

**INDEX TO
REGISTRATION OF DEATHS
CITY OF
PHILADELPHIA
1803-1860**

This is a transcription of the index prepared by Project #11791 Work Projects Administration. The original records are deposited with the Genealogical Society of Pennsylvania, 1300 Locust Street, Philadelphia, having been transferred from the Philadelphia Health Department under ordinance of Councils, dated April 26, 1934. The subsequent records, from 1860 to June 30, 1915, are held by the Philadelphia Health Department, Room 524, City Hall. The records from July 1, 1915 to date are filed with the Pennsylvania Bureau of Vital Statistics.

**PENNSYLVANIA HISTORICAL SURVEY
WORK PROJECTS ADMINISTRATION**

**PENNSYLVANIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION
HARRISBURG**

LETTER A

Typed by: Mr. S. Argentina

Checked with Cards.

Date: December 12, 1838

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BOARD OF HEALTH REGISTRATION OF DEATHS

These records, so far as yet available, are divided into three groups:

1.- The returns made to the Board by sextons of churches, superintendents of cemeteries, etc., together with certificates of physicians, which accompanied them. These are the original papers, covering the period 1825-32, inclusive, but with 1827 and 1830 missing.

2.- Register of Deaths, but without the names of places of burial. This is a book, covering the period 1833-37, inclusive.

3.- Register of Deaths, giving places of burial. These books cover the period 1838-60, inclusive.

The following notes are intended as an aid in understanding the names of the places of burial, many of which are so obscurely stated, or so abbreviated, as to be puzzling. No attempt whatever has been made to prepare a complete list of burying-grounds, which are legion.

The Board of Health of the City of Philadelphia did not have jurisdiction over the entire county until 1854. Other Boards operated in the outlying sections. Up to that date, therefore, the reports cover only the old city and some of the adjoining districts; but with the Consolidation Act of 1854, there is a noticeable number of old burying-grounds reporting for the first time.

Probably there was, at first, much laxity in reporting, as the returns from some of the older churches seem few and far between.

Occasional burials are recorded at Darby, Reading, Whitemarsh, Norristown, Wilkesbarre, Chester, Radnor and Evansburg, Pa.; at Westfield, Jamestown, Salem and Woodbury, N. J.; and at Burlington, N. Y.

For twenty years, Samuel P. Marks, Clerk of the Board of Health, kept the records. After his death, on December 23, 1856, clerks of inferior education and penmanship succeeded, with an evident and disastrous effect on the registers.

Often, however, the clerk was at the mercy of the person making the return.

A few examples of choice blunders will serve as illustrations:

Central Bushill; Cateme Luderien (Academy, Lutheran ?); Jewish Congestior; Genesis Israel; Friends Jewish; Baptist Mills (Milestown ?); Ashberry; Philanthrophy; Thomas Chouch in Acorn Alley; Puplich Ground, Kinseton (Public Ground, Kensington ?); E. Lutheran St. John St. (Lutheran is uniformly reported as Lutheran).

The following call for close study:

Union Society of Penn Township, "a member of the New Jerusalem"; New Jerusalem at Fairmont; Little Westley in Hurst; Dr. P. Family burial ground; Independent U. O.; Presbyterian-Schuy. front; Dutch Reformed Presbyterian; New Federal Cemetery; Old Brick Colored.

Some of the abbreviations found in the Registers:

B. of H.- Board of Health.

C. H. of Israel.- Congregation House of Israel.

C. S. S.- Combined Sunday School.

F. A.- First African.

F. R.- Frankford Road.

F. R. D. S. G.- First Reformed Dutch, Spring Garden.

G. H.- German Hebrew.

K.- Kensington.

M. E. P.- Methodist Episcopal Protestant.

N. L.- Northern Liberties.

P. R.- Passyunk Road.

S.- Southwark.

SW.- Swedish.

A guide to some of the difficult names follows:

All Saints.- P. E. (Church on 12th St. bet. Fitzwater),
P. E. (Lower Dublin).

Arabella; Ribella.- There was a Jewish burying-ground on Arabella (now Randolph) St., above Federal, opp. Union burying-ground.

"Asbury African", Reports in 1838; "Asbury Presb. Col.", in 1844.- M. E. (West Phila.).

Axe's.- The upper burying-ground of Germantown, at Concord School House.

Big Wesley.- (See Wesley).

Bishop's Ground.- St. Joseph's R. C. (So called because purchased in the name of Bishop Conwell).

Blockley.- The City Hospital, in Blockley township. (Now West Philadelphia).

Buttonwood.- (See Dr. Carol).

Byberry.- Probably refers to the Potters' Field at that place, which is in the north-east section of the present city.

Cedar Street Presbyterian.- This is the Twelfth Presb. Church on Cedar St. (now South) ab. 11th.

Carpenter Street.- The 3d Presb. Church had a burying-ground on Carpenter St., sometimes known as "Dr. Elys", (from the Church's pastor).

