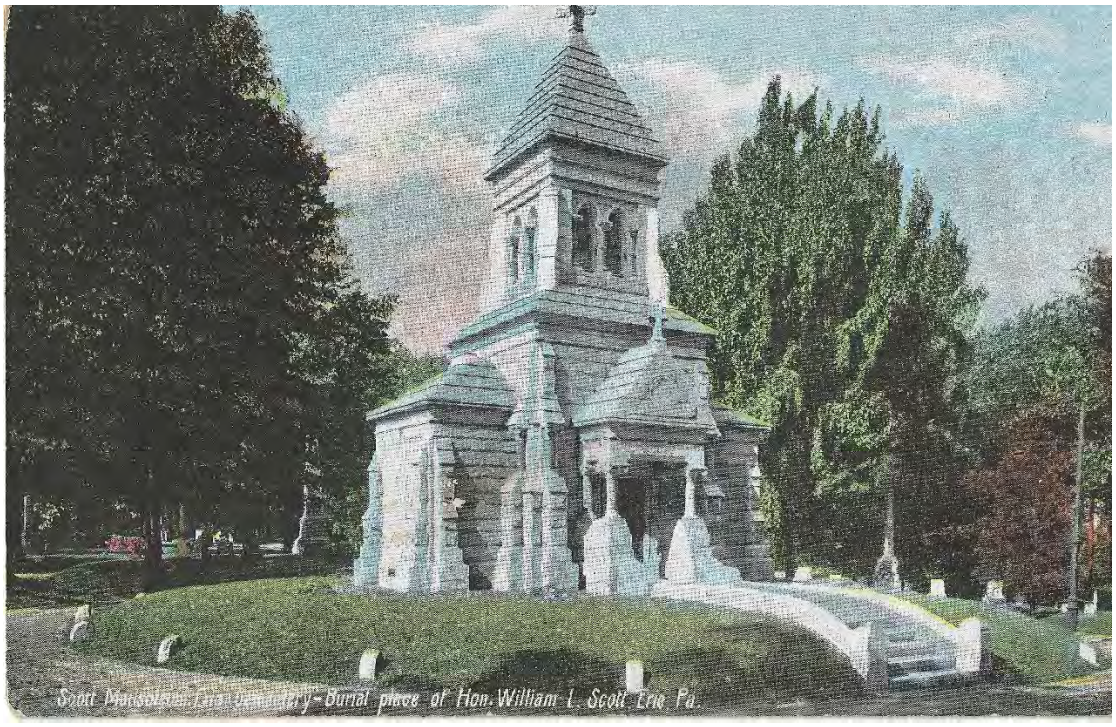


Erie Cemetery

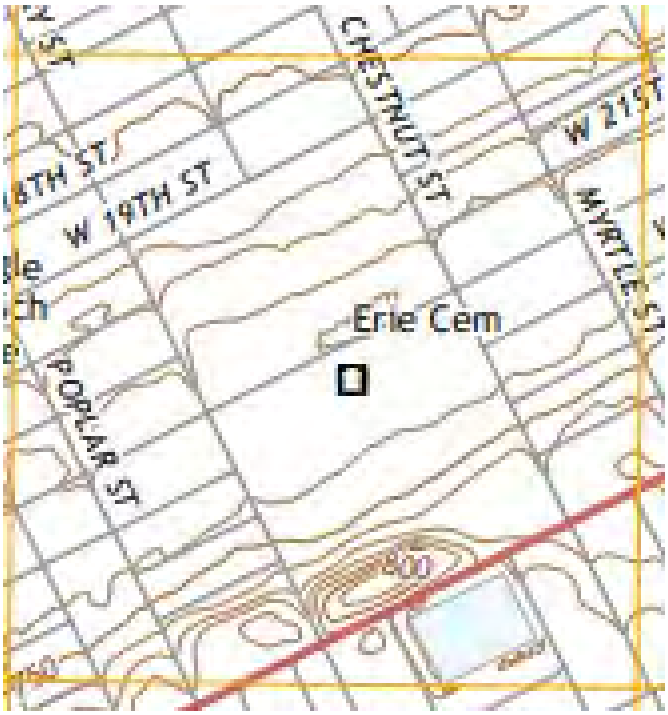
City of Erie Historic Resource Nomination Binder

Prepared by Becky Weiser & Matthew Falcone

Description

Erie Cemetery spans 75 acres and is surrounded by the dense, residential neighborhoods of Little Italy and Federal Hill in Erie, Pennsylvania. At seven city blocks long by two city blocks wide, it is bound by West 19th Street to the north, West 26th Street to the south, Chestnut Street to the east, and Cherry Street to the west. The size of this parcel of land remains largely unchanged since its original designation.

This property was once part of a larger tract purchased by Judah Colt, Pennsylvania's Commissioner of Land Sales in 1811, and later owned by Eli K. Price. Known historically as "Cochran's Woods," the area was a forested hillside with a grassy clearing, situated on a well-drained ridge overlooking Lake Erie and its bay—an ideal location for a cemetery inspired by the Rural Cemetery Movement of the mid-19th century. According to the US Geological Survey, the highest point of 800 feet above sea level is near the corner of West 26th and Cherry Street. From there, the land slopes approximately 100 feet to the cemetery's northern border on West 19th Street.



US Dept. of Interior, US Geological Survey – Erie South Quadrangle 1983

As of November 2025, Erie Cemetery has approximately 56,000 burials with an undetermined number of headstones and other monuments. There are twenty-seven (27) mausoleums on the property. Merriam-Webster defines a mausoleum as "a stone building with places for entombment of the dead above ground. They range in size from the grand William L. Scott mausoleum which has the capacity for twenty-four (24) coffins to the modest, two-crypt mausoleum of John and Minnie Mulholland. Fourteen (14) of the mausolea are located on "mausoleum row" which line the hill heading towards West 26th Street; the others are scattered throughout the property. Various styles (such as Classical Revival, Gothic Revival, Art Deco and Art Nouveau) and different motifs can be found in mausolea throughout the cemetery.

The primary entrance to Erie Cemetery is located near the intersection of Chestnut Street & W. 22nd Street and is marked by five, square, limestone columns. In between the columns are four sets of ornate, wrought iron gates. The two gates in the center open inwards towards the cemetery and are wide enough to accommodate vehicles while the two gates flanking are smaller and meant for pedestrian access.

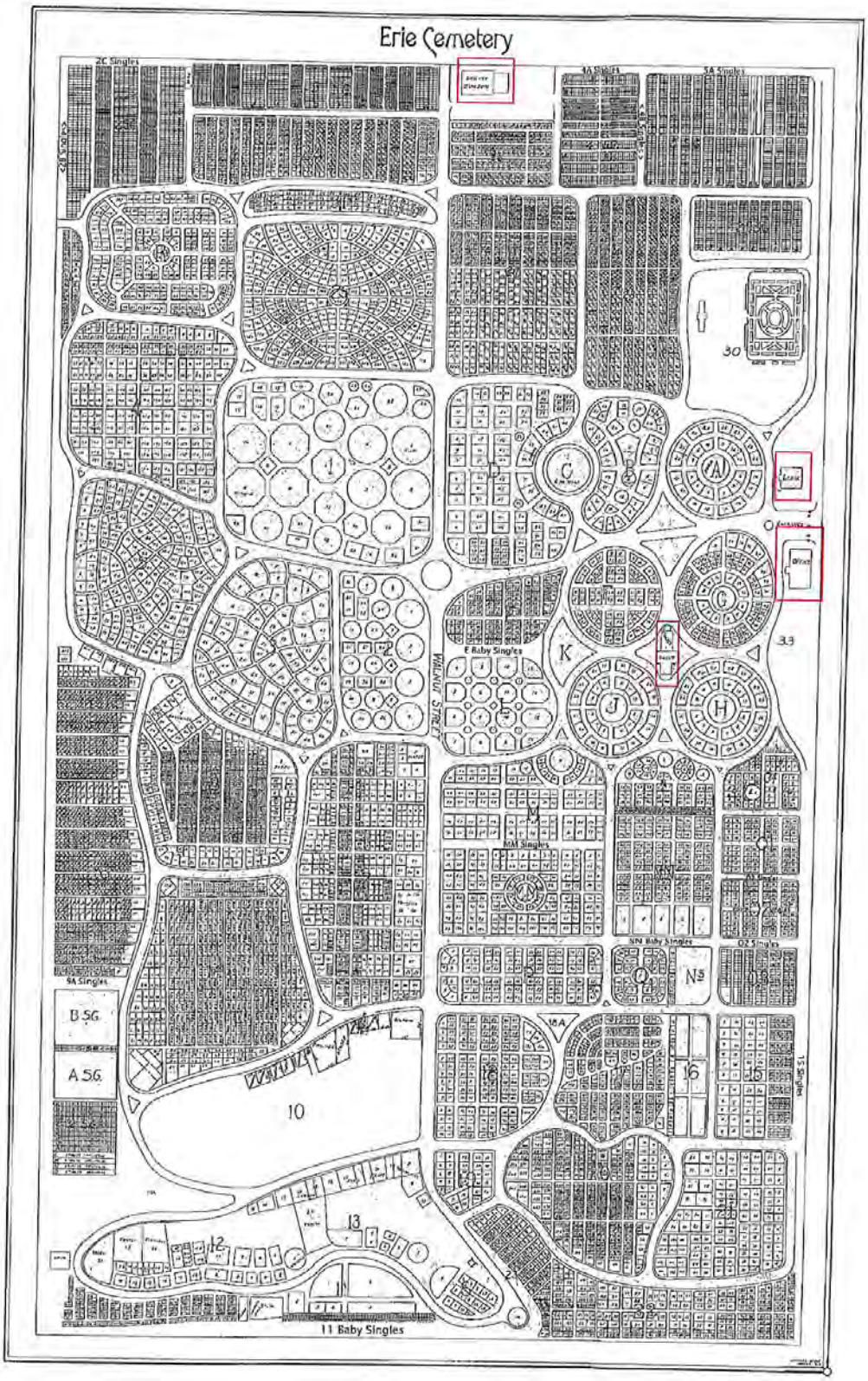
Most of the cemetery's buildings reflect a similar style and construction with the exception the brick maintenance building. This building was constructed in 1909 by Constable Brothers construction company of Erie. The "porters lodge" or current office, is a one-story building of Richardsonian Romanesque design is comprised mainly of hewn brownstone. It is located immediately to the left of the main cemetery gates on Chestnut Street. The Grounds Supervisor's home, a two-story building also primarily comprised of hewn brownstone and of Richardsonian Romanesque design, is to the right of the gates upon entering. The Chapel and Crematorium, another Richardsonian Romanesque building of hewn brownstone, laid out in a Latin-cross plan with a spire rising from its crossing, are not far from office, just further inside the cemetery grounds. Each building is marked on the following map.



