

**NOMINATION OF HISTORIC BUILDING, STRUCTURE, SITE, OR OBJECT
PHILADELPHIA REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION**

**SUBMIT ALL ATTACHED MATERIALS ON PAPER AND IN ELECTRONIC FORM (CD, EMAIL, FLASH DRIVE)
ELECTRONIC FILES MUST BE WORD OR WORD COMPATIBLE**

1. ADDRESS OF HISTORIC RESOURCE (must comply with an Office of Property Assessment address)

Street address: 4111-23 Chestnut St.

Postal code: 19104-3012 Councilmanic District: 3

2. NAME OF HISTORIC RESOURCE

Historic Name: African Friends to Harmony Burial Ground; Harmonia; Harmonian Burying Ground

Current/Common Name: _____

3. TYPE OF HISTORIC RESOURCE

Building Structure Site Object

4. PROPERTY INFORMATION

Occupancy: occupied vacant under construction unknown

Current use: Non-commercial parking lot

5. BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Please attach

6. DESCRIPTION

Please attach

7. SIGNIFICANCE

Please attach the Statement of Significance.

Period of Significance (from year to year): from 1826 to 1882

Date(s) of construction and/or alteration: _____

Architect, engineer, and/or designer: none

Builder, contractor, and/or artisan: none

Original owner: African Friends to Harmony

Other significant persons: _____

CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION:

The historic resource satisfies the following criteria for designation (check all that apply):

- (a) Has significant character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the City, Commonwealth or Nation or is associated with the life of a person significant in the past; or,
- (b) Is associated with an event of importance to the history of the City, Commonwealth or Nation; or,
- (c) Reflects the environment in an era characterized by a distinctive architectural style; or,
- (d) Embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style or engineering specimen; or,
- (e) Is the work of a designer, architect, landscape architect or designer, or engineer whose work has significantly influenced the historical, architectural, economic, social, or cultural development of the City, Commonwealth or Nation; or,
- (f) Contains elements of design, detail, materials or craftsmanship which represent a significant innovation; or,
- (g) Is part of or related to a square, park or other distinctive area which should be preserved according to an historic, cultural or architectural motif; or,
- (h) Owing to its unique location or singular physical characteristic, represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, community or City; or,
- X (i) Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in pre-history or history; or
- X (j) Exemplifies the cultural, political, economic, social or historical heritage of the community.

8. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Please attach

9. NOMINATOR

Organization none Date June 13, 2018

Name with Title Donna J. Rilling, Assoc. Professor of History Email donna.rilling@stonybrook.edu

Street Address Dept of History, 4348 SUNY Telephone 631.751.8309

City, State, and Postal Code Stony Brook, NY 11794-4348

Nominator is X is not the property owner.

PHC USE ONLY

Date of Receipt: July 23, 2018 (revised)

Correct-Complete Incorrect-Incomplete Date: July 26, 2018

Date of Notice Issuance: July 30, 2018

Property Owner at Time of Notice

Name: Trustees of the University of Pennsylvania

Address: 3451 Walnut Street

City: Philadelphia State: PA Postal Code: 19104

Date(s) Reviewed by the Committee on Historic Designation: October 17, 2018

Date(s) Reviewed by the Historical Commission: November 9, 2018

Date of Final Action: November 9, 2018

Designated Rejected

Nomination
for the
Philadelphia Register of Historic Places
African Friends to Harmony Burial Ground
4111-23 Chestnut Street
Philadelphia, PA 19104-3012

5. Boundary description

Beginning on the North side of Chestnut Street at the distance of two hundred and twenty-three feet Eastward from the East side of Forty-second Street in the City of Philadelphia, thence extending Eastward along the North side of Chestnut Street eighty-nine feet six inches to a point; thence extending North eleven degrees one minute East forty-eight feet three inches; thence extending North eighty-six degrees twenty-eight minutes thirty-one seconds East three feet three fourths of an inch; thence extending North ten degrees nine minutes twenty-six seconds East sixty-five feet five and seven-eighths inches to a point; thence extending North seventy-eight degrees fifty-nine minutes West ninety-one feet six inches; thence extending South eleven degrees one minute West one hundred and fourteen feet six inches to the first mentioned point and place of beginning.¹

BRT/ OPA Account 885491800
017S120132

The nomination excludes the portion of 4115-23 Chestnut Street contained within these boundaries:

Beginning at a point on the north side of Chestnut Street at the distance of one hundred and seventy-two feet six inches westward from the west side of Forty-First Street thence extending northward at right angles to said Chestnut Street forty-eight feet three inches to a point; thence extending south eighty-six degrees twenty-eight minutes and thirty-one seconds west one hundred and seventy feet two and one half inches along the line of ground now or late of African Friends of Harmony Watkins Disberry and James Duffee to a point thence extending south eight degrees twenty minutes and fifty-one seconds west five feet six and one-quarter inches to the

¹ Max Carol and Anna Carol to Vernon Bender and Clara Bender, May 1, 1951, Philadelphia Deed Book CJP no. 2955, p. 114ff (recorded May 2, 1951).

north side of said Chestnut Street; thence eastward along the north side of the said Chestnut Street one hundred and sixty-four feet six inches to the place of beginning.²

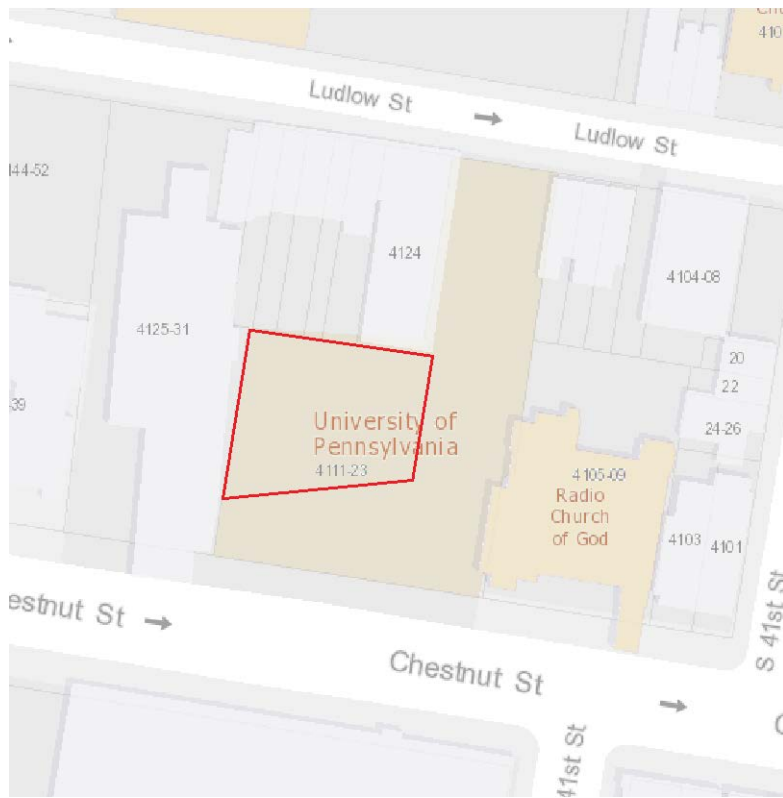


Figure 1. Parcel Map, 4111-23 Chestnut St. The nominated portion is approximated by the red outline.
Source: <https://atlas.phila.gov/>

² Jane Ann Miller et al to Albert Miller, March 11, 1891, Philadelphia Deed Book TG no. 11, p. 427ff (recorded March 12, 1891). Thanks to Meredith Keller of the PHC staff for locating this deed.

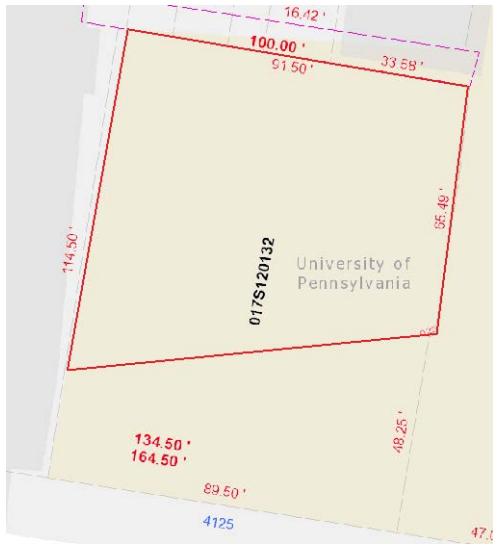


Figure 2. Detail, Parcel Map, 4111-23 Chestnut St. The nominated portion is approximated by the red outline. Source: <https://atlas.phila.gov/>

6. Physical description

4111-23 Chestnut Street is the site of the southern- and easternmost portion of the African Friends to Harmony Burial Ground. It is currently a non-commercial parking lot owned by the Trustees of the University of Pennsylvania. The lot is flat with asphalt paving. Automobile access to the lot is from Chestnut Street. The lot is flanked on the west and south with a chain-link fence. On the easterly side, there is no barrier, as the parking lot continues over the line of the parcel proposed for registration. On the northwesterly side, the lot it is bordered by a grassy area that is the rear of lots on Ludlow Street; on the northeasterly side, it is bordered by the rear wall of a Ludlow Street structure.

