affiliation. Among Calvinistic Methodists, this practice survived into the 1920s.

The single example of a cross (PC007) is a finial on a tall headstone (Figure 7.8). The almost total lack of crosses at Penycae (6% each at Brown Knowl and Buckley) may be a reflection of Presbyterian faith: the cross as such is not a central tenet of the 1823 Confession of Faith, unlike the special significance of the doctrine of the cross among evangelical Primitive Methodists (Chapter 5).

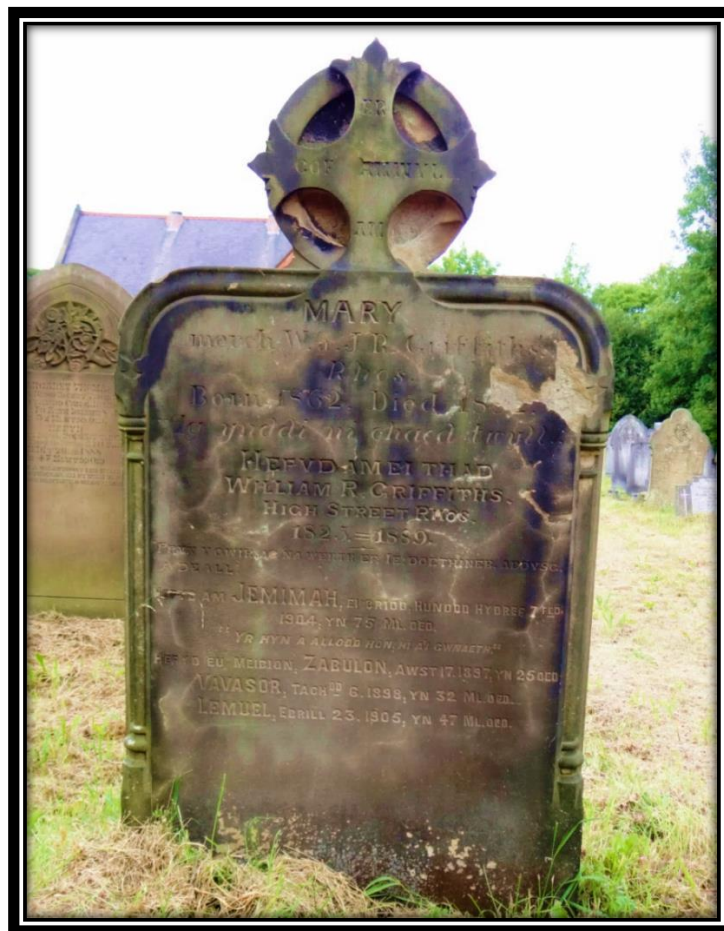


Fig. 7.8 Penycae Groes: Griffiths gravestone with cross finial from the east (PC007)

The gravestone at Figure 7.8 records the loss of four adult offspring of William and Jemimah Griffiths, and is notable for its Old Testament allusions. Jemimah was the oldest of three daughters of Job; Zabulon was the sixth and last son of Jacob and Leah, while Lemuel means ‘devoted to God’ in Hebrew. Vavasour does not have Hebrew connotations, meaning instead a feudal holder of lands ranking below a baron. These references may not necessarily denote familiarity with the Hebrew language among the family nor among the congregation, but are more likely to indicate thorough immersion in the Old Testament. The sickle and severed branch imagery on the gravestone to the left is similar to that on the Jarvis memorial (Figure 7.6).

Imagery on gravestones is tabulated below (Table 7.2). Of the 158 recorded gravestones, 42 (26%) bear no imagery at all, broadly in line with the situation at Buckley, while 41% of gravestones contained some design featuring flowers or flower arrangements.

Table 7.2 Penrycae Groes: frequency of gravestone imagery

Design of Imagery	Occurrences
Floral arrangement or individual plant eg rose, ivy or willow	65
Roundels	14
Abstract designs	13
Supplementary crosses	7
Quatrefoils	6
IHS	6
No imagery	42

However, variations in choice of motif and decoration at Penycae is remarkable; thirty-five different types of imagery were recorded, although there were usually only one or two examples of most of these motifs. There is not, of course, a direct relationship between types of imagery and the total number of recorded gravestones since many memorials have more than one motif, but it is possible to demonstrate that the other Nonconformist graveyards show broadly comparable lower ranges, the Baptists at Tarporley being the least likely to be commissioners of imagery among the dissenting populations studied here (Chapter 8).

Of the flora/floral arrangements category, there are twelve depictions of ivy. According to an undated anthology belonging to the author's grandmother in 1893 (anon u/d, 92) ivy denotes fidelity, while willow, with four instances at Penycae, denotes being forsaken. We cannot now know whether these emblems were deliberately chosen for their symbolism, but the anthology tends to suggest some contemporary regard for the language of flowers in mortuary circumstances. Some ten of these floral depictions appear within roundels; other motifs associated with roundels include quatrefoils and incised crosses (two instances), IHS and linked hands with one occurrence each.

Conversion of the chapel has obliterated any internal depictions of the Christian cross there may have been; however, of the seven incised crosses on gravestones one appears inside a quatrefoil (Figure 7.9 below: PC043).



Fig. 7.9 Penycae Groes: Roberts gravestone from the east (PC043)

The gravestone commemorates the death in 1884 of another former occupant of the Black Horse Inn, Groes, and that of his wife in 1892. Neither of these two deaths is commemorated by an epitaph on the gravestone, unlike the later deaths of their son and his wife. Of the remaining quatrefoils depicted in the graveyard, most incorporate the IHS symbol, floral or other motifs eroded beyond recognition. Minimally represented motifs include doves, shields, sickles, scrolls, urns and joined hands. Angels and harps are depicted once only, which may reflect Presbyterian views on the dominance of the Trinity discussed above and in Chapter 2. It appears from this evidence that the appetite of the ‘Prims’ at Brown Knowl for cross symbols in different guises was not shared by the Calvinistic Methodists at Penycae.

However, a standard Portland stone Great War memorial bears the customary incised cross, together with an epitaph in Welsh which reads, in translation, ‘Loving Memories from the family’. The dead soldier, Sapper Roberts of the Royal Engineers, who is also commemorated on an adjacent family gravestone worded entirely in Welsh, died in a UK hospital in June 1916. In these two demonstrations of remembrance, it is possible to infer a desire by the family to emphasise and foreground the soldier’s Welsh heritage and family ties to complement the military acknowledgment of his Army service and sacrifice. It is not known under which gravestone Sapper Roberts’ remains are buried.

Three further Great War casualties are commemorated in the chapel graveyard; all fell in France and have individual epitaphs, two from the Old Testament and one from the New.



Fig 7.10 Penycrae Town War memorial from the north

All four fallen are also commemorated on Penrycae's war memorial (Figure 7.10 above), which features a statue of a soldier with reversed arms at the top of an obelisk on three plinths, within a railed enclosure laid out as a garden. The memorial is sited on the main street of Penrycae. Thirty-six further First World War deaths of soldiers from the immediate area are also recorded: some 40,000 Welsh soldiers died in the conflict, causing considerable disruption to local and national economies (British Broadcasting Corporation n.d [b]).

A sense of place

Inscriptions at Penrycae exhibit a remarkable degree of localism: of the 317 recorded individuals, 128 have an inscribed primary address (village, town, city). Most of these are within the local area; of these, there are 40 instances of Penrycae/Groes, and 43 of Rhos. Of the remaining primary addresses, eleven are outside a ten-mile radius of Penrycae and represent major centres of population such as Chester, Birkenhead, Manchester and London, although seven of these examples are situated within the Principality.

The addition of street/house addresses is common, with 93 occurrences: 1, Cemetery Road has already been discussed. However, there are nine examples where a street or house address lacks a recorded primary location. For instance, Sarah Jones (PC049) died 'in Bridge Street' in 1902, while gravestone PC001 reads:

'Here sleeps John George Evans Old Toll Bar
Died April 18th 1908 aged 54'

This practice may imply that the chapel congregation was deeply integrated and that visitors to the grave, whether mourners or others, would recognise the domestic and locational circumstances of the dead. In addition, some of these secondary addresses have been abbreviated - Yew Tree Farm to Yew Tree, Black Horse Inn to Black Horse; two in particular seem to imply local retail knowledge - Shop (Copperas) and Pentre Shop, which may suggest

that some, at least, of the chapel congregation were of the middling sort, as well as manual workers in the area's many mines and industrial areas.

Occupational references

There are eleven occupations recorded on gravestones, all represent males; six are related to religion, being Preachers, Deacons or Elders. Four others represent the middling sort; engineers (two), one farmer and one tailor. The death of Sapper Roberts which completes this group has been discussed above. However, some occupations can be inferred; it would be reasonable to assume that William Roberts (Figure 7.9) was the publican of the Black Horse Inn, or that the David Davies who lived at 'Yew Tree' (PC101) and died in 1869 was a farmer, as were the Evans family, who later occupied 'Yew Tree Farm' (PC027). These subtleties suggest, once again, that the congregation at Penycae Groes was deeply integrated, and did not need detailed information to recall the habitus of dead members of the congregation. This might explain why, in contrast to the number of gravestones, there are relatively few direct occupational references on the gravestones of Penycae.

However, the CFHS survey is more explicit with regard to publicans: among the graves inscribed wholly in English, two individuals were resident at the 'Black Horse', others associated with public houses are also noted. This may indicate a denominationally more relaxed attitude to alcohol compared with the vociferous Temperance movement of the early 'Prims'.

The language of remembrance

Table 7.3 below analyses 156 primary and secondary salutations at Penycae. More women were given a primary or secondary salutation than men. As at Brown Knowl and Buckley, in the years prior to 1900 'In loving memory' and 'In loving remembrance' predominated at Penycae, with 40% of recorded salutations. However, the latter expression, which was chosen mainly for women, was not chosen here at all in the new century.

Table 7.3. *Penycae Groes: primary and secondary salutations by type, gender and period*

Salutation/ Period	Male	Female	Child	Total	%
In loving memory: pre-1900	11	13	6	30	26%
In loving memory: post-1900	14	19	2	35	21%
In loving remembrance: pre-1900	2	10	2	14	14%
In memory: pre-1900	12	14	11	37	22%
In memory: post-1900	5	1	0	6	3%
In affectionate memory: pre-1900	1	1	0	2	1%
In affectionate memory: post-1900	2	4	0	6	3%
In affectionate remembrance: pre-1900	4	3	2	9	5%
In affectionate remembrance: post-1900	1	0	0	1	<1%
In remembrance: pre-1900	8	3	2	13	8%
To the dear memory: pre-1900	0	2	0	2	1%
To the dear memory: post-1900	0	1	0	1	>1%
TOTAL	60	71	25	156	100%

‘To the dear memory’, which appeared both pre- and post-1900, was chosen exclusively for women, and was not noted at either previously-discussed location. In addition, there were no instances at Penycae of ‘Sacred to the memory’, which was comparatively popular with the ‘Prims’ (nine examples) or the Congregationalists (eight examples); perhaps this may suggest that the Calvinistic Methodist adherence to the

Confession of Faith in which the ‘great truths about God, his Son and the Holy Spirit’ (Owen 2013, 55) did not permit sacredness to lie elsewhere. There were also no references to the dead body: this may be a reflection of the ethos of ‘atonement and salvation, heaven and hell’ in the Confession of Faith, or was indicative of an earlier commemorative style (Tarlow 1998a).

Particularly noticeable in the Penycae dataset is the tendency, after 1900, for expressions of love to appear in salutations. While we cannot of course know what impulses drove any choice of salutation, the analysis above suggests that ‘warmer’ expressions were marginally more frequently chosen for adults (particularly women) later in the chapel’s existence, unlike the two congregations studied earlier, where ‘In loving memory’ was more frequently chosen before 1900. This anomaly also seems to be maintained in the salutations of children, where ‘In loving memory’ appears more frequently before 1900 at Penycae.

While stereotypical generalisations about any perceptions of dourness associated with early Presbyterianism should be resisted, it may be that such a change to ‘warmer’ expressions is indicative of a less formal social milieu of the twentieth century, or increasing secularisation affecting even the Calvinistic Methodists of Penycae.

The language of death

At Table 7.4 below, analysis of expressions to describe the act of dying indicates that there was a noticeable preference at Penycae, until the end of the sample period, to emphasise the presence of the Lord, or Christ, at the time of death, in comparison to both Brown Knowl and Buckley where such declarations of faith are comparatively rare. Although beyond the scope of the sample period of this thesis, it is noteworthy that this practice seemed to continue at Penycae until about the end of the 1930s.

Table 7.4 *Penycae Groes: euphemisms for dying*

	1861/1880	1881/1900	1901/1920	NO REF.	TOTAL
Departed (and from) this life	13	5	2		20
Fell asleep in Christ		1			1
Fell sleep in Jesus	2	9	11		22
Fell asleep in the Lord			1		1
Killed in action/Fell in (location)			3		3
Passed away		1	1		2
Who gave his life as a sacrifice			1		1
No reference				2	2
TOTAL	15	16	19	2	52

As at other studied burial grounds, ‘Passed away’ did not occur before 1881, and was taken up in small but increasing numbers thereafter, while ‘Departed this/from this life’ was also popular here; although use declined after the 1880s. One individual departed from this life on ‘Sabbath morn’ in 1906; her husband also died on a Sabbath morn in 1926. These are the only two references to the Sabbath in the entire dataset.

At Penycae, a mode of death was inscribed for most recorded individuals, and could be discerned or inferred even if the text was largely illegible; the two instances where no such expression existed at all belonged to the memorials to Sapper Roberts: perhaps ‘died’ was too painful a word to be acknowledged by his family.

In addition to terms denoting death, terms denoting interment were found at Penycae; with three instances of ‘buried’, applied to two children, both of whom died in 1887, and a male. The burial of one of these children was added to a gravestone (PC022: Figure 7.11 below) after the recorded deaths of a sister (1883) and the burial of her brother in 1906; it is not clear how the child was related to them.



Fig.7.11. Penycae Groes: Evans gravestone from the east (PC022)

There are also eight instances of ‘died and buried’, mostly relating to deaths between 1871 and 1906, with one example denoting a death as late as 1941. In terms of gender, this phrase was applied to six males, three children and two females. It would seem that these individuals were perhaps more firmly ‘grounded’ at Penycae, where attachment to place was already considerable.

There are two instances of ‘interred’. Tai Smith died in 1897 and ‘was interred at Groes cemetery’ (PC050), while David Philips ‘departed this life at Birkenhead June 21 1873 aged 46 years and was interred at Groes Chapel near Ruabon June 24’ (PC052: illustrated at Figure 7.12).



Fig. 7.12 Penycae Groes: Phillips and Edwards gravestone from the east (PC052)

This journey would have required the transport of a coffin some 60km in summer by rail and horse-drawn conveyance; a very strong indication of personal or familial attachment to both place and denomination, although this gravestone is one of twenty-three (15%) in the burial ground wholly inscribed in English.

Wholly English-inscribed graves are concentrated on the left of the graveyard, although this reflects the date of the first death rather than any attempt at partition. To investigate how these 'English' graves came to be in an otherwise Welsh graveyard, the addresses of the dead, which had been noted in the CHFS survey from burial registers, were analysed by address of occupant, which indicated that all these individuals were local

residents, predominately from Rhos or Penycae, with the exception of David Phillips (PC052) noted above. It may be that the proximity of the border with England increased the likelihood of English speakers resident in the area; whether they were Calvinistic Methodists is now impossible to verify.

In a similar vein is a religious biography on the memorial to Evan Jones (PC125) who died in 1870 aged 63. It reads ‘He served as office of Elder with much commendation and ability for 30 years in Rhos and Groes. He was the chief instrument in the Lord’s hand to begin the Methodists cause in this area. He was acclaimed as a Prince in the Parish as a Man of Religion and Patriot’. A further epitaph -‘Well done, thou good and faithful servant.....’ was incised on an undecorated obelisk within a railed plot; the only such enclosure in the graveyard.

There was also a single example of ‘baptised’ (PC023) in the dataset. Although the death occurred in 1951, and was therefore beyond the remit of this study, the inscription seems to memorialise the salient dates of this long-lived individual’s life, with the exception of marriage:

‘Also John Evans, husband of the above born Oct 19 1858
baptised Oct 31 1880 died Jan 22 1951’

In general, these conventions were noted only at Penycae, although phrases recording interment in other cemeteries occurred at Buckley, where Timothy Catherall (B003) was ‘buried at Holywell’, and where two other children, both under the age of two months, who died in 1823 and 1825 ‘was (sic) here buried’.

