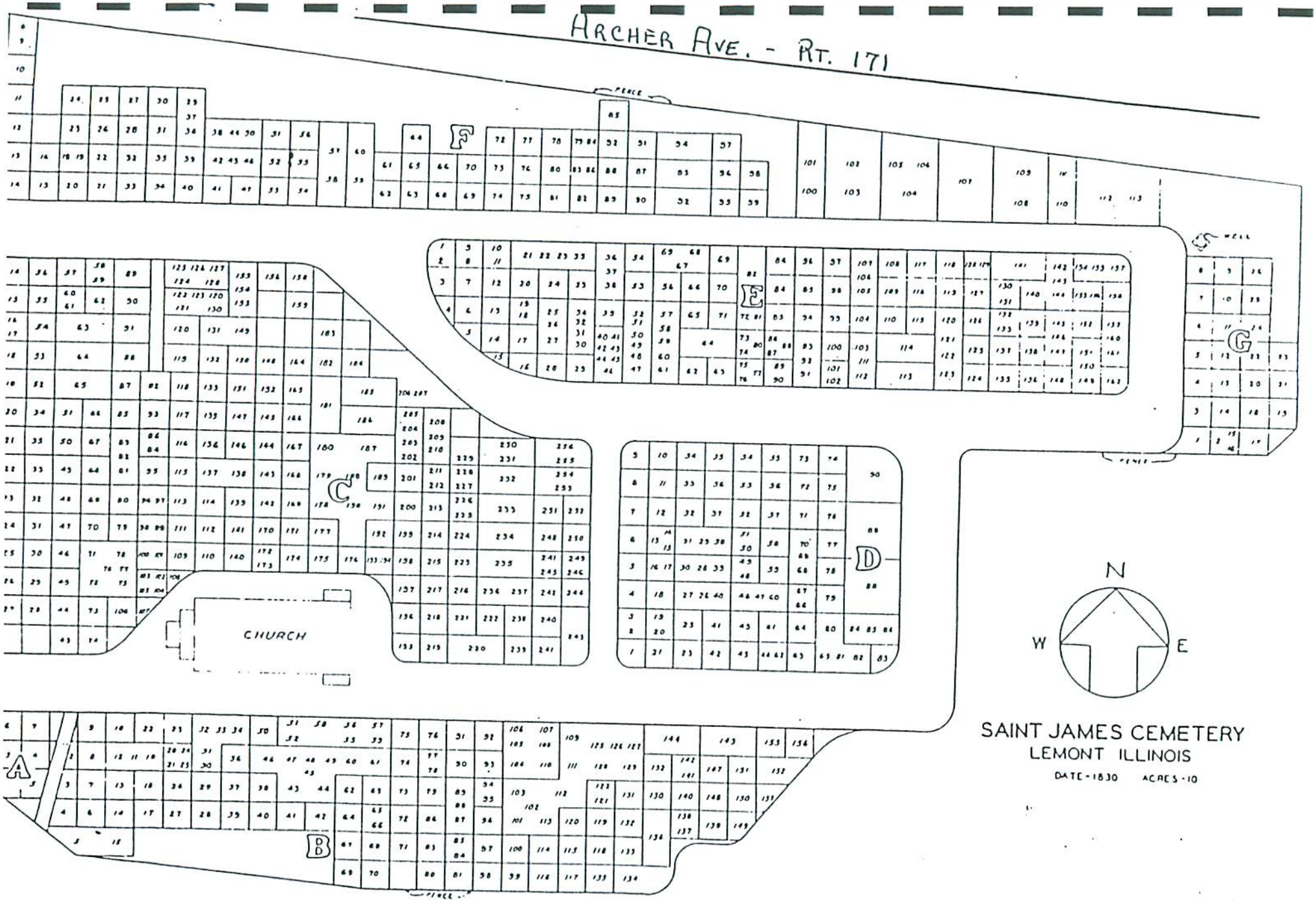

ARCHER AVE. - RT. 171
FENCE
F
E
G
C
D
B
A
CHURCH
WELL
N
W
E
SAINT JAMES CEMETERY
LEMONT ILLINOIS
DATE - 1830 ACRES - 10

HISTORY

ST. JAMES CHURCH CEMETERY

SAG BRIDGE

This is probably the oldest cemetery in the Chicago Archdiocese, yet the dates are very obscure. If one were to judge from the old and faded marble marker of Michael Dillon, it would seem the date of death reads "1816", although it could possibly be "1846".

