

HISTORIC BURYING GROUNDS INITIATIVE NEWSLETTER

Preserving Boston's 16 Historic Burying Grounds



BOSTON PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT

MARTIN J. WALSH, MAYOR

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HISTORY OF THE SOUTH END BURYING GROUND

The South End Burying Ground was established in 1810 on Boston Neck, the marshy and sparsely populated thin strip of land connecting the town of Boston with the main land. The primary reason for establishing a new burying ground here was the pressing need for more burial space combined with the lack of space elsewhere in Boston. This burying ground never had the sentimental appeal of the older sites in town such as the Granary and King's Chapel Burying Grounds and it could not compete with the cachet of Mount Auburn Cemetery which opened in 1831. Nevertheless, an estimated 10,000 people were interred here. This site was also associated with some controversial events in 19th-century Boston regarding capital punishment, race and the treatment of human remains.



The future location of the South End Burying Ground is indicated by a blue star in the lower left-hand corner of this German map from 1775. Map reproduction courtesy of the Norman B. Leventhal Map Center at the Boston Public Library

Before the South End Burying Ground was opened there was intense crowding in the other burying grounds. Grave diggers had to bury the bodies in graves four-caskets deep. It was not uncommon to dig up parts of other bodies when burials were made. A report made in 1795 warned that the crowded state of the burying grounds and the “exhalations” that came out of the open graves were dangerous for public health.

In August 1810 Boston selectmen were directed to “locate such a tract of land belonging to the Town on the Neck, as in their judgment shall



Letter from the Director

One of the challenges of writing this newsletter is to find enough trustworthy information on which to base the articles. Many histories have been written about these burying grounds over the centuries, but how does one tell if the “facts” are actually factual? I try to find several independent and contemporaneous confirmations of any element I put in the article. Unfortunately many written records have not survived to the present day. Since there were no cameras in the 17th and 18th centuries and burying grounds and funerals were not frequently the subject of drawings or paintings, there are no visual records either. I am also limited by the other duties of my job: I cannot spend a lot of time in libraries and archives searching for nuggets of information. I am infinitely grateful for all the documents and books which have been digitized and put on-line for free public use. I am also thankful to the staff of the City of Boston Archives and Records Department who have researched and scanned documents for me from their large collection. Finally I have a great appreciation for the Boston Public Library and the wealth of their electronic resources.

The South End Burying Ground has more than a few interesting stories coloring its history. It is a rather deceptive site. If you look through the front gate you will see a handful of headstones, a few mound tombs and 90 identical tombs around the perimeter of the site. The rest of the burying ground has lush grass and a few trees. You might even think it was a private park. Although it only accepted burials for 56 years, its history is entwined with the history of Boston from the years of the Early Republic to the Gilded Age. Development in adjacent properties affected the site up until the end of the 19th century. Because more written records have survived to the present day from the 19th century than the 17th century, it has been easier to find information on the South End Burying Ground than for the other older sites.



BOSTON PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT
HISTORIC BURYING GROUNDS INITIATIVE
1010 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE
BOSTON, MA 02118

Historic Burying Grounds Initiative

Our mission is the comprehensive restoration, on-going conservation and heritage interpretation of Boston's historic burying grounds.

Kelly Thomas, Program Director
Tel. (617) 961-3034 e-mail: kelly.thomas@boston.gov
www.cityofboston.gov/parks/hbgi

FIELD NOTES:

UPDATES ON COPP'S HILL BURYING GROUND AND GRAVE MARKER CONSERVATION

Copp's Hill Burying Ground

The last part of the Copp's Hill Burying Ground fence restoration project was completed in December 2013. Although the restored fence on Charter Street was installed in October, two items requiring special casting services took additional time. The bird's head spigot was recreated by an artist from an old photo. The artist had to create a full-size model of the bird's head in clay in order to recast it. The only reference the artist had was an old black and white photo. Creating an exact replica

took time. Casting iron for artistic elements is somewhat unusual and the foundry's restricted schedule for cast-iron pouring had to be respected. Also one of the plot fences which was restored was made from cast steel. Only a few finials needed to be replaced so they were poured at the same time as the bird's head. Luckily the weather in December was mild enough to be able to install the final elements. A series of before and after photos is a good way to appreciate the success of the project.