Maintenance Building on West 19th Street. Photograph. Undated. From the Collection of the Erie Cemetery Association.

One of the most character-defining features of Erie Cemetery's design is the emphasis on curvilinear design, as manifested in the buildings, sculpted grave markers, and the pathways and burial arrangements throughout. Upon entering the cemetery, the pathway diverges amongst six circular sections, each divided into subsections that contain a variety of gravestones and monuments. These circles act as a strong transition point from the formal, square grid pattern of Erie's streets and serve as a visual break from the surrounding neighborhood. Throughout the cemetery, paths curve and bend, obstructing linear views and redirecting the viewer's gaze through verdant fields and large old-growth trees. All driving paths in the cemetery today are comprised of asphalt while many of those dividing individual sections are a combination of stone, asphalt, and grass. As one moves into the more recent sections of the cemetery, towards its northern side, the use of individual circles surrounded by pathways gives way to circular burial groupings within larger sections.

These curvilinear pathways also directly respond to important topographical features. For example, in the northeastern section of the cemetery where the land is lower and depressed, the pathways encircle the sunken garden and pergola. On the southern end of the cemetery where there is a notable rise on the hillside, the paths curve along the hillside and through the summit.


Erie Cemetery
2C Singles
4A Singles
5A Singles
30
C
A
Office
K
33
E Baby Singles
WALNUT STREET
J
H
M
M1 Singles
N1
N2
NN Baby Singles
O1.5 Singles
9A Singles
B SG
A SG
10
16A
16
15
15 Singles
12
13
11 Baby Singles

Notable Structures, Objects, & Sites



William L. Scott Mausoleum. Photograph. Undated. From the Collection of the Erie Cemetery Association.

The most prominent mausoleum within Erie Cemetery is the one built by William L. Scott in 1889 at the request of the Erie businessman and politician. It is the largest private mausoleum in Erie County, encompassing 1,000 square feet and rising 50 feet high. Designed in the Gothic Revival style and shaped like a Greek Cross, the mausoleum features:

- A portico supported by polished granite pillars
- Hallowell granite walls with engaged, stepped buttresses
- A pyramidal spire roof with pointed-arched niches and a cross-shaped finial
- 22 polished granite columns
- Solid bronze entrance doors flourished with ornate tracery
- 24 crypts, adorned with Florentine, French, and African marble
- Stained glass windows and decorative interior ironwork

Its design closely resembles the mausoleum of J.B. Ford, founder of Pittsburgh Plate Glass Company, in Pittsburgh's Allegheny Cemetery. In 1911, the mausoleum was broken into, resulting in significant damage and the relocation of Mr. Scott's sister-in-law's remains. A ransom note demanding $50,000 was received, leading to the arrest and conviction of individuals from the Perkins Union Detective Agency, hired to solve the case but were, in fact, guilty of perpetrating it for their own gain.

The various styles of grave markers within the cemetery offer valuable insights into its development over time. One distinctive example is reflective of the Rustic Style monument, which resembles carved wood and was produced between the mid-1800s until the 1920s. These markers are associated with the fraternal organization *Woodmen of the World*, which provided them as a member benefit. Erie Cemetery houses more than a dozen of these memorials, serving as both historical artifacts and symbols of community affiliation.



Frances M. Elliot Tombstone (Woodmen of the World Example). B. Weiser. Undated.

Zinc grave markers represent another significant feature of Erie Cemetery. Manufactured between 1874-1914 by the Monumental Bronze Company of Bridgeport, Connecticut, these metal monuments were an affordable alternative to traditional stone markers. Each was customized to honor the deceased, reflecting a blend of personalization and industrial innovation. Production ceased during World War I when the company shifted its focus to munitions manufacturing. Although briefly revived after the war, the popularity of zinc markers declined, and production ended in the early 1930s. Recognizable by their distinctive blue-gray hue, Erie Cemetery contains approximately a dozen of these rare memorials.

Erie Cemetery is also home to several monuments and memorials reflective of the city's diverse citizenry and commemorative of events which shaped our history. For example, a Section is devoted to underprivileged children of the Sarah Reed House. Another monument is dedicated to the unknown soldiers and sailors of the War of 1812 and this is coupled with a memorial to honor the dead of the U.S.S. Michigan's accidental gun discharge. The cemetery is also home to several people who perished in the Millcreek Flood and, more recently, those who perished in the daycare fire of 2019.

Erie Cemetery is, from its founding, a non-sectarian and non-denominational place of rest and early records indicate that the cemetery was also a place of burial open to African-Americans. The cemetery's original Record Book captures the minutes of the annual meeting of January 12, 1852 and states "The south part of Section O has been set apart for Colored people; the lots will be sold in consecutive number 1.2.3. etc. Two or more lots will be sold as family burial lots…" and continues on to prescribe pricing and dimensions of headstones. As this language and pricing mirrors that used in other Sections of the cemetery in this same Record Book, further research and contextualization is needed to holistically realize this important historical narrative. Many of these graves were historically unmarked and, as is the case with the eleven members of Harry T. Burleigh's family, recent monuments were erected to honor the deceased and make their stories, and their final resting places, more accessible.



Bractus M. Cole Tombstone (Zinc Example). B. Weiser. Undated.

History

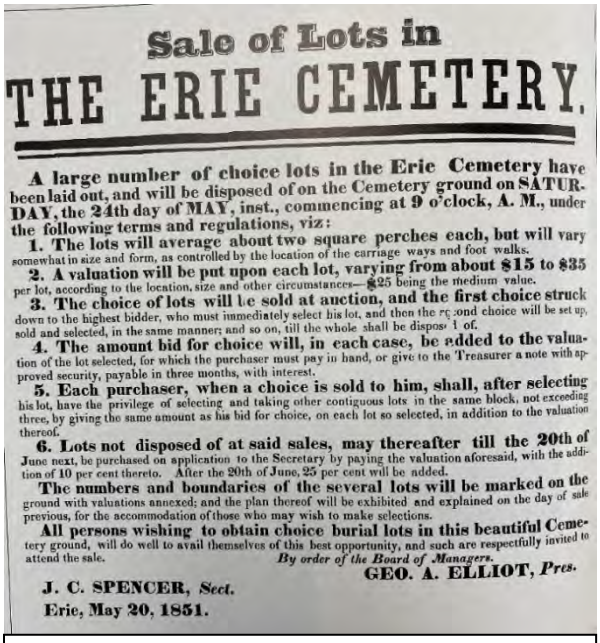
Site History – Pre-Construction

The land that would later become home to Erie Cemetery was originally connected to indigenous peoples. The Erie people (also referred to as the Kahqua, Eriechronon, Riquéronon, Erielhonan, Eriez, Nation du Chat) were an Iroquoian group who lived along the south shore of Lake Erie in what is now Ohio, Pennsylvania, and western New York. Ultimately European colonists would settle this land.

Burials in Erie began with Native American communities and continued with European settlers following the establishment of a French fort in 1753 near Parade Street. As Erie developed, congregations established their own graveyards:

- United Presbyterians: S.E. corner of French & East 8th Streets
- First Presbyterians: S.E. corner of Myrtle & West 7th Streets
- Episcopalians: Between Myrtle and Chestnut, 7th & 8th Streets
- Lutherans: Myrtle and Sassafras, 22nd & 23rd Streets
- Catholics: Near St. Patrick's Church on 3rd Street & St. Mary's on 9th Street
- Reform Jews: West 26th Street, East of Cherry Street, purchased in 1858.

Due to increasing maintenance costs and urban expansion, civic leaders sought a centralized burial ground. As reported in the *Erie Gazette* (May 1847), they aimed to find "a spot suitable and large enough to answer the purposes of a burying place for all." 31 signatories committed $100 to purchase 75 acres for what would become the cemetery. The land owned by Eli K. Price was selected, and the Pennsylvania State Legislature passed the "Act to Incorporate the Erie Cemetery" on January 29, 1850. The formal dedication took place on May 20, 1851 and the first burial occurred shortly after.



Sale of Lots in

THE ERIE CEMETERY.

A large number of choice lots in the Erie Cemetery have been laid out, and will be disposed of on the Cemetery ground on **SATURDAY, the 24th day of MAY, inst., commencing at 9 o'clock, A. M.,** under **the following terms and regulations, viz:**

1. The lots will average about two square perches each, but will vary somewhat in size and form, as controlled by the location of the carriage ways and foot walks.

2. A valuation will be put upon each lot, varying from about $15 to $35 per lot, according to the location, size and other circumstances—$25 being the medium value.

3. The choice of lots will be sold at auction, and the first choice struck down to the highest bidder, who must immediately select his lot, and then the second choice will be set up, sold and selected, in the same manner; and so on, till the whole shall be disposed of.

4. The amount bid for choice will, in each case, be added to the valua-tion of the lot selected, for which the purchaser must pay in hand, or give to the Treasurer a note with approved security, payable in three months, with interest.

5. Each purchaser, when a choice is sold to him, shall, after selecting his lot, have the privilege of selecting and taking other contiguous lots in the same block, not exceeding three, by giving the same amount as his bid for choice, on each lot so selected, in addition to the valuation thereof.

6. Lots not disposed of at said sales, may thereafter till the 20th of June next, be purchased on application to the Secretary by paying the valuation aforesaid, with the addition of 10 per cent thereto. After the 20th of June, 25 per cent will be added.

The numbers and boundaries of the several lots will be marked on the ground with valuations annexed; and the plan thereof will be exhibited and explained on the day of sale previous, for the accommodation of those who may wish to make selections.

All persons wishing to obtain choice burial lots in this beautiful Ceme-tery ground, will do well to avail themselves of this best opportunity, and such are respectfully invited to attend the sale.

By order of the Board of Managers.

GEO. A. ELLIOT, *Pres.*

J. C. SPENCER, *Sect.*

Erie, May 20, 1851.

Sale of Lots Advertisement. From the Collection of the Erie Cemetery Association.

City graveyards were gradually closed, and Protestant remains were relocated to Erie Cemetery. One of the earliest reinternments occurred in 1858 with the First Presbyterian and Episcopalian Churches. In 1859 remains were discovered on the Bluffs during the construction of the Sunbury and Erie Railroad. At that time, they were then believed to be those of soldiers & sailors who fought in the War of 1812 and were reinterred with full military honors in Erie Cemetery. In 1862, the United Presbyterian graveyard was sold, and bodies reinterred; however, some remains were missed and rediscovered during the excavation of the Civic Center (now Erie Insurance Arena) in the early 1980s. Catholic Churches also made efforts to close their graveyards downtown and burials were moved to Trinity Cemetery, established in 1869.



