

CAMPERDOWN CEMETERY

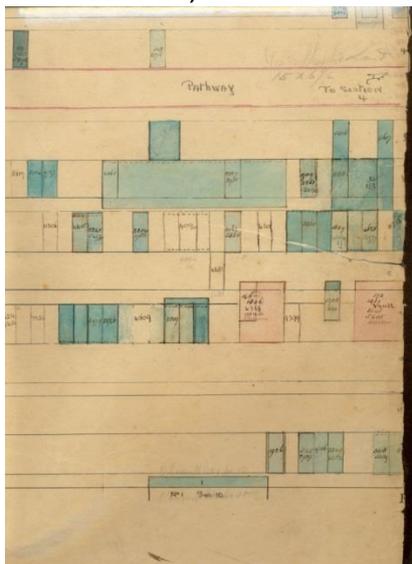


If you had ancestors living in Sydney in the pre-Federation period, you may find more information about them in the Camperdown Cemetery records held by the Society of Australian Genealogists.

Camperdown Cemetery was established by the Sydney Church of England Cemetery Company, which was formed in 1848 in response to the need for additional burial and memorial accommodation in Sydney: the Church of England portion of Sydney's main general cemetery, the Elizabeth and Devonshire Street cemetery¹ had been closed for burials other than those in vaults.

The Company acquired 12 acres and 3 rods of the Camperdown Estate, which was part of an original grant of 240 acres to the Governor, William Bligh. It was bounded by what later became Church, Charles and Australia Streets, Newtown.

Camperdown Cemetery was gazetted in 1849 and consecrated on 16 January 1849. The first burial was that of Sir Maurice O'Connell, Governor Bligh's son-in-law, whose body was disinterred from its original gravesite in the Devonshire Street cemetery. Other graves were removed from the Devonshire Street cemetery as well as from the earlier George Street cemetery in Sydney where the Sydney Town Hall is now located. Between 1849 and 1867, there were 15,733 burials in Camperdown cemetery.

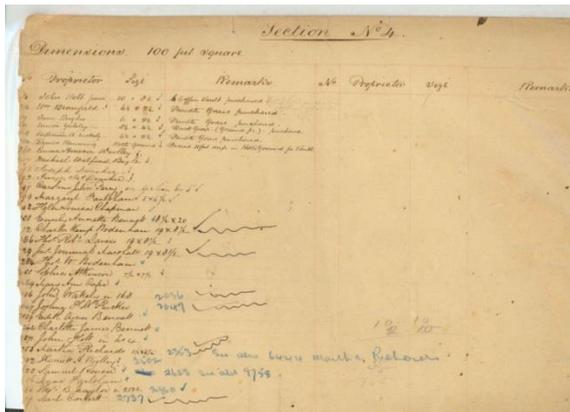


*Sample plan of Camperdown Cemetery
SAG Manuscript and Image Collection Item 16/154*

¹ On the current site of Sydney's Central Railway Station.

After 1867, the creation of new grave plots was prohibited and burials were only permitted by license from the Chief Secretary. This prohibition was also applicable to the Old Devonshire Street Cemetery (opened 1819) and St Jude's Randwick Cemetery (opened in 1857).

From 1867 to 1900 there were a further 2,183 burials at Camperdown Cemetery into already existing plots and family graves. A final handful of 18 burials took place between 1900 and 1926.



*Part of a list of interments in Camperdown Cemetery
SAG Primary Records Collection 16/154*

The cemetery has monuments not only to many of Sydney's prominent personalities of the 19th century, but to the ordinary people of Sydney as well. The Surveyor General Sir Thomas Mitchell is buried here, as was Edmund Blacket, the architect of the nearby church. The victims of the Dunbar and Adamson shipping disasters of 1857, the father of Australia's first Prime Minister and the children of NSW Premier Henry Parkes are also buried in the cemetery.

