



Record Group: Mercer Cemetery at Trenton
Series: Burial Records, 1846-1973
Accession #: Unknown, 1990.094, 1993.092
Series #: PMERC001
Guide Date: 3/1994 (JK)
Volume: 2 c.f. [4 boxes, 6 card drawers]

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Institutional History

The consolidation of land for the creation of Mercer Cemetery reportedly took place in 1841, with plot sales and interments commencing in 1842 (see *Graveside Dispatch* in "Research materials," item #7 below). It was not until 23 February 1843, however, that "Mercer Cemetery at Trenton" was incorporated by the New Jersey Legislature with Charles C. Yard, Joseph C. Potts, Samuel Lloyd, Alexander H. Armour, David Witherup and Joseph A. Yard as incorporators (P.L. 1843, p. 105). By this charter, the cemetery association was authorized to hold and dispose of lands not exceeding five acres. The corporation's earliest recorded land transaction was the purchase of a lot on Clinton Street and the Assunpink Creek from Alexander H. Armour for \$1 on 2 May 1843 (see Mercer County Deed Book E, pp. 530-532). The cemetery's land was augmented in 1850-1851 with adjacent lots purchased from David Witherup, John and Eliza Yard, Mr. Armour, Joseph C. and Elizabeth Potts, and Elias and Anna T. Cook (see Mercer County Deed Book R, pp. 289-298; Book T, pp. 404-406).

From its formation until at least the 1890s, Mercer Cemetery was considered a premier burial location by Trenton's elite. In 1892, however, portions of the graveyard were sold off to improve the corporation's financial position. Business gradually tapered off, with only a few interments per year by the 1930s. The last burial in Mercer Cemetery took place in 1973.

Content Note

The records in this series constitute a near complete account of burials in Mercer Cemetery at Trenton. The earliest original record included is the general burial ledger begun by David Witherup, the cemetery's first superintendent (item #1). Entitled "Record of Deaths in Mercer Cemetery," this volume spans the period 1846-1861 and provides the name of the deceased, the date of burial, and a brief plot reference. The series also contains loose burial and transit permits, burial orders, and other miscellaneous items from the years 1871 and 1880-1920 (in boxes 2-3). These papers were indexed by H. Ryan in 1976 (item #3). They are also indexed, along with the "Record of Deaths," in a card file located in the Archives search room.

Next is a chronological record of burials kept during the period 1895-1973 by two of the cemetery's later superintendents/sextons, Charles M. Snyder Sr. and Charles M. Snyder Jr. (items #4-5). Also included is a lot book completed in 1897, which records, by location, the owners' names and plot sizes (in box 4; see index at front of volume). A list of tombstone inscriptions in Mercer Cemetery prepared by Elizabeth O. Weber of the Daughters of the American Revolution has also been added to the series (item #6). While there is a gap in the original burial records for the years 1861-1880, death information from this period *can be found* in Mrs. Weber's inscription list. Finally, a file of

research material is included as item #7.

Contents

Search Room

-- Card file index to burials

Box 1

1. "Record of Deaths in Mercer Cemetery," D. Witherup, Supt., 18 February 1846 - 16 November 1861 [1 vol.].
2. Miscellaneous papers, 1880s-1890s [7 items, heavily taped].
3. "Burial List Compiled from Permits and Cemetery Forms" by H. Ryan, 1880-1920 [photocopy].
4. Superintendents' "Burial Records," 1895-1973 [photocopy].
5. Sexton's burial book, 1895-1934 [photocopy, typescript of part of #5 above].
6. "Records of Mercer Cemetery, Trenton, N.J., to Year 1934" [tombstone inscriptions] by Elizabeth O. Weber (Mrs. Robert), Penelope Hart Chapter, D.A.R., Pennington, NJ, ca. 1934 [bound photocopy].
7. Research material.

Box 2-3

-- Burial permits, transit permits, etc., no date, 1871 and 1880-1920 [all heavily taped, many folded].

Box 4

-- Lot book, completed 1 March 1897 [1 vol., photocopy].

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