A portion of the burial ground at 4125 Chestnut is not included in the nomination, as construction is currently underway on that site.



Figure 3. 4115-23 Chestnut Street, April 21, 2018. The nominated portion is approximated by the red outline. Source: Pictometry.



Figure 4. 4115-23 Chestnut Street. View from Chestnut Street, facing north. Pictometry.

7. Statement of Significance

The African Friends to Harmony Burial Ground, known variously as “Harmonia,” “Harmony,” “Harmony Society,” “Harmonial,” and “Brothers of Harmony” Ground or Cemetery, is a significant historic resource that merits designation by the Philadelphia Historical Commission and inclusion in the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. It satisfies Criteria I and J of the Criteria for Designation as enumerated in Section 14-1004 of the Philadelphia Code. The burial ground site is located in the principal nineteenth-century African American neighborhood of West Philadelphia. It served the communities of the area’s two oldest African American churches, African Baptist Church of Blockley (later called Oak Street Baptist and subsequently

Monumental Baptist) and Mt. Pisgah African Methodist Episcopal Church. Organized as a mutual aid society, African Friends to Harmony is exemplary of early free black beneficial societies and the cultural, economic and social heritage of the African American community in Philadelphia. Acting also as a charitable association, the society provided gravesites for African Americans with no apparent connection to the immediate religious or surrounding community.

The subject site

- (i) has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important to pre-history or history;
- (j) exemplifies the cultural, political, economic, social or historical heritage of the community.

Criterion I

In July 1826, Jacob Gardner, Philip Bartho and Isaac Lloyd bought a lot on Oak (later Ludlow) Street, Blockley Township, for the sum of \$105. The seller, farmer Peter Rose, was a major landowner in the township. Over the first four decades of the nineteenth century, Rose divided his property into lots. He sold numerous tracts to African Americans settled in the neighborhood, including the subject lot to Gardner, Bartho and Lloyd. The core community came to be known as “Roseville.” In the 1826 purchase, Gardner, Bartho and Lloyd acted as trustees for the “association lately formed in Blockley Township...under the name and Title of ‘The African Friends to Harmony.’”³

The African Friends to Harmony provided burial plots for members of the African Baptist Church of Blockley/Oak Street/Monumental Baptist Church, members of Mt. Pisgah African Methodist Episcopal Church, and African Americans who had no apparent connection to either of the churches nor necessarily lived in West Philadelphia. Death records kept officially by the City of Philadelphia beginning in 1861 reveal that at least one hundred thirty-six (136) persons were buried in the subject property between 1861 and 1882. (See Figures 5 and 6, and Appendix.) It is very likely that the African Friends also interred deceased persons between the founding of the burial ground in 1826 and the start of municipal recording of deaths in 1861. Several factors, however, hinder knowing the full extent of burials in the subject property. These include the incomplete or no longer extant public and church death/burial records, location of the subject property outside the populous sections of the city (which city authorities somewhat ignored), various and inconsistent names ascribed to the burial site, and race of those interred.

³ Peter Rose et uxor to Jacob Gardner, Philip Bartho, and Isaac Lloyd, July 14, 1826, Philadelphia Deed Book GWR no. 14, p. 353ff (recorded Feb. 7, 1827).

**RETURN OF A DEATH,
IN THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA.
PHYSICIAN'S CERTIFICATE.**

1. Name of Deceased, *Charles Griffen*
 2. Colour, *black child*
 3. Sex, *male*
 4. Age, *fifteen month*
 5. Married or Single,
 6. Date of Death, *June 15th. 1861.*
 7. Cause of Death, *congestion of the brain*

J. M. Fox M. D.
 Residence, *134 S. 4th St. Walnut.*

UNDERTAKER'S CERTIFICATE, IN RELATION TO DECEASED.