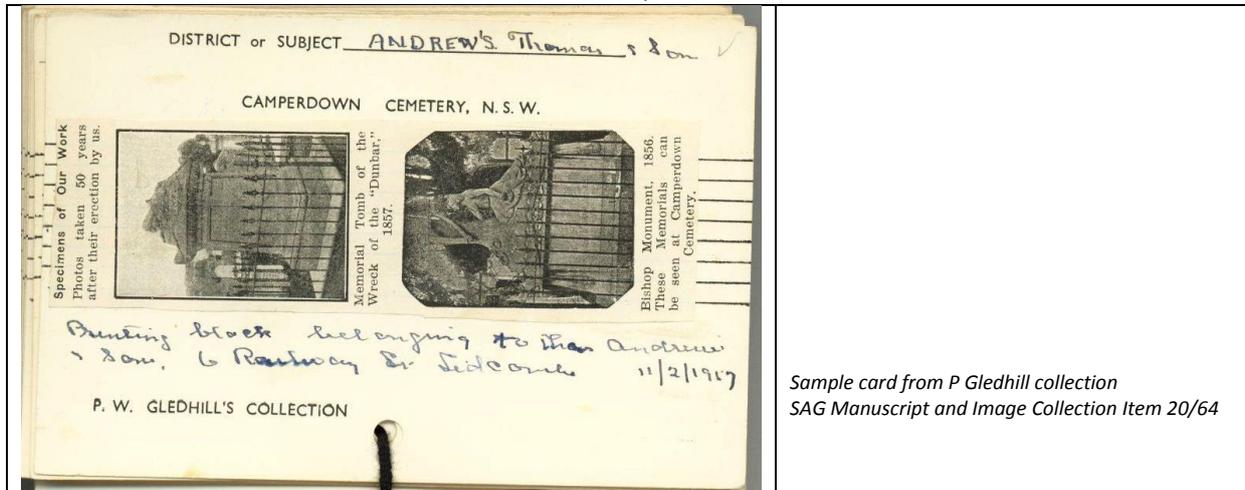
In 1948, part of Camperdown Cemetery was dedicated as a public park by an Act of the NSW State Parliament. As a result, the size of the cemetery was reduced in 1950 and monuments from the resumed land were relocated around a stone boundary wall which was built at that time. As part of that process, four volumes of monumental inscriptions relating to the relocated stones were compiled by the NSW Department of Lands. These form part of the records held in the Society of Australian Genealogist's Library at 379 Kent Street, Sydney.

The Society's Manuscript and Image Collection at 120 Kent Street Sydney also holds a transcription of Camperdown Cemetery relating to all the monuments intact at that time, including photographs of a number of them. The cemetery was transcribed by the Society once again in 1987, by which time a number of the monuments extant in 1950 had been broken or become illegible.

The information included in the Society of Australian Genealogists Camperdown Cemetery collection includes:

- two sets of transcriptions (compiled in 1957 and 1987)
- detailed plans of the Camperdown Cemetery
- the trustees' papers

- information relating to the victims of the wrecks of the *Dunbar* and *Catherine Adamson* in 1857
- microfilm of the burial butts for the cemetery from 1851 onwards (which may also contain an address and a cause of death).



Sample card from P Gledhill collection
SAG Manuscript and Image Collection Item 20/64

IN THE ARCHIVES

The Manuscript and Image Collection of the Society's archives contains a broad range of unpublished materials relating to Camperdown Cemetery. Due to the volume of records, they are outlined here firstly by broad topic area, and then within each topic in numerical order.

Items indexed as part of Series 4 relate to paper format research materials; Series 5 includes small photographs and pictures; Series 6 contains large photographs, while Series 16 comprises large or outsized items. Series 20 contains artefacts, in this instance, index cards with transcriptions.

CEMETERY TRANSCRIPTIONS, BURIAL BUTTS & RELATED

4/37 A small notebook acquired by P. W. Gledhill (Chairman of the Camperdown Cemetery Trustees) and inscribed by him as follows: "The information contained in the book was gathered by Mr Joseph Cook during the year 1892 and 1893. He was Trustee of the Cemetery 1896 – 1907".

The notebook lists the names and home addresses of next of kin, and also comments on the state of grave and sometimes other miscellaneous information.

This file also includes extracts from burial registers, transcriptions of headstones to be removed from Camperdown Cemetery (not indexed) and some transcriptions and correspondence to and from Gledhill relating to transcriptions of memorials (Mar 1950 – Mar 1958). It was followed by 4/4406.