Map of reinterments from the Presbyterian graveyard, colloquially known as the "Witches' Circle". 1858. From the Collection of the Erie Cemetery Association.

Site History – Construction

When first founded, the site that would become Erie Cemetery was largely dense woodland and efforts were made to not only make this a place for burials but to convert these acres into a curated, accessible, and aesthetically pleasing environment. It is important to note that today Erie Cemetery remains an active burial site and so, changes are ongoing.

On December 20, 1850, Howard Daniels, a nationally-known landscape gardener (what would today be understood as a landscape architect), was selected to lay out the initial design of the cemetery. Erie weather delayed his progress, but he was able to complete the design of initial lots by the opening in May. Low retained Daniels to lay out additional lots and used his own background as a civil engineer and former City surveyor to ensure the harmonious integration of future construction, including a wooden superintendent's residence and a barn for equipment. In 1867, an iron gateway manufactured by Robert Wood & Co. of Philadelphia was installed, along with fencing and sidewalks.



Ground Supervisor's Home and Entrance to Cemetery. Photograph. Undated. From the Collection of the Erie Cemetery Association.



Ground Supervisor's Home. Photograph. Undated. From the Collection of the Erie Cemetery Association.

The Porter's Lodge (now the cemetery office) was designed by J.C. Marshall Shirk and constructed by the Henry Shenk Company in 1897. Built in the Richardsonian Romanesque style using pink Medina sandstone, it complements the stone chapel designed in 1887 by Green & Wicks of Buffalo, one of the leading architectural firms of the time. The chapel was remodeled in 1960 to include a modern crematorium, still in use today.



Porter's Lodge. Photograph. Undated. From the Collection of the Erie Cemetery Association.



Chapel. Photograph. Undated. From the Collection of the Erie Cemetery Association.

In 1912, the original wooden residence was replaced with a pink medina stone building designed by Alden & Harlow of Pittsburgh, which continues to serve as the grounds supervisor's home. In 1915, a Classical Revival pergola and asphalt roadways were added to the grounds. The pergola is near the site of Erie Cemetery's "sunken garden". For many years, this garden was filled with thousands of tulips which brought visitors to the cemetery every Spring. Begun in an undetermined year, the garden was maintained until the 1960s when it is believed rising costs ended this popular planting program.



ERIE, PA., THURSDAY, MAY 16, 1940.

UNCIL COLD
REQUESTS
R PAY HIKES

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en Way to Added
Demands

War In Europe May Curb Display Of Tulips At The Erie Cemetery



A Beauty Spot in Erie, PA. Postcard. Postmarked 1938. From the Collection of M. Falcone.



Sunken Garden in Spring. Postcard. 1963. From the Collection of the Erie Cemetery Association.

Significance Criteria

a) That are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of Erie history; or

This resource does not meet this Criterion.

b) That are associated with the lives of persons significant in Erie's past; or

This resource meets this Criterion as it is affiliated with life and work of Emma Hay, one of, if not the, earliest women in the country to serve as a superintendent of a major American cemetery. Hay served as the superintendent of the Erie Cemetery from 1892–1916 following her husband's (Henry) death.



Entranceway featuring Emma Hay. Photograph. Undated. From the Collection of the Erie Cemetery Association.

Hay was responsible for several improvements to Erie Cemetery during her tenure, not the least of which was the gate and porter's lodge designed by J.C. Marshall Shirk.[1] Hay was also an enthusiastic member of the American Cemetery Superintendents Association (founded in 1887 and is today known as the International Cemetery and Funeral Association). During Hay's tenure as superintendent, she was known for leading funeral processions on a bicycle, which at this time was often viewed as a symbol for freedom, independence, and the emerging women's right movement.[2]

It is difficult to contextualize the significance and impact of Hay's role as Erie Cemetery

[1] Claridge, John R. *Landscapes for Eternity: Erie, Laurel Hill & Wintergreen Gorge Cemeteries*. Erie, PA: Claridge Publishing, 1995. PP. 36-37.

2. Ostroff, Hannah S. *How the 19th-Century Bicycle Craze Empowered Women and Changed Fashion.* The Smithsonian. Accessed: The 19th-Century Bicycle Craze | Smithsonian Institution; November 14, 2025.

superintendent because of the lack of comprehensive records related to cemeteries across the country, state, and county. From the records we do have, it is clear that Hay was one of the earlier pioneers in what we know today as the funeral care services. In Philadelphia, Henrietta Bowers is regarded as the first woman to own a mortuary after her husband, the original proprietor of the business, passed away.[3] In Gettysburg, Elizbeth Thorn is noted for serving as the unofficial caretaker for Evergreen Cemetery while her husband served in the Union Army from 1862-1865. Her work burying 91 dead and her work was later denied by then Evergreen Cemetery president David McConaughy.[4]

In contrast, Hays was welcomed into her role as superintend and her work received public accolades. In *Erie Cemetery: A Hand Book: Historical. Biographical. Descriptive*. published in 1903, Hay was described as:

> *…it is no doubt from this admirable stock that Mrs. Hays has inherited the marked executive ability noticeable in her administration of her present charge. Henry W. Hay died Jan. 24, 1892, after filling the position of superintendent less than three years. Immediately after his death, the position of superintendent was tenured to his widow, who during her husband's term had familiarized herself with the work. Being urged with diffidence, she accepted the trust, which had been filled to the entire acceptability of the management.*[5]

Women would continue to make inroads into important roles in the funeral care industry over time, albeit slowly. Juanita Dixon Walker became the National Cemetery Administration's first woman cemetery director in 1974 at Lebanon National Cemetery in Kentucky.[6] In 1970, 5% of funeral director program graduates were women, in 2019 that figure climbed to 72%.[7]

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[3] Greenidge, Kaitlyn. *The Life and Activism of Henrietta S. Bowers Duterte*. Historic America. Accessed: https://www.historicamerica.org/journal/2021/4/8/the-work-and-activism-of-henrietta-s-bowers-duterte; November 17, 2025.
[4] Loski, Diana. *Elizabeth Thorn: "Those Were Hard Days,"* Accessed: Elizabeth Thorn | Those Were Hard Days | The Gettysburg Experience; November 17, 2025.
[5] *Erie Cemetery. A Handbook: Historical, Biographical, Descriptive.* Erie, PA: Erie Cemetery Association, 1903. Pp. 94-95.
5 *Chattanooga National Cemetery*, National Cemetery Administration, U.S Department of Veteran Affairs. Accessed: Chattanooga National Cemetery - National Cemetery Administration; November 14, 2025.
6 *Women in the Profession: How Female Funeral Directors Are Reshaping Funeral Homes*. Tribute Technology. April 15, 2025. Accessed: Women in the Profession: How Female Funeral Directors Are Reshaping Funeral Homes; November 14, 2025.

c) That embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or

This resource meets this Criterion as it is a one of the best examples of the Rural Cemetery Movement within the City of Erie.

This Rural Cemetery Movement began in 1831 with the establishment of Mount Auburn Cemetery in Cambridge, Massachusetts. The movement sought to create a more aesthetically pleasing environment for burials and drew inspiration from formal European garden and cemetery design, like that of Père Lachaise Cemetery in Paris. Using natural geographical features, curated plantings, and artistic embellishments (such as statues, mausoleums, stained glass), the movement drew inspiration from Romanticism, resulting in the creation of cemeteries that more closely resembled manicured parks.

The design approach of the Rual Cemetery Movement remains present in Erie Cemetery today. Erie Cemetery was designed by nationally-renowned landscape gardener Howard Daniels (1815–1863). Daniels' work at Spring Grove Cemetery in Cincinnati, Oakwood Cemetery in Syracuse, and Druid Hill Park in Baltimore, among others made him a predominant figure in this movement. It is also of note that Daniels was a published contributor to *The Magazine of Horticulture* and *The Horticulturist* and placed fourth in the design competition for New York City's Central Park. Daniel's design for Erie Cemetery took advantage of the natural topography of the site, creating curvilinear walking paths throughout that forces those to meander and wander. Daniels took special care to integrate these pathways into naturally existing topographical features onsite, which can be seen in the singular pathway around the hilltop in the south and sunken gardens in the geographically depressed area of the site in the north.

The design features of the Rural Cemetery Movement are also resplendent throughout Erie Cemetery. While several of the monuments and tombstones near the entrance to the cemetery are modest in size and scale, it should be noted that many predate the existence of the cemetery itself and were moved from other sites. Throughout the cemetery, large carved stone monuments and mausoleums are grouped together in circular burial groups. The presence of over 70 urns throughout the cemetery also pull from Victorian symbolism related to death. The chapel, lodge, caretakers house, and – to a lesser extent - maintenance building also help to reinforce Romantic design elements as their Richardsonian Romanesque design approach incorporating roughhewn brownstone, curvilinear rooflines, and a use of natural materials.

The Rual Cemetery Movement also sought to solve growing issues of public health and urban sanitation, the overabundance of burials (and dead bodies) within cities. As urban growth increasingly encroached upon small church graveyards, the public and city officials across the country became increasingly concerned with the real and perceived public health concerns. For example, the New York Board of Health recommended that all burials be moved outside of city limits and the former gravesites be turned into parks

"instead of remaining receptacles of putrefying matter."[8] Officials in Erie shared similar concerns and the creation of Erie Cemetery led to the exhumation and reburial of hundreds of bodies. Today, Erie Cemetery is located inside the City of Erie because of the city's continued growth and expansion in the 20th century and future annexations.