UPDATES ON COPP'S HILL AND GRAVE MARKER CONSERVATION



Grave Marker Repair and Resetting

The contract for the conservation and resetting of the gravestones that are in the fragment collection has begun! Building and Monument Conservation is the contractor who is doing the work. There were two contractors who bid on this work. The amount of the contract is for \$97,500. The scope of work for this contract is the conservation and resetting of 142 grave markers and the resetting only of 38 grave markers.

The grave markers which are part of this contract were moved out of the Archives building in December and January. Some of the headstones which required no conservation work were also reset in the appropriate burying ground during this period. The others are in at the studio of Building and Monument Conservation in various stages of repair. They will be reset into eight burying grounds this spring and summer.



The headstone for Elizabeth Cary, who died in 1707, before conservation.

The same stone after conservation. It will be reset in Phipps Street Burying Ground.

HISTORY OF THE SOUTH END BURYING GROUND (continued from first page)

be sufficient and best adapted for a burying-ground, and to enclose and prepare the same for that purpose." They chose the lot that sits on Washington Street, bordered by East Newton, East Concord and Father Gilday (previously called James) streets, in the section of Boston that was called the Neck, now called the South End. Sandwiched in between two large tidal flats, the Back Bay of the Charles River and the South Bay of Boston Harbor, the Boston Neck was a perpetually marshy, sometimes dangerous stretch of land. There were very few buildings on this isthmus due to its unpleasant landscape.

The first order of business for the new burying ground was the wooden perimeter fencing, which was begun immediately. In-ground burials (made by digging holes in the ground as opposed to using a masonry burial crypt) began soon after opening. During the first 17 years of existence of this site, only in-ground burials were performed; no tombs had been built yet. The site was used extensively and the City Registrar certified that 4,610 bodies were buried in graves prior to 1831. At this time

burying ground policies were mandated by the Board of Health. Regulations stated that "graves were to be in exact ranges parallel with, and as near to each other as may be." Also, a new row of graves could not be started until the previous row was completely full. Graves at the South End Burying Ground had to be dug so that the bottom of the first coffin was at least five feet six inches from the surface of the ground and the top of the last coffin was at least three feet from the surface of the ground. In other sites the required burial depth was deeper, for example in Copp's Hill Burying Ground, grave diggers had to go down eight feet. Most likely the shallow depth of graves in the South End Burying Ground was due to the high water table on the Boston Neck. Records from the Committee on Burial Grounds indicate the site was regraded (probably several times). In fact regrading the site was a way to increase burial space. In 1837, taking advantage of the low price of dirt (25 cents for a cartload), 1,400 cartloads of dirt were added to the rear of the South End Burying Ground. The addition of soil brought the level of the rear of the site up to the level of the front of the site and also created more depth in which to add new burials.



This is the southwest corner of the South End Burying Ground. Thousands of people were buried in this quarter of the site.

The granite wall that is currently there was built over 12 years starting in 1827. The wall forms the rear wall of the perimeter tombs. The building of tombs began in 1827. Unlike the tombs in the older burying grounds, these tombs were built above ground. Another difference is that these tombs were built upon the suggestion of the Superintendent of Burial Grounds, Samuel Hewes, and constructed by the City of Boston, whereas in previous centuries, private citizens petitioned the selectmen for permission to build individual tombs. The Boston Board of Aldermen directed the Committee on Burial Grounds to start building tombs on the Washington Street side of the site at the northwest corner (near the intersection of Washington Street and East Newton Street), to continue southerly on Washington Street and then to continue building tombs around the site. Although the tombs on Washington Street were built in a linear fashion as directed, the rest of the perimeter tombs were built out of order. A Committee communication from April 1832 stated that

HISTORY OF THE SOUTH END BURYING GROUND (continued from previous page)

four tombs on the northeast corner and four tombs on the southeast corner had been completed but noted the gaps between the tombs (where there were no walls) were “unsightly and indecent.” A new plan was put into action to prevent this situation: instead of building several tombs a year and leaving the perimeter unsecured for many years, a granite wall and tomb foundations would be built around the rest of the site with tombs to follow afterwards. A report from 1834 revealed that the front and back walls had been built, but that the other two sides were still open. The site was fully enclosed by tombs and a wall by 1839. A second row of 38 tombs was built on the James Street (Father Gilday Street now) side in the following years. Annual reports from the City of Boston show tombs being built in the South End Burying Ground until at least 1848. In total, 184 perimeter tombs were built. Fifteen tombs were also built in a symmetric fashion in the interior of the site. It is unclear exactly when the interior tombs were built. In three of the four quadrants of the site a large center tomb was built, encircled by four more tombs.

