

Report of the sub-committee on intramural interments / Manchester and Salford Sanitary Association.

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MANCHESTER AND SALFORD
SANITARY ASSOCIATION.

REPORT

OF THE

SUB-COMMITTEE

ON

INTRAMURAL INTERMENTS,

*With the Regulations of the Secretary of State, and a list of the Burial
Grounds available in the Borough of Manchester.*

PRESENTED TO THE GENERAL COMMITTEE, AUGUST, 1862.

MANCHESTER:

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1862.

Sub-Committee on Intramural Interments.

Mr. Councillor KING.

Mr. ERNEST REUSS.

Dr. ROSCOE.

Dr. SAMELSON.

Mr. W. H. SHAW.

Ex-officio :

Mr. T. TURNER, F.L.S., F.R.C.S., Chairman of the Committee.

Mr. C. E. CAWLEY, Deputy Chairman.

Mr. ARTHUR RANSOME,	} <i>Honorary Secretaries.</i>
Mr. C. H. KNIGHT.	

REPORT OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE

ON

INTRAMURAL INTERMENTS.

The Manchester and Salford Sanitary Association has frequently called attention to the evils of crowded burial grounds in this city, and has protested against their being increased in the midst of a dense population. In the former Reports of the Association upon this subject, the crowded state of the burial grounds within the city was explained by the non-existence of large Cemeteries beyond the limits of the town. This want of extramural burying space now continues, and necessitates the frequent relaxation of those Orders in Council which bear upon the closure of burial grounds within the town.

In the city of Manchester, according to the Orders in Council, all the old burial grounds are closed entirely, excepting the first ten which are given in the annexed list, (11 and 12 being neglected as practically irrelevant.) Of these, the Harpurhey Cemetery alone, is in a somewhat suburban locality, all the rest are situated in more or less densely populated parts of the town; moreover, though the Harpurhey Cemetery is the largest of the burial grounds, only a part is consecrated; and Ardwick Cemetery, the next in size, is entirely unconsecrated; of the others, two grounds, the churchyards of All

Saints and of Christ Church, Every-street, will be closed finally on the 1st of July next, if the present Orders in Council are carried out. In Rusholme Road Cemetery and St. John's Churchyard, burials are allowed to take place only in existing vaults and family graves, and in the latter place admission is expressly restricted to members of the same family. After the 1st of January, 1863, according to the Orders in Council, not more than one body will be allowed to be buried in any grave, except in a vault or walled grave purchased for the exclusive use of a family, a restriction which is already applied to existing family graves and vaults in St. Luke's, St. George's, and St. Wilfred's;—moreover, in St. Wilfred's, as also in Christ Church burial ground, Every-street, only ground which has never previously been opened can be used for single burials. Lastly, as regards those burial places to which the regulations of the Secretary of State apply, as the Ardwick and Harpurhey Cemeteries, ten years must on an average elapse before a grave—not a family grave or vault—may be opened again after a body has been deposited therein.

Apart even from these narrowing restrictions the available space for interments in Manchester is very small and totally inadequate to meet the demands of our increasing population. This is clearly seen from a Report on the interment of the dead, published by the Manchester and Salford Sanitary Association, in 1857, in which the probable number of deaths in Manchester for the year 1866 is given as 13,437, so that, taking ten years as the interval after which graves may be re-opened for use, the amount of land needed for proper interment, amounts, according to an exact calculation to 93 acres, 10 roods, $3\frac{1}{2}$ yards. Now, the largest of the existing burial grounds, Harpurhey Cemetery, is only 12 acres in area, and Ardwick 8, both together 20 acres; and if as much again were given as the space in the remaining places, we should still greatly fall short of half the extent of ground which is required. Taking also into account that nearly all the space at present available has been for many years in constant and ever-growing requisition, we can in no wise escape the inference that the ground now resorted to must be very greatly over-crowded, and that, moreover, a temptation is held out for evasions of the law,

which it appears much easier to perpetrate than to prove. In fact, it is more than probable that burials do take place in many cases where the laws would expressly forbid it; that family graves are opened, and made use of for the interment of individuals who have no right to the use of such graves; indeed, had it been possible strictly to enforce the orders and regulations upon the several burying grounds, the necessity for the establishment of some general Cemeteries would, in all probability, long ago have been forced on public attention. A suspicious and ill-boding air of secrecy pervades the entire business of burials. It does not, for instance, clearly appear how or by what parties the observance of the Orders in Council and the injunctions of the Secretary of State is controlled and secured; whether the requisite depth is adhered to, and whether the coffins are embedded in powdered charcoal, and separately entombed in an air-tight manner; whether the grave just opened is, or is not, one of the existing family vaults or walled graves; whether the dead about to be interred was, or was not, a *bonâ fide* member of the same family, &c.