There are several other examples of cemeteries in and around the City of Erie that share similar historical and design connections though remain distinctly different from Erie Cemetery's Rural Cemetery Movement connection. The first Jewish organization in the city came into existence in 1846 when a group from Erie's Jewish community founded the Anshe Hesed Burial Society. Following Jewish burial customs, they purchased land outside of Erie's city limits, close to Erie Cemetery between Poplar Street and Cherry Street in 1858. Burials here were restricted to only those of Jewish faith and no formal landscape design scheme is present.[9] Similarly, Trinity Cemetery, located outside of the city of Erie in Millcreek Township opened in 1869 and burials here were restricted to Catholics. Like Erie Cemetery, Trinity Cemetery is filled with monuments and gravestones from the Victorian Era though the plan of the cemetery does not emphasize an integration with the natural environment as is often seen within the Rural Cemetery Movement.[10] Lakeside Cemetery, located on Erie's East Side between Lake Erie and E. Lake Road was founded in 1898. Though verdant, its design and construction contrast to Erie Cemetery in that they draw inspiration from military cemeteries and Lawn Parks. It is notably home to Captain Charles V. Gridley's final resting place and a significant memorial to his bravery in the Spanish-American War.[11]

Erie Cemetery's rolling hills, verdant landscape, and meandering lanes make it the best exemplification of the Rural Cemetery Movement within Erie and continue to offer a peaceful retreat, still following the original intent of its founders. Its design embraces English Romantic ideals, featuring winding paths that followed the natural topography, preserved forest trees, and thoughtfully planned foliage.

d) That have yielded or may be likely to yield information important in Erie's prehistory or history; or

There is potential for archaeological resources on this property, but no archaeological testing has been conducted. Future research may result in the development of an area of significance under this Criterion.

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[8] Burial Customs and Cemeteries: Introduction: Guidelines for Evaluating and Registering Cemeteries and Burial Places." National Parks Service. U.S. Department of the Interior, n.d.Web. 19 Apr. 2016. https://www.nps.gov/nr/publications/bulletins/nrb41/nrb41_5.htm

[2] *Our Story*. Temple Anshe Hesed. Accessed: Our Story - Temple Anshe Hesed, November 11, 2025.

3 *Trinity Cemetery*, Erie Diocesan Cemeteries, Diocese of Erie. Accessed: The Roman Catholic Diocese of Erie, Pa., November 11, 2025.

3 *Death of the Cemetery: An Integrity Assessment of Historic Cemeteries in Erie County, Pennsylvania*. Rachel Sites. 2015. Accessed: sites-2015.pdf; November 14, 2025.

e) That represent a cultural, historic, architectural, archaeological or related theme expressed through distinctive areas, properties, sites, structures or objects that may or may not be contiguous; or

This resource could potentially meet this Criterion; additional research and sites are needed.

f) That exhibit a unique location or distinctive physical appearance or presence representing an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood, community, or Erie.

This resource meets this Criterion as it is a visually prominent feature within the Little Erie Neighborhood and the City of Erie. Erie Cemetery occupies a prominent role in Erie's cultural landscape. Numerous books have been written about the history of the cemetery itself, interesting events that have taken place there, and some of its stories have occupied folkloric space within the city. Additionally, Erie Cemetery's 75 acres are filled with mature, old-growth trees and it is one of the largest open green spaces in the city; frequently used by neighbors for leisure and recreational activities, akin to a public park. The verdant nature of the space is a distinct departure from the surrounding dense, urban landscape of Little Italy and the immediately adjacent Sigsbee Reservoir.



Ghosts and Legends Tour. Photograph. October 2025. M. Falcone.

As testament to the role Erie Cemetery plays in the cultural life of Erie, it today hosts a robust, year-long cultural programming that draws thousands of people to the cemetery. Events like the spring "Dine Among the Departed", fall's "Ghost and Legends Tour" and Summer "Firefly Tour" all incorporate important elements of our city's history and cultural practices involving the dearly departed and make Erie Cemetery's rich history accessible to us all. The creation of the Erie Cemetery Association Foundation and the Adopt an Urn Program highlight the large number of volunteers from and around Erie who dedicate their time and service towards the care and upkeep of this special place within our city.

Erie Cemetery is also an officially designated Level 1 arboretum and home to some of the oldest, and largest variety (68 distinct species) of trees within Erie. At 75 acres, Erie Cemetery rivals the largest public parks (Glenwood & McClellen) in size with the city and serves an essential environmental role within our community. The cemetery helps to connect neighbors with accessible greenspace and serves as a haven for wildlife, especially migratory birds.



Dining Among the Departed. Photograph. Undated. From the Collection of the Erie Cemetery Association.



Arboretum Tour. Photograph. Undated. From the Collection of the Erie Cemetery Association.

Integrity

- *Location:* Erie Cemetery conveys a high degree of integrity of location as the original acreage acquired to create the cemetery remains the entirety of the cemetery's expanse today.

- *Design:* The design of Erie Cemetery retains a high degree of integrity and different sections of the cemetery and the pathways and roads connecting them can easily be visually connected back to the different stylistic movements that influenced its overall design.

- *Materials:* There is a high degree of material integrity in Erie Cemetery, with minor alterations in materials largely centered on the introduction of asphalt in the roadways and replacement of the more mechanical elements of the cemetery's buildings (i.e. the replacement of copper gutters with aluminum).

- *Workmanship:* Erie Cemetery retains a high degree of integrity regarding workmanship present throughout the site. This can be seen from the hewn stones of the buildings to the ornately carved gravestones, markers, and mausoleums, which are the most predominant elements of the constructed environment throughout the site.



Gravemarker of Moses & Jane Billings. Photograph. November 2025. M. Falcone.

Erie Cemetery
Historic Resource Nomination Binder
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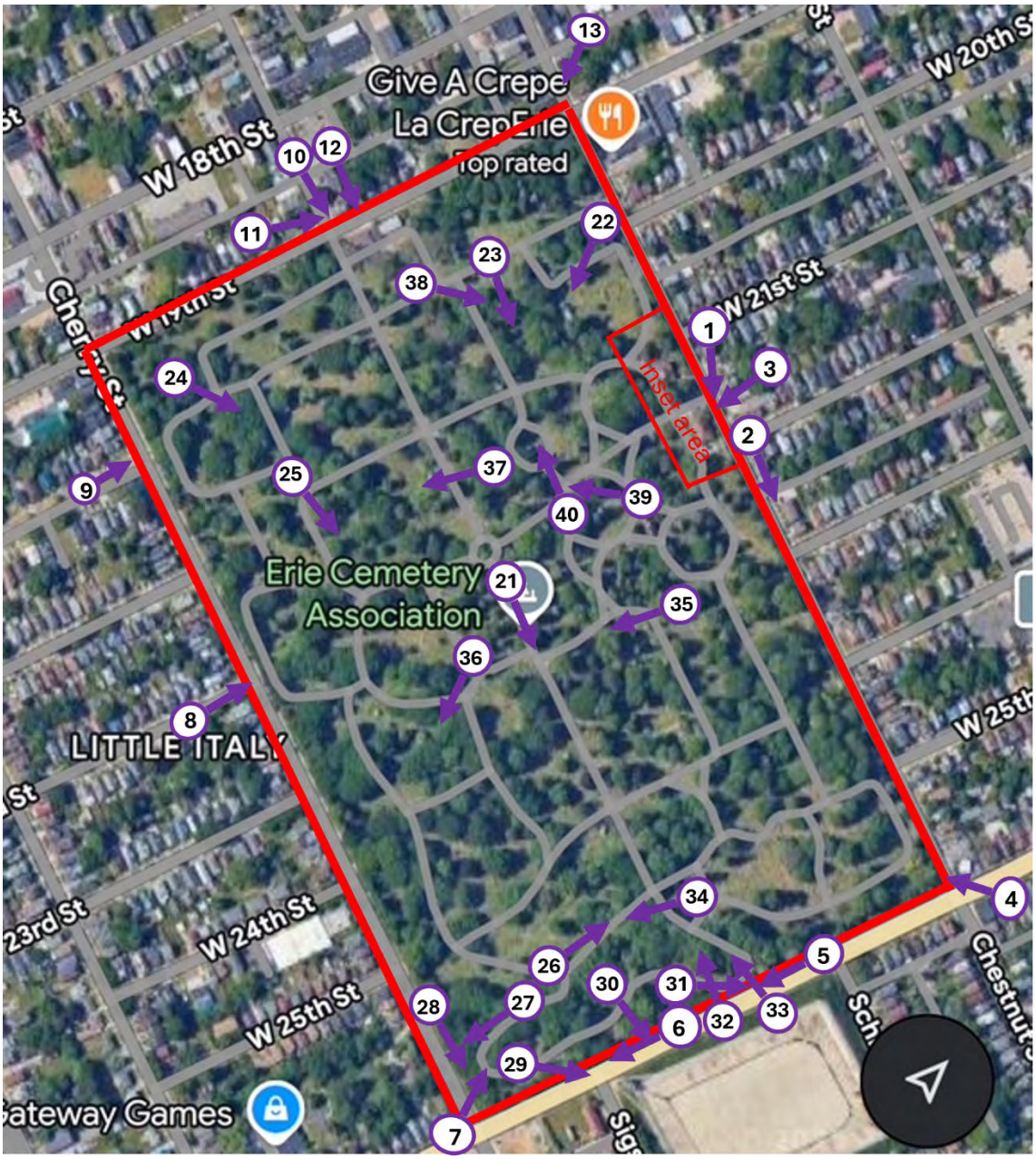
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Erie Cemetery
Historic Resource Nomination Binder
Photo Log

