

# Old Burial Ground Sydney – Inventory of Burials, 1792-1820

## About the Inventory

This is the first time that a consolidated list of burials for the Old Sydney Burial Ground has been produced. The inventory identifies the names of **2266 people** that were buried in the cemetery between **September 1792 and September 1820**. Another 90 names have been flagged as possible burials in the cemetery; research to date has been unable to confirm in which cemetery these burials occurred, but they fall within the timeframe of when the cemetery was active.

The inventory was painstakingly extracted from St Phillip's Parish Registers (the only parish at Sydney during this period) and then cross referenced with other primary and secondary sources, including contemporary diaries, newspaper reports, and the Thomas D. Mutch Index to NSW Births, Deaths and Marriages 1787-1956.

**The inventory is presented in three main sections according to burial status.** First up is a list of names of those who were buried in the cemetery (**burial**), the majority of which probably never had a headstone. A small percentage of graves had headstones, some of which were recorded in one form or another for posterity. These persons are confirmed burials in the cemetery. This is the second section (**headstone**), starting on page 64. Finally, there are a number of deceased persons falling within the timeframe of when the cemetery was active, but the historical record is either too vague or not there to confirm with any certainty whether they were actually buried in the cemetery. These are flagged as **possible** burials, starting on page 71. The first three burials that took place in 1819 at the new cemetery (while the original cemetery was still open) are also identified at the end of the spreadsheet.

Within each section, the inventory is in alphabetical order by surname, and adopts the spelling and burial dates as shown in the St Phillip's Parish Registers. Each entry records the name, date of burial and age at time of death (where available).

The type and clarity of the information recorded in St Phillip's registers varies from year to year. For example, sometimes the age at time of death is noted, sometimes not. And there are some significant gaps in the registers. The records were poorly maintained between October 1800 when the Reverend Richard Johnson departed for England and when his successor, the Reverend William Cowper, arrived in the colony in August 1809.

The process of cross-referencing the parish registers with other sources identified a number of burials not recorded in the parish registers. Several of the names recorded by headstone transcriptions in contemporary diaries and later newspaper reports did not appear in the parish registers. A small number of Jewish burials did not appear in the parish registers.

Sixty three names can be connected to documentary or material evidence of a headstone. On these figures, less than 3% of the burials were marked by a headstone. This figure is no doubt conservative (vandalism of the cemetery was rife following its closure in 1820) but it supports the picture painted by contemporary descriptions of the cemetery; the vast majority of graves were unmarked.

Research revealed variations in the spelling of names, and conflicting dates of burial and ages. These variations are noted in the index. Other information, such as date of death (as

opposed to burial date), social status of the individual at time of death (convict, free, soldier), and details of any headstone transcriptions, was collated where available. All this additional information has been recorded in the final column of the consolidated list of burials and references provided so that researchers can go back to the original sources. Every effort has been made to identify and eliminate duplicate burials due to variations in the spelling of names, but some duplicate listings may remain.

The Inventory of Burials in the Old Sydney Burial Ground, 1792-1819, has been provided to assist family historians with their research. Please note that the City of Sydney Council does not hold any original records relating to the Old Sydney Burial Ground and cannot undertake historical research on individuals buried in the cemetery. The St Phillip's Parish Registers can be consulted at the State Library of New South Wales and the Society of Australian Genealogists, as well as at regional repositories around New South Wales that hold the Archives Resources Kit produced by State Records.

Was one of your ancestors buried in the Old Sydney Burial Ground? The City's History Program is always happy to receive biographical information about persons formerly buried on the site. Information will be placed on file in the City Archives. Send information to [history@cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au](mailto:history@cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au)

## References

This list provides the full bibliographic details of the references used to compile the inventory of burials, along with a brief explanation of what they cover, so that researchers can go back and consult the original sources.

The reference list needs to be used in conjunction with the spreadsheet **Old Sydney Burial Ground - Inventory of Burials, 1792-1820**. Abbreviated references are provided in the final column of the spreadsheet (column: *References and further information*).

An explanation of the inventory is provided

**R1:** Collins, David. *An account of the English colony in New South Wales: Volume 1*, RAHS, Sydney, 1975.

Refers to some deaths at Sydney, mostly soldiers that don't appear in the St Phillips parish register and the Mutch index and also includes cause of death for numerous burials at the Old Sydney Burial Ground.

**R2:** Collins, David. *An account of the English colony in New South Wales: Volume 2*, RAHS, Sydney, 1975.

Refers to some deaths at Sydney, mostly soldiers that don't appear in the St Phillips parish register and the Mutch index and also includes cause of death for numerous burials at the Old Sydney Burial Ground.