Last words

There are two instances of the inscription of last word; both are attributed to deaths in 1886. The man who died aged 46 said ‘He who believes shall not want’, which is probably related

to John 11:26, while a fragmentary inscription - ‘Gentle.....as I am....Thy deadly wound’- was attributed to a woman of 76.

Summary

The first part of this chapter has discussed the physical attributes of the chapel and graveyard at Penycae, and some unique memorial features and practices not noted at the other sample graveyards. The remainder of this chapter investigates the sources of epitaphs chosen by the living to commemorate their dead, and how the expression of belief and feeling can be discerned in these choices, even in those instances where translation from the Welsh language proved to be a challenge. All findings are summarised at the end of this chapter.

Epitaphs at Penycae

The Calvinistic Methodist graveyard at Penycae contained the largest population of recorded gravestones (158) and the greatest number of individuals (317), among the Nonconformist denominations featured in this study (Table 4.1), although the proportion of gravestones with epitaphs (66%) is broadly in line with Brown Knowl (64%) and less than that at Buckley (73%). As before, epitaphs discussed here have been subjected to the filtering processes described in Chapter 4, and to the separate consideration of those epitaphs which refer to a number of people (‘multiples’), which are discussed below.

Inscriptions in this graveyard are predominately wholly in Welsh (77%), and this practice continued at least until 1978. 15% are wholly in English; the earliest is dated 1869, indicating that non-Welsh speakers were commemorated in their own language from the earlier years of the chapel. There are examples, however, where both English and Welsh occurred on the same gravestone. An analysis of these cases indicates some variation: intermixing of languages occurred for addresses, epitaphs, occupations (for instance, PC053, illustrated at Figure 7.13) and for whole inscriptions relating to particular individuals.



Fig. 7.13. Penycae Groes: Davies gravestone from the east (PC053)

All gravestones were manually recorded on the forms described in Chapter 4. Welsh language epitaphs were translated by the Rev. Tom Wright by reference to the CFHS survey of the graveyard (Roberts, J. *et al.*, 2011). However, it was clear from the CFHS survey that at the time of its compilation not only were the gravestones widely affected by erosion, but it also appeared that Welsh was not always the first language of the recorders (as, indeed, it is not that of the author). Although strenuous efforts were made to produce a credible translation, sometimes only keywords could be extracted with any degree of confidence. Nevertheless, as coding into Nvivo proceeded it was possible to recognise some phrasing which, on further examination, was applicable to epitaphs which had been rejected earlier; where appropriate these epitaphs have been included in Nvivo and discussed in this chapter.

Epitaphs relating to multiple deaths

The prevalence of headstones memorialising multiple numbers of family members is a feature of Penycae Groes (Figure 7.14).



Fig.7.14 Penycae Groes: example of double headstone from the east (PC071)

For a larger population of gravestones, there are slightly fewer multiple epitaphs (Table 7.5) here than at Buckley, and much the same number as at Brown Knowl. Some of these are double-panelled stones and somewhat anthropomorphic in design (Figure 7.14

above); a similar design of double headstones occurred at Tarporley (Chapter 8), but not at either Brown Knowl or Buckley. Welsh was the language of all multiple epitaphs.

The asterisk in the table below relates to a death of a husband who died aged 85, and whose date of death was not recorded on the headstone. Since his wife died in 1866 aged 82, it has been assumed that the husband's death occurred before 1919.

Table 7.5 Penrycae Groes: epitaphs relating to multiple deaths

Grave no.	M	F	Child	Dates of Death	Source
PC058	1	1		1872, 1873	Hymn
PC073	1	1		1903, 1904	New Testament
PC086	1	1		1866, unknown*	New Testament
PC096	1	1	1	1905, 1904, 1881	New Testament
PC105	1	1		1866, 1911	Old Testament
PC107			3	1874, 1869, 1870	Common epitaph
PC126	3			1897 (2), 1906	Hymn
PC220	1	2		1902	Common epitaph
PC238		1	2	1908, 1899,	Hymn
PC 246	1	1		1899, 1904	Hymn

There are three from the New Testament. Two references (PC 086 and 096) are from the Book of Revelations: 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord' which occurs with frequency throughout the dataset, but only once at Buckley. PC086 alone of these epitaphs

includes the relevant chapter and verse on the gravestone. The third New Testament reference (PC073 - illustrated at Figure 7.15 below) is from Matthew - 'Blessed are the pure in heart'.



Fig.7.15 Penycae Groes: New Testament epitaph with occupational reference (PC073)

This gravestone is one of two at Penycae where the occupations of the commemorated males - tailor and engineer - have been inscribed in English on an otherwise Welsh language gravestone.

The four incidences of a hymn in the table are taken from a work by Evan Evans (1795 - 1873). Its shortened title in English is 'Rest in the Grave', and the text either appears

in full or part on six memorials at Penycae. The first verse, or parts thereof, is the most frequently chosen and is, in translation, as follows:

‘How happy are those, through faith
Who go amongst the living;
Their names are sweet-smelling (or ‘as perfume’)
And their sleep is so quiet!’(or ‘so peaceful’)

The lasting influence of this hymn was, apparently, powerful enough to appear on a family memorial (PC246) applied to deaths between 1875 and 1953. From the appearance and legibility of the gravestone, it appears that the opportunity may have been taken to commemorate all the dead of the family on the occasion of the latest deaths by the erection of a modern memorial. The gravestone is constructed of grey granite with incised lettering and

resisted the efforts of the author to obtain an acceptable photograph, although it can be seen in the background of Figure 7.16.

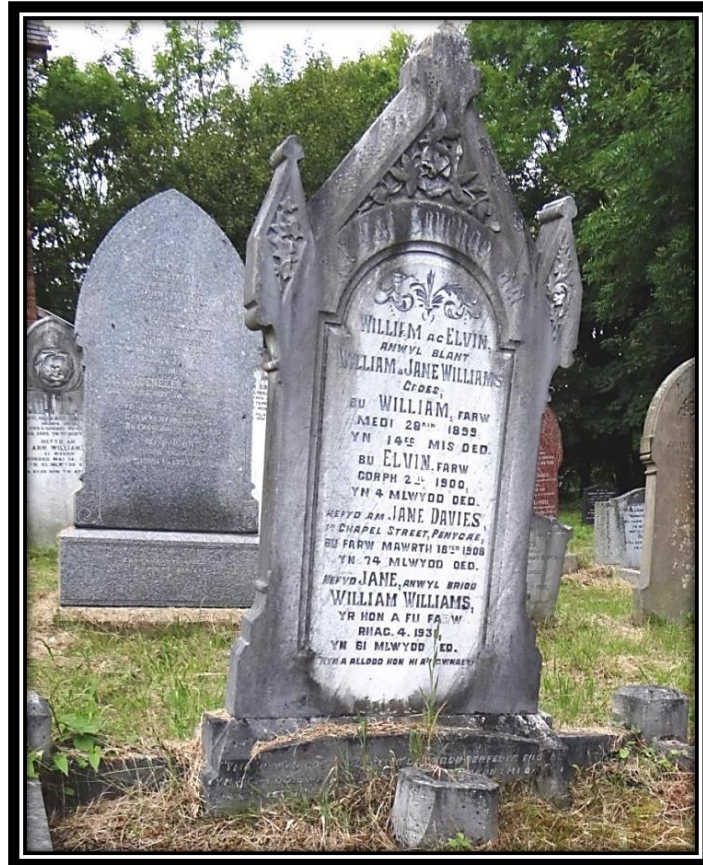


Fig.7.16 Penycae Groes: Williams & Davies gravestone from the east (PC238)

This is a complex memorial commemorating deaths from 1899 to 1954 (Figure 7.16). It incorporates a single epitaph applied to a female death in 1931: ‘She did what she could’, the implications of which were discussed in Chapter 6, and a further ‘multiple’ incised on the plinth. The latter epitaph seems to draw heavily on references to the grave, and lying in the earth, and is the second verse of Evans’ hymn:

‘After all their intense tribulations
They are resting in peace,
Far from the sound of the world and its burden,
Without pain in the dust of the earth’

Some common themes among the inscriptions described above reference peace, resting or sleeping; the confidence of the faithful and the blessings of religion. However,

there seems to be some evidence of a preoccupation with death, the grave and earth. A word frequency search in Nvivo for ‘earth’ (excluding references to the Earth as a physical whole) produces six epitaphic examples at Penycae only, while a similar word frequency search for ‘grave’ produced four at Penycae, two at Brown Knowl and one at Buckley. Also at Penycae, ‘dust’ (or ‘ashes’) occurs on three gravestones, and only once at Brown Knowl. Although references of this nature, both in the ‘multiples’ analysed above, and elsewhere in the dataset, are slim evidence for denominational characteristics, it would appear that the Calvinistic Methodists of Penycae did not shrink from some willingness to articulate the practical vocabularies of death and burial not often observed elsewhere in this study.

The remainder of this chapter discusses 108 single epitaphs by gender, date and source of epitaph in tabular form, representing 55 males, 40 females and 13 children, and suggests some personal or religious themes. It begins with common epitaphs, of which there are three.

Common Epitaphs

There are only a small number of such epitaphs at Penycae; two are ‘At rest’, while PC248 reads ‘peace be to her ashes (or ‘dust’); all are applied to women. They may represent the adoption of shorter epitaphs later in the study period which has been noted elsewhere in this study.

Table 7.6 Penycae Groes: common epitaphic sources

Ref	Year of death	Gender	Age	Themes
PC010	1911	F		Rest
PC051	1914	F	83	Rest
PC248	1916	F	60	Peace, ashes (or dust)

First World War epitaphs

In Table 7.7 below, PC213 is the Portland stone memorial to Sapper Roberts discussed earlier, and is the only example in this group of a secular epitaph. Although the sample is small, phraseology suggesting sacrifice and unseen graves is absent. The other epitaph for the male death in 1916 is ‘He weakened my strength in the way, he shortened my days’ from Psalm 102, which only appears at Penycæ. Further discussion of the use of this Psalm occurs in the section devoted to Old Testament epitaphs.

Table 7.7 Penycæ Groes: First World War epitaphic sources

Ref	Year of death	Gender	Age	Themes
PC018	1916	M	24	Strength weakened, days shortened
PC213	1916	M	23	Loving familial memories
PC198	1917	M	22	God as refuge and help in trouble
PC235	1918	M	26	Reward for a moral life

The remaining epitaphs are ‘Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord’ (PC235), which was another example where the source (Revelations 14:13) was inscribed; and ‘God is my refuge and a very present help in trouble’ (PC198).

Hymn sources

There seems to be little evidence of the Welsh choral tradition in this category during the sample period, unlike at Buckley, where sixteen epitaphs were chosen from hymns, for a slightly smaller population of usable epitaphs (Table 4.1). However, music was clearly valued at Penycæ; a harmonium was bought in 1884, an American organ in 1885, and a further harmonium in 1892 (Evans-Jones 2014, 31). It may be that some Psalms were set to music, reflected in their popularity for epitaphs (seventeen from a total of twenty-nine). Bickersteth’s hymn was chosen only once, in 1902, although this phrase gained support after 1919, with eight references in the dataset before 1946.

Among the remaining hymn epitaphs, Evans’ hymn ‘Rest in the grave’ was popular and has already been encountered as a ‘multiple’ epitaph, where the earliest occurrence was

also in 1872. It is unclear why this hymn was most popular, in ‘multiples’ as with single epitaphs tabulated below, in the earlier years of the twentieth century.

Table 7.8 Penrycae Groes: hymn sources

Ref	Year of death	Gender	Age	Themes
PC095	1865	F	42	Judgement in a second coming; desire for salvation
PC069	1872	M	56	Peace for the faithful. Sleep as perfume
PC178	1902	M	40	Perfect peace
PC255	1903	M	37	Peace for the faithful. Sleep as perfume
PC256	1911	M	59	Peace for the faithful. Sleep as perfume
PC249	1917	F	67	Peace for the faithful. Sleep as perfume

The earliest hymn epitaph recorded (PC095) is worth quoting in full for its vivid depiction of individual yearning for salvation:

‘When thou shalt come the second time
In greatness, respect and honour
To judge the living and the dead together
O God do not reject me’

This is another of Evan Evans (1796-1855) hymns; in a later translation the text is considerable softened, and refers to being forgotten, not rejected.

Old Testament sources

These 29 sources provide almost 27% of the single epitaphs at Penrycae.

Table 7.9 Penrycae Groes: Old Testament sources

Ref.	Date of death	Gender	Age	Themes
PC098	1876	F	71	Memory, righteousness, blessings
PC099	1878	C	5	Children, inheritance/gift of the Lord
PC100(1)	1878	M	63	Memory, righteousness, blessings
PC114	1882	C	<1	Sacrifice, safety for the vulnerable
PC108	1883	M	55	Joy in the Lord for the meek
PC042	1883	M	72	Release from the grave after great troubles
PC087	1883	M	72	Wisdom, teaching of the Lord

PC109	1884	M	40	Bodily weakness, shortness of life
PC110	1885	C	3	Loss of borrowed life, resurrection
PC006	1887	C	7	Children, inheritance/gift of the Lord
PC015	1888	M	47	Release from the grave after great troubles
PC019	1888	F	76	Safety for the righteous in the strength of the Lord
PC007	1889	M	64	Wisdom, understanding
PC035	1889	F	64	Release from the grave after great troubles
PC032	1889	F	59	Memory, righteousness, blessings
PC013	1896	M	39	Bodily weakness, shortness of life
PC026	1902	M	45	Bodily weakness, shortness of life
PC075	1902	M	65	Grace and mercy of the Lord
PC121	1903	F	88	Memory, righteousness, blessings
PC179	1906	M	43	Fleetingness of life
PC100(2)	1910	F	90	God's gift of life, favour and preservation of spirit
PC122	1911	M	93	Long life, salvation
PC137	1911	F	35	Bodily weakness, shortness of life
PC259	1914	F	80	Salvation of the righteous
PC253	1915	F	55	Memory, righteousness, blessings
PC191	1916	F	35	Bodily weakness, shortness of life
PC247	1916	F	69	Memory, righteousness, blessings
PC018	1916	M	24	Bodily weakness, shortness of life
PC198	1917	M	22	God as refuge and help in trouble

Quotations from Psalms (17) and Proverbs (8) predominate; within the latter category two epitaphs each have six occurrences: 'The memory (or remembrance) of the just is blessed', and a lament on the shortness and weakness of life - 'He weakened my strength in the way, He shortened my days'. The latter epitaph above was appropriately chosen for four male and two female deaths all of which occurred before the age of forty; it seemed to gain popularity after 1884; it was still in use as late as 1952. The overall gender distribution is fourteen males, eleven females and four children.

Since many of these epitaphs concentrate on the ephemerality of life, some of the sentiments expressed may appear lugubrious to the modern reader. An epitaph of this type was chosen for a man who died aged forty three (Figure 7.17).

'My days are like a shadow that flees, and I am as the grass that withers' (PC179)



Fig.7.17 Penrycae Groes: Evans gravestone from the east (PC179)

There are few references to joy in these Old Testament epitaphs: PC108 - ‘And the meek shall also increase their joy in the Lord’ from Isaiah is one; there are, however, more among the New Testament epitaphs discussed in the following section. Nevertheless, even in the bleakest of Old Testament epitaphs, suggestions of hope, faith or salvation can be discerned. This quotation from Psalm 71 was chosen for one female (PC035) and two male deaths (PC015 and PC042), all in the 1880s:

‘Thou which has shewed me great and sore troubles shall quicken me again
And shall bring me up again from the depths of the earth’

This 1888 epitaph addressed to a female aged seventy-six alludes to faith in the strength of God:

‘The name of the Lord is a strong tower:
The righteous runneth into it and is safe’ (PC019)

During the early years of the twentieth century, a perhaps more positive note can be discerned:

‘The Lord is merciful and graceful, slow to anger and plenteous in mercy’ (PC075)

‘Thou hast granted me life and favour, and thy visitation
has preserved my spirit (PC100)

‘With long life I will satisfy him and show him My salvation’ (PC122)

‘Say ye to the righteous that it will be well with him’ (PC259)

‘God is my refuge and a very present help in trouble’ (PC198)

This section on Old Testament epitaphs is concluded with a ‘hidden’ message on the gravestone (Figure 7.18 below) of a family from Rhos; the first commemoration is to a second child who died in 1882 at the age of three. Her epitaph reads:

‘Alas, Master, for it was borrowed’



Fig.7.18 Penrycae Groes: Rogers gravestone from the east (PC110)

The text alludes to the 'sons of the prophets' felling wood to build a new dwelling across the River Jordan, accompanied by the prophet Elisha. The borrowed axe being used fell into the water and was lost; Elisha 'cut down a stick, and cast it in thither, and the iron did swim'. This epitaph therefore alludes to something precious and being lost was recovered, or rising again by faith or by the actions of a holy man; the source of the text (2 Kings 6:5) is inscribed after the epitaph, although it was probable that contemporary readers of the text would recognise the provenance of the epitaph, and would appreciate the context and sentiment of the quotation.

