

Historical sketch

The Kingston Evergreen Cemetery Association is a voluntary group organized on March 4, 1853 to create a private, non-sectarian cemetery to replace the Old Burying Ground which had served the Town since 1717. The KECA (as they are currently known) acquired the original hilly site between Green and Evergreen Streets in 1853, then extended the grounds to the west in 1887 and again to the east in 1895. The landscaped grounds cover almost 18 acres in the center of Kingston

The first interment was Julia D. Parris, widow of Reverend Martin Parris. She died June 17, 1854. Two days later, a great thunderstorm struck during her service. Lightning struck several trees in the Cemetery, dwellings were damaged and the spire of the new First Parish Church was shattered, stopping the clock.¹

In 1936, Thomas Prince of Oregon left \$20,000 to the cemetery for a memorial. The Prince Memorial Chapel was built and dedicated in 1956.

Incorporated in 1942, the Association is governed by a board of directors elected at the Proprietors Annual Meeting each January.

A map of the cemetery as of 1941 with lot numbers is available online (<http://kplma.org/maps/doc-18-0004-pc24.pdf>)

Evergreen Cemetery is separate from the Old Burying Ground, a 3.7 acre, Town-owned historical cemetery fronting Main and Green Streets.

Scope and Content Note

The Evergreen Cemetery Collection includes records from the founding in 1853 to 2003, which have been arranged in the following series.

- Deeds: bound volumes and loose deeds that provide information of lot sales.
- Interments: bound volumes detailing burials and removals by lot.
- Minutes: bound volumes and loose papers with meeting records.
- Administrative and miscellaneous material: records related to wills, perpetual care, the Prince Chapel, permits.
- Photographs: an album of 49 images of the cemetery taken in 1916.

¹ Doris Johnson Melville, *Major Bradford's Town: A History of Kingston 1726 – 1976*. pg. 116.

Box and folder listing

- 1 Deeds 1 – 282, sold between 1856 – 1887. One bound volume, 10.5 x 8 inches, green with brown edging, spine not present. [Transcribed.]
 - 2 Deeds 1 – 398, sold between 1888 – 1952. One bound volume, 11 x 9 inches, black with maroon trim, duct tape on spine. [Partially transcribed.]
 - 3 Deeds 399 – 699, sold between 1952 – 1987. One post-bound volume 13 x 10 inches, blue with black edge.
 - 4.2 Deeds, loose
 - 4.3 Deed related correspondence.
 - 4.4 Book 3, Interments in lots 1 – 1000 (only pages 1-143 used). Information on burials, deeds, age at death, and additional notes on place or cause of death. Tan suede with red edging.
 - 5 Book 1, Interments in lots 1 – 500. 1830 – 1996, undated. Information on burials, deeds, age at death, and additional notes on place or cause of death. Tan cloth with red edging. [Transcribed and added to local database]
- Book 2, Interments in lots 501 – 1000. 1914 – 1992, undated. Information on burials, deeds, age at death, and additional notes on place or cause of death. Also includes information regarding specific sections such as infant graves, single graves, rear border path and sections A and B. Tan leather with red edging. [Transcribed]
- 6.1 Key to map of Evergreen Cemetery containing names and plot numbers: includes map with no corresponding plot numbers. SEE 1887 map in O/S 2.
“Old Cemetery” lot listings: alphabetical from 1853 – 1975.
Lots by section: includes hand drawn sectional maps.
Method of interment 1968 – 1988.
Order of Services at the Consecration of the Cemetery, 1854 (NOTE: This item was found in the LHR and is not part of the original Collection)
 - 7 Minutes 1853 – 1899
Minutes 1900 – 1948 “Records No. 2 Kingston”
Minutes 1949 – 1991 “Kingston Evergreen Cemetery Association Records”
 - 8 Minutes of the Association 1988 – 1992, unbound and loose.
Lots, sale of. Information regarding how to sell lots, restrictions on lots, burials, fees and old lots.
Permits: burial and removal 1953 – 1959

Wills: (sic) Paine, date unknown; George Holmes, 1877, 1877; Abigail H. Adams, 1885; Irene Paine, 1886; Edward Chandler, 1887; William Adams, 1890; Henry Soule, 1890; Winslow Sever, 1895; Frederic C Adams, 1895; Alden S. Bradford, 1900; Rebecca D. Holmes, 1901; Kimball Stetson, 1903; Rosa Cole, 1912; Dr. Henry N. Jones, 1926; Louise E. Heath, 1927; George T. Prince, 1927; Lucinda A. F. Baker, 1927; Rosalind Norton, 1932; Millard O. Dalton, 1937; Edmund A. Whitman, 1953; Edward Howe, 1979.

Perpetual Care Funds: includes listings of lots, with funds left for care.

Maintenance of grounds, general: correspondence.

Chapel: Bids; specifications; blueprints.

Bates Deed (land grant) ca. 1940s: deed; blueprint.

Murders: information on Holmes/Andrews murder of 1868 and Meinholz/Benoit murder of 1990.

Correspondence, 1971 re: satisfaction with Cemetery. *Then and Now* article from the *Kingston Reporter*, 1984.

Laws. State and federal: Right-to-know law.

9 *Photographs*

Album of 49 7.5 x 9.5 inch black and white prints of Evergreen Cemetery in 1916 (contains views of the grounds and of headstones). Also on cd.

8 x 10" black and white reprint of Evergreen pond

8 x 10" possible albumen print of cast of play (play unknown)

10 Deeds 700 – 941, sold between 1987 – 2003. One post-bound volume, 10 x 12.75 inches, blue cover.

Acquisition: Donated in October of 2002 by the Kingston Evergreen Cemetery Association. Note that the bound deeds in Boxes 1, 2, and 3 were removed by the KECA from the Library collection in 2003 and returned in 2016, along with the bound deeds in Box 10, which was not part of the 2002 donation..

Access: Unrestricted to the general public.

Processor: Survey conducted by Volunteer Ruth Ryan. Archivist, Carrie Elliott boxed and processed the material, and wrote the original finding aid. Archivist Susan Aprill revised the finding aid for addition to ArchivesSpace in 2019.