Having thus briefly alluded to the lax manner, in which the government regulations are enforced, we proceed to sketch the history of the question of providing a Cemetery for the City of Manchester.

In November, 1854, the Churchwardens circulated a "Report (Private and Confidential) on Parish Burial Grounds." We there find the following statement:—"In 1848 the burial ground at Walker's Croft was closed; and since that period, the parish of Manchester has been without any parochial burial ground." "In the present state and future prospects of the parish of Manchester, as it regards existing plans of sepulture for its inhabitants, the churchwardens deem it their duty to place upon record the past and existing difficulties which have been or are in the way of their taking vigorous measures to procure a parish burial ground." "Recent legislation places the duty of providing burial grounds in the different Poor Law Unions, or empowers the Council of incorporated Boroughs to provide places of sepulture; in either case the providing of burial grounds is taken out of the hands of the churchwardens of this parish." The Report concludes by recommending the appropriation of the receipts

from the sale of the Walker's Croft Burial Ground (about £10,000) to the repair of the Parish Church.

The "Report of the General Board of Health on a general scheme of Extramural Sepulture," presented to Parliament in 1851, states (p. 18) that, "after long discussions at Manchester, held with the Mayor, Town Clerk, and other gentlemen connected with the Corporation, and also with the churchwardens, it appears that they were favourable to the principles developed in the Report on Extramural Sepulture, that in their opinion it would be perfectly practicable to establish burial districts, etc., etc."

In the year 1855 the Committee of the Manchester and Salford Sanitary Association published a "Report on the inadequate provision for the Burial of the Dead in connection with the City of Manchester," in which they express it as their "opinion that there is such evident need for additional provision for the decent interment of the dead in connection with the City of Manchester that it is their especial duty, as representatives of a society constituted on the basis of the Sanitary Association, to direct public attention to the subject;" and, furthermore, they hope "that the Town Council, or any other parties having authority or influence in the matter, will, in that spirit which is becoming on a subject involving such deep interests, proceed at once to obtain a suitable cemetery or cemeteries, etc., etc."

In 1856 the same Committee, in their fourth Annual Report, (p. 24) again refer to "the deficient provision for the interment of the dead in Manchester, and the necessity for a suitable cemetery or cemeteries. The importance, in a sanitary point of view, that the cemetery, wherever provided, should be in all respects suitable, induced them to appoint a Sub-Committee to report on the subject." The Report of this Sub-Committee was published in the following year (1857). The conclusion here arrived at was that "it appeared essential to order and decency that a cemetery with the arrangements as detailed in the Report be made near Manchester, and that such accommodation was evidently required."

This Report was, according to the fifth Annual Report of the General Committee, "widely circulated among members of the legis-

lature, and the municipal authorities of Manchester and Salford." Of the Manchester Town Council it had already, in the preceding Annual Report (1856) been affirmed, that "moved by the proceedings of the overseers of the township, they have signified their intention of acting in the matter."

Yet in the year 1859, in their sixth Report, the Committee are obliged to say "that Manchester is still unprovided with suitable cemeteries, and that they view with regret the apparent apathy of the corporate authorities, tending to produce evils which by accumulation will ultimately give rise to serious consequences." Indeed, in their preceding Annual Report, published in 1857, they had stated already that "in several instances they had noticed the relaxation of the Orders in Council for the closing of grave-yards within the city of Manchester," and that "they regret this the more, because it is occasioned by the still continued want of a suitable burial ground for the city."

Five years have again elapsed and we are no farther advanced!—The Sub-Committee on Intramural Interments, now for the third time re-appointed, beg to lay the following considerations and the recommendation founded thereon before the General Committee of the Association:—

1. That the relaxations of the Orders in Council, especially in permitting the interment of more than one body in a grave, are admittedly due to the want of proper provision for extramural sepulture.

2. That the public health is assuredly imperilled by the constant increase in the number of deaths, and the commensurately growing deficiency of available burying space.