Erie Cemetery - Areal View with Photo Key



Erie Cemetery – Inset Area with Photo Key

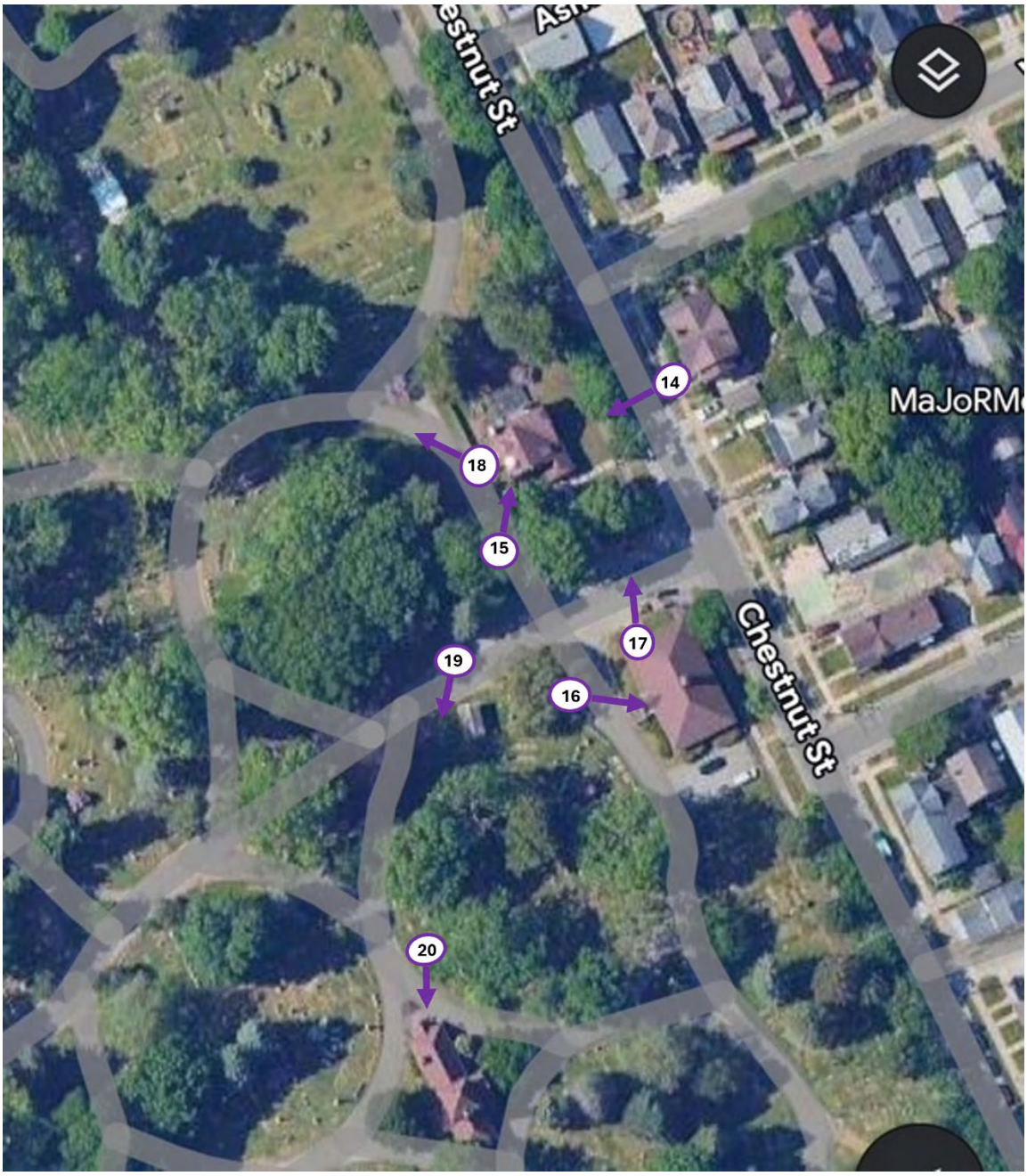




Photo 1. Erie Cemetery, Entrance Gate facing S.E., M. Falcone. November, 2025.



Photo 2. Erie Cemetery, Chestnut Street facing S.E., M. Falcone. November, 2025.



Photo 3. Erie Cemetery, Entrance Gate Detail facing S.W., M. Falcone. November, 2025.



Photo 4. Erie Cemetery, Chestnut & 26th Sts. facing N.W., M. Falcone. November, 2025.

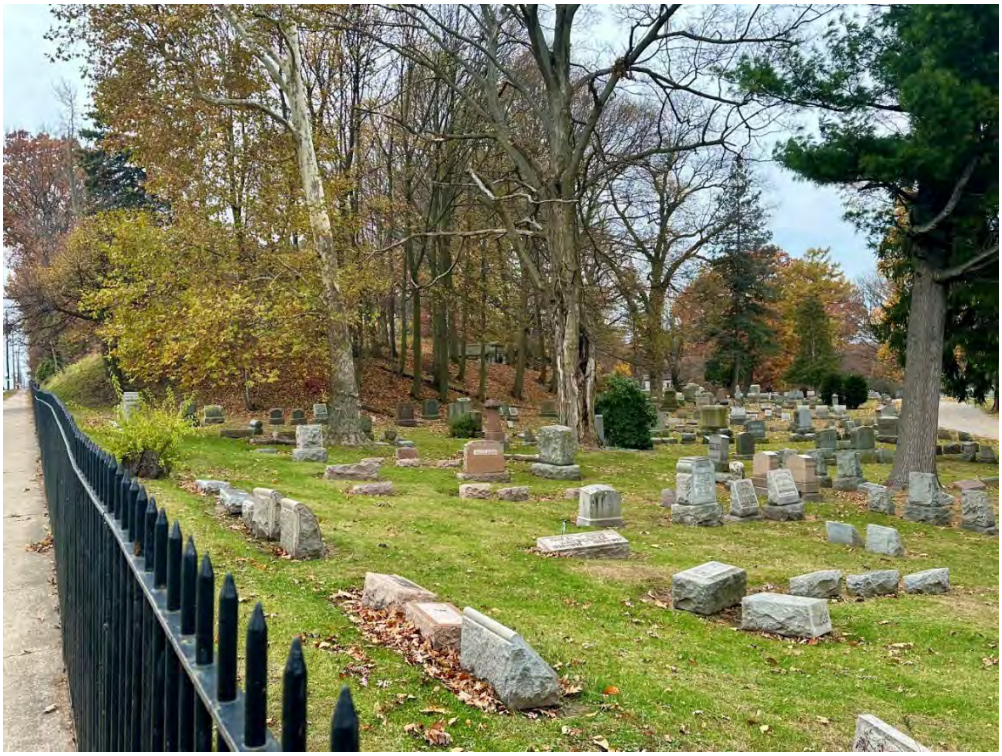

Photo 5. Erie Cemetery, Hillside Near Intersection of Schley & 26th Sts. facing N.W., M. Falcone. November, 2025.



Photo 6. Erie Cemetery, 26th Street (Mid-block) facing S.W., M. Falcone. November, 2025.

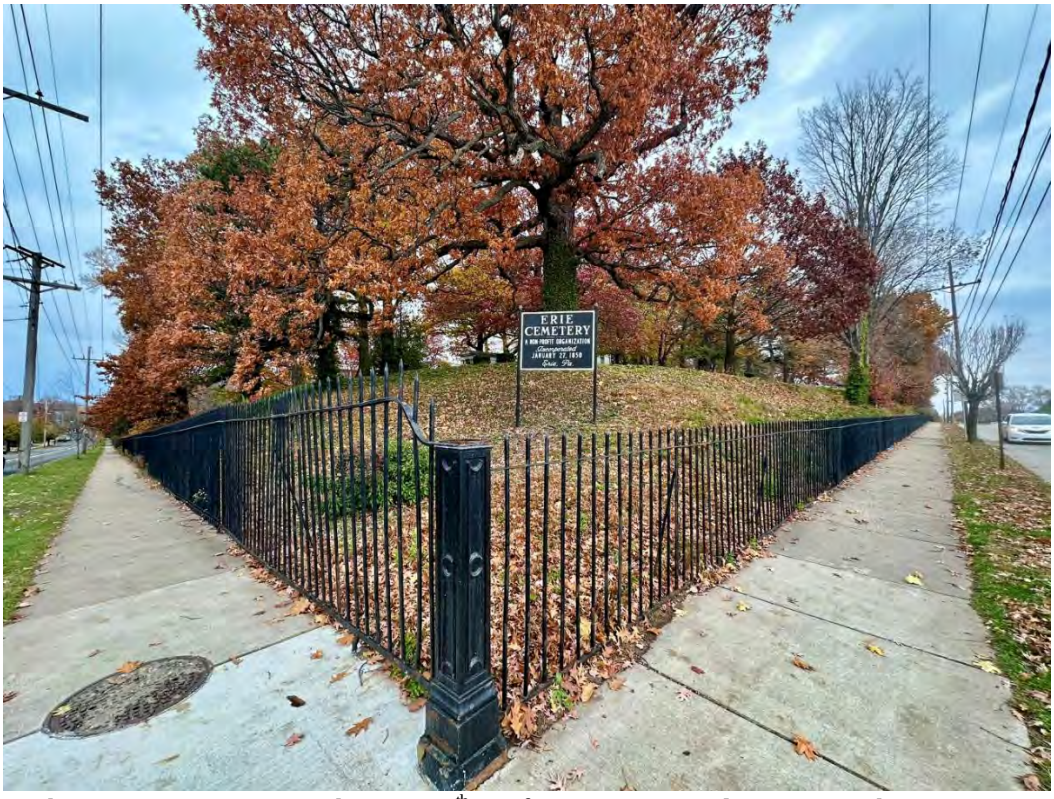


Photo 7. Erie Cemetery, Cherry & 26th Sts. facing N.E., M. Falcone. November, 2025.



Photo 8. Erie Cemetery, Sections near the intersection of Cherry & 22nd Sts. facing N.E., M. Falcone. November, 2025.



Photo 9. Erie Cemetery, Entrance Gate near intersection of Cherry St. & Brown Ave. facing S.E., M. Falcone. November, 2025.



Photo 10. Erie Cemetery, Entrance Gate near the intersection of 19th and Walnut Sts., facing S.E., M. Falcone. November, 2025.



Photo 11. Erie Cemetery, Maintenance Building, Warehouse, & Entrance Gate at the intersection of 19th and Walnut Sts., facing E., M. Falcone. November, 2025.



Photo 12. Erie Cemetery, Maintenance Building facing S.E., M. Falcone. November, 2025.



Photo 13. Erie Cemetery, Corner at Chestnut & 19th Sts. facing S.W., M. Falcone. Nov. 2025.



Photo 14. Erie Cemetery, Ground Supervisor's House facing S.W., M. Falcone. Nov. 2025.



Photo 15. Erie Cemetery, Ground Supervisor's House facing N.W., M. Falcone. Nov. 2025.



Photo 16. Erie Cemetery, Porters Lodge facing S.E., M. Falcone. Nov. 2025.


Photo 17. Erie Cemetery, Entrance facing N.E., M. Falcone. November, 2025.



Photo 18. Erie Cemetery, Section & Pergola facing N.W., M. Falcone. November, 2025.



Photo 19. Erie Cemetery, Section, Thompson Mausoleum, & Chapel facing S.W., M. Falcone. Nov. 2025.



Photo 20. Erie Cemetery, Chapel Entrance facing S.W., M. Falcone. November, 2025.



Photo 21. Erie Cemetery, Walnut Street facing S.E., M. Falcone. November, 2025.



Photo 22. Erie Cemetery, Pergola & Sunken Garden facing N.E., M. Falcone. November 2025.



Photo 23. Erie Cemetery, Section & Pergola facing S.W., M. Falcone. November 2025.



Photo 24. Erie Cemetery, Section facing S.E., M. Falcone. November 2025.


Photo 25. Erie Cemetery, Section facing S.E. M. Falcone. November 2025.



Photo 26. Erie Cemetery, Mausoleum Row facing N.E., Gate. M. Falcone. November 2025.



Photo 27. Erie Cemetery, Hilltop Loop facing S.W., M. Falcone. November 2025.