**R3:** Sharpe, Allan. *City of Sydney; Pictorial History*, Kingsclear Books, Alexandria, NSW, 2000, p.30.

Brief history of Old Burial Ground Sydney, and James Bonwick's description, includes transcript of Jane Dundas' headstone (one of the oldest monuments seen by Bonwick) "an honest, faithful servant".

Compliers notes: Jane Dundas was tried at Old Bailey, London on 18 April 1787 for stealing linen with a value of 6 shillings. She was sentenced to transportation for 7 years and left England on the *Prince of Wales* aged about 29 at that time (May 1787). She died in 1805, buried old Burial Ground Sydney 22 December 1815. a servant in Lt Governor Philip King's household for 15 years.

**R4:** Birmingham, Judy & Carol Liston, *Old Sydney Burial Ground 1974: emergency excavation in the City of Sydney*, Studies in Historical Archaeology No. 5, Sydney, 1976.

A short but excellent history of the Old Sydney Burial Ground (Town Hall site) and description of archaeological finds uncovered in 1974, which includes references to some individual burials.

**R5:** Epitaphs in the Church Yard at Sydney New South Wales in Arnold, Joseph. *Letters etc 1810 and Journal 1815*, Mitchell Library CY Reel 339. CYA:1849-2.

Description and notes on the Old Burial Ground Sydney and transcription of some headstones:

Jane Maher d. unknown	Catherine West d. unknown
William Gibbs d. unknown	Mary Bruce d. 1810
Charles Robinson d. 1810	Mary Skinner d. 1808
Henry Lane d. 1815	John Justice d. 1804
Thomas Webb d. 1795	Anne Cotton d. 1808
Mary King d. 1810	

**R6:** Johnson, Keith A., 'Sydney's Early Burial Grounds – Part 2 – The Old Burying Ground, George Street, 1792-1869', *Descent*, vol. 5 no.1, 1970, pp.26-43.

**R7:** Johnson, Keith A & Malcolm R. Sainty, *Sydney Burial Ground 1819-1901 (Elizabeth and Devonshire Streets) and History of Sydney's Early Cemeteries from 1788*, Library of Australian History, Sydney, 2001.

Includes an introductory chapter on the history of Sydney's early burial grounds and particularly the Old Sydney Burial Ground and the Devonshire Street Cemetery. Majority of the book is indexes to trace removals from the Devonshire Street Cemetery. Also includes extracts and reprints of: Johnson, Keith A., 'Sydney's Early Burial Grounds – Part 2 – The Old Burying Ground, George Street, 1792-1869', *Descent*, vol. 5 no.1, 1970.

**R8:** Sydney Town Hall Collection, coffin plate that was uncovered during the excavation for Town Hall station in the 1920s.

Coffin plate, brass, 31 x 21 cm, is inscribed "Mrs Mary Stogdell Obit July 25th 1797 aetatis 25". Mary Revell (Reavill) married First Fleet convict John Stogdell (Stockdale) in 1795 at St Phillips' Church, Sydney. Following her death two years later, her husband acquired a land grant north-west of Sydney (McGrath's Hill) but was drowned in the Hawkesbury River flood of 1801.

**R9:** Judge Advocates Office, William Balmain Esq. SRNSW COD 76 (1798), p.35

On 4 Aug 1798 Priscilla Loveridge was committed for further exam on suspicion of murdering her infant son (Thomas Goodman) "by administering a certain Quantity of Spirituous Liquor". There was no evidence to incriminate her, however Priscilla was imprisoned for one month in the goal for keeping a riotous and disorderly house and concealing suspected wrongdoers in it.

**R10:** Pybus, Cassandra. *Black Founders: The Unknown Story of Australia's First Black Settlers*, UNSW Press, Sydney, 2006.

Historian and writer Cassandra Pybus reveals that black convicts were among our first fleet. Daniel Gordon is featured in the appendix.

**RACS:** *Australian Colonists Series, Vol 1: 1788 – 1800 Special Edition*, Scott Brown, 2000. (CDRom)

**RM:** *Thomas D. Mutch Index to NSW Births, Deaths and Marriages, 1787-1956*, Mitchell Library CY377 – 378. Card index of birth, marriage, and death entries compiled from parish registers. Though it covers later time periods, it is most effective for the pre-1830 time frame.

**RST:** *St Phillips Church Parish Registers*

Vol 2 has C/E burials 1787 to 1831

Vol 4 has chronological baptisms, burials & marriages 1787 to 1809 for St Phillips Sydney.