New Testament sources

Epitaphs at Penycæ in this category are the most numerous at 35 (Table 7.10). Of these epitaphs, 14 are from the Books of Mark and Matthew. The gender distribution is 17 males, 14 females and 4 children. The practice of adding the source of the epitaph after the text was noted on seven occasions, compared with one for Old Testament epitaphs. The most frequently-chosen and individualistic epitaphs are discussed below.

The following epitaph, or extracts from it, was only found at Brown Knowl and Penycæ where it was chosen for two males and a female who died between 1870 and 1906, aged between sixty-three and eighty. It carries messages of salvation and redemption:

‘Well done thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord’
(PC125 [2], PC042 [1] and PC226).

Also with three references is the ‘hidden’ message ‘She hath done what she could’ previously encountered at Buckley, and which was still being chosen for deaths at Penycæ in 1931 and 1945, whereas a quotation from the Letters to the Philippians only occurred at Penycæ for deaths after 1887, the youngest of whom was a child aged 13 (PC040):

‘For me to live is Christ and to die is gain’

Table 7.10 Penycæ Groes: New Testament sources

Ref.	Date of death	Gender	Age	Themes
PC125(1)	1867	F	69	Sacrifice
PC125(2)	1870	M	63	Faithfulness, power, joy of the Lord
PC052	1873	M	46	Reward for a moral life
PC032	1883	M	64	Belief, salvation
PC094	1884	F	22	Reward for a moral life
PC115	1884	F	43	Sacrifice
PC035	1885	M		Readiness for death
PC074	1886	M	68	Scriptures, wisdom, salvation & faith,
PC040	1887	C	13	Living and dying in Christ
PC042(1)	1889	F	80	Faithfulness, power, joy of the Lord
PC016	1891	M	32	Belief
PC095	1891	F	30	Living and dying in Christ
PC111	1891	M	67	Sleep, redemption

PC026	1894	C	10	Reward for a moral life
PC039	1895	M	72	Living and dying in Christ
PC005	1895	C	10	Sorrow, sleep, not death
PC055	1897	F	66	Resurrection, life, belief
PC050	1897	M	72	Readiness for death
PC043	1901	F	73	Readiness for death
PC245	1902	M	45	Readiness for death
PC019	1904	M	42	Readiness for death
PC159	1905	C	<2	Not dead, only sleeping
PC232	1905	M	29	Fought a good fight, faith
PC188	1906	F	49	A better future life/experience
PC226	1906	M	67	Faithfulness, power, joy of the Lord
PC069	1907	F	78	Belief, salvation
PC194	1908	F	44	Release from care, divine care
PC199	1909	F	62	Hope, patience & prayer
PC192	1910	M	66	Readiness for death
PC042(2)	1912	F	59	Sacrifice
PC241	1915	F	74	Reward for a moral life
PC260	1916	F	52	Ephemerality of life
PC013	1916	M	73	Living and dying in Christ
PC023	1918	M	26	Reward for a moral life
PC188	1919	M	64	Fought a good fight, faith

There were ten occurrences of a full or partial quote of a verse from the Book of Revelation which has been encountered at burial grounds already discussed:

‘Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth
Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest in their labours;
And their works do follow them’

One of these is the War death (PC023) discussed above; in all this epitaph was chosen for six males, three females and a child; three of the dead were aged forty-six or less.

However, the most frequently-chosen New Testament epitaphs emphasise the unpredictability of death; all but one of six were chosen for males, only two of whom could be considered to have died early; where this quotation was chosen for a victim of a mine accident (PC035), no date of death was given. The epitaph only appears between 1885 and 1910:

‘Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh’

Two deaths of children are commemorated with comforting analogies of rest and not-death; the memorial with this epitaph is one of only seven at Penycae to have supplementary crosses incised on the gravestone:

‘Why maketh thee this ado and weep?
The damsel is not dead but sleepeth’
(PC 005, PC159: illustrated below at Figure 7.19)

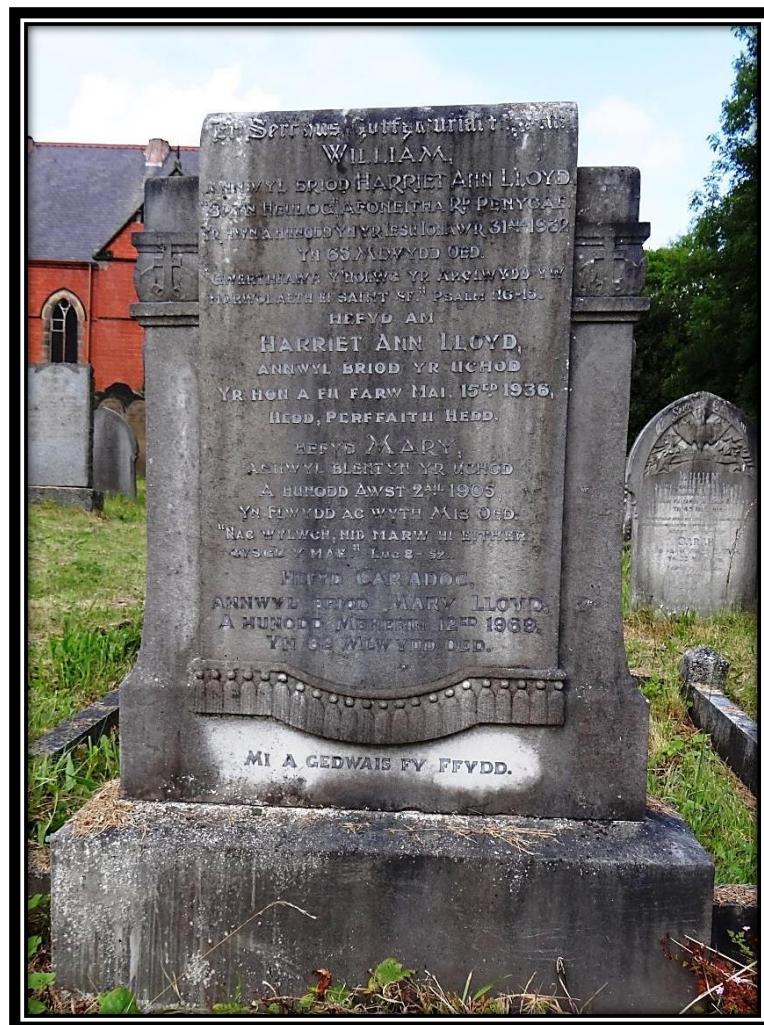


Fig.7.19 Penycae Groes: Lloyd gravestone from the east (PC159)

Although many of the epitaphs discussed above may seem to the modern reader rather chastening in tone, with some concentration on death, tribulation and weeping, an alternative interpretation of the themes in Table 7.10 above suggests that the Penycae Calvinistic

Methodists were confident and hopeful that their adherence to or efforts toward a righteous life would result in salvation and redemption. This is noticeable throughout the sample period. ‘He who believes shall not want’ illustrates this confidence; it was the last words, described earlier in this chapter, of a man who died in 1886 aged 48.

Prayer sources

There are only two prayer sources chosen at Penrycae for seven epitaphs. ‘Thy will be done’ from the Lord’s Prayer is chosen for three male epitaphs after 1906, and may reflect the trend for shorter epitaphs later in the sample period. ‘In the midst of life we are in death’ is from the burial service, and appears between 1873 and 1898, and once in 1908. It is noteworthy how small these numbers are given the comparative appetite for religious epitaphs from the Old and New Testaments, and with comparison with prayer epitaphs at Buckley, where there were seventeen for a broadly similar population. However, there were only six at Brown Knowl, all extracts from the Lord’s Prayer.

Table 7.11 Penrycae Groes: prayer sources

Ref.	Date of death	Gender	Age	Themes
PC052	1873	F	21	Death in the midst of life
PC025	1888	M	55	Death in the midst of life
PC043	1898	M	59	Death in the midst of life
PC126	1906	M	69	Submission to God’s will
PC200	1906	M	56	Submission to God’s will
PC014	1908	M	48	Death in the midst of life
PC011	1914	M	39	Submission to God’s will

Poetry sources

There are only two poetry references (Table 7.12) at Penrycae: both commemorate female deaths in 1913; it is remarkable that there are so few such epitaphs in the land of the bardic

tradition. The epitaph on PC192 is an extract from ‘The Divine Comedy’: ‘In His will is our peace’.

A nationally-acclaimed poet was Hedd Wyn (Ellis Humphrey Evans 1887 - 1917) who was killed at Passchendaele and who was posthumously awarded the Bard’s chair at the 1917 National Eisteddfod. His words appear on the gravestone (PC133) bearing the address ‘1 Cemetery Road, Rhos’ discussed above, and are quoted in full below. Parentheses indicate alternative translations:

‘A woman (lady) who was full of goodness (good works)
 And her (whose) liberal breast (heart) (was) as free of treachery as the lily
 The white (fair) district of her birth should (ought to)
 Set a (memorial) stone of gold on (over) her dust (remains)’

Table 7.12 Penrycae Groes: poetry sources

Ref.	Date of death	Gender	Age	Themes
PC133	1913	Female	57	Goodness, birthplace, ashes
PC192	1913	Female	64	Peace in God’s will

These words are in the form of an englyn, a very strict meter in four lines conveying “all that needs to be said” (Irvon Parry pers.comm. September 2018).

Vernacular verse sources

Because of the complexities of translating these enigmatic, individualistic and sometimes weathered epitaphs (Table 7.13), it is possible that some may be quotations from mainstream works, or extracts from hymns, for instance, which eluded identification. They have been included in this category because of their similarity in tone and content to verses and sentiments observed at the other burial grounds; equally, they could qualify as ‘unassigned’ epitaphs examined below.

These nine epitaphs mainly appear in earlier years, and are mostly sombre in tone; mourning, weeping, earthly pain and sorrows predominate. Some summon vivid images,

such as PC034, which commemorated the death of a man in 1866 aged 62, and has echoes of Bunyan's 'The Pilgrim's Progress':

'I approach the side of the river, almost leaving the wilderness entirely
I have heard of the conquest of the man Who travelled the river ahead of me
He rolled the stone under seal. He rose in strength to the shore
I love Him come what may. There is hope for the poor and the weak'

Table 7.13 Penrycae Groes: vernacular verse sources

Ref.	Date of death	Gender	Age	Themes
PC091	1866	M	28	Progress to the grave
PC079	1866	M	59	Illness, pain, rest
PC034	1869	M	62	Approaching death, presence of God
PC114	1875	M	76	Love for God
PC081	1875	M	39	Approaching death, mourning, rest
PC016	1885	F	20	Earthly sorrow and pain, ephemerality of life
PC050	1888	C	10	Grief, not-death, meeting again
PC056	1889	F	25	Not-death, sleep, approaching death
PC028	1891	*	*	Loss of a child

* a heavily weathered gravestone which was probably that of a female child.

The penultimate line of this epitaph was also chosen for a male who died in 1875 aged 76 (PC114), while in the same year, the following English epitaph was chosen for a man of 39 (PC081). His gravestone is illustrated at Figure 7.20 below. It is decorated with an inscribed cross; it is curious that the monumental mason's name and address on the plinth are more prominently inscribed than the commemorative text which reads:

'Farewell vain world I must thee leave,
To dust I must return
For out of it I first was made
Dear friends forbear to mourn
God ever takes the best, from earthly troubles to eternal rest'



Fig.7.20 Penycae Groes: Chapman gravestone from the east (PC081)

In much the same context of mourning and leaving the earth is the following salutary reminder of the frailty of life that was chosen for a female aged 20 in 1885 (PC016):

‘Mourn not for her whom God has blest and taken to her heavenly rest
 Freed from all sorrow, grief and pain, our loss is her eternal gain
 Yes she has gone and we are going all
 Like flowers we wither and like leaves we fall’

Although it may seem that these nine epitaphs appears somewhat sombre and cheerless with perhaps a hint of introspection, more than half make reference to the redeeming power of a God-figure, and to some hope in a better, future existence. A similar concentration on mourning, the grave and on dying is discernible among those epitaphs which did not fall

easily into the categories examined above, with some inferences of the redemptive powers of hope and faith.

Unassigned epitaphic sources

The examination of epitaphic sources at Penycrae concludes with thirteen epitaphs (Table 7.14) lacking a secure provenance, which proved to be among the most challenging to translate, perhaps because of their idiomatic or colloquial phrasing, now obscure, and which occur mainly between the years 1863-1896. Within this category of epitaphs nearly half (6/13) mention death, the grave or mourning as in the examples below, which might, due to weathering and translation, have lost some of the original meaning:

‘Where did she go? In mortal grief, black death has taken her captive’ (PC108)

‘Ashore from the deep black and the wave, someday will come the heirs of faith. Their song in unison despite the bitter bread of the cross’ (PC111)

‘Here at rest in dust, lying in peace, when the trumpet sounds....
in Jesus will I rise’ (PC057[1])

Table 7.14 Penycrae Groes: Unassigned epitaphic sources

Ref	Year of Death	Gender	Age	Themes
PC057(1)	1863	F	65	Dust, peace, rising again
PC061	1863	M	29	Bed in the earth, rising again
PC106	1865	C	<1	Weeping
PC108	1871	F	59	Grief, capture by death
PC099	1873	C	<1	Short life, dying, eternity
PC057(2)	1873	M	75	Grave, purity, sleep
PC098	1876	F	71	Grave, peace, Saviour
PC100	1878	M	63	Grave, redemption
PC111	1878	M	19	Grave, faith, rising again, crucifixion
PC114	1883	F	77	A resting place beside God
PC098	1883	M	80	Sleeping in Jesus
PC012	1896	C		Child’s heart, grave
PC076	1911	F	60	Love continuing for those taken by God

The latter gravestone, which is illustrated at Figure 7.21, has a further epitaph, which is heavily weathered but is nevertheless in a similar same vein:

‘Within a grave.....Two so pure.....while...asleep’ (PC057 [2])



Fig.7.21 Penycae Groes: Evans gravestone from the east (PC057)

Even among these funereal sentiments there are expressions of faith and belief in redemption:

‘My Redeemer will come again to timely open the entrance to the grave (PC100)

‘She therefore has a resting place beside God’ (PC114)

‘Beyond the grave is my peace, with my Saviour handsome to behold’ (PC098)

Moreover, the majority of these epitaphs include religious references: God, Jesus, Redeemer, Saviour, death on the cross, tending to endorse observations earlier in this chapter that religious expression in epitaphic choices was for the Calvinistic Methodists at Penycae a

foundation of life and death, even when such quotations, such as the examples above, were not drawn directly from religious sources.

Source of epitaphs: Summary

At Penycae, the Old and New Testament books are the most frequently chosen for epitaphs, while religious references as a whole are represented in 73% of the epitaphs tabulated above, demonstrating, and confirming to other worshippers as well as to the reader, the significance of chapel and religion to this population. Equally, confidence in faith and redemption is well attested, even when the sentiments expressed seem to place emphasis on death, mourning, and the grave.

The trend noted elsewhere for shorter, less-expressive and secular epitaphs toward the end of the nineteenth century was not apparent at Penycae; here a preference for elaborate epigraphy conveying a moral message or dimension survived well into the twentieth century. The Welsh language was the dominant language of commemoration throughout, although there were some instances of bi-lingualism. Some defining characteristics of Calvinistic Methodism are discernible here; a population with a strong sense of place, united in religious and doctrinal observation, and awareness of the constant presence of death.

The following chapter examines the memorial practices of the General Baptists of Tarporley, Cheshire, the last Nonconformist representative in this study, and where the survival of earlier gravestones has been affected, as at Buckley, by church rebuilding.

CHAPTER 8

TARPORLEY BAPTIST AND METHODIST CHURCH

Location and history

Tarporley is located some 22 kms north-west of Crewe in Cheshire; a market town since 1281, by 1841 it had 200 houses and 1114 inhabitants who were chiefly engaged in trade and agriculture (Cheshire Archives and Local Studies Service 1991, 3a). Tarporley had a thriving shoe and clog industry in the early nineteenth century, and by 1831 had 119 families ‘chiefly employed in Trade, Manufactures and Handicraft’ (CALs 1991, 8).

