



City of Boston Archives and Records Management Division

Guide to the Evergreen Cemetery records

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 This finding aid was produced using the Archivists' Toolkit

Repository: City of Boston Archives and Records Management Division
Title: Evergreen Cemetery records
Collection No.: 4412.001
Dates: 1881-1967 with gaps
Quantity: 9.0 Cubic feet (9 record cartons)

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Historical note

Adjacent to Chestnut Hill Reservoir and Boston College this 19.66-acre historic cemetery was consecrated in 1850. Evergreen Cemetery became Brighton's primary burial space after the 1764 Old Burial Ground on Market Street ran out of available space. The Selectmen of Brighton purchased a portion of Aspinwall Woods, a beautiful wooded tract of slightly less than 14 acres on South Street in 1848 from the heirs of William Aspinwall. Evergreen Cemetery was established during the early stages of the Rural Cemetery Movement. Its design struggled to integrate characteristics of a rural cemetery style such as winding roads and formal plantings with the engineering requirements of a naturally rocky and wooded landscape. Shortly after Evergreen Cemetery was acquired by the City of Boston with the annexation of Brighton in 1873, it was placed under the administration of the Board of Health along with Boston's older burial grounds. The attention of the Board of Health was focused on the problems of the urban cemeteries under its control. Few funds were expended on Evergreen and it languished until the early 1890s when a new gateway was erected and a new section of lots was developed. After the control of Evergreen was transferred to the Cemetery Departments in 1897, more funding was available and a

number of improvements were made. Evergreen serves as the final resting place for prominent Brighton families and veterans of various wars.

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Scope and Contents note

This series contains 9 cubic feet of records. There are four subseries of records in this series: burial permit records; lot sale records; financial records; and cash records. Each series of records is organized in a set of books.

The burial permit records do not all have the same information because they do not all have the same origin. Each person buried in Evergreen was given a permit. However, the permit came from the city or town in which the person died. For example, if someone in Newton died and was to be buried in Boston, a record would come from the Clerk of Newton. Some towns used a local board of health to send the record rather than a clerk. This record would then be kept and stored by the City of Boston. The information contained in the record would vary from town to town. It usually included such information as the name of the deceased, cause of death, age at death, and place of death. Starting in June of 1888, these started coming from the Boston Board of Health rather than from the city Registrar's Office.

Toward the end of 1897, these records started to contain two documents. One document contained the permit from the Office of the Board of Health. The second document contained the official agreement between the person requesting burial (usually a family member of the deceased) and the Superintendent of the Cemetery. Both of these records are contained in the books. Overtime, these records became more detailed and started to contain more information. Cremation records are also scattered through out this collection. Knowing the death date of the deceased will make these easier to locate.

The lot sales are the official records regarding the sale of the lots. These include: the date of purchase, the name and address of the purchaser, the grave number and location of the grave in the cemetery, the number of graves purchased (including whether the graves are for adults or for children), the cost of the graves, the cost for perpetual care of the graves. These are signed by the custodian of the cemetery.

The financial record books are organized into two sections. The first section lists the payees alphabetically and the second section lists the purchases chronologically. The second section also contains information regarding the payee's residence and the location and specifications of the burial plot.

The cash record books are chronological records of cash transactions. These expenses can be for anything such as grave maintenance or the opening a grave. They contain the payee's name, the amount of cash involved, and the purpose of the expense. One of these books contains chronological transactions of purchases made by citizens for the year 1934. The information includes the date of purchase, the name and address of the citizen, the lot number and the amount paid.

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Series I: Burial Permits and Orders

Box

1	1881-1886
1	1887-1890
1	1891-1893
1	1894-1896
1	1897-1898

1	1899-1900
1	1901-1902
1	1903-1904
1	1905-1906
1	1907-1908
2	1909-1911
2	1912-1913
2	1914-1915
2	1916-1917
2	1918-1919
2	1920-1921
3	1922-1923
3	1924-1925
3	1926-1927
3	1928-1929
4	1930-1931
4	1932-1933
4	1934-1935
4	1936-1937
5	1938-1939
5	1940-1941
5	1942-1943
5	1944-1945
6	1946-1947
6	1948-1949
6	1950-1951

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Series II: Lot Sales

Box

7	1914-1916
7	1917-1918
7	1919-1920
7	1921
7	1922-1923
7	1924
7	1925
7	1926
7	November 26, 1958-December 15, 1960
7	March 11, 1963-June 1, 1965
7	June 12, 1965-October 31, 1967

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Series III: Financial Records

Box

8	1899-1901
8	1901-1903
8	1904-1905
8	1906-1907
8	1907-1908
8	1908-1911

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Series IV: Miscellaneous volumes

Box

9	Cash Account 1897-1903
9	Cash Account 1904-1912
9	Misc. Lot/Grave Owners
9	Misc. Lot/Grave Owners
9	Misc. Lot/Grave Owners
9	Misc. Lot/Grave Owners
9	Misc. Financial Records
9	Misc. Financial Records

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