There are only eleven headstones in the South End Burying Ground. Yet the burying ground policies from 1810 and 1819 clearly state that people were allowed to “place horizontally on such grave, within twelve months after the burial of such person, a stone not less than four nor more than six feet long and two feet wide, having the person’s name and age, and the No. of the grave, and the No. of the range, cut thereon....” The grave could be reserved for family members for twenty years. This lack of identification begs the question: Who was buried in the South End Burying Ground? The absence of grave markers suggests this was the burial site for the poorer residents of Boston. The true picture appears to be more complex. Burial rates for graves dug in the ground were the cheapest option. An individual could purchase a tomb for \$220 each. The corner tombs were slightly larger and cost \$250 each. The mean annual wages for adult males in Boston in 1820 have been estimated at \$325.30 per year¹. That would put the purchase of a tomb at about two-thirds of a working-man’s annual salary. Since 162 tombs were built, of which 100 were designated for sale to the public, and most of them were sold, people of higher economic stature clearly used this burying ground also. The fees were the same for all municipal burying grounds at that time.



This is a close-up of tomb #134. It was owned by the City of Boston. It is not known who is buried in this tomb.

The City of Boston retained ownership of a number of tombs for burial of the poor. There was no cost for burial of paupers. The need for this type of burial space was so great that a row of tombs designated exclusively for pauper burials was built behind the south wall of tombs (where Father Gilday Street is now). Some tombs were specially designated for the burial of small-pox victims. Some tombs were used by charitable organizations such as the Boston Female Asylum and the Home for Indigent Females. The City of Boston also owned special tombs that the public could use for a small fee as a middle step in between private and pauper tombs. There was also a special large tomb for the burial of infants. Sadly, this tomb could accommodate the bodies of at least 500 children and that space was in high demand. Between January 1828 and December 1831, 170 adults and 245 children were laid to rest in tombs in South End Burying Ground.

¹ K.L. Sokoloff and G.C. Villaflor, “The Market for Manufacturing Workers during Early Industrialization: The American Northeast, 1820 to 1860,” in *Strategic Factors in Nineteenth Century American Economic History: A Volume to Honor Robert W. Fogel*, ed. C. Goldin and H. Rockoff (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), p. 36.

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The reports from the Committee on Burying Grounds are full of comments about how beautiful the South End Burying Ground was, and how the various improvements made to the site would make it one of the most beautiful burial spots in the region, if not the country. In spite of the City of Boston's landscaping efforts, the site never particularly appealed to well-heeled citizens. Certainly the trend for rural cemeteries, which began in the 1830s and grew significantly in following decades, may have provided some competition, but there were other factors that worked against this site.

The area to the east of the burying ground was a tidal bay off of the Boston Harbor also known as "Gallows Cove." As the name suggests, the Boston gallows were located on the Neck. The original gallows were located closer to the center of town. For many years they were located just outside the fortification that was the gateway to Boston, near the present-day intersection of Herald and Washington streets. As development occurred in town and pushed out toward the Neck, the gallows moved out too. In the 1780s the gallows were moved to a more remote location near the present-day intersection of Washington and Malden streets. A few decades later they were moved farther out again next to the South End Burying Ground. After the Leverett Street jail was built in 1822 the gallows were relocated to the jail.



Farmers came to collect the waste dumped in the South End Burying Ground to transport it out of town. They would use it in their gardens.

In July 1820 a letter to the *Boston Daily Advertiser* from an irate reader with the pseudonym "A Constant Smeller" complained of the disgusting atmosphere near the South End Burying Ground. Although he did not enjoy the numerous burials and the occasional hanging, his chief complaint was the smell of the "dirt carts." These carts hauled the trash of Boston town dwellers, "consisting chiefly of perishing vegetable substances, together with old straw beds, all sorts of filthy rags, tainted veal, mutton, beef, &c. dead dogs, cats, rats and fowls, and now and then a dead hog." All these things were deposited behind the wooden fence of the burying ground. The decomposing waste would be collected by farmers although sometimes not for several days. "A Constant Smeller" described other conditions particular to a burial place. He mentioned three coffins being buried in one grave, with the third coffin within 20 inches of the surface. This practice had already been delineated by the Board of Health, however coffins were not supposed to be closer than 36 inches to the surface of the ground.

