

Nonconformist Burial Area

The first major religious influence in The Lye were the Nonconformists who opened the first chapel on Lye Waste in 1805, followed by the Established Church with the building of Christ Church in 1813. At the time of the creation of the cemetery serious divisions existed between these two factions, and a decision was made to erect two separate chapels in one building. The layout of the cemetery reflected this division and the central pathway effectively divides the burial ground with Nonconformist burials are on the left and Anglican burials on the right in consecrated ground.

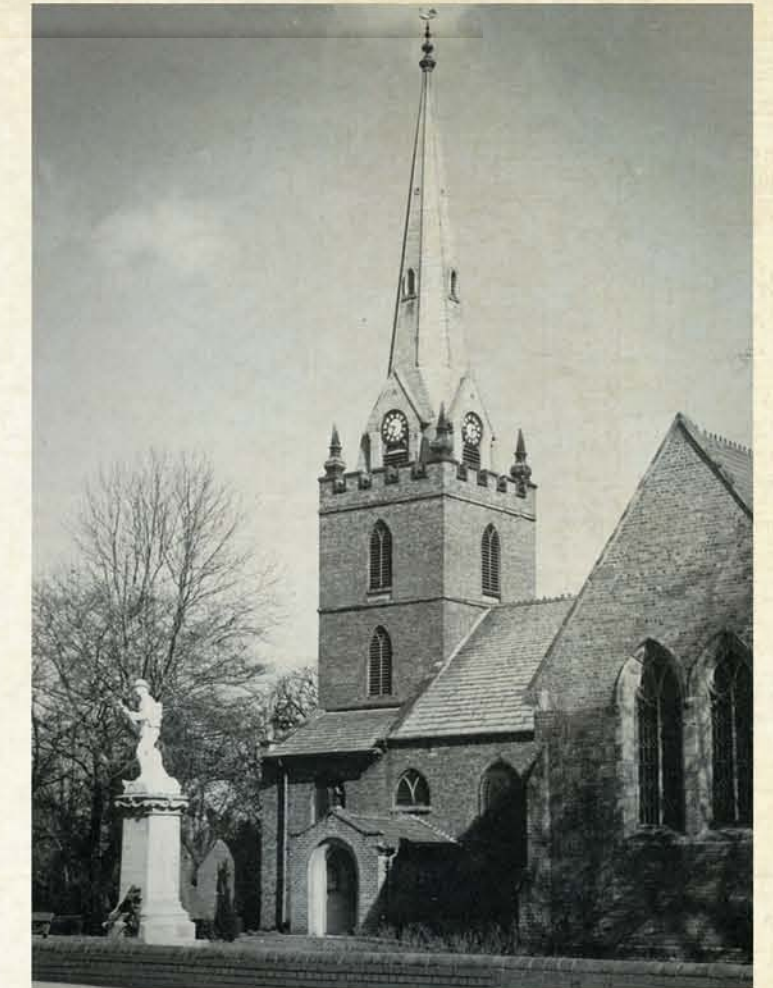
The first recorded burial was that of Stephen Brookes, an infant of one month, who was buried in the Nonconformist Section on the 22nd April 1879.



ABOVE: A view of the Nonconformist side of the cemetery.

RIGHT: The Unitarian Church, founded 1805.

FAR RIGHT: Christ Church, High Street, founded 1813. Over time, serious divisions developed between the Nonconformists and the Anglicans.



Muslim Burial Area

This cemetery is one of three in the Dudley Borough that has a designated Muslim Section with graves orientated towards Mecca. The others are at Brierley Hill and Clee Road, Dudley.

Muslims allow only burials. Immediately after death the deceased's head is turned towards Mecca and the burial must take place before the next sunset.

With a relative of the deceased in attendance, the body is bathed by a selected group of women for a female and men for a male, and is then wrapped in two white cotton sheets. The funeral service is held at the Mosque and the majority of the community will pay their respects.

At the graveside two Imams will recite from the Koran, following which the coffin is placed into a specially prepared grave, wherever possible a concrete chamber, and covered with a board. The Imams will say the final dua (prayer) and all present will place earth onto the board until it is covered.

The first known Muslim burial in the Lye & Wollescote Cemetery was that of Nahid Akhtar, an 11-month old infant, who was buried in January of 1978.



ABOVE: The grave of Nahid Akhtar, the first known Muslim burial in January 1978.

LEFT: The new designated Muslim burial area.

BELOW: A Muslim grave.



ABOVE: The central path which divides the cemetery. Nonconformists burials to the left, Anglicans to the right in consecrated ground.