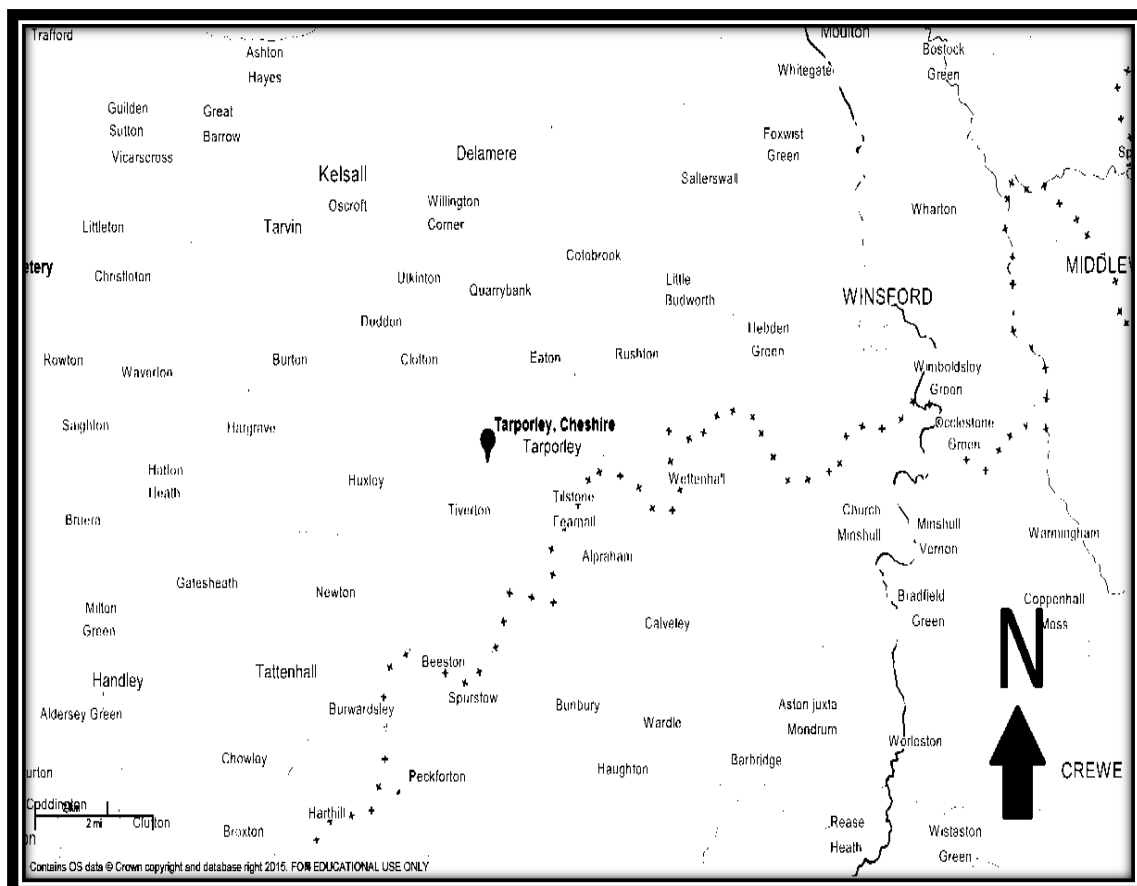


Fig. 8.1 Location of Tarporley, Cheshire. Ordnance Survey 2011 West Cheshire and East Wales. Edina Digimap. Ordnance Survey data @ Crown copyright and database right 2016

In such an environment likely to appeal to the ‘middling sort’, early Baptists were active in Tarporley from the late 1600s (Thomas 1984, 4) and established a brick chapel (Figure 8.2) and burial ground at Brassey Green, south of Tarporley, in the early 1700s. The

graveyard is notable for the number of table tombs; the earliest surviving gravestone is dated 1773.



Fig.8.2 Brassey Green Baptist chapel from the north-west

In Tarporley, land off the High Street for a General Baptist church was purchased in 1829; the building was a small brick edifice with a burial ground. To extend the site and provide direct access to the High Street, a garden and cottage which fronted the High Street were purchased in 1864; the first chapel was demolished and the second church was built in 1866 (Figure 8.3). Prior to this, dissenting bodies were either buried in the graveyard of St. Helen's Anglican Church, or 'in the orchard or elsewhere on their own land' (Thomas 1984, 32).



Fig.8.3 Tarporley Baptist Church from the east

Primitive and Wesleyan Methodists also established chapels in the town in 1846 and 1865 respectively (Tarporley Local History Group 1975, 83) although the Wesleyans had been active in the area since the previous century. Morris and Co's Directory (CALs 1991, 4a) had warm words for the Baptist and Wesleyan buildings, describing them as 'neat edifices'; the Wesleyan chapel seated 300 worshippers, while the Prims' had room for only 100. Since neither had a graveyard, some interments from these denominations took place in the Baptist graveyard, as will be noted later in this chapter. The Primitive Methodist chapel was disused by 1922, and converted to a domestic dwelling, while the Wesleyan chapel was

rebuilt in 1867 and closed in 1976. Thereafter, the Baptist church became the Baptist and Methodist church.

Tarporley provided a manse on the site for the minister from the days of the first church. In Baptist churches, organisation and management of church affairs was (and still is) conducted by the minister and by 'members of the church', who were elected by the then congregations. In the burial registers, there is a column for identification of such individuals; it is remarkable how many of them were women.

In addition to the graveyard memorials, there are seven interior tablets; this practice was comparatively rare among the studied denominations.

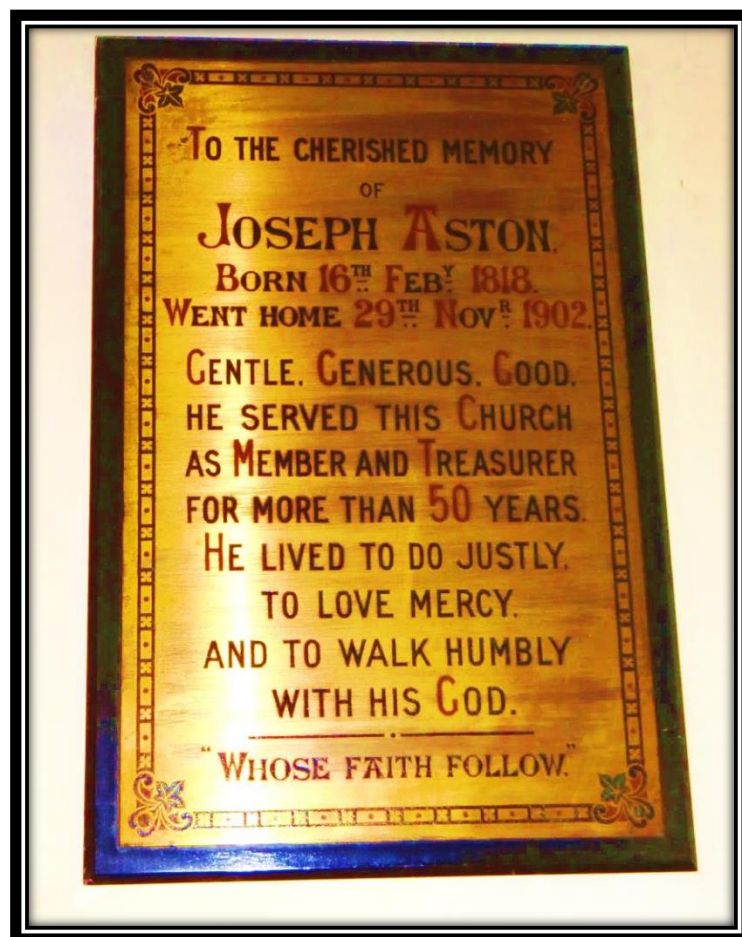


Fig.8.4 Tarporley: internal memorial tablet to Joseph Aston

Three commemorate members of the Bate, Aston and Walley families. Joseph Aston died in 1902 (Figure 8.4 above); if he is buried in the graveyard, his grave was not identified

during this study. He ‘went home’ according to his tablet; similar phrasing was chosen for the Bate and Walley tablets, although mode of death on both their gravestones, which were identified, was ‘died’. The use of the ‘home’ metaphor may reflect such religious teachings as ‘in my Father’s house there are many mansions’ (John 14:2), positioning these families in the religious and local social milieu. Elsewhere ‘went home’ as a mode of death was observed on five occasions in the graveyard; three were within the study period.

Thomas Walley purchased the land for Brassey Green chapel (Thomas 1984, 10), and all three families provided treasurers and secretaries of the church in Tarporley. Three former pastors, ministers and deacons of the church are also commemorated within the church. This practice continued until 1953, demonstrating that this mode of Baptist commemoration survived until the middle of the twentieth century.

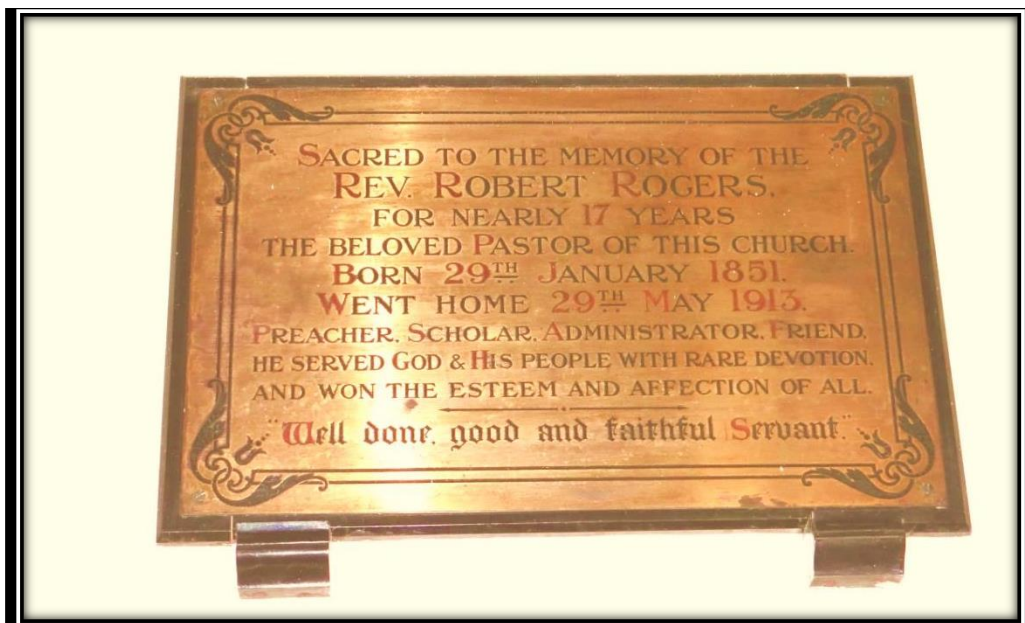


Fig.8.5 Tarporley: internal wall tablet to the Rev. Rogers

Of the three pastors/ministers, two died within the study period and are buried in the churchyard (T009 and T032). Their tablets are notable for their affectionate and descriptive language as exemplified by that of the Rev. Robert Rogers (Figure 8.5 above).

In addition there is a white marble tablet honouring Lizzie Ffoulkes Griffiths, neé Aston (whose gravestone is discussed later in this chapter) and which reads:

‘In the adjoining graveyard Lizzie Foulkes Griffiths sleeps,
awaiting the Lord’s coming.
Born Aug. 22nd 1850 at Brassey Green Died Dec. 1876 at Tarporley

This is followed by an inscription in Welsh which reads in translation ‘The life of your husband and his children are weaving a wreath as adornment to you’. Lizzie died aged 26; her son Edgar Joseph Aston Griffiths, died in 1880 aged six. Since another daughter (also Lizzie), died in 1948 and is also commemorated at Tarporley, it seems that Mr Ffoulkes Griffiths married again.

Demographics

Data from Nvivo produced the following gender distribution: 51 child, 72 female and 74 male deaths: 197 in all between 1830 and 1919, which are analysed by gender in ten-year ranges in Figure 8.6 below. The child death noted before 1830 should be discounted because the date of death does not seem to relate to others on the gravestone.

Recorded child deaths account for about 26% of the total: about twice that at Brown Knowl. This finding is difficult to explain in a prosperous market town like Tarporley; it may be that Baptists were more inclined, for personal or doctrinal reasons, to acknowledge children as individuals, although there was some historical opposition to the baptism of infants (Chapter 2). It may be that weather-related or economic events that might have necessitated the use of mass graves for anonymous children were less influential here. However, there was a high level of child deaths in the 1860s, and particularly in the 1870s; while the highest peak in the latter period may be attributable to the effects of poor harvests noted earlier in this study, it is hard to account for the relatively high number of children’s deaths in the following twenty years, although improvements in pre- and post-natal health care are probably responsible for reductions thereafter. Child deaths did not return to pre-1860 levels until after 1910.

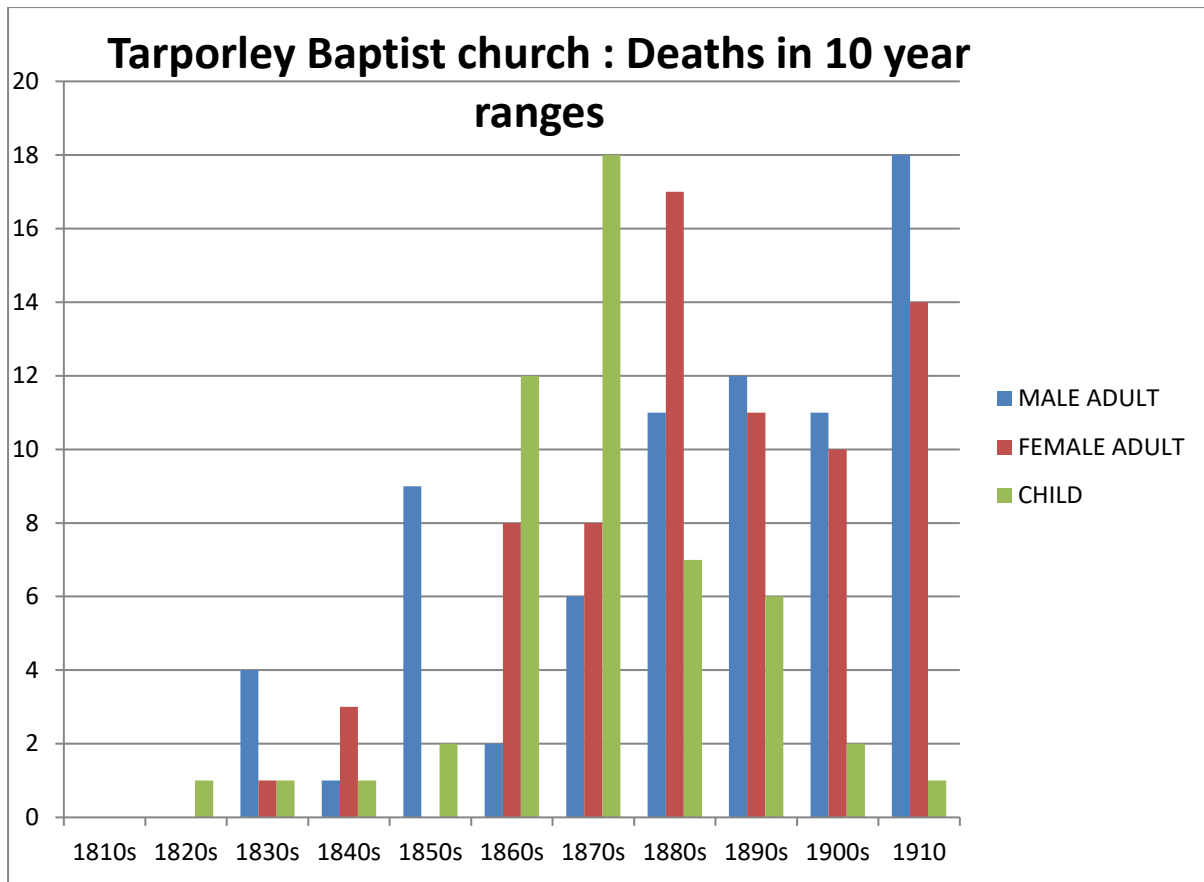


Fig.8.6 Tarporley: deaths by gender in ten-year ranges

Adult female deaths peaked in the 1880s and again after 1910. In an excavation of eighteenth and early-nineteenth Baptist graves at Priory Yard, Norwich, Caffell and Clarke (2011) attributed the prevalence of female deaths there to the stresses of childbirth, lactation and pressures on younger women to return to work. If these earlier factors were replicated at Tarporley, female deaths might have been expected to have been consistently high, and not to have shown an exponential increase after 1860. An alternative explanation may be that there was an increase in the number of women (and thus children, arguably) in the Baptist congregation (Watts 2015, 171).

Male deaths peaked in the 1850s, and between 1880 and 1909, reaching the highest level in the ten years after 1910. The influence of the First World War can be discounted since there are only two such deaths memorialised in the Tarporley dataset; it is more likely that the post-war Spanish influenza epidemic was responsible for the increase in adult deaths,

which was often associated with tuberculosis (Chowell *et al.*, 2007, 507 and Table 8.1 below).