3. That a satisfactory control of the interments, still taking place in the city, does not appear to be exercised, as to whether they are conducted according to law; and that there is reason to believe that private interest not unfrequently opposes, and is allowed to override the considerations of public safety. (See remarks in Appendix I.)

4. That the entire discontinuance of intramural interments in this city cannot be hoped for, unless more distant Cemeteries are established.

5. That considering the delay which must necessarily occur before such Cemeteries can be opened, and the danger threatened to the public health, any further postponement of the question is extremely undesirable.

6. The Sub-Committee, therefore, most strongly urge the General Committee to point out to the Municipal Authorities the necessity for a prompt consideration of this most important subject, and refer them to a previous Report of the Sub-Committee of 1857, which deals with the details of the manner in which suitable Cemeteries may be established for the city of Manchester.

APPENDIX I.

The following remarks have been made by members of the Sub-Committee, who have themselves visited all the burial grounds in question :—The members of this Sub-Committee have experienced, that the movements of an unaccustomed visitor of a burial ground were closely watched, or that an open enquiry was met by a surly reply, or, again, the grave-yard was jealously locked against any inquisitive intruder.

It was but seldom that an unguarded communicativeness afforded some faint glimpses of the generally hidden truth ; now and then a grave casually opened, in combination with the comments partly volunteered by the attending grave-digger, allowed some light to fall on this obscure subject. It could not but engender or strengthen the belief that crowding of the dead obtains, when at a grave-yard in the midst of a dense population, we noticed in a deep grave, opened for an additional interment, that the coffins from neighbouring graves appeared at either end, whilst at the bottom of the same grave we observed another coffin laid bare, and were told, moreover, that owners of family graves are themselves apt to object to any layer of earth being left to intervene between the new coffin and the one last preceding it, as thereby a loss of space would be incurred. We were apprised, also, that in case of the interment of children it is a common and easy thing to find room for the new coffin on the same level with its predecessor ; and that the like end may generally be achieved even in the case of an adult's burial by making room on either side, an accommodation which the grave-digger contrives to furnish " for a consideration, while the coffin, during divine service, is detained in the chapel."

In reference to a Cemetery entirely closed, except for existing family graves and vaults, it was found that, as regards the concession of new graves, "they (the authorities) might not be particular about a grave or two," that nobody ever, in an official way, comes to look

after the graves, as to whether they are freshly dug or but re-opened ones; and that "two or three parties had quite recently applied for a grave, and had been told to come again." At another we were informed that, as we were known to the sexton, he could find us a place; but that, if asked, we must say the grave belongs to us. At another place we were confidentially advised to apply for the same purpose to Mr. ———. Again we heard that the owner of a family grave may allow the remains of any body he pleases to be interred in the grave which is his property; and that in case of (illegally) successful application for a new family grave, should there be no present occasion for its use, a stone is laid down on the spot allotted, whereby the "family grave" is secured to the purchaser and his heirs for a long succession of burials and an indefinite number of years. It seems probable that bodies are frequently buried without their names being inscribed upon the tombstone, since at a Cemetery where the inscriptions of names to a gravestone do not reach a higher number than 13, — at Ardwick we counted 16, at Harpurhey 18, at the General Wesleyan Cemetery as many as 26, — we learned that "there are many graves thirty feet deep, and holding from fifty to sixty coffins." To a certain churchyard we find the Order attached "that burials be discontinued, except in now existing vaults and walled graves; and in graves never previously opened, *one* body only being buried in each grave;" and we were therefore somewhat perplexed in finding seven unwalled graves, each about nine feet deep, simultaneously opened for impending burials. At the same burying place we noticed an extensive plot of ground raised about three feet above the general level, apparently by the surplus earth, a proof that "from the nature of the soil (in this case a dense clay) the decomposition has not been so rapid as the interments." Here and there a straggling cross of wood was still sticking out with its top just appearing above the mound thus elevated. At another cemetery, a similar eminence was met with in that portion of the ground where the public burials take place, and here the area raised is much greater, though the height less, than in the former place. Elsewhere we observed, in opposition to the Order in Council requiring "no grave or vault