4/4400 to 4/4452 Camperdown Cemetery Trustees papers, which contain a range of interesting items including Trustees' Balance Sheets and correspondence; some death reports from the Benevolent Asylum 1859; a 1950 plan with graves for exhumation; a small number of burials without a death certificate at the time of burial; subscribers to the Repair Fund; a petition objecting to resumption of cemetery land; graves under perpetual care; and a small number of removals from Camperdown Cemetery to other cemeteries 1948-1950.

4/13678 Recollections of Bruce Bowen about the survey and transcription of headstones in Camperdown Cemetery under the direction of Percy Gledhill, churchwarden during 1949 – 1950.

4/14446 Newspaper cutting from the Sydney Morning Herald of 16 Apr 1986 about vandalism at Camperdown Cemetery.

4/17778 Trustees Reports of the Camperdown Cemetery Trust 1931, 1936 – 1941, 1949. These contain photographs and lists of benefactors.

4/19493 Newspaper cutting from SMH 2 Dec 1998 about a memorial in Camperdown Cemetery dedicated to four Aborigines.

5/1224 Fifteen (15) photographs of transcriptions of headstones.

6/920 Black and white photographs of the Abbot family vault in Camperdown Cemetery, together with a brief family tree.

16/154 Plans of Camperdown Cemetery, showing sections and grave plots, with lists of proprietor's names. Also included is an article from the Women's Weekly, 23 Feb 1966, as well as photocopies of items at 16/238.

20/64 Headstone inscriptions transfer red onto index cards by Percy Gledhill about 1950. The contents include some photographs and a plan of the cemetery.

THE DUNBAR & CATHERINE ADAMSON SHIPPING DISASTERS

4/4403 Commemorative services and historical information about the wreck of the Dunbar during the 1920s and 1930s, part of the records of the Trustees for this period.

4/13492 Programmes for the 1993, 1999 and 2001 memorial services for these disasters, as well as short histories of the Dunbar and Catherine Adamson Memorials in the Camperdown Cemetery.

4/18588 Scrapbook of TM Sloman of Bathurst, which contains contemporary newspaper cuttings relating to the Dunbar and Catherine Adamson shipwrecks in 1857.

IN THE LIBRARY

The Society's Library of published materials also contains information relating to the Camperdown Cemetery, and can be accessed at 379 Kent Sydney during opening hours.

HISTORY OF CAMPERDOWN CEMETERY

- B3/47/Pam 5** Chrys Meader. *Beyond the boundary stone: a history of Camperdown Cemetery*. Marrickville Council Library Services, 1997.
- B4.042/91/Pam 1** Alan Nichols, ed. *Camperdown: a history of Camperdown Cemetery and St Stephen's Newtown*. Camperdown Press, 1978.
- B7/11/Pam 28** M F King. *Prominent Australians and importance of Camperdown cemetery, N.S.W.* Trustees Camperdown Cemetery, 1934 [23 pp.]
- B7/11/Pam 29c** P W (Percy Walter) Gledhill. *Camperdown Cemetery: Plan and description of some of the historic graves, 1934*.
- B7/11/Pam 30** P W (Percy Walter) Gledhill. *A stroll through historic Camperdown cemetery, N.S.W.* Sydney, Robert Dey, Son & Co, 1946 [79 pp., includes plan].

CEMETERY TRANSCRIPTS, BURIAL BUTTS & RELATED

- B7/11/13 – 16** Camperdown Cemetery - typescript transcriptions of headstones, as at 1957. Indexed in first volume, includes a cemetery plan showing portions.
- NSW-CEM-CAM** Indexes to and memorial inscriptions of St Stephen's Anglican Cemetery, Camperdown. (2 indexed microfiche of transcriptions of the entire cemetery, i.e. the headstones moved in 1950 and those not recorded at the time. Memorials inside the church are included.)
- Microfilm Reel 0290** Camperdown Cemetery: Burial butts 13 Jan 1871-29 Dec 1873; 31 Dec 1873-19 Jul 1876; 25 May 1881-28 Apr 1887; 28 Jun 1897-4 Nov 1942
- Microfilm Reels 3228-3235**
Camperdown Cemetery burial butts, St Stephen's Church of England, Newtown. 1 Apr 1850 - 4 Mar 1853; 7 Mar 1853 ... 23 Mar 1901.
Particularly useful for details of address, and cause of death.