Some causes of death were noted in the burial register; there is no consistency or pattern in these annotations, and they occur mainly in the latter years of the nineteenth century. In all 42 male, 43 female and 20 child causes of death were noted in the registers, which are bound volumes pre-printed with columns for personal details and a further column for 'Remarks'. This column reveals that, in Tarporley as in Pembrokeshire (Mytum 2002a) not all burials were commemorated on gravestones; the memorial to Hannah Heath, who died aged 84 in 1887, records her death only (T042), although there is sufficient empty space on the headstone for further commemorations. To her entry in the burial register is added '1899. Mary Barker of Rushton aged 2 days buried in the same plot. Described as Samuel Barker's baby'. While the reasons for this uncommemorated infant burial in an existing grave can only be guessed at, it is only one example of several individuals (particularly children) whose deaths, invisible in the graveyard, were noted in the register. While in no way attributable to the health of the Baptist population at Tarporley as a whole, some major causes of death are analysed by gender in Table 8.1.

Table 8.1 Tarporley: some major causes of death from the burial register

Cause	Male	Female	Child	Total
Decline of nature/decay	6	8	1	15
Consumption/Tuberculosis	4	8	2	14
Cancer	2	7		9
Senile decay/senility	4	4		8
Heart disease	5	2	1	8
Convulsions			6	6
Accident	2		3	5

In addition to the conditions tabulated above, there is one occurrence of death resulting from childbirth (which may question Caffell and Clarke's conclusion), two of dropsy, blood poisoning, smallpox and paralysis, and four of bronchitis. There were also two deaths attributed to typhus/typhoid, which may be related to the lack of sewerage and mains water supplies to the town, payment for which was still being resisted by local rate-payers as late as 1885 (Tarpoley Local History Group 1975, 63). Two of the three accidental child deaths were attributable to drowning. Clearly one annotator was not medically trained, since more than one death was attributed to 'the visitation of God'.

Memorial types, imagery and decoration

Memorial types from a base of 79 graves (Table 4.1) are analysed at Table 8.2 below.

Table 8.2 Tarpoley: distribution of memorial types

Memorial Type	Number	%
Tall Headstone (>1m)	64	70%
Low Headstone (<1m)	4	4%
Kerbs	9	10%
Cross	6	6%
Ledger	3	3%
Obelisk	6	6%

All kerbs were attached to other elements of the grave, predominately headstones, and were not inscribed in any way. There was no evidence for the removal of kerbs for

management purposes. In addition there were ten headstones of local material that had weathered to illegibility.

A distinct axial shift in the organisation of the graveyard was noted, with some infilling with later graves facing east in the area abutting the High Street, formerly occupied by a cottage; many of the older graves are aligned south toward the side of the present church. It was suggested (Peter Willis pers. comm. November 2013) that these latter graves faced the entrance of the first church.

Preferences for tall headstones are broadly comparable to choices for such designs at Penycae, while the occurrence of crosses is similar to other studied Nonconforming denominations, except Penycae, although one or two memorials are decorated with finials that suggest a cruciform shape.



Fig. 8.7 Tarporley Baptist church: Dutton/Roscoe memorial from the south (T043)

Figure 8.7 above illustrates one of these gravestones, which is also decorated with pelleting, a quatrefoil and IHS: three references to the sacrifice on the cross on one memorial. However, unlike at Brown Knowl, there was little appetite for quatrefoils (three instances) or supplementary crosses (two instances).

In the burial ground at Tarporley, there is considerable evidence for familial continuity, particularly the Aston, Bate and Walley families, already demonstrated by the tablets described above. One of the Aston memorials in the graveyard is a tall headstone with an attached low monument (Figure 8.8) which commemorates eight members of the extended Aston family, including Sarah, who was a daughter of Charles Bate.



Fig. 8.8 Tarporley: Aston/Kirkham gravestone from the east (T014)

The headstone, which also commemorates Sarah's ten-week old daughter, is similar in form to the 'roofed' design noted at Buckley, and, given the prominence of the two local families, may be a metaphorical allusion to the benefits of 'house', home, family or heaven. The connected low monument records the deaths of four further Aston children, and three adults, and apart from a decorative finial, is devoid of decoration.

Excluding floral motifs, eighteen different types of gravestone imagery and motifs were noted at Tarporley, although most of these designs such as crowns, crowns of thorns, hands, anchors, shields, scrolls and spheres occurred only once or twice. Thirty-eight memorials had no imagery at all, and these are compared to the frequency of other designs in Table 8.3.

The choice of proscenium arch imagery was noted only at Tarporley; since it occurs in the 1830s, this may be indicative of an earlier vocabulary, or a local design. There may be some metaphorical allusion to passing from one state to another (i.e. the space dividing a stage and auditorium) in the choice of this motif. Where this motif occurs, the primary salutations 'Sacred' or 'In memory' was inscribed in gothic script; two of the three memorials are ledgers (Table 8.2), and one is dedicated to the then-Minister of the Baptist church.

Table 8.3 Tarporley: frequency of gravestone imagery

Design of imagery	Occurrences
Floral arrangement, or individual plant e.g. rose, ivy or willow	45
Abstract designs	15
Roundel	7
IHS	4
Quatrefoil	3
Proscenium arch	3
No imagery	35

There are no First World War-specific gravestones at Tarporley; however, two commemorations have been added to earlier gravestones: Robert Povah (T102) was described as ‘missing in action in the First World War’, while Frank Greenway (T103) was killed in May 1918. Both men are also commemorated on the war memorial in St.Helen’s churchyard (Figure 8.9). The possibility of a further First World War casualty is suggested later in this chapter.



Fig.8.9. Tarporley war memorial in St.Helen’s churchyard

A sense of place

A total of thirty-six gravestones (45%) have addresses; of these twenty-six are of males and ten of females. Most addresses are Tarporley (thirteen instances) or settlements close by (twelve instances); Chester addresses appear twice. There are only two references to settlements further afield: Maesbrook (Shropshire) and Launceston (Cornwall). However,

five subsidiary addresses (house, farm etc) without a settlement reference also indicate a strong degree of localism; three of these are two references to Iddenshall (or Iddinshall) Hall, which was the home of the Bate family; and Ash Hill.

It has been noted that Baptist churches were not numerous in the north-west (Thomas, 1984, 2), and the above evidence suggests that the church at Tarporley, and its associated chapel at Brassey Green, provided a significant focus for the Baptist faithful of the immediate area. It also provided burial space for other Tarporley Nonconformists, particularly Wesleyans; there are a number of references in the burial register to such burials, sometimes accompanied by comments such as ‘For 25 years, a Wesleyan local preacher’ (T023). Four individuals were described as ‘all Primitive Methodists’ (T035); while a commemorated male of Primitive Methodist convictions was described as having ‘died in the faith’. There does not seem to be any discernible animosity in comments such as these; this may be an earlier manifestation of Baptist generosity toward other denominations noted in Chapter 4.

Occupational references

There are only three occupational references on gravestones; all refer to males who were Ministers or Pastors of the General Baptist Church, and who were probably occupants of the manse on the site. The burial register records four further occupations - a deacon and Sunday school superintendent, two boot-makers and a farmer. As with the other studied Nonconforming denominations, the recording of secular occupations on gravestones seemed not to be important to the Tarporley Baptist congregation.

The language of remembrance

Table 8.4 below considers eighty-four primary and secondary salutations by gender at Tarporley, In this analysis, the popularity of ‘In loving memory’ after 1900 compared to earlier years is not overwhelming, while ‘In memory’ is primarily a nineteenth-century salutation. Some expressions are not chosen at all after 1900: ‘In loving remembrance’, ‘In

remembrance’, for instance, and ‘In affectionate remembrance’, which was one of the more popular salutations of the nineteenth century.

Table 8.4. Tarporley: primary and secondary salutations by type, gender and period

Salutation/ Period	Male	Female	Child	Total	%
In loving memory: pre-1900	6	5	4	15	18%
In loving memory: post-1900	9	7	1	17	20%
In loving remembrance: pre-1900	0	1	4	5	6%
In memory: pre-1900	3	10	6	19	22%
In memory: post-1900	0	1	1	2	2%
In affectionate remembrance: pre-1900	6	4	5	15	18%
In fond remembrance: post-1900	1	0	0	1	1%
In remembrance: pre-1900	0	1	0	1	1%
To the ever dear memory: post-1900	1	0	0	1	1%
Sacred to the memory: pre-1900	2	3	3	8	10%
TOTAL	28	32	24	84	99%

‘Sacred to the memory’ which was chosen at a low but relatively uniform rate before 1900, was not chosen thereafter. There were no occurrences of salutations referencing bodily remains at all. This table offers further evidence of shorter, ‘warmer’ salutations chosen with more frequency after 1900, and a reflection of the limitations of choice imposed by pre-inscribed, machine-produced blanks.

The language of death

Table 8.5 below examines the terms chosen to describe the manner of death at Tarporley. As before, because of the frequency of its use, the term ‘died’ has not been tabulated, which, as elsewhere, was the most frequently chosen term.

Table 8.5. Tarporley: euphemisms for dying

	1830- 1840	1841- 1860	1861- 1880	1881- 1900	1901- 1920	TOTAL
Called to the higher service					1	1
Departed this (and from this) life	5	6	6	5	1	23
Drowned				1		1
Entered into rest				1		1
Entered the perfect life					1	1
Fell asleep		1	1		1	3
Fell asleep in Jesus				1		1
Killed in action or fell in (location)					1	1
Passed from his labours		1				1
Went home					3	3
No reference						0
TOTAL	5	8	7	8	8	36

There is a small but rich vein of expression at Tarporley not noted elsewhere: ‘Called to the higher service’ was chosen for a male who died in 1908, while ‘Passed from his labours’ referred to a Pastor of the church who died in 1858. ‘Entered the perfect life’ described a male death, in 1913; ‘Went home’ was applied to two female deaths which occurred in 1919 and 1920. ‘Departed this life’, as elsewhere, was the most numerous choice, while the modern expression ‘passed away’ does not appear here until after the 1920s.

Summary

Of the graveyards surveyed, the General Baptist burial ground at Tarporley contained the smallest number of recorded graves at 79 (Table 4.1); church rebuilding may have affected survival rates of earlier gravestones, although this could not be detected at the site. A significant number of memorials may also have been affected by erosion due to the use of local sandstone.

There is significant evidence of middle-class continuity in the Tarporley graveyard when the settlement was an expanding market town, manufacturing and farming community; a significant number of graves (and some tablets) commemorate members of prominent local families. The majority (75%) of graves are decorated tall headstones, some associated with low monuments. While many of those commemorated were members of the church (as defined earlier in this chapter) some others were notable outside the community; Richard Foulkes Griffiths (1850 -1901) was an author and political dissenter, and shares a grave (T005) with his son and wife Lizzie (Lizzie was a member of the church and also has a tablet which was discussed above). The gravestone is similar in design to that (T14) of the Aston family illustrated at Figure 8.8, perhaps another indicator of familial position and influence in the community. However, unlike the Aston gravestone, there are no epitaphs on that of the Foulkes Griffiths family.

The remainder of this chapter considers the sources of epitaphs chosen at Tarporley and suggests some interpretations. As before, multiple epitaphs are examined first in the following section.

Epitaphs relating to multiple deaths

Tarporley has proportionately fewer gravestones with epitaphs than at other sample sites. However, there is a higher number of multiple epitaphs (13) in comparison with both Penycae and Brown Knowl, and one fewer than at Buckley, all of which had higher

populations of both people and gravestones. Table 8.6 below examines these epitaphs in detail.

Table 8.6 Tarporley: epitaphs relating to multiple deaths

Grave no.	Male	Female	Child	Dates of Death	Source
T001 (Aston)	1	2		1915, 1918 (2)	New Testament
T011 (Bate)		1	1	1895, 1915	New Testament
T012	1	1	2	1868,1875,1914 (2),	Hymn
T014(1) (Aston)		1	1	1867 (2)	Prayer
T014(2) (Aston)			4	1873,1874,1877, 1881	Unassigned
T023	1		1	1908, 1913	Poetry
T025	1	2		1903,1904,1910	Hymn
T032	1	1		1885, 1900	New Testament
T050	2	1	3	1853,1857,1860, 1872,1886,1901	Prayer
T057(Aston)			2	1864 (2)	New Testament
T063			2	1875, 1876	Hymn
T094		1	1	1865, 1869	Unassigned
T097	1		1	1888, 1889	New Testament

As noted elsewhere in this study, women and children at Tarporley are most frequently memorialised in epitaphs commemorating multiple individuals. This may be because of family considerations, since some of the major Tarporley families; the Astons and Bates in particular, are highly represented, or because of a personal concern at the time to ensure that babies and children received recognition, or it may be a feature of the particularly high number of child deaths in the 1860s and 1870s (Figure 8.6 above).

This table is remarkable for the absence of Old Testament sources; however, of the thirteen epitaphs, five are from the New Testament, of which two are variations on ‘Blessed

are they that die in the Lord'. Two of the three chosen hymns (T012 and T025) are Bickersteth's 'Peace perfect peace', but T025 has the whole of the first stanza of the hymn. Both prayers are 'Thy will be done'. The single example of a poem is from 'Hallowed Ground' by Scottish poet Thomas Campbell (1777 - 1844).



Fig.8.10 Tarporley: Gregory gravestone from the south (T094)

T094 commemorates a female child aged four, and her grandmother (Figure 8.10 above); although these lines may have originated in a hymn, this proved to be elusive:

'Free from sorrow they are free, in the mansions of the blest
Their dear Saviour's face they see, and with Him forever rest'

Similarly elusive was the epitaph of four children of the Aston family who died between 1873 and 1881 aged between 2 days and nine years old (T014[2]):

‘Not lost to memory, not lost to love’

Of this sample of epitaphs the majority are derived from a religious source or reference religious figures or beliefs (Lord, Saviour, Jesus, heaven). Safety and rest are common themes; the power of love and the blessings of religion are emphasised throughout.

The remainder of this chapter considers the sources of the forty-two epitaphs chosen for individuals, in which 21 males, 18 females and 3 children are represented. Thematic patterns are investigated, beginning, as before, with common epitaphs: short, holophrastic phrases usually referencing rest or being re-united.

Common epitaphic sources

There are too few of these to draw conclusions, except to note that they only occur in the 1890s. All the individuals commemorated at T035 were described as Primitive Methodists in the burial registers.

Table 8.7 Tarporley: common epitaphic sources

Ref	Year of death	Gender	Age	Themes
T035	1895	M	78	Reuniting
T064	1896	F	47	Rest

First World War epitaphs

Robert Povah’s epitaph ‘Reunited’ was added to a modern gravestone commemorating the deaths of his mother, father and two siblings. With the exception of his father, who died in 1913, all deaths commemorated on this gravestone occurred after 1919.

Table 8.8 Tarporley: First World War epitaphic sources

Ref	Year of death	Gender	Age	Themes
T102	n/k	M	n/k	Reuniting

There is also a further commemoration which may refer to a Great War death. Denis Ferguson's death was added to a Dutton family gravestone (T063: Figure 8.11 below).



Fig.8.11 Tarporley: Dutton and Ferguson gravestone from the south (T063)

His date of death is given only as 'November 2-4 1917', and is followed by an epitaph from the Song of Solomon - 'Until the day break'. However, his name does not appear on the war memorial in St. Helen's churchyard, nor in the church register, so his body, if found, may not have been identified until after the cessation of hostilities.

Hymn sources

To quote Thomas (1984, 29), ‘early Baptists had conscientious scruples against public singing; uttering praise in a set form was as unacceptable to them as reading prayers from a book’, and this attitude persisted among General Baptists rather longer than among the Particular Baptists. Nevertheless, by about 1856 a harmonium had been installed at Tarporley church, not to universal approbation (Thomas 1984, 30); however, in 1887 a new pipe organ was commissioned. The New General Baptist Hymn Book was published in 1881. These inhibiting factors may account for why there are so few hymn sources at Tarporley, and that they all post-date 1881 (Table 8.9).

Table 8.9 Tarporley: hymn sources

Ref	Year of death	Gender	Age	Themes
T030	1881	F	59	Safety, Jesus
T038(1)	1896	M	70	Eternity with the Lord
T038(2)	1904	F	78	Safety, Jesus
T077	1904	M	44	Submission to God
T065	1909	M	43	Security
T104	1919	M	55	Perfect peace

In this small sample no child has a hymn as an epitaph, similar to the situation at Buckley and Penycae. There is only one occurrence (T104) of Bickersteth’s hymn, and like those multiple epitaphs noted in Table 8.6, it occurs later in the sample period.