Central.- Presb. (Church at 8th and Cherry)
Presb. of Northern Liberties (Church on Coates St., now Fairmount Ave.),
African Presb. (Church on Lombard St.).

City and Districts.- Interments in the Almshouse burying-ground, other than those from the Almshouse itself, were so designated. The "Districts" were the municipalities outside the old city of Philadelphia, but within the county.

City Public.- Potter's Field.

Coates.- The burying-ground of the Coates family was at 3rd and Brown.

Cokeckink.- Presb. Church, on Germantown road.

Combined Sunday School Assn.; C. S. School Assn.; Combine.- Same as "Combined Mission House", a Reformed Church institution, with burying-ground, on Howard St., bet. Girard Ave.

Covenanters.- (See Dr. Wylie).

Dr. Berg's Church, (1850).- Rev. Jos. P. Berg was pastor of the 2nd Dutch Reformed Church, at this time.

Doctor Carol.- Dr. D. L. Carroll was pastor of the 1st Presb. Church of Northern Liberties, Buttonwood St., near 6th. Reports of interments at "Dr. Carol's" or at "Buttonwood Street" (the two names sometimes found together) presumably refer to this church.

Doctor Eustace.- Rev. Thomas Eustace, was pastor of the Twelfth Presbyterian Church, (afterwards Cedar St. Presb.).

Doctor Wylie.- Dr. Samuel B. Wylie was pastor of the First Ref. Presb. Church, (sometimes known as the "Covenanters").

Emanuel.- P. E. Church in Kensington.

Epiphany.- P. E. Church at 15th and Chestnut Sts.

Eneu.- James Eneu's family burying-ground was on 5th St., above Carpenter.

Fairmount.- Reports of interments at "Fairmount" are made in 1838-9. This cannot be Fairmount Cemetery, incorporated in 1840. Perhaps it is the "New Jerusalem at Fairmont", reported in 1828-9. (See New Jerusalem). The 2nd Reformed Presb. Church was also at Fairmount.

Fitler.- The Fitler family intermarried with the Pfeiffer family, so some members of the former were interred in the burying-ground of the latter. (See Pfeiffer).

Francisville.- There were several burying-grounds in Francisville. This may refer to the 5th Presb. there, or to the Potters' Field known as the "Vineyard". One report refers to "Francisville Board of Health".

Gloria Dei.- The correct name of "Old Swedes Church".

Grace.- P. E. Church at 12th and Cherry.

Harmony Burial Co.- (See Union Harmony).

Harrowgate, Frankford Road.- Probably a public burying-ground.

Helverson's Ground.- Nicholas Helverson, an undertaker, was interested in several burying-grounds. (See Mutual of Kensington).

Holy Trinity.- R. C., 6th and Spruce. (See also Trinity).

Independent.- Independent Church of Christ. (Universalist).

Israel, Congregation House of.- A Jewish Congregation.

John Wesley.- (See Wesley).

Kensington; Kensington Public; Old Kensington.- Probably all these refer to Palmer burying ground, the oldest in Kensington. (The name Palmer does not occur in these B. of H. registers).

Kensington Union.- (See Union).

Little Wesley.- (See Wesley).

Lutheran, Bakerstown.- This reference of 1850 is probably to a Lutheran Church at Beggartown. (A locality in upper Germantown).

Lutheran, L. P. Road; Lutheran Passyunk Road.- "L. P." appears to mean "Lower Passyunk". Trinity Evan. Lutheran Church is situated in this neighborhood. The church was actually on Rope Ferry road, near Passyunk Road, and interments there are reported as "Lutheran, Rope Ferry", 1856-9.

Lutheran, Rope Ferry.- (See Lutheran, Passyunk Road).

Market Square.- A Presbyterian church on Market Square, Germantown. (Formerly the German Reformed Congregation).

Mechanics.- An abbreviation of American Mechanics.

Mount Zion.- There was a Christian church of this name, on Christian Street.

Moyamensing.- The Almshouse burying-ground, in Moyamensing township.

Mutual.- Mutual Family burying-ground, on Washington Ave.

Mutual of Kensington.- Exact location not known. Probably at Frankford Rd. and Norris St. In July, 1846, there is one single report of 23 burials at "Helverson's", which previously reported only an occasional interment. This report of the Mutual of Kensington is missing for the same period. In 1859, there is a report of an interment at "Mutual, Frankford road".

New Jerusalem.- Swedenborgian.

New Market.- The Fourth, or New Market Street, Bapt. Church.

New School.- About 1860, the Presb. Church underwent a separation into "New School" and "Old School". There were numerous congregations in each group, so this reference cannot be identified.

Nisectown.- There were several burying-grounds at Nisectown; one being Hebrew, and one Roman Catholic. (See St. Stephen's).

Noble Street.- The 2nd Presb. Church had a burying-ground on Noble St.

Old Kensington.- (See Kensington).