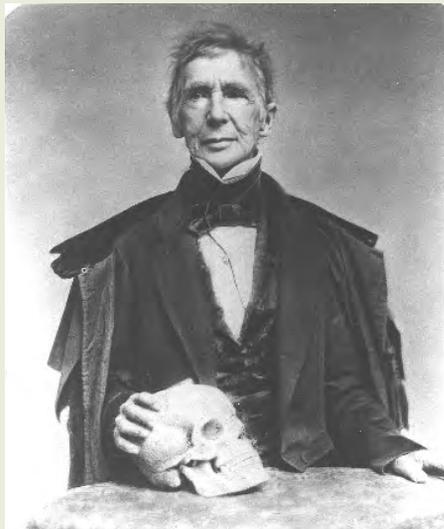
Another unsavory practice that occurred in this somewhat remote burying ground was grave robbing. Doctors required cadavers for dissection in order to learn about the human body. Articles in local papers in 1814 and 1822 tell of a \$100 reward offered by the Board of Health for information leading to the conviction of grave robbers. The Board also requested that the selectmen station a watchman by the South End Burying Ground every night to look out for grave robbers. By the following year the reward was increased to \$500.

In 1806 the eminent physician Dr. John Collins Warren, nephew of Bunker Hill hero General Joseph Warren, opened a private dissection room. As needed he had his medical students procure bodies. He gave a colorful account of an expedition to the South End Burying Ground on which he sent a couple of medical students:

They watched one [body] going from the Alms-house to the burial-ground on the Neck, which was appropriated exclusively for the interment of paupers. They marked the grave where the body was deposited by

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placing a piece of stick in it; and soon after twelve o'clock, having carefully noted the visit and retirement of the watch, they proceeded to open the grave and remove the body. The grave being filled, F. went into town to obtain a wagon he had engaged; T. remaining in the neighborhood where he could observe the return of F. It would have required less than five minutes to have removed the body into the wagon: but no sooner had they halted at the burial-ground, than a party of watchmen, who had concealed themselves within the wall, sprang upon them, seized T. and attempted to arrest F.; but the latter sprang upon his cart, laid the lash upon his horse, and went off at full speed, dragging with him two or three of the watchmen some distance. He soon got rid of them, and went off into the country.²



Dr. John Collins Warren ca 1850. He performed the first surgical operation using ether.

The other young man was captured and subsequently escaped from the night watchmen two times. The first time he escaped by running off into the dark and marshy area of what is now Back Bay. The second time he broke free from his captors and hid on a construction site on Belknap Street on Beacon Hill. Grave robbing tapered off in the 1830s and 1840s due to laws which allowed physicians to perform dissections on unclaimed paupers' bodies. It is interesting to note that Dr. Warren considered the South End Burying Ground as a burial place only for paupers even though this was not true. Most likely this view was based on his social situation as a member of Boston "high society," owning a family tomb in the Granary Burying Ground.

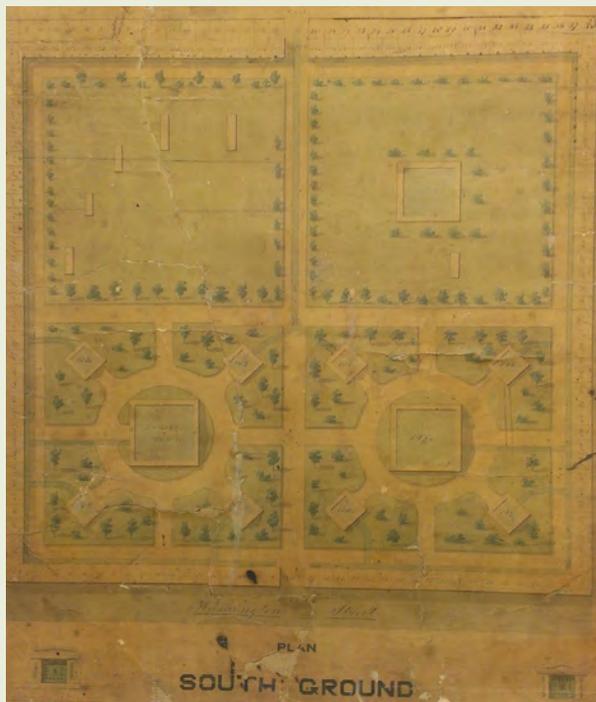
Even though the gallows were moved to the Leverett Street jail in the 1820s, executed prisoners continued to be buried in the South End Burying Ground. In 1849, Washington Goode, a convicted murderer, was buried at this site. The circumstances of his execution sparked considerable debate in Massachusetts.