Vol 5 has baptisms, burials & marriages 1809 to 1811 for St Phillips Sydney.

Vol 7 has baptisms, burials & marriages 1812 to 1818 for St Phillips Sydney.

Vol 8 has baptisms, burials & marriages 1819 to 1825 for St Phillips Sydney.

St Phillips Church Parish Registers can be consulted at the State Library of NSW, Society of Australian Genealogists and at regional repositories around New South Wales that hold the Archives Resources Kit produced by State Records.

**RRA:** *Log of the Royal Admiral 1792*, India Office Library, London - East India Company: Ships' logs, 1759-1827, Mitchell Library M 1620 - M 1627.

**AJGS:** Australian Jewish Genealogical Society

**NSWSR Probate:** Index to early probate records (supplementary). This index was created from three record series by New South Wales State Records. It is for supplementary probate records and does not include the main probate series. Available at

<http://www.records.nsw.gov.au/indexes/searchform.aspx?id=52>

**R1800 and R1801:** Baxter, Carol J. (ed). *Musters and lists, New South Wales and Norfolk Island, 1800-1802*, ABGR in association with the Society of Australian Genealogists, Sydney, 1988. This features a list of deaths and executions for 1800 and 1801.

## Photos/Images

**P1:** Joseph Wright (d. 1811) memorial: St James Anglican Burial Ground, Old Pitt Town Rd, Pitt Town (just east of intersection with Airstrip Rd), photo taken by Mark Fleming Aug 2007.

**P2:** Elizabeth Steel headstone (death in St Phillips Registry under married name of Mackay). *Foundations for a City - Building Sydney Town Hall - Burial Ground: Convict Headstone*. <http://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/history/foundations/BurialGround.html> Cited 27 August 2007.

*In Memory of  
Eliz Steel died  
1795 Aged*

A sketch and dimensions of this headstone (Figure 32) appears in Mackay, Richard. *Old Sydney Burial Ground, Sydney Town Hall: archaeological monitoring excavation*. Prepared by Richard Mackay and Tony Lowe of Godden Mackay Pty Ltd for the Council of the City of Sydney and The Heritage Council of NSW, Godden Mackay, Surry Hills NSW, 1991.

**P3:** Headstones transcriptions and photographs from *A G Foster Epitaph Book 1901*, Mitchell Library PX B768. Some are reproduced in Johnson, Keith A & Malcolm R. Sainty, *Sydney Burial Ground 1819-1901 (Elizabeth and Devonshire Streets) and History of Sydney's Early Cemeteries from 1788*, Library of Australian History, Sydney, 2001.

**P4:** Picture of broken headstone of William Bowen in "Old relic of Sydney: Unearthed in the grounds at the Town Hall", *Sydney Morning Herald*, 14 July 1906. (City of Sydney Archives, newspaper clippings Australiana, vol. CC p.71)

## Newspapers

**N1:** Old Chum, 'Old Sydney No.152', *Truth*, 9 October 1910. Much of this article was reprinted in Old Chum, 'Old Sydney No.881', *Truth*, 28 September 1924. Article includes transcriptions of headstones from James Bonwick notes, history of old burial ground and other cemeteries around Sydney. Burials and headstones mentioned include:

Mrs Jannette Dundas 1805	Kable 1792	Headstone Jan 1794
Ensign NSW Corp 6 July 1797	(John Lanigan Brock who was buried with military honours).	
Gregory (Kelly) 1808	Thomas Lambert 1809	Gavin Hamilton 1798
Mary Ann Worsdull 1805	William Cassidy 1818	Michael Mulhall 1820
Mary Ann Walworth 1818	Henry Laer 1816	Cornelius Heirtchy 1812
Mary Latchford 1814	John Yates 1818	George Griffis (Griffith) 1803
Mary Byrne 1815	Elizabeth Demsdale 1810	Child (female) Demsdale 1810
Darby Carberry 1810	Unknown 1818 age 80	Zachariah Bowie 1817
John Davis 1813	Unknown 20 Oct 1???, ?5 years (Thomas Byas 1817)	

**N2:** *Sydney Morning Herald*, 16 July 1888. Transcription of Darby Canberry headstone

**N3:** 'Peeps at the Past – "Secrets of the Tomb" The Old George-Street Burial Ground', *The Sun*, 10 October 1911.

**N4:** 'Old Sydney – The Market Square – George St Transformed' *Balmain Observer*, 12 June 1925

**GS:** *Sydney Gazette*. The first Australian newspaper, the *Sydney Gazette* and *NSW Advertiser*, 5 March 1803 to 1842, feature death notices and some mention of headstones. Copies held at the Mitchell Library.