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**PRO-CATHEDRAL
AND
CATHEDRAL
CEMETERIES**



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**HANS GROGAARD AND
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Cathedral Cemetery

Every Roman Catholic bishop has a throne – an actual chair of state – the Latin word for which is *cathedra*, and the church which contains this ecclesiastical throne is known as the bishop's cathedral. When a bishop lacks a cathedral of sufficient size and dignity, he designates another church in the city of his residence as his pro-cathedral, *pro* being another Latin term which can indicate "preceding" or "substituting for." It was thus that tiny St. Peter's Church, build in 1770 and for almost a quarter of a century thereafter the only Catholic church in what today is Baltimore City, became the pro-cathedral of John Carroll (1735-1815) when he was consecrated Bishop of Baltimore in a ceremony in the chapel of England's Lulworth Castle in 1790. The Pro-Cathedral, which was situated at the southeast corner of what today are Little Sharp and Little Pleasant Streets in Baltimore, had a churchyard stretching south to West Saratoga Street and east to North Charles Street, and it was this churchyard which became the first Catholic burial ground in the city of Baltimore. By the time Bishop Carroll saw his diocese – which until 1804 had jurisdiction over all Catholics in the United States – raised to the dignity of an archbishopric in 1808, it was clear that the already-crowded Pro-Cathedral Cemetery was as insufficient for the burgeoning Catholic population of Baltimore as the humble St. Peter's Church* was for the cathedra of the nation's first Archbishop. Archbishop Carroll took steps to improve both situations, assigning trustees to secure a suburban site for a larger Catholic graveyard and commissioning architect Benjamin Henry Latrobe to design a suitable cathedral on an elevated site slightly north and west of the Pro-Cathedral, but he lived to see the realization of neither plan. The trustees were just concluding negotiations for the purchase of six acres of the suburban estate of Samuel G. Smith at the time of the Archbishop's death, while what today is known as the National Shrine of the Basilica of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary was not dedicated until 1821. In 1815 those with relatives buried in the Pro-Cathedral Cemetery were instructed to transfer their remains to the new graveyard on North Fremont Avenue, which was christened the Cathedral Cemetery; those bodies for whom no one was willing or able to take responsibility were transferred to mass graves at the Fremont Avenue lot at the trustees' expense, the costs involved being met by the gradual sale of the vacated land at Charles and Saratoga Streets for building purposes.

By the time the long-awaited Cathedral on Cathedral Street was dedicated in 1821, its cemetery on the west side of Fremont Avenue had been in operation for nearly five years, and the last of the land that had been the Pro-Cathedral Cemetery was empty and about to be sold. The new cemetery was in keeping with the increasing trend to move burial grounds out of the hearts of large cities into peaceful rural sites, but it soon proved inadequate to a wave of immigration from Catholic Europe that raised the number of parishes in Baltimore from four in 1821 to 31 in 1881. While some parishes created their own cemeteries, notably St. Patrick in Fells Point, St. Vincent de Paul in Oldtown and St. Peter the Apostle in west Baltimore, these tended to accommodate mainly members of their own parish families, so that newer and poorer parishes were forced to recommend communicants seeking Catholic burial to Cathedral Cemetery. As early as 1841 Cathedral's trustees doubled the cemetery's size with a further purchase of six acres from Samuel R. Smith's heirs. They expected to acquire adjoining property on the west side of Fremont Avenue in the future as needed but they failed to take into account the possibility of the area's development, a development which in fact began in the mid-1850s and which by the end of the Civil War had multiplied the value of the undeveloped land remaining around the Cemetery to an enormous extent. Worse still, in the course of the 1860s the newly-revitalized Baltimore & Potomac Railroad secured the right to lay track from Washington, DC to modern-

* St. Peter's remained an active Catholic church until 1841, when it was secularized and turned over to the Brothers of the Christian Schools as the first home of what is today Calvert Hall College.

day Pennsylvania Station in Baltimore; track which (although it eventually was enclosed in a tunnel) ran right along the northern edge of Cathedral Cemetery. The rural tranquility which had attracted buyers to Cathedral's lots was gone forever the day trains began rumbling past its monuments, and the trustees felt themselves obliged to begin a fresh search for country property which could be developed for cemetery purposes.

They found what they were seeking in "Bonnie Brae", a 45-acre estate on Old Frederick Road owned in 1869 by the Catholic Capt. Charles McBlair [(1809-1890)], who proved able and ready to sell his land for so worthy a purpose. His price was considerably higher than what the trustees of 1816 had paid for the Smiths' land, but the trustees of 1869 looked to the price Cathedral Cemetery would bring from developers once it had been cleared of bodies, gritted their teeth, and signed a contract with Capt. McBlair.