Old Testament sources

These epitaphs (Table 8.10) lack the profundity and range of those at Penycae, for instance, and concentrate on simple concepts.

Table 8.10 Tarporley: Old Testament sources

Ref	Year of death	Gender	Age	Themes
T089	1839	F	33	Dying, peace
T036	1841	F	n/k	Dying, peace
T055(1)	1872	F	23	Protection by the Lord/shepherd
T014	1881	F	39	Sleep
T055(2)	1885	M	42	Nearness of death
T035	1890	F	69	Dying, peace
T037	1892	C	<1	Children, inheritance/gift of the Lord
T006	1898	M	70	Dying, peace
T024	1900	M	77	Memory, righteousness, blessings
T018(1)	1903	F	70	Sleep
TO18(2)	1910	M	83	Memory, righteousness, blessings
T063	1917	M	n/k	Day break, fleeing shadows
T052	n/k*	M	19	Led by the Lord

Note: *The man who died aged 19 (T052) had a father who died aged 42 in 1880. It has been assumed, therefore, that the son died before 1919.

There are four occurrences of ‘His/her end was peace’, two of which were from the early years of the first church, and commemorate three females and a male. ‘So He giveth his beloved sleep’ and ‘The memory of the just is blessed’ occur twice; the former commemorates female deaths and the latter male. The relatively young ages of deaths before 1890 are worthy of note.

The epitaph T055(1) consisted of a biblical reference only – ‘Psalm 23 4 verse’. This is the full verse beginning ‘Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death’ from ‘The Lord is my shepherd’. It has been noted elsewhere in this paper that congregations steeped in the bible would have needed little prompting to recognise sources, and this is a more abbreviated example. Thirteen years after this young woman’s death, her brother drowned, and was commemorated by ‘Prepare to meet thy God’, an epitaph only too appropriate in the circumstances. A second daughter succumbed to consumption in 1875 aged thirteen, and does not have an epitaph.

The gravestone is not decorated, but gives the family address of ‘C-Cross’, an abbreviation of ‘Cobblers Cross’, which probably refers to Tarporley’s shoe and clog

industry. It may also be that Victorian sensibilities would not allow a term associated, since at least the mid-eighteenth century, with derogatory slang, to appear on a memorial.

New Testament sources

These ten epitaphs in Table 8.11 are evenly divided by gender; there are no New Testament epitaphs commemorating children. Of the ten epitaphs, three are from the Book of Revelation: ‘Blessed are they that die in the Lord’ (T066, T097, T032); the first of these commemorated a former minister of the church who died of consumption at an early age. Two originate from the Letters to the Phillipians: ‘With Christ, which is far better’ and only appear in the 1880s. This epitaph was most frequently noted at Buckley (five occurrences) the earliest of which appeared in 1870.

Table 8.11 Tarporley: New Testament sources

Ref	Year of death	Gender	Age	Themes
T066	1834	M	26	Reward for a moral life
T057(1)	1862	F	48	An end to death, and earthly ills
T057(2)	1863	F	83	Readiness for death
T055	1882	F	59	Death, rest
T026	1887	M	24	A better, future life/experience
T082	1888	M	26	A better, future life/experience
T097	1889	M	64	Reward for a moral life
T032	1900	F	84	Reward for a moral life
T039	1904	M	83	Love of God
T001	1915	F	56	Eternal nature of love

Common threads in these epitaphs reference the love of God, and a hope or belief in some form of afterlife, in contrast to earthly ills. Perhaps the epitaph commemorating Elizabeth Aston of Brassey Green illustrates this conviction most vividly; she died of cancer in 1862 aged 48:

‘And there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying,
Neither shall there be any more pain
For these former things are passed away’ (T057 [1])



Fig 8.12 Tarporley: Aston gravestone from the south (T057)

Her gravestone, which also commemorates two neo-nates of the Aston family who died from smallpox within ten days of each other in 1864, is illustrated at Figure 8.12 above.

Prayer sources

Although Baptists did not use the Book of Common Prayer (Chapter 2), the epitaphs below (Table 8.12) are derived from an integral part of the Anglican funeral service. There are three occurrences of ‘In the midst of life, we are in death’, all chosen for members of the Bate family, and two of ‘Thy will be done’, although the latter might have been said in Baptist churches in its form as an extract from the New Testament (Matthew 26:42). Although there have been Baptist service books published since at least the middle of the twentieth century,

congregations could choose not to use them. It is clear that these epitaphs were not popular in the earlier years of the churches at Tarporley.

Table 8.12 Tarporley: prayer sources

Ref	Year of death	Gender	Age	Themes
T052	1880	M	42	Death in the midst of life
T050	1886	C	3mnths	Submission to God's will
T027	1894	M	64	Submission to God's will
T028	1896	F	37	Death in the midst of life
T019	1919	M	24	Death in the midst of life

Vernacular verse sources

There are no single epitaphs from established poetry at Tarporley, and only one example of vernacular verse, in comparison to the vivid expressions and vocabulary noted at Brown Knowl. Since this death tabulated below (Table 8.13) occurred at an early age, references to meeting again are understandable.

Table 8.13 Tarporley: vernacular verse sources

Ref	Year of Death	Gender	Age	Themes
T037	1897	F	40	Meeting again, resurrection

Unassigned epitaphic sources

These epitaphs (Table 8.14) were noted only in the twenty years following 1892, and are evenly distributed in terms of gender. Two contain references to religious figures (T004, T074), while the remainder mourn the death of beloved individuals, such as 'Endeared in life, lamented in death' (T039).

Table 8.14 Tarporley: unassigned sources

Ref	Year of Death	Gender	Age	Themes
T004	1892	M	79	Sleep, everlasting life
T039	1898	F	82	Love, sorrow
T007	1901	M	58	Memory, meeting again
T074	1912	F	54	Trust in Jesus, love

Epitaphic material at Tarporley: summary

There are fewer gravestones and epitaphs at Tarporley (Table 4.1) than at other dissenters' graveyards, which may be a result of the rebuilding of the church in 1866; conclusions drawn from these sources, therefore, should be treated with some caution. Nevertheless, a number of epitaphic themes and trends have emerged; it is, for instance, clear that epitaphs (including multiples) with religious origins were the most popular. While not a surprising finding, of the fifty-five epitaphs tabulated above, forty-four are derived from the Bible, hymn books or prayers, demonstrating the central influence of the church, and religious belief, to the congregation.

Although the Old Testament was not chosen for multiple epitaphs (Table 8.6), there were nine occurrences of such extracts for single epitaphs, and which seem to allude to the benefits endowed by religious observation - 'So He giveth his beloved sleep'; 'The memory of the just is blessed', and 'The Lord did lead him', for example. Similar sentiments 'Blessed are they that die in the Lord' occur among both multiple and single epitaphs, although among the latter there are more references to love: 'Love never faileth'; 'God is love' for instance.

Bickersteth's hymn was chosen for both multiple and single epitaphs from the time of its publication in 1875 onwards with increasing frequency from 1900. This may be evidence for greater acceptance of the 1881 hymnbook, and further evidence for the adoption of more formulaic expressions noted elsewhere. Among prayers, 'Thy will be done' was chosen throughout the sample period, although prayer epitaphs declined in popularity after 1900.

In the minor categories of the epitaphs tabulated above, there is some continuity, with rest and being reunited occurring in ones and twos after 1895. However, 'resurrection' was noted only once, in comparison to two at Penycae and four at Buckley. There are no references to joy at all at Tarporley, unlike at Buckley (three occurrences) and Penycae, with five, although most of these are variations on 'Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord', rather than a reference to personal happiness.

A commitment to faith, and to the church, is apparent in this sample from gravestones at Tarporley, although there is some evidence for a decline in the choice of religious epitaphs after 1900, particularly those from the Bible. However, evidence from ten Tarporley gravestones dated after 1919 suggests that about half continued to demonstrate a preference for religious epitaphs until at least the 1960s; the remainder have no epitaphs at all.

This chapter concludes consideration of the commemorative practices of four Nonconforming denominations in England and Wales. The following chapters discuss evidence for the similarities and differences between them, and conclude by responding to the research questions, suggesting further avenues for research into the neglected expressions of commemoration investigated here.

CHAPTER 9

DISCUSSION

Introduction

This chapter compares memorial practices at each of the four Nonconforming burial grounds and offers evidence for significant similarities and differences, in particular in the source of chosen epitaphs, and emotional messages embedded in epitaphic text. The chapter is organised into three sections. Firstly, contrasts in memorial landscape and language at each location are considered, broadly following the structure established for discussion of these elements at each site. Secondly, choices of memorial source and wording made by the bereaved will be evaluated, focusing on how these changed as the sample period progressed. Thirdly, the discussion concentrates on identifying the expression of emotion in epitaphic language, and the replacement of rich and empathetic language by more standardised expressions.

Memorial landscape and language at the sample graveyards

At all four locations, the original church or chapel had been replaced by a larger, more ornate successor; at Buckley the extant church is the third to have been built on the site. Such developments had affected the layout and organisation at each graveyard and, in particular, the survival of earlier gravestones. Nevertheless, patterns in memorial design, imagery, language and practice were discerned, and these elements are considered next.

Overall, the range of chosen memorial types was not extensive (Table 9.1); there were few examples of ledgers or low monuments, and no chest or table tombs, except at Brassey Green Baptist chapel, the first Baptist church at Tarporley, in contrast with many Anglican graveyards, where these monuments are a minor, but dominant element in the late eighteenth- and early-nineteenth centuries, usually clustered around the church.

Table 9.1 Memorial types: all sites

Memorial Type	Brown Knowl (%)	Buckley (%)	Penycae (%)	Tarporley (%)
Tall headstone	72 (67%)	70 (50%)	137 (80%)	64 (70%)
Low headstone	14 (13%)	21 (15%)	14 (8%)	4 (4%)
Kerbs & former kerbs	13 (12%)	25 (18%)	9 (5%)	9 (10%)
Cross	7 (6%)	8 (6%)	1 (<1%)	6 (6%)
Obelisk		10 (7%)	6 (4%)	6 (6%)
Other	2 (2%)	5 (4%)	4 (<3%)	3 (3%)

At every site, tall headstones (more than one metre high) represented more than 50% of recorded gravestone types: at Penycae this figure was 80%; this graveyard is closest to Sayer's description of 'a uniform, austere aesthetic' (Sayer 2011b). There was little evidence that the choice of tall headstones, decorated or otherwise, were class or status signifiers (Mytum 2002, 205); at Penycae, a number of highly-decorated memorials were those of working-class people.

Also at Penycae, crosses were hardly chosen at all (1%). At other locations, consumption of crosses was not significant, some 6% -7% of total gravestones. This may corroborate a suggestion (Mytum 2002a) that the cross symbol was particularly associated with high-Anglican iconography; equally, however, as at Penycae, its absence might also reflect the Confession of Faith (Chapter 2), where it is not a tenet of faith. Mourners found subtle ways to acknowledge the Christian symbol of sacrifice by the use of quatrefoils, inscribed crosses and finials on gravestones, and on chapel buildings and fixtures; this refinement was particularly prevalent at Brown Knowl.

Low headstones (less than one metre high), usually associated with kerbs, were more popular at Buckley than elsewhere, although the survival of this particular combination may be less evident at other sites because of the removal of kerbs for management purposes. Although they were not numerous anywhere, obelisks were confined in the main to the Welsh

graveyards (Mytum 2002a) and to Tarporley, and double headstones to Penycae and Tarporley.

Imagery was dominated by depictions of flowers or floral arrangements at all graveyards, although there was some appetite for abstract designs by all denominations except Tarporley, where there were none. The absence of imagery was also a consideration: (see Figure 5.7 for instance); this was most prevalent at Buckley and Tarporley (52% and 44% of recorded gravestones respectively); there is some evidence that this tendency was replaced from about the 1860s by decorated stones, which may be a result of the increasing availability of pre-incised and decorated blanks in the nineteenth century. Highly decorated stones and metaphorical allusions were particularly prevalent at Penycae, and continued to occur well into the twentieth century.

The custom of recording primary or secondary addresses on gravestones was most evident at Tarporley and Penycae; at the latter site there was some evidence of the abbreviation of addresses suggesting local familiarity, although the cost of extra lettering may also have been influential. Only at Brown Knowl was the settlement address per se uncommon; mourners preferring to record the wider location of Broxton. On the rare occasions when occupations of the deceased were inscribed, they were mainly those of figures of religious significance to the particular denomination.

Salutations at all sites became 'warmer' and less varied after 1900, although only at Tarporley did the choice of 'In loving memory' increase in frequency early in the new century. Expressions referencing the dead body were not numerous, and were confined to the period before about 1860 (Tarlow 1998a). 'Sacred to the memory' was not noted at all at Penycae, and declined or fell into disuse at all other sites post-1900, while 'In remembrance' was observed only at Penycae and Tarporley; usage also declined here in the twentieth century. These findings tend to confirm that the adoption of shorter, holophrastic expressions occurred later in the sample period.

In a similar vein, the rich vocabulary of euphemisms for dying became more formulaic over time. Variations on ‘Departed this life’ peak in the period 1861-1880 and declined thereafter at all sites. Notable are the incidences of ‘falling asleep’, particularly in the Lord, Jesus or Christ, which represent nearly half of the euphemisms at Penycae, and which were still being chosen in some numbers there in the period 1901-1920. The phrase ‘Went home’ was restricted to Tarporley.

These observations suggest that the studied Nonconforming denominations had distinct and discernible preferences in memorial design and language at least until the latter years of the nineteenth century. Thereafter, the richness and detail of memorial language and iconography tended to decline at all graveyards, with the exception of Penycae, influenced by progressive changes noted above.

Although comparisons with Anglican churchyards have not been attempted during this study, it is possible that the imposition of any conformity of text or imagery on mourners would have been anathema to ministers and managers of Nonconforming places of worship, such as have been required by Anglican Ecclesiastical regulations since the nineteenth century. If this is indeed the case, it may be a further indication of the independence of dissenting thought and practice.

Epitaphic sources

Table 9.2 below analyses the choices of religious and secular epitaphs chosen at the sample graveyards, and includes multiple epitaphs. The major categories of choice of religious references, and those of vernacular verse will be discussed in detail and by gender; however, common and First World War epitaphs, poems and unassigned epitaphs are not individually tabulated on the grounds of small sample sizes, but are discussed later in this section. Figures for usable epitaphs in square brackets are derived from Table 4.1. Since these were communities were steeped in the study of the Bible, both at Sunday School and at prayer and

bible meetings, it seems natural that this source would provide the majority of religious sources for epitaphs at all sites.

Table 9.2 Epitaphic sources: all sites.

Source	Brown Knowl [79]	Buckley [111]	Penycae [118]	Tarporley [55]
Common Epitaphs	4 (5%)	3 (3%)	5 (4%)	2 (4%)
War epitaphs	3 (4%)	4 (4%)	4 (3%)	1 (2%)
Hymns	12 (15%)	19 (17%)	10 (8%)	9 (16%)
Old Testament	25 (32%)	23 (21%)	30 (25%)	13 (23%)
New Testament	12 (15%)	22 (20%)	38 (32%)	15 (27%)
Prayer	6 (7%)	21 (19%)	7 (6%)	7 (13%)
Poem		1 (<1%)	2 (2%)	1 (2%)
Vernacular verse	12 (15%)	10 (9%)	9 (8%)	1 (2%)
Unassigned	5 (6%)	8 (7%)	13 (11%)	6 (11%)

In total, the 161 biblical sources chosen for single epitaphs observed the following gender distribution (Table 9.3), which indicates that biblical sources were chosen for about half the totals of male and female deaths, but only about 10% of child deaths. This finding is difficult to explain since children would have been exposed to the Bible from an early age as a result of Sunday School attendance.

Table 9.3 Biblical sources: gender distribution of single epitaphs

	Male	Female	Child
Brown Knowl	16	16	2
Buckley	20	14	6
Penycae	31	25	8
Tarporley	11	11	1
TOTAL	78	66	17

Only at Brown Knowl did the choice of Old Testament epitaphs significantly exceed that of the New; this may indicate some lingering influence of the early evangelical preachers of Primitive Methodism. At Penycae and Tarporley the reverse was the case, but not significantly. At all locations Old Testament epitaphs were more frequently chosen for men

than for women or children; this may reflect the more patriarchal ethos and teaching of this Testament; at Brown Knowl no child had an Old Testament epitaph. Perhaps the didactic nature of some of the Old Testament books was not considered appropriate for such short lives.