Goode, a 29-year-old African-American sailor was convicted of killing another seaman, Thomas Harding. The evidence brought against him was circumstantial. The case took place during a period of national debate on capital punishment. The guilty verdict delivered against Goode was met with much anguish among various groups such as abolitionists, social reformers and those opposed to capital punishment for religious reasons. Many petitions were submitted to the governor to commute Goode's sentence to a life sentence. Many believed Goode was sentenced to death because he was African American and that a white man convicted of murder in those particular circumstances would not have received the same sentence. In spite of public support, Goode's appeal for commutation failed and he was executed on May 25, 1849. His body was given to his uncle who lived on Beacon Hill. After the funeral service, a large funeral procession accompanied his body to the South End Burying Ground where he was buried in a tomb. In a strange coincidence, the chief justice on the court that convicted him, Lemuel Shaw, also owned a tomb in the South End Burying Ground, however Lemuel Shaw was buried in Mount Auburn Cemetery when he died in 1861.

Big changes started occurring at the South End Burying Ground in the 1850s. More significant development had made its way out this far. Land-filling operations had begun on either side of the Neck. The pressures of development on this waterlocked peninsula would significantly alter the burying ground both in size and number of burials. One of the impediments to development in the South End was the lack of roads, particularly since Washington Street was the only road that led to the mainland. Plans showing a grid of streets in the South End had been printed for decades but it took some time before reality caught up to the plans.

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Mayor Jerome V.C. Smith mentioned the tombs in the rear of the South End Burying Ground in his annual address in 1855, saying their “defective masonry...combined with the action of ice in winter, allowing mephitic exhalations to escape, offensive to the residents of the vicinity indicates that they should be taken down.” He proposed that they should be buried below ground and an iron fence be put up instead of the “gloomy” stone wall in order to give the neighborhood a more cheerful appearance. The Committee on Public Lands received several petitions calling for the removal of tombs in the South End Burying Ground and for the continuation of the street on the



This plan by T. Voelkers, architect, shows a possible layout of the South End Burying Ground, which was never realized.

eastern side of Franklin Square behind the burying ground. The plan to remove the row of pauper tombs was approved and carried out, although the original perimeter tombs on this side of the burying ground remained. A new street called James Street was created behind the site. The bodies in the discontinued tombs were moved to Deer Island in the Boston Harbor for reinterment. An article which appeared in the *Daily Atlas* on July 21, 1856, mentioned the moving of the bodies to Deer Island but only as part of a “ludicrous incident.” The article tells about how a ship taking members of the Massachusetts College of Pharmacy out on their annual excursion were very surprised when they found out that a nearby tug boat towing four scows was actually hauling dead bodies for reburial.

The next disturbance to burials in the South End Burying Ground began in 1859 when George H. Davis, of the piano-forte factory of Hallet, Davis & Co., which abutted the border of the site, began to buy the rights to the tombs along his property. He acquired the rights to at least 19 tombs along that edge

of the burying ground, buying them individually from the previous tomb owners. It is believed that about half of the tombs along that row were owned by the City of Boston and used for burial of the poor. Several decades later, Davis’ son testified in a hearing about the South End Burying Ground that his father wanted to develop the remaining properties as residential housing and wanted to provide rear access to the houses. In 1864 the factory caught on fire and one of the walls fell and crushed the row of tombs behind it. Davis was still interested in expanding his factory and in 1865 he bought from the City of Boston a swath of land that went from Washington Street through to James Street. The swath included all the areas where there were tombs as well as some land in the open cemetery. Interestingly enough part of the land was sold with a warranty deed, which guaranteed the City of Boston legally owned the land and that there were no encumbrances against it, and part of the land was sold with a quitclaim deed, in which the City of Boston ceded its interest in the property but made no guarantees that someone else did not hold a title to that property. The property that was under warranty included the tombs that the City of Boston had used to bury the poor and the quitclaimed property was comprised of tombs that had been sold to individuals. Part of the deed agreement stipulated that Mr. Davis had to build a fence with a stone base with a foundation below the frost line between the burying ground and his property. According to Mr. Oliver C. Stevens in a subsequent hearing, as a boy he remembered that when the foundation for the fence base was built, the ground was “honeycombed” with coffins and when the