Oxford Trinity, (1854-9).- P. E. Church in Oxford township, now part of the City of Philadelphia.

Peiffer.- Mention of "Peiffer" "John Peiffer" may refer to the burying-ground of the Pfeiffer family, although no member of that family named John is known.

Philadelphia.- This was the original name of Ronaldson's, which begins to report under the latter name about 1855.

Philadelphia P. R.- The Philadelphia Cemetery, on Passyunk road, is usually distinguished in the reports, from Ronaldson's (which was earlier known as "Philadelphia") by the initials "P. R." It is also reported as "New Philadelphia".

Pine Street.- "Old Pine Street" is the popular name for the 3rd Presb. Church at 4th and Pine Sts.

Ribella.- (See Arabella).

Rising Sun.- St. Johns M. E. burying-ground, at the village of that name.

Rose Cemetery.- The Rose family burying-ground was on Ludlow St., West Philadelphia.

Roxbury, (1851-1853).- Probably refers to some ground in Roxborough, a township lying along the Schuylkill river. (Now part of the city of Philadelphia).

St. James.- P. E. Church on 7th St.
P. E. Church in Kingsessing, now West Phila.

St. James the Less.- P. E. (Falls of Schuylkill).

St. John's.- P. E. (Northern Liberties).

Evan. Luth. (Church on Race St.) usually reported merely as "Evangelical
Lutherian".

M. E. (Church in Nor. Liberties).

R. C. (Church on 15th St.).

St. John Street.- An M. E. Church on the Street of that name. (Name later changed
to "St. John's M. E. Church").

St. Mary's.- R. C. (Church on 4th St.).

P. E. (West Phila.).

St. Mary Street.- 2nd African Presb. Church, on St. Mary St. ab. 6th.

St. Mathew's.- Luth. (Church on Buttonwood St.)

P. E. (Francisville).

St. Michael's.- R. C. (2d and Jefferson).

Evan. Luth. (Germantown).

St. Paul's.- M. E. (Church on Catharine St.).

P. E. (Church on 3d St.).

St. Peter's.- P. E. (4th and Pine Sts.).

German R. C. (Church on Girard Ave.).

St. Stephen's.- P. E. (Church on 10th St.).

R. C. (Nicetown).

M. E. (Germantown).

St. Thomas.- African P. E. (Church on Adelphi St.).

Samson St. Baptist.- This was afterwards reorganized as the Fifth Baptist Church.

Say; Dr. Say; Thomas Say's ground, etc.- The Say family burying-ground is
situated on 3d St. adjoining the Friends' Meeting ground. There are also
reports of interments in "ground adjoining Say's" which is presumed to
mean the Porteus family burying-ground. In 1850, there is reference to
"Private c. 3d near Arch St.", which may be either of the two above
mentioned.

Scot's Presbyterian.- One later became the Eighth Presb.; the other merged
with another congregation. A most complicated subject. (See Scharf &
Westcott for exact data).

Shiloh.- An African Baptist Church.

Solame, (1859, 1860).- Perhaps intended for Salem Reformed Church.

Trinity.- P. E. (Church in Southwark).

P. E. (See Oxford, Trinity).

Luth. (Germantown).

Luth. (Passyunk).

Union.- M. E. (Church on 4th St.).

African Bapt. (Church on Little Pine St.).

Baptist (Milestown).

Union.- Union burying-ground, (6th and Federal Sts.).

Union; Union Independent; Union Society.- First Swedenborgian Church.

Union Costes St.; Union Costes St. Cold.- The Union African M. E. Church was
situated on Costes St. (Now Fairmount Ave.).

Union Chestnut Hill, (1866-8).- This refers to the Union Burying-ground in that section.

Union Colored.- This appears to have been a burying-ground not connected with any church.

Union Harmony Burial Co.- Its ground was on Hanover St. Kensington and adjoined that of Union Wesleyan and Kensington M. E. Churches. This is not the place referred to as "Kensington Union" or Union of Kensington.

Union, of Northern Liberties and Kensington.- A ground on Belgrade St. Kensington.

Union Wesleyan.- Methodist Church, Kensington. (See also Union Harmony).

United Brethern.- Moravian.

Upper Lutheran, Germantown, (1854-9).- Probably a reference to Trinity Lutheran Church.

Welsh Cemetery.- The burying-ground of the Welsh Society, on Market St., West Phila.

Wesley.- There were three African Methodist Churches of this name: Big Wesley, Little Wesley and John Wesley. There is also reference to Colored Wesley.

Zoar.- A colored congregation belonging to the M. E. Church of Phila. (Not connected with the A. M. E. Church).

(signed) Chas. R. Barker.

Grateful acknowledgments are made to Mr. Charles R. Barker, Lansdowne, Pa., for the information assembled in this and the several pages preceding. The extensive and patient research carried on by Mr. Barker, in the preparation of this compilation, has taken a long time, and he has verified the data personally wherever possible.

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