At Brown Knowl and Buckley there is evidence for a decline in the more colourful epitaphs after about the 1870s; replaced by 'His/her end was peace', 'With Christ which is far better' and 'Blessed are they who die in the Lord', although at Penycae more expressive epitaphs such as 'He weakened my strength in the way': He shortened my days' continue to be chosen to the end of the sample period, and in small numbers until about the 1950s. At Tarporley, there seemed to be little appetite over the sample period for the more vivid biblical epitaphs chosen elsewhere; here there were only simple statements of faith such as those quoted above.

Hymns and prayers were also sources of religious epitaphs. At Brown Knowl, Buckley and Tarporley the choice of hymns was broadly similar at 10% - 12% of all epitaphs; although the sample sizes are small; at Penycae it was about 5%. At Brown Knowl, of ten hymn sources, four were 'Peace, perfect peace' over the period 1895-1917; whereas at Buckley this hymn was chosen for six of sixteen epitaphs (1904-1913), some 37% of hymn epitaphs. Penycae and Tarporley had one occurrence of Bithersteth's hymn each; however, five of the six hymn epitaphs at Penycae were Evans' hymn 'Rest in the grave'.

At all locations, prayer sources are predominately 'Thy will be done' and 'In the midst of life, we are in death', which are not chosen before 1870 and appear with increasing frequency later in the sample period; further evidence for shorter, more formulaic expression noted throughout this study.

The choice of vernacular verse epitaphs at Brown Knowl was proportionally greater than at the other locations, and equalled that of both hymns and the New Testament (Table 9.2), chosen in broadly equal numbers for both men and women, but not at all for children. There are suggestions of affiliation to a wider, rural community in these epitaphs; perhaps

some reliance on a memorable narrative tradition also noted at some Anglican graveyards in the area. These sources are chosen for early deaths mainly between the 1850s and 1870; there are none after 1890.

Some of these verses can be difficult to interpret where text is capitalised; at Buckley, for instance, the phrase ‘I loved you while my life did last’ (B093 in 1914) is opaque. Here the percentage choice was less than 10% of total epitaphs; epitaphs for men slightly outnumber those for women, while two children are commemorated in this way. This style of epitaph dates from 1848 (i.e. from the time of the first chapel at Buckley) but seems to increase in popularity after 1890, and, while they continued to be chosen in small numbers until the end of the sample period, male deaths are exclusively commemorated in verse after 1910. Little explanation for this pattern can be discerned; it may be evidence for changing fashions among the middling sort at Buckley.

At Penrycae, vernacular verse epitaphs were a smaller percentage of the total, and were chosen for five male, two female and two child deaths in the period 1866-1891. Most feature sombre language, and the vocabulary of death, mourning, pain and grief. At Tarporley, there was a single occurrence chosen for the death of a sister in 1897, and referenced resurrection and meeting again.

The earliest common epitaphs, such as ‘Reunited’ or ‘Rest in peace’, begin to appear at Buckley in 1885. While there are four at Brown Knowl, most graveyards have two or three, and most are the epitaphs of women. Although the overall number of occurrences is small, the majority appear after 1900, with the exception of Tarporley, where they are clustered in the mid-1890s. At Penrycae there are no common epitaphs before 1911.

Most First World War epitaphs reference sacrifice, sleep, reunion and rest. Only at Penrycae are there religious references such as ‘He has weakened my strength in the way: He shortened my days (PC 018), although this epitaph appears on five other gravestones here. It is not known whether there was an internal war memorial at Penrycae as there are at Brown Knowl and Buckley.

Unassigned (or unattributable) epitaphs need to be treated with caution, since many of them, particularly those translated from the Welsh language, could justifiably be placed elsewhere. Nevertheless, these appear predominately in the twentieth century and are evenly represented by gender. Only at Penycae are there children with epitaphs of this type.

Emotion in epitaphic material

Tarlow contends (2000, 739) that emotion is a legitimate avenue of investigation for mortuary and other archaeologists, despite the challenges of defining an emotion. This thesis has not attempted to add substantially to that debate but suggests that most individuals would find no difficulty in recognising the expression of emotion in a graveyard, particularly grief, loss, pain and sorrow. Some expressions can be heart-wrenching:

‘And there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying,
Neither shall there be any more pain: for these former things are passed away’ (T057)

There may other emotions generated by the deaths of others; these may not be fashionable today. Retribution or punishment is one, in this case of the parents:

‘Farewell our little one, farewell, whom we have loved we fear too well,
And God to scourge us took away to dwell with him in endless day’ (B166)

Faith may be another. The American evangelist Billy Graham is reported (Chisholm 2017, 50) to have said “‘Belief is easy, but faith is a feeling. Something you can’t easily explain””. Another definition might be that faith is belief without proof, while belief is a personal acceptance of a particular truth or conviction. There are numerous references to faith on Nonconformist memorials. The epitaphs below are both at Penycae, although there are examples of the former elsewhere:

‘I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith’ (PC018)

‘So much at peace are those who through faith depart from those alive.
Their names are as perfume and their rest is so peaceful’ (PC249)

There are no direct references to belief per se in the dataset, but a number to the act of

believing. The following epitaph also contains elements of repentance and fear:

‘If you believe, repent and fear. There will be a crown for you’ (BK084)

There are also a number of indirect references to the power of belief:

‘Them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him’ (B205); and

‘Zion's gates have opened for them. They have found an entrance through’ (BK157)

Some earlier epitaphs contain no religious references, and can be admonitory in nature:

‘All they who come my grave to see, must prepare to follow me’

We have seen that the greater majority of epitaphic material examined in this thesis falls within religious categories; while some is profoundly moving some appears more conventional. However brief, ‘Thy will be done’ and ‘Peace, perfect peace’ are taken from religious sources. Repetition does not dim their meaning nor belittle or diminish the sincerity of mourners.

These varied examples demonstrate that, while gravestones can be the focus for the interpretation of any number of social, economic and personal factors, it is only through the study of ‘what the survivors thought important’ (Nelson and Hume George 2000) that religious and personal affiliations can be identified and emotions associated with death detected and interpreted. This study has also illuminated the many ways in which some nineteenth- and twentieth-century mourners (who may or may not have been members of the Nonconforming congregations studied here) articulated their feelings at the deaths of others. The language employed may include some understandably predictable terms, but, while there are some hidden messages, the expression of emotion is usually unequivocal.

Summary

This thesis has examined the choice of gravestone, epitaph and imagery at four Nonconformist graveyards. What we cannot know, of course, is why or by whom those styles, motifs and texts were chosen at the time: it may be that there was no more profound

significance to the mourners than that they, or the dead individual(s), liked the words and/or music.

Moreover, when gravestone production became an industrial process, it is important not to overlook how persuasive the advice of the stonemason may have been, nor the cost of the wording chosen for the memorial. It may also be that the classification of gravestone styles (Appendix B) and organisation of epitaphs that has been adopted in this thesis may have imbued them with more meaning than was intended at the time that they were chosen.

We cannot know, of course, how firmly held were the beliefs and teachings of any denomination by those who may have attended its services and who are commemorated in its graveyards. However, and particularly in the earlier years of the study period, many of the individuals were dedicated church- and chapel-goers and satisfied much of their religious, social and educational needs from these sources. What they thought or felt about their own deaths (fear, anticipation, faith, or nothing) or the deaths of others remains opaque. In considering mortuary commemoration expressed through the medium of epitaphs, this study inevitably captures the emotions of grief, loss and separation, but also those of faith, love, friendship and community. Again, although we may safely assume that these emotions are genuinely felt at a time of heightened stress and sorrow, we must also be aware that other, darker, emotions related to loss, that may have been experienced at the time - guilt, anger, remorse, relief - are not being articulated for us to read.

As always, we see only through a glass darkly. A study such as this has to rely upon others' views of death and about the dead person; to accept things at face value, as it were. Those of us who have had to become involved in the process and choices of modern commemoration will recognise the compromises and conventions required. Accordingly, this thesis is based on the assumption that, whatever the motivations behind the choice of any gravestone or epitaph, the commissioners of such were, at least, sincere.

CHAPTER 10

CONCLUSIONS

This chapter summarises the basis for the study, reviews the research questions, and offers evidence in response to them. Memorial practices at four Nonconforming burial grounds have been examined; this does not represent a synthesis of Nonconformist memorialisation practices as a whole, since the sample of burial grounds chosen for comparison was necessarily restricted, choices being governed by considerations described in Chapter 4. Nevertheless, the four chosen denominations were broadly representative of the major dissenting English and Welsh populations (with the exception of Quakers, Welsh Baptists and Wesleyan Methodists) active in the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, and their memorials have provided a wealth of material and textual evidence.

A broad selection of literature focusing on some excavations at redundant religious sites, and other elements of the burial and commemoration of the dead, was reviewed in Chapter 3, which noted recommendations by commentators for the future pursuit of some under-exploited dimensions of mortuary studies. This study has engaged with three of these in particular:

- a need for more cross-border studies into mortuary practices (Mytum 2011, Tarlow 2015);
- the legitimacy of the influences of religion in the study of human thought and activity (King and Sayer 2011, Tarlow 2013);
- the study of emotion as a proper and accessible element of human behaviour despite issues of identification and personal bias of the researcher (Tarlow 1998, Tarlow 2000).

The research questions were as follows:

- is there a consistently characteristic style of Nonconformist epitaphic and decorative memorialisation in the sample area?
- if not, are there recognisably distinct denominational characteristics?

With reference to the first question, all denominations studied here exhibited attributes of religious independence and thought. Chapter 2 has noted how their early history and contrasting religious convictions moulded later denominational development, suggesting that individual Nonconforming denominations could and did act very differently from each other at times, and that individual church or chapel congregations could behave differently from others within their grouping. It is unsurprising, therefore, that each denomination exhibited distinct characteristics of its own. All denominations displayed variations in church or chapel organisation and management; these and other attributes declined toward the end of the nineteenth century, under pressure from factors discussed below.

This study has indicated that there was little homogeneity in memorialisation practices among the denominations studied here; notably contrasting commemorative practices were observed at all locations, although declining in individuality later in the sample period. Accordingly, there is little evidence to suggest that there was consistent uniformity of memorial practices which was recognisably 'Nonconformist'. This would suggest that it would be inappropriate to assume that evidence of preference or practice at one Nonconformist graveyard can be applicable to others.

In particular, the Calvinistic Methodists of Penycae retained a hold on their individualistic characteristics and memorial language at least until the 1950s. This may demonstrate a particular national, as well as denominational, determination to preserve religious and personal traditions. The chapel may have closed, but Calvinistic Methodist voices live on in the graveyard.

However, this study has indicated that contrasts in denominational behaviour tended to decline after about the 1880s. The reasons for this are complex, and were driven by developments such as the passing of the 1880 Burials Act (Appendix A); moves toward union between denominations ('denominalisation'); greater leisure and access to social activities; increasing secularisation, and growth of commercialisation of memorial media. Despite the resurgence of religious fervour in 1904 and 1905, the First World War marked the end of the old religious and personal certainties.

Despite their theological and procedural differences, the language of memorialisation at all locations was overwhelming drawn from religious sources, with particular preference for the Bible, although (Table 9.2) there was evidence that choice of the New Testament was more prevalent at Penycae, and the Old Testament at Brown Knowl. Prayers were chosen more frequently for epitaphs at Buckley, while vernacular verse was a particular feature at Brown Knowl. Hymn sources were relatively popular, particularly at Buckley, but less so at Penycae.

All denominations preferred tall headstones, and demonstrated limited consumption of other memorial types (Table 9.1), although the effect on earlier gravestones of the rebuilding of chapels at all locations except Penycae should not be discounted. Obelisks and crosses were not numerous, but Brown Knowl had more inscribed crosses and quatrefoils, on gravestones and on chapel fittings, than elsewhere. Imagery was predominately floral at all locations, while some designs were unique to a particular location, proscenium arches at Tarporley, for instance. Penycae had the highest proportion of highly decorated stones; Buckley and Tarporley had the greater number of stones with no imagery at all. These findings may challenge the assertion (Mytum 2002a, 205) that tall decorated gravestones are signifiers of wealth, status or class.

The expression 'died' to describe the mode of passing was generally preferred, but all denominations demonstrated some eclectic examples of more colourful euphemisms

(Appendix I). The use of 'Departed this life', which was common in all graveyards, fell from favour at the end of the nineteenth century. The use of expressive salutations declined during the nineteenth century; in those burial grounds where earlier gravestones survived, references to the dead body disappeared after about 1860, while 'Sacred to the memory' was an exclusively nineteenth-century choice and was not used at all at Penycae.

This evidence for changes in memorial habits over time is not confined to the properties of the physical gravestone; it is clear that there is a distinct movement towards shorter, more formulaic epitaphs, less overtly religious in tone and source, at all studied graveyards towards the end of the nineteenth century, with the exception of Penycae. This is demonstrated by the increasing popularity of commemorative sentiments such as 'Peace, perfect peace' and 'Reunited', which may be further evidence of some decline in the importance of religion to these populations.

The reasons for these developments are also complex, and include increasing use of pre-inscribed blanks, and the extra costs associated with large monuments with extensive lettering. It would be tempting, however, to interpret some of these developments as indicative of the beginning of a decline in faith.

This study has argued that, while that interpretation of the physical size, material, design and placement of the gravestone has its established place in mortuary archaeology, it is epitaphic material that conveys personal and denominational identities most vividly. It is to be hoped that this paper will encourage researchers to engage with the intriguing insights into these memorial practices, perhaps tested with larger datasets. Further research might, for instance, contrast Wesleyan and Primitive Methodism commemoration, while the dimension of vocalisation - who is 'speaking', and to and about whom on the memorial - remains unexploited, although collected for the purposes of this study (Appendix H - 'message direction').

These specific observations apart, some more general elements have emerged from this study. It has been demonstrated how difficult it can be to ensure that, in any sample of

memorial media, religious affiliation can be identified with the required degree of confidence, particularly after about 1880 and where burial records are unavailable or unreliable. Such issues will, of course, affect the integrity of any patterns or findings, unless other corroborative elements, such as epitaphic preferences and trends, are taken into consideration.

Issues of denominational identification can be particularly acute due to inter-burying in civil cemeteries where unconsecrated ground was set aside for dissenting bodies. If the situation at Overleigh is not unique, it would be misleading to assume elsewhere that the bodies of dissenters were the only occupants of unconsecrated ground, particularly after the 1880 Burials Act: this study has indicated that the integrity of any sample relying on a required degree of confidence to distinguish between Nonconformist and other-denominational practices is fraught with uncertainty.

This factor was apparent at all sample graveyards and at Overleigh cemetery, where it became clear that the sample here could not be representative of the required population (Orton 2000, 8). The subsequent loss of this site as a comparator has had the unfortunate effect of obviating the potential for offering contrast or context to the some of the studies of Victorian cemeteries reviewed in Chapter 3 (Curl 1972, Ames 2000, Buckham 2003, for instance), or to test the comparative consumption of religious or other sources chosen for epitaphs; addresses on gravestones or primary salutations, for instance.

Experience of constructing the Overleigh sample and subsequent dataset (which has been included in Nvivo for possible future use) has also indicated that any interpretation of commemorative practices relying on gravestone data to advance theories on economic, social or religious elements may be affected by the inclusion of those (usually unidentifiable) Nonconformists who abjured the rubrics and rituals of the established church, at least before about 1880. Buckham (2003) was unusual in having access to burial records which reliably identified religious affiliation. The implications for students of dissenting populations are clear and may be insoluble, although there will undoubtedly be occasions when such refinements are unimportant.

These issues aside, it is encouraging that the study of the religious, social and personal contribution made by the Nonconformists of all affiliations is increasingly recognised as an integral part of the fabric of the early modern period. There is a rich, complex and distinctive history; their religious understanding and commitment profound. Their epitaphs express the infinite variety of human responses to death. Their voices deserve to be heard.

APPENDIX A**Extract from the Burials Act 1880, Clause 6. (Public General Acts, 43 & 44 Vict.,c.14)**

‘At any burial under this Act all persons shall have free access to the churchyard or graveyard in which the same shall take place. The burial may take place, at the option of the person so having the charge of or being responsible for the same as aforesaid, either without any religious service, or with such Christian or orderly religious service at the grave, as such person shall think fit, and any person or persons who shall be thereunto invited, or be authorized by the person having the charge of or being responsible for such burial, may conduct such service or take part in any religious act thereat. The words ‘Christian service’ in this section shall include every religious service used by any church, denomination, or person professing to be Christian’.