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workmen “did the digging there they struck coffin after coffin.” But Davis did not build anything else and sold the property at the end of 1866.

In the beginning of 1866 the Board of Aldermen proposed to discontinue use of the South End Burying Ground as a place of interment. They held a public hearing to allow any comments on this proposal. No objections were voiced so the Board accepted the proposal as well as a second proposal authorizing the City to sell the land of the burying ground for development.

In December 1866 Mary Anne Ballou, wife of Maturin Ballou, a local writer and publisher, purchased this parcel with the intention of opening the Saint James Hotel. In April 1867 the City



The Saint James Hotel with Franklin Square in the foreground

of Boston sold the northeast corner of the remaining burying ground land, a 12,100 square foot parcel, to Ballou at the price of \$1 per square foot. This area was previously open ground in the burying ground. A wing for the hotel was built on this site. Nicholas Apollonio, the City Registrar of Births and Deaths, recalled that during the construction of the hotel wing his “attention was called to the fact that coffins were exposed in considerable numbers in the trenches, which served to attract the curious. To avoid the excitement which had already begun to manifest itself, officers were stationed there, to prevent

the presence of idlers and the curious.” The 1881 tour guide, *King’s Handbook of Boston*, described the hotel as “one of the best and largest hotels in the city. It accommodates about 500 guests, and has over 400 rooms. The price for transient board is \$3 a day.” The hotel failed shortly thereafter and was sold in 1882 to the New England Conservatory of Music for \$275,000.

In 1883 the Conservatory asked the City of Boston to sell an 11,000 square foot part of the burying ground to them at the price of \$1 per square foot so they could expand their facilities. At this point, unlike the sales of other parts of the South End Burying Ground, objections to the sale were voiced at two hearings that year. The nature of the objections were both financial and ethical. Some thought the selling price was too low since the assessed value of the site was \$2 per square foot. Some thought it was morally objectionable to remove the bodies of the people who were buried there, even if the remains were reburied elsewhere. However many believed that the educational nature of the Conservatory overrode any other concerns. The City of Boston decided to sell the parcel to the Conservatory in May 1884 for \$3,080 (or \$0.28 per square foot) with the provision that the Conservatory be required to remove and rebury the human remains under the direction of the Board of Health. Although somewhat unclear, it appears that the Conservatory tried to buy more land in the South End Burying Ground that same year, but a newspaper article appearing in the *Daily Advertiser* on December 12, 1884, stated that City Council refused the additional sale. In 1902 the property was sold to the Franklin Square House which provided safe, low-cost housing for single working women.

No more land from the South End Burying Ground was sold. Its area remains the same today as it was in May 1884. Although the period of activity for this burying ground was short compared to other burying grounds owned by the City of Boston, its plain appearance belies an interesting history.

STORIES BEHIND THE STONES

In the gravestone fragment collection, one of the headstones is for Edward Lillie who died during the winter of 1688/89. At his burial a fight broke out in the burying ground between a deacon and a minister over the religious service. This unusual event illustrates the great tension felt in Boston during this period. The once homogeneous population of Boston was opening up to varied influences. Several churches had opened in Boston and inevitable differences occurred between the various congregations. The mercantile success of the Colony resulted in an increased interest in business. People were immigrating to Boston for non-religious reasons.



The Edward Lillie headstone is stored in the fragment collection.

Edward Lillie was born in 1628; his place of birth is not known. The earliest recorded presence of Edward Lillie in Boston was in 1663 at the birth of his son Samuel. He was a successful cooper and later made significant property purchases on the Boston Harbor. When he died in 1688 he was a wealthy man. His headstone was an expensive, custom-made monument. It is one of the earliest gravestones in Boston with this type of ornamentation. It is broken into four pieces and could easily be repaired; however we do not know the site of Edward Lillie's burial. Although we know what happened at his burial, we do not know where it took place.