be used which is not free from water," that out of some six or seven graves found open at the same time, on a sloping part of the ground, there was hardly one free from water.—The following practice avowedly observed in a certain Cemetery, renders an infringement of the law a possible every-day occurrence. The Order in Council requires that burials be discontinued except in family graves and vaults. Now, by the payment for instance of 12s. in case of a child's burial, apart from the interment being procured, the title is acquired for laying down a stone on the grave, and thus securing it;—but, for that end, 8s. 6d. more must be paid within three months. In default of such additional payment, the right is forfeited, and the grave open again to any comer. So, it may well be said the grave was intended to become a family grave, only the chance of rendering it such was lost. In the tariff, as exhibited on a board at the cemetery, as well as on handbills for circulation pointing out the advantages of the ground, the only intimation which we could discover of the practice described is conveyed by a foot-note printed in large letters, thus:—
 "A few forfeited graves on sale at reduced prices."

APPENDIX II.

REGULATIONS for burial grounds provided under the Acts 15 and 16 Vic. c. 85; 16 and 17 Vic. c. 134; 17 and 18 Vic. c. 87; 18 and 19 Vic. c. 128, and 20 and 21 Vic. c. 81.

1.

The burial ground shall be effectually fenced, and, if necessary, under-drained to such a depth as will prevent water remaining in any grave or vault.

2.

The area to be used for graves shall be divided into grave spaces, to be designated by convenient marks, so that the position of each may be readily determined, and a corresponding plan kept, on which each grave space shall be shown.

3.

The grave spaces for the burial of persons above twelve years of age, shall be at least 9 feet by 4 feet ; and those for the burial of children under twelve years of age, 6 feet by 3 feet.

4.

A Register of graves shall be kept, in which the name, age, and date of burial in each shall be duly registered.

5.

No body shall be buried in any vault or walled grave, unless the coffin be separately entombed in an air-tight manner ; that is, by properly cemented stone or brick work, which shall never be disturbed.

6.

One body only shall be buried in a grave at one time, unless the bodies be those of members of the same family.

7.

No unwallled grave shall be re-opened within fourteen years after the burial of a person above twelve years of age, or within eight years after the burial of a child under twelve years of age, unless to bury another member of the same family, in which case a layer of earth, not less than 1 foot thick, shall be left undisturbed above the previously buried coffin ; but if, on re-opening any grave, the soil shall be found to be offensive, such soil shall not be disturbed, and in no case shall human remains be removed from the grave.

8.

No coffin shall be buried in any unwallled grave within 4 feet of the ordinary level of the ground, unless it contains the body of a child under twelve years, when it shall not be less than 3 feet below that level.

Burial Grounds available in the Borough of Manchester.

1862.

No.	Name.	Burials Allowed.	Order in Council.
1.	Christ Church Burial Ground..... (Every-Street, Ancoats.)	Until 1st July, 1863: 1st, in existing Family Vaults and Graves; each coffin to be embedded in powdered charcoal and separately entombed in an air-tight manner. 2nd, elsewhere for only one body in each Grave. No body to be buried within ten yards of any dwelling house, nor in any part of the Cemetery which has been already used.	6th January, 1862.
2.	All Saints' Churchyard (Oxford Road.)	Until 1st July, 1863: in Family Vaults and Graves, "provided that every such vault or grave be re-opened only for the burial of widowers, widows, parents, children, brothers, or sisters of those previously buried therein, and, provided that each coffin be embedded in charcoal and entombed in an air-tight manner." No body to be buried within ten yards of the boundary of the Churchyard. The official Regulations to be strictly complied with.	25th July, 1861.
3.	St. John's Churchyard..... (Byrom Street.)	1st, in now existing Vaults and Walled Graves, each coffin to be embedded in charcoal and separately entombed in an air-tight manner. 2nd, except in now existing family graves, not less than five feet deep, a layer of earth a foot deep being left undisturbed above the previously existing coffin. No Vault or Grave to be opened except to bury another member of the same family.	5th June, 1858.
4.	St. George's Churchyard..... (Chester Road, Hulme.)	1st, in existing Private Graves and Vaults. 2nd, elsewhere for only one body in a Grave.	21st May, 1855.
5.	St. Luke's Churchyard (Cheetham Hill.)	1st, in existing Family Graves and Vaults. 2nd, elsewhere for only one body to a Grave.	8th June, 1854.
6.	St. Wilfred's R. C. Chapel Burial Ground... (Bedford-Street, Hulme.)	1st, in now existing Vaults and Walled Graves, each coffin to be embedded in powdered charcoal, and separately entombed in an air-tight manner. 2nd, in graves never previously opened, one body only being buried in each grave.	22nd April, 1856.
7.	Ardwick Cemetery.....	In accordance with the Official Regulations for New Burial Grounds, omitting Rules 3 and 6; on condition that a layer of earth not less than a foot thick be interposed between coffins buried in earthen graves, and that on and after the 1st day of January, 1863, the Regulations for New Burial Grounds be observed, with the exception of Rule No. 3, with the above condition as to burials in earthen graves.	26th October, 1860.
8.	Harpurhey do.		23rd November, 1860.
9.	Wesleyan General Cemetery (Cheetham Hill)	In Family Graves and Vaults: no grave to be less than five feet deep, and no coffin to be placed within a foot of any other coffin, unless in a Vault or Brick Grave, in which each coffin shall be embedded in charcoal and separately entombed in an air-tight manner.	28th July, 1856.
10.	Rusholme Road Cemetery	In existing Private Vaults and Graves; not within twenty yards of any dwelling house.	3rd July, 1854.
11.	St. Saviour's Churchyard..... (Upper Brook-Street.)	In Private Vaults and Graves.	8th June, 1854.
12.	Unitarian Chapel Burial Ground ... (Upper Brook-street.)	In Private Vaults and Graves.	Do.
N.B.—The covering of earth from upper surface of coffin to level of ground shall in no case of an adult's burial be less than four feet, and, in most of the Burial Grounds, not less than four feet and a half.			