Photo 28. Erie Cemetery, Hilltop Loop & Brady Mausoleum facing S.E., M. Falcone. Nov. 2025.



Photo 29. Erie Cemetery, Hilltop Loop overlooking Sigsbee Reservoir facing S.E., M. Falcone. November 2025.



Photo 30. Erie Cemetery, Hilltop Loop featuring Sarah Reed House Section & Sigsbee Reservoir, facing S.E., M. Falcone. November 2025.



Photo 31. Erie Cemetery, Section facing S.E., M. Falcone. November 2025.



Photo 32. Erie Cemetery, Soldiers & Sailors Memorial and U.S.S. Michigan Memorial facing N.W., M. Falcone. November 2025.



Photo 33. Erie Cemetery, Section overlooking larger cemetery grounds facing N.E. M. Falcone. November 2025.



Photo 34. Erie Cemetery, Mausoleum Row featuring Brown Mausoleum on left facing S.W., M. Falcone. November 2025.



Photo 35. Erie Cemetery, Sections featuring Chapel on right, facing N.W., M. Falcone. Nov. 2025.



Photo 36. Erie Cemetery, Firch Mausoleum, facing S., M. Falcone. November 2025.



Photo 37. Erie Cemetery, Scott Mausoleum facing S.W., M. Falcone. November 2025.



Photo 38. Erie Cemetery, Pergola S.E., M. Falcone. November 2025.

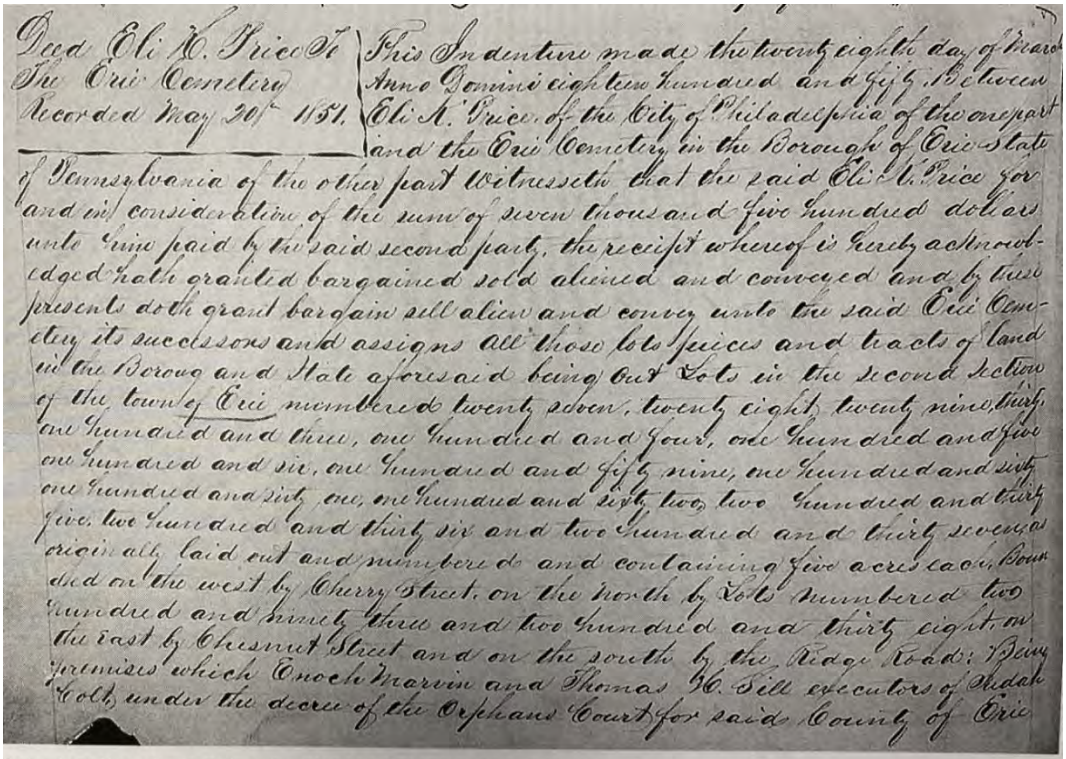


Photo 39. Erie Cemetery, Section facing N.W., M. Falcone. November 2025.



Photo 40. Erie Cemetery, Reed Section featuring Sarah Reed Memorial facing N.W., M. Falcone. November 2025.

Erie Cemetery
Historic Resource Nomination Binder
Supporting Documents

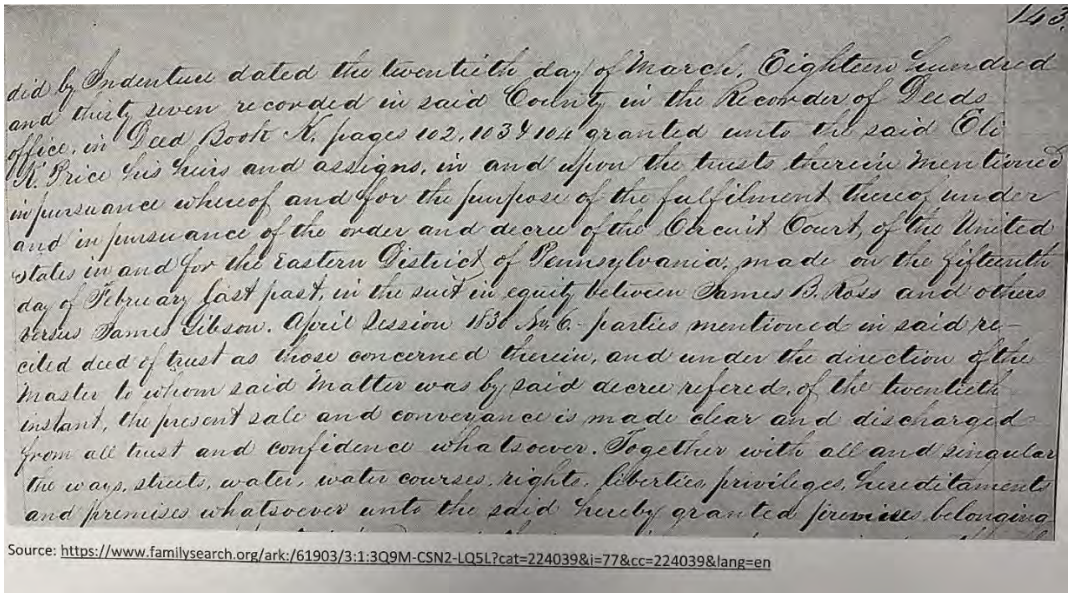


Deed Eli K. Price To
The Erie Cemetery
Recorded May 20th 1851.

This Indenture made the twenty eighth day of March in the year of our Lord Anno Domini eighteen hundred and fifty one Between Eli K. Price of the City of Philadelphia of the one part and the Erie Cemetery in the Borough of Erie State of Pennsylvania of the other part Witnesseth that the said Eli K. Price for and in consideration of the sum of seven thousand five hundred dollars unto him paid by the said second part, the receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged hath granted bargained sold aliened and conveyed and by these presents doth grant bargain sell alien and convey unto the said Erie Cemetery its successors and assigns All those lots pieces and tracts of land in the Borough and State aforesaid being out lots in the second section of the town of Erie numbered twenty seven, twenty eight, twenty nine, thirty one hundred and three, one hundred and four, one hundred and five one hundred and six, one hundred and fifty nine, one hundred and sixty one hundred and sixty one, one hundred and sixty two, two hundred and thirty five, two hundred and thirty six and two hundred and thirty seven as originally laid out and numbered and containing five acres each, Bounded on the west by Cherry Street, on the north by lots numbered two hundred and ninety three and two hundred and thirty eight, on the east by Chesnut Street and on the south by the Ridge Road; Being premises which Enoch Marvin and Thomas H. Sill executors of Elisha Kelly, under the decree of the Orphans Court for said County of Erie

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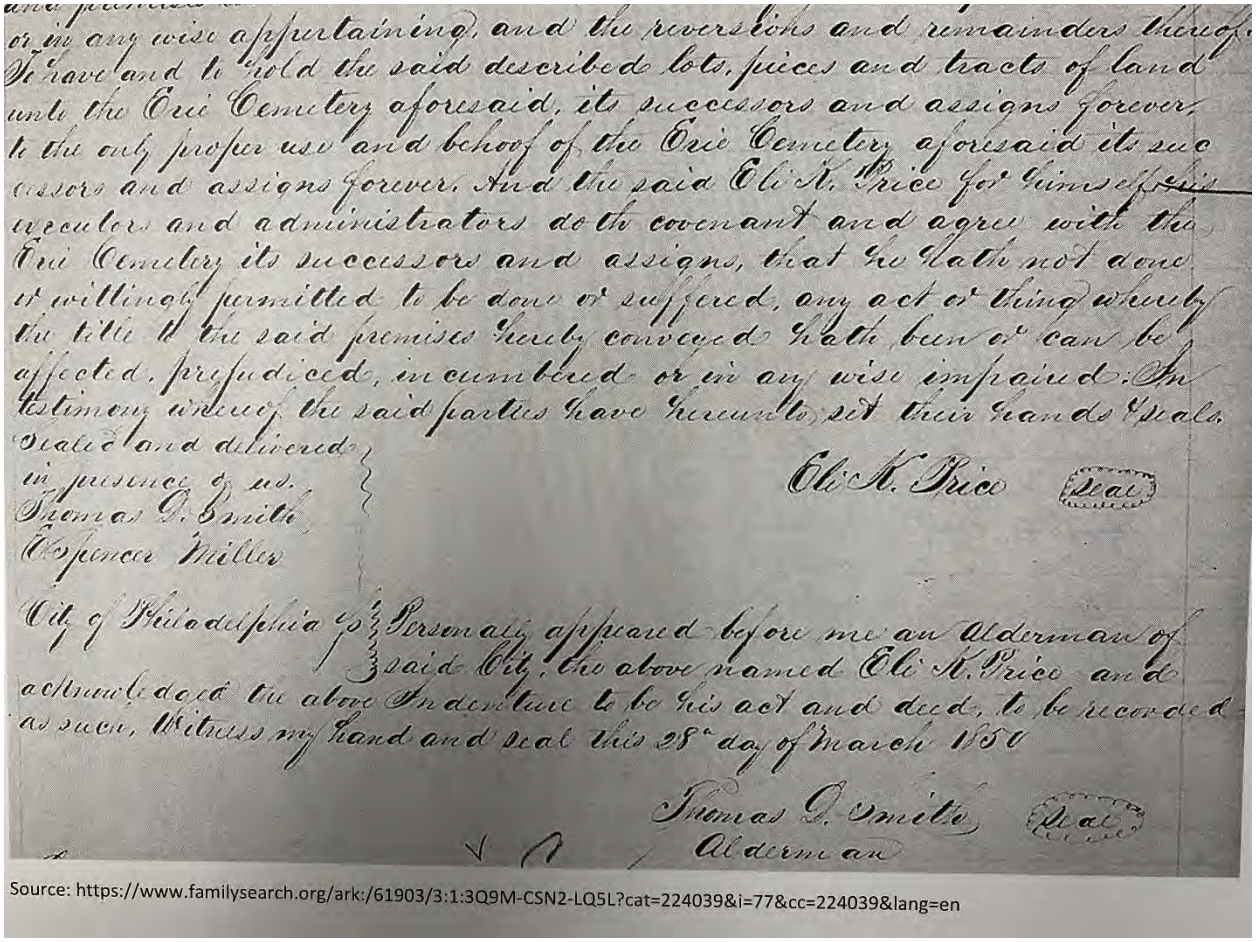
Fig. 1. *Deed Transfer (Page 1).* 1851.