Unfortunately, they discovered in very short order that the price of land was not the only thing about cemetery trusteeship that had changed between 1816 and 1869. Cathedral Cemetery lotholders had no objection to the trustees' acquiring an additional site for burials, but they reacted very strongly to the announcement that Bonnie Brae eventually was to be the only Cathedral Cemetery. An 1872 meeting of Fremont Avenue lotholders resolved to petition the trustees for a delay in the requirement that all graves be shifted from the "old" to the "new" Cathedral Cemetery, a petition that the resolution hinted might be followed by a costly lawsuit on the part of the lotholders if the Archdiocese proved determined. In the end, a compromise was reached: lot holders were given until 1887 to transfer their loved ones' remains from Fremont Avenue to Old Frederick Road, while the trustees were allowed to close the Fremont Avenue site to new burials at the end of 1874. The compromise actually helped the trustees by allowing them more time to shift the graves whose owners could no longer be traced, and thus to spread the payments required for such transfers over a longer period of time. By 1887, however, Fremont Avenue's Cathedral Cemetery was empty, and after a final legal notice in the city newspapers by the trustees, the land was sold to developers who erected the small rowhouses with which the site is covered today.

The records in this volume are those of the Pro-Cathedral Cemetery at Charles and Saratoga Streets and of the Cathedral Cemetery at North Fremont Avenue for the period 1791 through 1874. There are no records of transfers from Pro-Cathedral to Cathedral Cemetery, although these are known to have taken place, nor of transfers from Cathedral to New Cathedral Cemetery, although these are equally certain. The records of New Cathedral Cemetery are held by the Library of the Maryland Historical Society on microfilm for the period 1874 through 1977. Interments in New Cathedral Cemetery for the period 1978 to the present are recorded in the offices of New Cathedral Cemetery, 4300 Old Frederick Road, Baltimore, Maryland, 21229 (Tel: 410-566-7770).

Conventions

The records used to produce this book are copies of the original Cathedral Cemetery Interment books. They are:

- Interments 1793-1813 – copied in 1917, with many details
- Interments 1814-1842 – copied in 1917, with many details
- Interments 1836-1874 – copied in 1918, with limited entries

These books are housed at the Maryland Historical Society. The records were copied by Jack Groggaard and then by Mary Warfield, so an entry in this book, in many cases, is a copy of a copy. Additionally, some of the copy held at MdHS is in hand-written form.

In the 1917 books, entries from 1836-1842 were sometimes duplicated. Where it was possible, the duplicate entries were eliminated, but there were problems. The names are often spelled differently (Keho and Keough, Morris and Norris), the age numbers might be reversed, etc. The word 'Colored' or 'cold,' was sometimes in one source and not in the other.

Entries followed by '?' indicate that the data appeared in one document and not in the other. In cases where the two documents showed different information, both information is shown and is separated by a virgule. Examples of this are: '3/6 Mar 1847' and 'Smith, Ann L./Little'.

The following information was contained within the original copies at MdHS:

- Sep 19, 1819 Not paid for – but buried in the cemetery of the Hospital near Hamstead Hill (now St. Michael's Church property – Lombard & Wolf Sts.)
- Mar 1, 1827 We record from this date in the Register of Deaths of the Cathedral, Rev. Roger Smith, First Assistant Pastor of Cathedral
- Aug 31, 1835 Account of Grave Yard settled, received in all \$76.00, C. J. White, Rev. Charles Ignatius, Rector

Cathedral Burial Records, 1836-1874 – note entered at the end of the book: 'Note: All interments in this period were made in the Old Cathedral Cemetery; M. T. Connor, Sept. 1874.'

Formatting

The format of dates is: dd mmm yyyy.

All **surnames** are presented in alphabetical order, regardless of capitalization, apostrophes and/or spaces between parts of the name. This particularly impacts French names. If **first names** are abbreviated, such as 'Jno,' they are alphabetized according to their appearance.

The original copy of this data was done in all capital letters. French names beginning with 'Da' and 'De' are all spelled the same with no space. This should not be construed as being the original spelling.

It is not always clear whether a name is a complete name or a two-word first name, such as 'Mary Rose.' For this reason, both the 'Incomplete Interments: People Without Last Names' Section and the Alphabetical Section should be checked when trying to locate names.

The sequencing of the data is as follows:

- Surname –
If there is no surname, the entry is in the 'Incomplete Interments: People Without Last Names Section.
- First name –
If the first name is not given, then any qualifying data is given: gender, Mr., Mrs., child, etc. If no additional information is given, then hyphens are displayed: 'Smith, --.'

Titles of Mr., Mrs., Miss, etc. are only repeated if they will provide additional information. For example, an entry that says 'Mrs. Mary Smith, wife of John...' would not contain the title of 'Mrs.' as it is assumed. An entry that shows 'Mrs. Mary Smith' with no information about the husband would show the title 'Mrs.' as it provides more information about the person.

- Date of Death –
This date is always preceded by: 'd.'. This information is not always available.
- Date of Burial –
This date is always preceded by: 'b.'.
- Age –
This data is shown with abbreviations for the time periods: y – year, m – month, w – week, d – day; the words 'minutes' and 'hours' are not abbreviated. The age is shown as recorded. This means that a child of one and a half years may be shown as having the age of: '1y6m' or '1 ½ y' or '18m'. Ages that were approximated are preceded by: 'c.' for 'circa.'
- Cause of death –
If this information is known, it is shown immediately after the age. The word 'cause' is not shown.
- Additional information –
Any additional information is the final entry. Abbreviations used are: 'dau' for daughter, 'wid' for widow, 'hus' for husband (son and wife are spelled out), dec. for deceased.