APPENDIX B: GRAVESTONE TYPES (Based on Mytum 2000)

TALL HEADSTONE >1M	4000
LOW HEADSTONE < 1M	4100
CROSS (ES)	2000
BOOK	8000
OBELISKS AND PEDESTAL TOMBS	9000
KERBS	0900
FORMER KERBS	0910
LEDGER - FLAT/ ON A BASE	0100
LOW MONUMENT - FLAT/CONVEX/HIP	0500
CHEST TOMB	1100
TABLE TOMB	1410
KERBS WITH RAILINGS	0920
CRAGGY ROCK	8400
OTHER	7000

APPENDIX C: WORD PROCESSING TEMPLATE FOR DATE ENTRY

(EXAMPLE FROM OVERLEIGH CEMETERY)

Burial Ground	Overleigh
Memorial Number	856
Family Name	Washington
Family Name	Piercy
Family Name	Shaw
Denomination	Urban Prot
Date Recorded	21/3/14
Language	English
Memorial Type	4000
Memorial Type	0900
Later date additions	
Number commemorated	4
Familial Address	Chester (“of this city”)
Motifs and Carvings	No decoration
Overarching Inscription	
Other notable comments	
Author Comments	
O_856_William_Grindley	Sacred to the memory of William Grindley Washington, Plumber of this city, who died 24 th May 1873, Aged 72 years His end was peace
Break	
O_856_George	Also of George Piercy, nephew of the above , who died 28 th August 1874, aged 46 years
Break	
O_856_Hannah	Also of Hannah Washington, relict of the above, who died 20 th April 1893, Aged 85 years Thy will be done
Break	
O_856_Ann	Also of Ann Shaw, daughter of the above W.G. Washington Who died 2 nd July 1905, Aged 73 years
Break	

APPENDIX D: GUIDELINES ON DATA ENTRY INTO NVIVO

1. Names

- a. Full Christian names(s) on both WP and Excel input documents, with underscores if more than one e.g. Alison_Mary
- b. Where Christian name not known (e.g. children died in infancy) put 'xx' on both input docs.
- c. Where more than one surname on memorial e.g. Jones and Evans, create separate line on WP doc for each surname. Ensure surname is emboldened, and that 'Heading 1' and 'Heading 2' etc are correct. This ensures that Nvivo does not double-count.
- d. Each case name must be unique. If more than one, add '1' etc to both WP & Excel e.g. BK_199_John and John1. If different surname, add initial letter of surname instead.

2. Addresses

- a. Full address on Excel e.g. Lower Farm, Broxton
- b. All addresses on monument, whether the dead person or relatives, to be recorded on WP input document.
- c. On Excel, only record the address of the person if that person is described as eg 'of Tarporley'; not 'X wife of Y of Tarporley in the relevant column. If the place is recorded as e.g. 'at Chester', enter the place of death in the 'Home' column. If 'of' (or if the 'of' is omitted, as at Buckley) is given, and this is not against the dead person, then do not include on spreadsheet.
- d. Familial address is first place name on memorial, irrespective of order of deaths commemorated. If no place given, code to 'No location given'. If a house/farm name is given, try to establish location e.g. town/village.

3. Numbers commemorated

This should reflect those commemorations which can be confirmed from the gravestone. Do not guess at numbers commemorated on heavily weathered memorials. However, if 'Also' or series of 'Alsos' are legible, but not the rest of the inscription, this is acceptable evidence of further commemorations.

4. 'Comments' Field on input document

Include in 'Comments' field all data highlighted in pale green.

5. Later commemorations of earlier death date than other death dates given on a memorial.

Where such a later commemoration has been added to a memorial commemorating earlier deaths recorded, enter 'YES' into 'Later Date Additions' on WP doc. 'No' is not required.

6. Occupation.

On spreadsheet, note occupation, including e.g. Preacher etc

7. Order of commemorations.

On all documents, enter names in the order they appear on the monument, not date or alpha order.

8. Denomination.

This is usually the denomination of the graveyard/chapel. If other denominations are present and can creditably be identified as another Nonconformist denomination (i.e. from Burial Registers or other official documents), record that denomination as well, on a separate emboldened line of the input document.

9. Language.

Input in order of predominate language e.g. Welsh/English or vice versa.

10. Date of Birth/ death etc.

- a. Enter as per monument e.g. Sepr.
- b. If age, date of birth (or death) is inferred, particularly from Burial Register information) enter YES in appropriate column on spreadsheet.
- c. Children. If no date of age or death (e.g. 'died in infancy') enter on WP and Excel if first name is known. Otherwise use xxx as before.

11. Biblical and other inscriptions.

- a. Source of quote: where it appears on monument, e.g. Job XII, 14, include it on WP input doc. **in quotes** as it is part of epitaph.
- b. Where a quote appears referring to one particular person, enter it on WP input document as part of that person's record, but do not include the source on the input document if it has been identified by the student but not inscribed on the memorial.
- c. Where a quote (e.g. Rest in Peace) is recorded on the monument in such a way that it clearly applies to all those memorialised, enter the quote in the 'Comments' field in the input doc.
- d. IHS (=Jesus). Input in capitals.

12. Initial Salutation(s) and Overarching Inscriptions

Where initial salutation (ILM, etc) appears as part of the carving of the monument, usually around the apex of the stone, treat this as applying to the first-named person only.

Where there is a separate inscription which usually appears at or near the top of the memorial, and applies to all commemorated, e.g. 'Peace', 'Resurgam' or a family surname, record this text on the input form under 'Overarching Inscriptions'.

13. Spelling and other mistakes.

Enter as per memorial, adding (SIC) to identify. Carving errors e.g. not leaving enough room for wording should be allocated a SIC. Care: 'dear' instead of 'dearly' is not necessarily a mistake.

- 14. Mason's Marks.**
Always include these in 'Comments' field even if the makers name is illegible/not specified on original gravestone form.
- 15. Script.**
At Tarporley (particularly) 'also' is rendered in antique cursive script. Use symbol 'ſ' for 's' in these instances.
- 16. Missing or illegible information.**
Should be recorded as dots i.e.....
- 17. Flower pots/urns.**
Only include on WP doc if in green highlight on the recording form or if any inscription is present.
- 18. Baptists only.**
If the deceased person is a 'member of the church', record in 'Comments' field on pro-forma, and in column on spreadsheet.
- 19. Date of Recording.**
Where no date of recording of the memorial exists, enter as 1/1/1990 so these will all appear together as an obvious grouping.

APPENDIX E: GUIDELINES ON ORIGIN OF INSCRIPTION

Where the origin has been positively identified eg Bible: Old Testament, code to those nodes.

However, there are some inscriptions that defy identification, and below are **some** of the more common expressions in the dataset and where they have been coded. Do not over-intellectualise the ‘message’ or guess at why the inscription was chosen in the first place.

1. Unassigned Origins

A beautiful memory left behind

A precious one from us is gone, a voice we loved is stilled
After much suffering, Jesus called her home, some day we will understand

Behold, children are a gift from the Lord (See below ‘Lo, children are....’)

Beloved in life, in death lamented

Beyond the veil (sic) eternal life

By faith we cling to thee

Christ shall clasp the broken chain closer again when we meet

Deeply regretted

Don’t weep for me

Endeared in life, lamented in death

Gone, but not/never forgotten

Gone home

Gratefully remembered by all her children

Her trust was in Jesus, her life was love

If you believe, repent and fear. There will be a crown for you

It’s better, farther on

Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord (See above ‘Behold, children are’)

She lies waiting for the coming of her Lord and Saviour Jesus

Some day our eyes again shall see the face so dear to memory

The Departed rest in peace
The Lord has called them out of sleep into everlasting life

There is sweet rest in heaven

They rest in hope

To live in the hearts of those we love is not to die

Zion's gates have opened for them, they have found an entrance through

2. Common Epitaphs

Asleep in Jesus

At Rest

Fallen asleep in Jesus

In God's keeping

In Jesus' keeping

In life beloved, in death lamented

May he/she rest in peace

Peacefully sleeping / sleeping peacefully

Rest in peace

Rest after weariness

Reunited

APPENDIX F: NVIVO 'SOURCES' STRUCTURE AND EXAMPLE

The screenshot displays the NVivo software interface. The top menu bar includes File, Home, Create, External Data, Analyze, Query, Explore, Layout, and View. Below the menu is a ribbon with various toolbars for workspace, item, clipboard, format, paragraph, styles, editing, and proofing. On the left, a 'Sources' tree shows a hierarchy: Internals > Brown Knowl > BK_045, BK_053, BK_062, BK_102, etc. The main window shows a table of sources and a detailed view for 'Brown Knowl'.

Name	Nodes	References	Created On	Created By	Modified On	Modified By
BK_045	34	42	27/04/2015 17:22	PKT	27/04/2015 20:16	PKT
BK_053	41	50	27/04/2015 17:22	PKT	02/07/2015 11:29	AMS
BK_062	37	54	27/04/2015 17:22	PKT	14/10/2015 14:37	AS

Burial Ground	Brown Knowl
Memorial Number	102
Family Name	Walker/ Barlow
Denomination	P Meth
Date Recorded	29/10/12
Language	English
Memorial Type	4000
Comments	Fallen tall monument
BK_102_William	In loving memory of William Walker of Broxton who died June 12 th 1877 aged 39 years
Burial Number	
BK_102_Ann	Also Ann wife of the above who died August 2 nd 1915 aged 74 years I heard the voice of Jesus say come unto me and rest
Burial Number	
BK_102_John	Also John Barlow son-in-law of the above who died Nov 22 nd 1920 aged 58 years
Burial Number	162

At the bottom of the interface, a status bar shows 'AS 95 Items Nodes: 45 References: 66 Read-Only Line: 6 Column: 7' and a taskbar with various application icons and a system clock showing 12:23 on 20/09/2019.

APPENDIX G: NVIVO NODE STRUCTURE: GRAVESTONES CODES AND MEMORIAL TYPE SUB-NODES

The screenshot displays the NVivo software interface for a project named 'Gravestones 1919 and before.nvp'. The main window shows a tree view of nodes on the left and a detailed table of 'Gravestone Codes' in the center. The table columns are: Name, Sources, References, Created On, Created By, Modified On, and Modified By. The data is as follows:

Name	Sources	References	Created On	Created By	Modified On	Modified By
Gravestone Codes	592	7064	27/04/2015 17:23	PKT	17/07/2016 09:27	AS
Author Comments	304	304	28/02/2016 16:44	AS	12/02/2019 12:00	AS
Burial Ground	592	592	27/04/2015 17:23	PKT	17/07/2016 09:21	AS
Date Recorded	592	592	27/04/2015 17:23	PKT	17/07/2016 09:24	AS
Denomination	592	597	27/04/2015 17:23	PKT	17/07/2016 09:25	AS
Familial Address	508	515	02/07/2015 10:27	AMS	17/07/2016 09:25	AS
Family Name	592	723	27/04/2015 17:23	PKT	17/07/2016 09:25	AS
Language	592	593	27/04/2015 17:23	PKT	17/07/2016 09:25	AS
Later date additions	360	360	21/07/2015 11:10	AMS	17/07/2016 09:25	AS
Memorial Number	592	592	27/04/2015 17:23	PKT	17/07/2016 09:25	AS
Memorial Type	590	689	27/04/2015 17:23	PKT	17/07/2016 09:26	AS
0100	34	34	27/04/2015 17:23	PKT	02/01/2019 13:04	AS
0600	37	37	27/04/2015 17:23	PKT	11/11/2016 14:10	AS
0900	61	61	27/04/2015 17:23	PKT	20/08/2018 17:13	AS
0910	2	2	23/09/2015 12:58	AMS	01/04/2017 13:33	AS
1100	1	1	16/05/2015 15:45	PKT	01/04/2017 13:33	AS
2000	58	60	27/04/2015 17:23	PKT	25/06/2018 13:12	AS
4000	407	407	27/04/2015 17:23	PKT	12/02/2019 12:00	AS
4100	61	62	27/04/2015 17:23	PKT	17/08/2018 11:55	AS
8000	3	3	28/02/2016 16:44	AS	01/08/2018 12:52	AS
9000	20	20	27/04/2015 17:23	PKT	06/08/2018 10:56	AS
9010	1	1	28/02/2016 16:44	AS	01/04/2017 13:33	AS
Railed plot	1	1	27/04/2015 17:23	PKT	02/07/2015 13:00	AMS

APPENDIX H: NVIVO NODE STRUCTURE: ORIGIN OF INSCRIPTION NODE AND SUB-NODES

The screenshot displays the NVivo software interface for a project named 'Gravestones 1919 and before.nvp'. The main window shows a list of nodes under the 'Inscription' category. The nodes are organized into a hierarchical structure, with 'Inscription' being the parent node and various sub-nodes listed below it. The table below represents the data shown in the screenshot.

Name	Sources	References	Created On	Created By	Modified On	Modified By
Archaic script	21	30	02/09/2015 12:51	AMS	02/01/2019 13:04	AS
Bible Inscriptions	28	32	02/09/2015 13:08	AMS	30/05/2017 13:03	AS
Day of week given (eg name and date)	1	2	02/09/2015 12:23	AMS	02/09/2015 12:24	AMS
Last words	1	1	30/05/2017 13:04	AS	30/05/2017 13:05	AS
Masons Mark	46	57	24/04/2015 21:48	PKT	22/06/2018 11:23	AS
Message direction	387	643	16/09/2015 11:06	AMS	19/05/2016 19:54	AS
Mode of Death	592	1676	06/10/2015 13:47	AMS	19/05/2016 19:54	AS
Origins of Inscription	372	612	16/09/2015 11:03	AMS	19/05/2016 19:54	AS
Common Epitaph	61	70	24/04/2015 21:46	PKT	15/08/2018 14:12	AS
Hymn	49	52	23/04/2015 14:40	PKT	17/08/2018 11:55	AS
New Testament	133	152	23/04/2015 14:39	PKT	19/05/2016 19:54	AS
Old Testament	129	149	24/04/2015 11:08	PKT	19/05/2016 19:54	AS
Other	4	4	17/11/2015 10:12	AS	12/02/2019 11:59	AS
Other Unattributable Origins	55	59	24/04/2015 21:46	PKT	15/08/2018 13:48	AS
Poetry	8	8	06/02/2016 14:17	AS	20/08/2018 16:19	AS
Prayers	67	69	02/09/2015 11:35	AMS	18/07/2016 22:19	AS
Vernacular/verse	42	44	02/09/2015 11:41	AMS	08/08/2018 13:15	AS
WWI epitaph	3	4	27/04/2015 15:17	PKT	22/08/2017 10:41	AS
Relationships	258	521	05/10/2015 15:18	AMS	19/05/2016 19:54	AS
Religious Themes	173	347	05/10/2015 16:39	AMS	19/05/2016 19:54	AS
Salutation	557	648	02/09/2015 13:28	AMS	19/05/2016 19:54	AS
War deaths	17	18	07/07/2015 10:41	AMS	15/08/2018 14:12	AS

APPENDIX I: EUPHEMISMS FOR ‘DIED’ – ALL GRAVEYARDS

At rest	Followed (or followed after) wife or husband
Called after	Gently fell asleep in Jesus
Called from us	Killed in action
Called to the higher life	Passed away in her tender shepherd’s care
Called to the higher service	Passed peacefully away
Called (or came) home	Passed into God’s keeping
Called to Jesus	Passed to the higher life
Called to rest	Passed to higher service
Died of wounds in (location)	Passed from his/her labours
Departed (and from) this life	Passed on
Died (or died happy) in the Lord	Passed peacefully into the homeland
Drowned	Reunited (not epitaph)
Entered the higher service	Taken from us
Entered the nearer presence	Was killed
Entered the perfect life	Went home
Entered into rest	Went to his/her inheritance
Fell in (location)	Who gave his life as a sacrifice
Fell asleep	
Fell asleep in Christ/Jesus/the Lord	
Fell asleep in perfect peace and resignation to God’s will	
Fell on sleep	

LIST OF REFERENCES

PRIMARY SOURCES

Brown Knowl Primitive Methodist Trustees' Minute Book 1941-1973.

Brown Knowl Primitive Methodist Trustees' Minute Book 1941-1973

Brown Knowl chapel burial book 1848-2011

CALS/CRO ZC 313 C. Overleigh Old Cemetery burial registers (database on CD)

CALS/CRO ZC 313 C-1, 2. Deeds etc relating to Overleigh Cemetery: 1881 legal opinion

CALS/CRO ZC 313C-10. Deeds relating to Overleigh Old Cemetery showing
consecrated/unconsecrated eastern areas

CALS n.d. Tithe maps. [www.cheshire archives.org.uk/tithemaponline](http://www.cheshirearchives.org.uk/tithemaponline)

Coflein C420912 'Cadw Chapels Survey 1998 - 2000: a study of the listing of
nonconformist chapels in Wales'

CRO ZC 313C-25. Plan of Overleigh Old Cemetery Showing Land Consecrated for Burial of
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Tarporley Baptist Church Burial Book

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