did by Indenture dated the twentieth day of March, Eighteen hundred and thirty seven recorded in said County in the Recorder of Deeds office, in Deed Book K, pages 102, 103 & 104 granted unto the said Eli K. Price his heirs and assigns, in and upon the trusts therein mentioned in pursuance whereof and for the purpose of the fulfilment thereof, under and in pursuance of the order and decree of the Circuit Court, of the United States in and for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, made on the fifteenth day of February last past, in the suit in equity between James B. Ross and others versus James Gibson. April Session 1850 No 6. parties mentioned in said recited deed of trust as those concerned therein, and under the direction of the Master to whom said matter was by said decree refered, of the twentieth instant, the present sale and conveyance is made clear and discharged from all trust and confidence whatsoever. Together with all and singular the ways, streets, water, water courses, rights, liberties, privileges, hereditaments and premises whatsoever unto the said hereby granted premises belonging

Source: https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CSN2-LQ5L?cat=224039&i=77&cc=224039&lang=en

Fig. 2. *Deed Transfer (Page 2).* 1851.



or in any wise appertaining, and the reversions and remainders thereof. To have and to hold the said described lots, pieces and tracts of land unto the Erie Cemetery aforesaid, its successors and assigns forever, to the only proper use and behoof of the Erie Cemetery aforesaid its successors and assigns forever. And the said Eli K. Price for himself his heirs and administrators doth covenant and agree with the Erie Cemetery its successors and assigns, that he hath not done or willingly permitted to be done or suffered, any act or thing whereby the title to the said premises hereby conveyed hath been or can be affected, prejudiced, incumbered or in any wise impaired. In testimony whereof the said parties have hereunto set their hands & seals. Sealed and delivered in presence of us. Thomas D. Smith, Espencer Miller

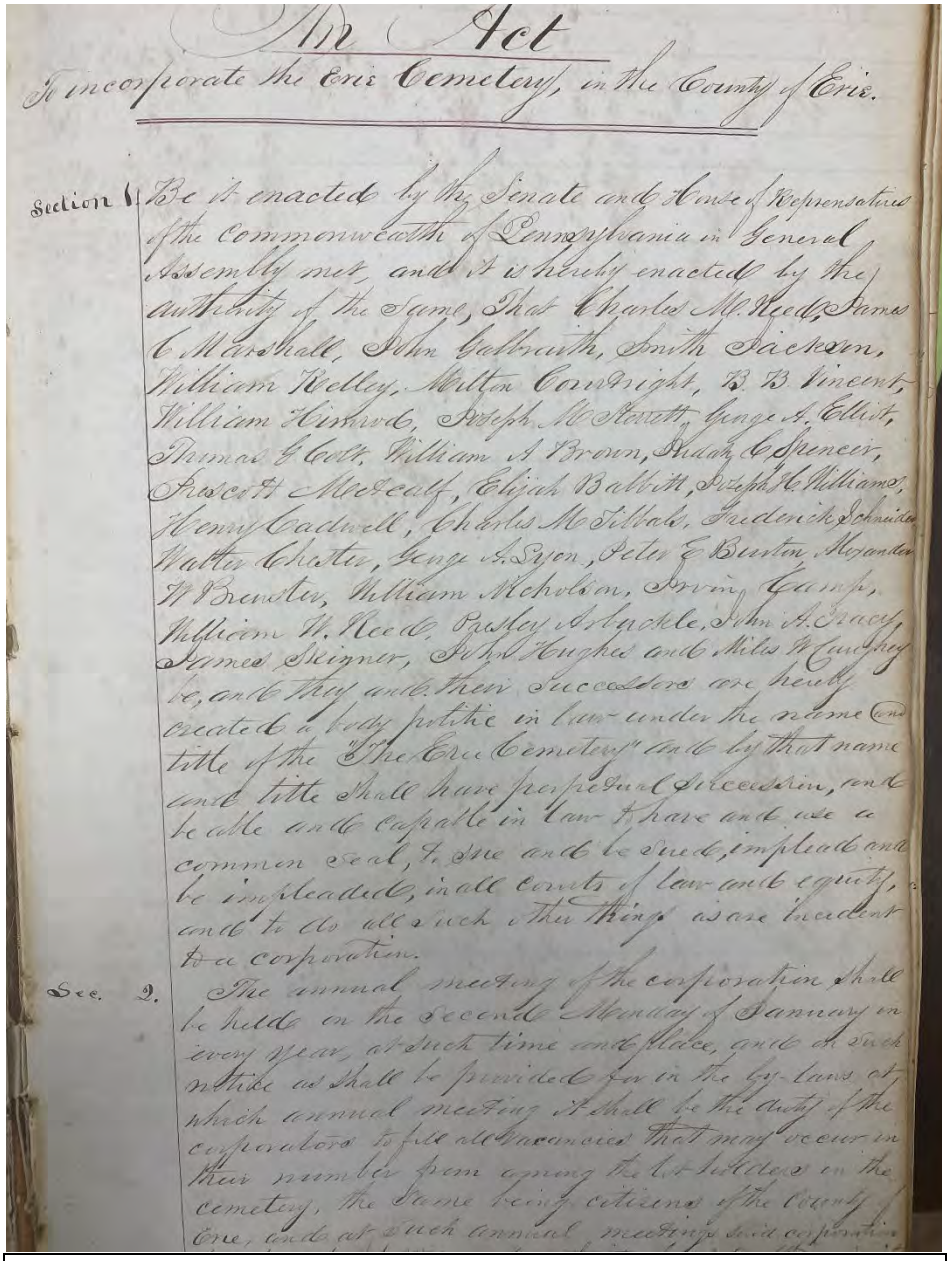
Eli K. Price (Seal)

City of Philadelphia ss: Personally appeared before me an Alderman of said City, the above named Eli K. Price and acknowledged the above Indenture to be his act and deed, to be recorded as such. Witness my hand and seal this 28th day of March 1850

Thomas D. Smith (Seal)
Alderman

Source: https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CSN2-LQ5L?cat=224039&i=77&cc=224039&lang=en

Fig. 3. *Sales Agreement to Erie Cemetery.*



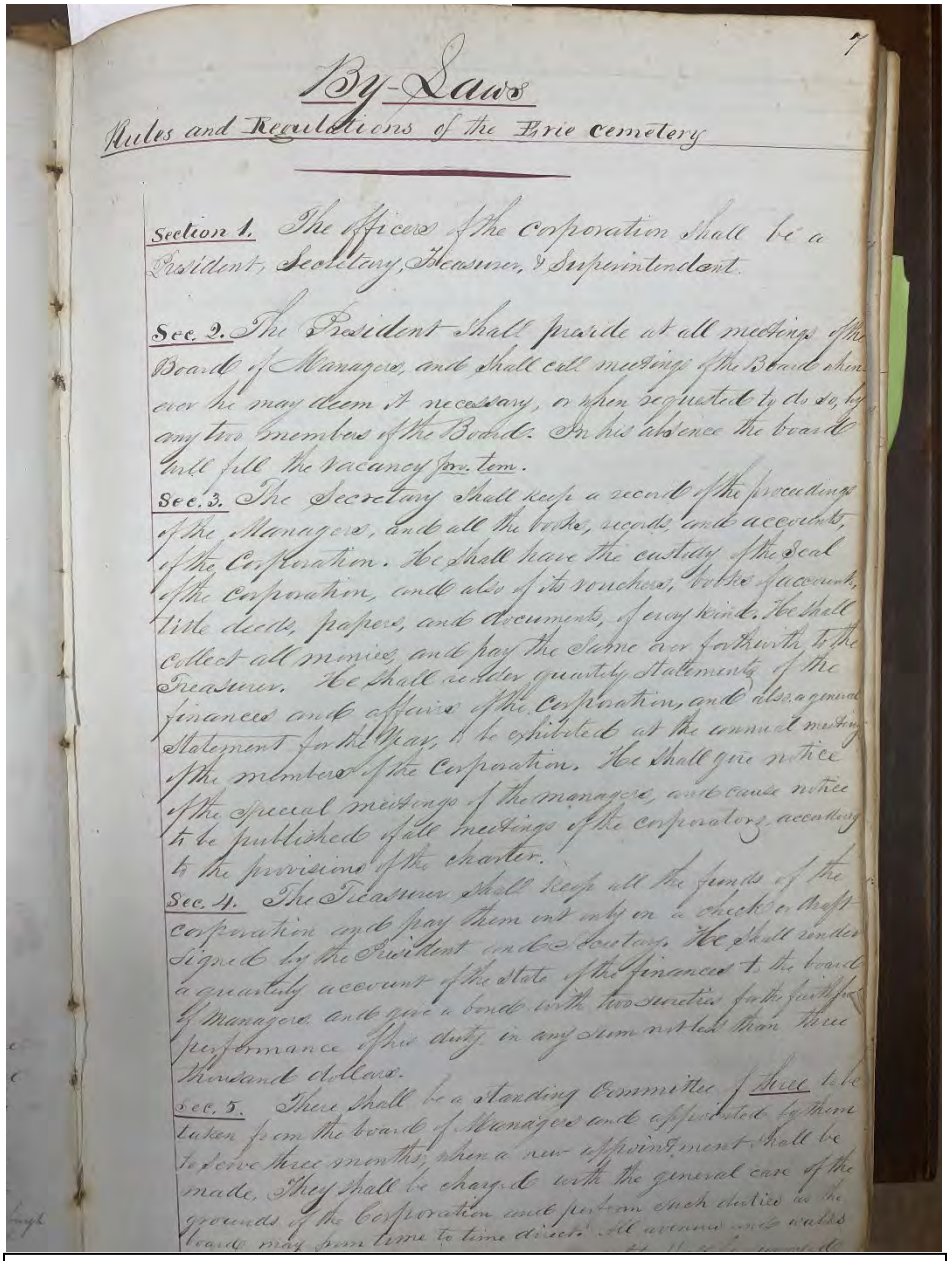
An Act

To incorporate the Erie Cemetery, in the County of Erie.