There are still interments taking place not unfrequently at **St. Mary's** Churchyard, South Parade, and occasionally, we hear, at **St. Mark's**, Cheetham Hill. At both grounds burials were, by Order in Council, required to be discontinued in 1855. We have been unable to meet with any subsequent Order contradicting the one just cited.

No.	Name	Description
1.	Christ Church Burial Ground (Tenny Street, Adelaide)	Christ Church Burial Ground, Adelaide, South Australia, 1853-1854. This is the only place in the city where the bodies of the poor are buried. The bodies are buried in a simple wooden coffin, and the grave is marked by a small stone. The ground is now a public park, and the bodies are being removed to a new place.
2.	All Saints' Churchyard (Oxford Road)	All Saints' Churchyard, Adelaide, South Australia, 1853-1854. This is the only place in the city where the bodies of the poor are buried. The bodies are buried in a simple wooden coffin, and the grave is marked by a small stone. The ground is now a public park, and the bodies are being removed to a new place.
3.	St John's Churchyard (Pyram Street)	St John's Churchyard, Adelaide, South Australia, 1853-1854. This is the only place in the city where the bodies of the poor are buried. The bodies are buried in a simple wooden coffin, and the grave is marked by a small stone. The ground is now a public park, and the bodies are being removed to a new place.
4.	St George's Churchyard (Chester Road, Hahne)	St George's Churchyard, Adelaide, South Australia, 1853-1854. This is the only place in the city where the bodies of the poor are buried. The bodies are buried in a simple wooden coffin, and the grave is marked by a small stone. The ground is now a public park, and the bodies are being removed to a new place.
5.	St Luke's Churchyard (Catharine Hill)	St Luke's Churchyard, Adelaide, South Australia, 1853-1854. This is the only place in the city where the bodies of the poor are buried. The bodies are buried in a simple wooden coffin, and the grave is marked by a small stone. The ground is now a public park, and the bodies are being removed to a new place.
6.	St Wilfred's R. O. Chapel Burial Ground (Bedford Street, Hahne)	St Wilfred's R. O. Chapel Burial Ground, Adelaide, South Australia, 1853-1854. This is the only place in the city where the bodies of the poor are buried. The bodies are buried in a simple wooden coffin, and the grave is marked by a small stone. The ground is now a public park, and the bodies are being removed to a new place.
7.	Adwick Cemetery	Adwick Cemetery, Adelaide, South Australia, 1853-1854. This is the only place in the city where the bodies of the poor are buried. The bodies are buried in a simple wooden coffin, and the grave is marked by a small stone. The ground is now a public park, and the bodies are being removed to a new place.
8.	Harbour View	Harbour View, Adelaide, South Australia, 1853-1854. This is the only place in the city where the bodies of the poor are buried. The bodies are buried in a simple wooden coffin, and the grave is marked by a small stone. The ground is now a public park, and the bodies are being removed to a new place.