While the cemetery land was not acquired until 1858, the "premises had been used for burials decades before", according to the Diamond Jubilee Book of the Archdiocese of Chicago (1920). Further information regarding the very earliest burials comes from Martin Murphy, whose parents James and Margaret (Kent) Murphy settled in Sag Bridge in 1848 from County Wexford, Ireland. Speaking about the Lemont-Sag Bridge area. Mr. Murphy notes that:

> The first Catholic cemetery was at a place called Haytown, about two miles southwest of Lemont, which was called Athens in the early days. When St. James Church and Cemetery were organized, some of the bodies were removed from Haytown to St. James Cemetery, as the Haytown cemetery was being infringed upon for quarry purposes.

So it would appear that there were burials in this ground for some time before the land was deeded to the Catholic Bishop of Chicago as a cemetery. On September 18, 1885, a warranty deed, conveying 63.34 acres of land, was issued by the Illinois and Michigan Canal Commissioners to James and Bridget Murphy and to John and Catherine Sullivan - Murphy to take the South half , and Sullivan the North half.

On October 1, 1858, just three years after they purchased the 63.34 acres, Murphy and Sullivan issued a warranty deed conveying eight acres of their land to the Catholic Bishop of Chicago for a cemetery, each man giving four acres. Contrary to what some have thought, the deed by which this land was transferred says nothing about "free burials" for the Catholics of the area, even though there appears to have been a fairly widespread understanding (or misunderstanding) to that effect.

In the days of Father Vincent Brunner (1909-1923) there was a great deal of confusion as to plot ownership, possibly because of this "free grave" idea. In a way a similar uncertainty continues to this day, since we have lost track of about 700 of the 1000 cemetery plots.

The Lemont Area Historical Society, would like to add to Father Aschenbrenner's appeal and suggest to any and all who read this account to get in touch with the pastor of St. James if they or their ancestors have owned lots in St. James Cemetery.

Civil War Veterans Buried in Sag Cemetery

Date of Death	Name	Rank	Comp	Regiment
July 15,1888	John B. Rullo	Pri.	K	48th Ind. Inf.
July 27,1889	Edward Cox	Pri.	A	31 Ill. Inf.
Mar.26,1892	John Hickey	Pri.	K	65 Ill. Inf.
Jan.23,1892	Michael Floor	?	?	U.S. Navy
June 28,1893	Patrick Dowd	Pri.	L	2nd Ill. Art.
?	James Kelley	?	?	?
July 10,1893	James Fitzpatrick	Pri.	A	69 N.Y. Inf.
Feb. 18,1896	Michael Hughes	Pri.	E	Doles Pa. Btry
Sept.19,1897	John Maroney	Pri.	C	140 Ind. Inf.
Feb. 14,1899	Daniel Gaffney	?	?	?
Jan. 30,1900	Geo. E. Stevens	Pri.	A	134 N.Y. Inf.
Jan. 25,1901	Francis Kent	Pri.	C	2nd Ill. Art.
Aug.28,1907	James Woodman	Pri.	G	2nd Ohio Inf.
Nov. 22,1913	James Donohue	Pri.	G	96 Ill. Inf.
Jan. 29,1917	Daniel McMahon	Pri.	H	89 Ill. Inf.
Apr. 27,1917	Ferdinand Herzog	Pri.	?	?
July 29,1917	John P. Schermer	Pri.	E	44 N.Y. Inf.