Section 1. Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the commonwealth of Pennsylvania in General Assembly met, and it is hereby enacted by the authority of the same, That Charles M. Reed, James C. Marshall, John Galbraith, Smith Dickson, William Kelley, Milton Cowright, B. B. Vincent, William Kirkwood, Joseph M. Stewart, George A. Elliot, Thomas E. Colt, William A. Brown, Isaac C. Spencer, Prescott McCrea, Elijah Babbitt, Joseph H. Williams, Henry Cadwell, Charles M. Tibbals, Frederick Schneider, Walter Chester, Geo. A. Lyon, Peter E. Burton, Alexander W. Brewster, William Nicholson, Irving Camp, William W. Reed, Presley Arbuckle, John H. Tracy, James Skinner, John Hughes and Miles M. Cuthbert be, and they and their Successors are hereby created a body politic in law under the name and title of the "Erie Cemetery" and by that name and title shall have perpetual Succession, and be able and capable in law to have and use a common seal, to sue and be sued, implead and be impleaded, in all courts of law and equity, and to do all such other things as are incident to a corporation.

Sec. 2. The annual meeting of the corporation shall be held on the second Monday of January in every year, at such time and place, and of such notice as shall be provided for in the by-laws of, which annual meeting it shall be the duty of the corporators to fill all vacancies that may occur in their number from among the lot holders in the cemetery, the same being citizens of the County of Erie, and at such annual meeting said corporation

Fig. 4. *Act of Incorporation (First Page).* 1850. From the Collection of the Erie Cemetery Association.



By-Laws

Rules and Regulations of the Erie cemetery

Section 1. The Officers of the Corporation shall be a President, Secretary, Treasurer, & Superintendent.

Sec. 2. The President shall preside at all meetings of the Board of Managers, and shall call meetings of the Board when ever he may deem it necessary, or when requested to do so, by any two members of the Board. In his absence the board will fill the vacancy pro. tem.

Sec. 3. The Secretary shall keep a record of the proceedings of the Managers, and all the books, records, and accounts, of the Corporation. He shall have the custody of the Seal of the Corporation, and also of its vouchers, books of accounts, title deeds, papers, and documents, of every kind. He shall collect all monies and pay the same over forthwith to the Treasurer. He shall render quarterly Statements of the finances and affairs of the Corporation, and also a general Statement for the year, to be exhibited at the annual meeting of the members of the Corporation. He shall give notice of the special meetings of the managers, and cause notice to be published of all meetings of the corporators, according to the provisions of the charter.

Sec. 4. The Treasurer shall keep all the funds of the corporation and pay them out only on a check or draft signed by the President and Secretary. He shall render a quarterly account of the state of the finances to the board of Managers, and give a bond with two sureties for the faithful performance of his duty in any sum not less than three thousand dollars.

Sec. 5. There shall be a standing Committee of three to be taken from the board of Managers and appointed by them to serve three months, when a new appointment shall be made. They shall be charged with the general care of the grounds of the Corporation and perform such duties as the board may from time to time direct. All avenues and walks

Fig. 5. *Erie Cemetery By-Laws (First Page).* 1850. From the Collection of the Erie Cemetery Association.



Fig. 6. *Map of Millcreek Township (Detail).* 1855. Accessed: MillCreekTwp.jpg (2592×1944). Note Erie Cemetery is outside of Erie city limits.

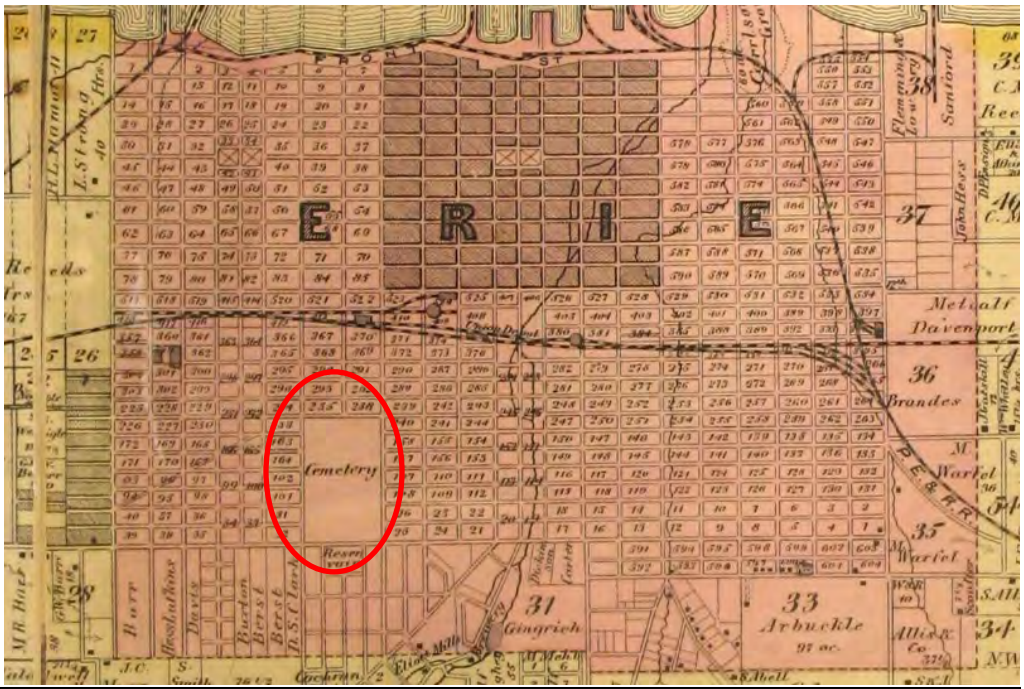


Fig. 7. *Map of Millcreek Township (Detail).* 1876. Accessed: MillCreekTwp.jpg (3780×2525). Note Erie Cemetery is now inside Erie city limits.

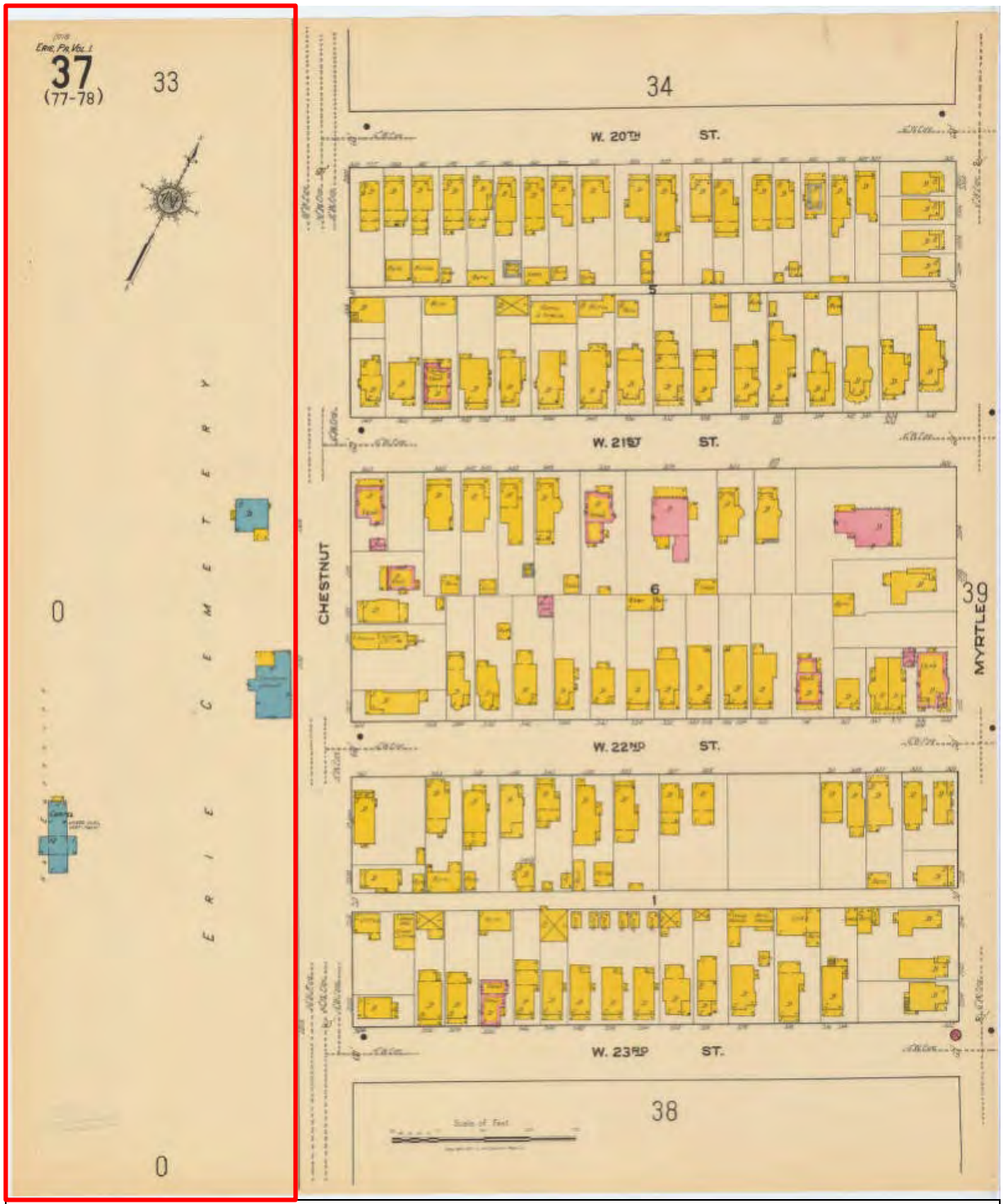


Fig. 9. *Map of Erie (Detail).* 1921. Accessed: Insurance maps of Erie, Pennsylvania, Vol. 1, 1921 - Erie-1921_sheet37 - Digital Map Drawer - Penn State University Libraries' Digital Collections. Note, Erie Cemetery was omitted from the Sanborn Maps of 1900.