In 1686 the charter of the Massachusetts Bay Colony was revoked and the new Dominion of New England was created. King James II appointed Edward Andros as the governor of the Dominion. At that time there were three Congregational churches in Boston and one Baptist church. There were no Anglican churches. The new governor Edward Andros demanded that there be a space for worship for Church of England members and mandated that they be able to use the Third Church of Boston, a

Congregational meeting house, for their services. This was not a popular decision in the Puritan community. In the meantime the Anglican community started collecting funds with the goal of building their own church. While it is not known if Edward Lillie considered himself an Anglican, he did make a contribution of three pounds to this effort.

In his will Edward Lillie left the decisions regarding his burial to his family, who were his executors. According to a letter by Joshua Moody to Increase Mather, the children of Edward Lillie asked the Anglican priest, Robert Ratcliffe, not to speak at the grave. They preferred that Deacon Theophilus Frary, a Puritan founder of the Third Church of Boston and father-in-law of Lillie's son, say a few words graveside. This did not sit well with the Reverend Robert Ratcliffe, who started reading from the Book of Common Prayer at the burial, contrary to the family's wishes. On behalf of the surviving Lillie family, Deacon Frary intervened to stop the reading. Apparently his intervention was so vigorous that he was arrested. The court fined him 100 marks (1 mark= 13 shillings 4 pence) and required him to be bound over, a sort of probation to remain on good behavior, for one year. Deacon Frary did not suffer too much from this punishment since the much reviled Royal Governor Andros was overthrown shortly thereafter in April 1689. The Anglican community dedicated its own church, King's Chapel, in June 1689.

The following incident was brought to my attention by a reader and genealogist, who thoughtfully sent me some information in response to the article "Do You Know Where These Headstones Go?" in the last issue of this newsletter.

UPCOMING PROJECT: GRANARY BURYING GROUND ENTRYWAY



The next major project that is “on deck” is the restoration of the entryway at the Granary Burying Ground. The project is made up of two main components: the cast-iron fence and the granite wall and gate. This entryway was installed in 1840 for the cost of \$5,000. The fence work is similar to the recently completed work at Copp’s Hill Burying Ground: missing finials need to be recast and installed, some pickets must be lengthened and some posts need repairs. There was no granite work at Copp’s Hill Burying Ground. Repairs to the granite wall at the Granary will include replacing any missing pieces and repairing any cracks. The granite wall and gate will also be cleaned. To my knowledge, nothing has been done to the granite since 1840.



The first step in this project was choosing the designer. I invited four potential landscape architects and engineers to the Granary Burying Ground in January to discuss the scope of the work. It is important to meet on site to view the elements that require repair and to get a feel for the site. The Granary Burying Ground is accessible only by foot and the entrance to the site is located on a busy street in downtown Boston. I asked the designers to submit to us a proposal including the work that needed to be done, any potential problem areas and their previous experience with similar types of projects. I also wanted to know who would work on the project, the estimated number of hours to do the project and if a metals and/or stone conservator was part of the team. The submittals were due in early February.

We evaluated and rated each design submission. We interviewed the highest-rated designer and negotiated a price for the work. We selected the firm Kyle Zick Landscape Architecture for the price of \$30,975. To this amount we added a \$7,000 supplementary budget for additional charges that may or may not be incurred, such as printing contract documents or survey work. It is an added bonus that Kyle Zick’s office is located one-half block from the Granary Burying Ground so he will have many chances to stop in at the site!

SITES INCLUDED IN THE HISTORIC BURYING GROUNDS INITIATIVE

Bennington Street Cemetery (1838)

Hawes Burying Ground (1816)

Bunker Hill Burying Ground (1816)

King’s Chapel Burying Ground (1630)

Central Burying Ground (1754)

Market Street Burying Ground (1764)

Copp’s Hill Burying Ground (1659)

Phipps Street Burying Ground (1630)

Dorchester North Burying Ground (1633)

South End Burying Ground (1810)

Dorchester South Burying Ground (1810)

Union Cemetery (1841)

Eliot Burying Ground (1630)

Walter Street Burying Ground (1711)

Granary Burying Ground (1660)

Westerly Burying Ground (1683)