When the last name of a relative (such as: 'dau of John') is the same as that of the deceased, that surname is not repeated. The surname is repeated here if the entry says 'Mr. Smith's son' without a given name, or if the entry says 'Mr. W. P. Smith's son.'

* This symbol indicates that the original information is in French and it has been translated for this document.

Acknowledgments

Two volunteers in the Library at the Maryland Historical Society must be acknowledged. Jack Grogaard painstakingly hand copied the data from both typed and handwritten books onto Index Cards, and Mary Warfield typed the information. Prior to this book, it was necessary to know an approximate date of death or burial in order to locate information. Now, the data is in alphabetical order by the deceased's last name, and the deceased are more easily located.

Gibbons, Bernard, b. 4 Dec 1859, 27y
Gibbons, Lawrence, b. 31 Aug 1821, mortification of the eye
Gibbons, Michael, b. 28 Sep 1832, c. 28y, consumption
Gibbons, Robert, b. 8 Aug 1861, 12m
Gibbons, Sarah, b. 2 Sep 1854, 25y
Gibbons, Thomas, b. 30 Apr 1845, 30y
Gibbs, Alexander, b. 15 May 1857, 66y, Colored
Gibbs, Ignatius, b. 2 Jan 1851, 32y, Colored
Gibbs, Mary, b. 24 Mar 1861, 67y, Colored
Gibbs, Rebecca, b. 20 Oct 1850, 12y, Colored
Gibbs, Susan, b. 3 Oct 1861, 20y
Gibiline, Joseph, b. 30 Sep 1860, 3y
Giblin, Jane, b. 22 May 1863, 3y
Giblin, Thos. Wm., b. 29 Dec 1857, 2y
Gibney, child, b. 3 Dec 1874, stillborn, child of Mr. Gibney
Gibney, Mrs. E., b. 13 Apr 1870, 38y
Gibney, George, b. 7 Jun 1866, 42y
Gibson, child, b. 10 Oct 1874, child of Bridget
Gibson, female, b. 28 Sep 1857, ½ hour, dau of Michael
Gibson, Mrs., b. 24 Jul 1870, 27y
Gibson, Basil, b. 29 Oct 1848, 60y, Colored
Gibson, Bridget, b. 10 Oct 1874, 25y
Gibson, Charles A., Jr., b. 7 Feb 1857, 5y
Gibson, Charles A., b. 7 May 1857, 41y
Gibson, Chas. W., b. 25 Feb 1861, 2½y
Gibson, Frederic, d. 20 Dec 1799, b. 21 Dec 1799, c. 48y
Gibson, John, b. 11 Jul 1821, c. 75y, old age
Gibson, John, b. 8 Mar 1867, infant
Gibson, Mary C., b. 23 Jun 1870, 2m
Gibson, Michael, b. 3 Mar 1859, 37y
Gibson, R. A. C., b. 23 Feb 1857, 32y
Gibson, Robert, b. 28 Jul 1824, 10m, convulsion fits, son of John (overseer of General Harper's Farm)
Gideon, Sister Mary Angelica, b. 20 Feb 1860, 41y, Oblate Sister of Providence, Colored
Giffey, John Patrick, b. 1 Sep 1859, 2m
Gilbert, male/child, b. 1 Jun 1836, 6m, catarrh fever, son/child of John
Gilbreth, Margaret, b. 8 Mar 1854, 22y
Gilchon, child, b. 25 Oct 1829, c. 4y, scalding, child of John H. Gilchon
Gilchrist, Ann, b. 25 Feb 1831, c. 17y, consumption
Gildea, male, b. 18 Apr 1850, 2y, son of Francis *son*
Gildea, Alexius, b. 18 Nov 1832, 3y, unknown sickness
Gildea, Eliza, d. 25 Aug 1816, b. 26 Aug 1816, 2y, summer complaint & whooping cough
Gildea, Eliza, b. 19 Dec 1840, 7y, dropsy
Gildea, Felix, b. 14 Sep 1836, c. 55y, liver complaint *father*
Gildea, Francis, b. 12 Jun 1859, 6y
Gildea, Juliana, b. 2 Jan 1869, 60y
Gildea, Laura P., b. 2 Jan 1867, 2½m *daughter*
Gildea, Mary, d. & b. 7 Oct 1814, 4y6m, in Baltimore
Gildea, Mary/Mary A., b. 30 Jun/1 Jul 1838, c. 50y, decline *mother*
Giles, Loisa, b. 30 Nov 1840, 25y, consumption, Colored
Giles, Rody, b. 21 Apr 1852, 65y, Colored
Gilfooy, male, b. 23 Mar 1861, 30 minutes, son of Mr. Gilfooy
Gilfoyle, Patrick, b. 17 Aug 1863, 46y
Gilgreest, child, b. 27 Jul 1831, 3m, child of Edward
Gill, female, b. 28 Jan 1844, 2y, dau of Charles
Gill, William, b. 8 May 1849, 39y