8. Occupation, *Rev.*
 9. Place of Birth, *Philadelphia*
 10. When a Minor, } Name of Father, *Wm. Griffen*
 } Name of Mother, *Debra Griffen*
 & th
 11. Ward,
 12. Street and Number, *1211 Arch St*
 13. Date of Burial, *June 17th*
 14. Place of Burial, *Haymonia*
 H. S. Duterte UNDERTAKER.
 Residence, *634 Lombard St*
 Date of Certificate, *June 15th 1861*

Figure 5. Death Return for Charles Griffen, died June 15, 1861, buried June 17, 1861 in “Haymonia” burial ground. Source: Philadelphia City Death Records, 1861-1915, Familysearch.org. Griffen’s is the earliest record of interment found for the African Friends to Harmony Burial Ground.

RETURN OF A DEATH
IN THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA.
PHYSICIAN'S CERTIFICATE.

This constitutes one Certificate. To be returned, by the Superintendent of Cemeteries, to Health Office, on Saturday of each week, before 12 M.

1. Name of Deceased, *Wm Henry*
 2. Color, *Colored*
 3. Sex, *Male*
 4. Age, *3 Weeks*
 5. Married or Single,
 6. Date of Death, *Dec 23/82*
 7. Cause of Death, *Distich of Heart Action*

Edw W Hemanthly M. D.
 Residence, *207 Olive St*

UNDERTAKER'S CERTIFICATE IN RELATION TO DECEASED.

8. Occupation,
 9. Place of Birth, *West Phila.*
 10. When a Minor, { Name of Father, *George Henry*
 Name of Mother, *Anna Mary Henry*
 11. Ward, *4th Ward.*
 12. Street and Number, *Market St. West Phila*
 13. Date of Burial, *Dec. 25th 1882.*
 14. Place of Burial, *Harmonia Cemetery*

A. P. Frankenhfield Undertaker.
 Residence, *530 1/2 4th St. W. Phila Pa*

Figure 6. Death Return for William Henry, died Dec. 23, 1882, buried Dec. 25, 1882 in “Harmonia Cemetery.” Source: Philadelphia City Death Records, 1861-1915, Familysearch.org. Henry’s burial is the last record of interment found thus far for the African Friends to Harmony Burial Ground.

Several Death Returns and Returns of Interments (Figures 7 through 11) confirm the location of the subject burial ground at “Oak Street below 42nd” (1861), “Oak near Rose [42nd Street]” (1861), “Ludlow near Rose” (1863), and “Ludlow Above 41st” (1876):

Interments in the Harmonian Burial Ground,
For the Week ending June 15th 1861

NAME.	AGES.	WARD.	DISEASES.	NATIVITY.
<u>Charles Guffia</u>	<u>15 months</u>		<u>Consumption</u>	
<u>Ground Oak Street below 42nd</u>				
<u>R. Beatley trustee or Grave Digger</u>				

Figure 7. Return of Interments for “Harmonian” Burial Ground, Week ending June 15, 1861. R. Beatley [or Beatley] signs as “trustee or Grave Digger.” Beatley was a trustee of Mt. Pisgah A.M.E. Church as early as 1847. Note the location of the burial ground at “Oak Street below 42nd.” Source: Philadelphia City Death Records, 1861-1915, Familysearch.org.

Return of Interments made to the Health Officer, before 12 o'clock, M., on the Saturday of every week.

Interments in the Harmonian Burial Ground,
Location, oak ^{near} between Rose Streets.

For the Week ending

NAME.	AGES.	WARD.	DISEASES.	NATIVITY.
<u>Annamary Disher</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>24</u>	<u>Disease of Lungs</u>	<u>Irish</u>
<u>R. Beatley sexton or Digger</u>				

Figure 8. Return of Interments for “Harmonian” Burial Ground, [Sept. 27, 1863]. Source: Philadelphia City Death Records, 1861-1915, Familysearch.org.

Return of Interments made to the Health Officer, before 12 o'clock, M., on the Saturday of every week.

Interments in the Harmonian Burial Ground,
 Location, South near 11th Streets.

For the Week ending Dec 6 1863

NAME.	AGES.	WARD.	DISEASES.	NATIVITY.
<u>George Butka</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>24</u>	<u>Phthisis</u> <u>1 year</u> <u>W. Bentley, S. 10th</u>	<u>Magorstown</u> <u>Hyderabad</u>

Figure 9. Return of Interments for “Harmonian” Burial Ground, Week ending Dec. 6, 1863. Source: Philadelphia City Death Records, 1861-1915, Familysearch.org.

Return of Interments made to the Registrar, before 12 o'clock, M., on the Saturday of every Week.

INTERMENTS In the Harmony Ground Burial Ground,
Location, East of 43 Streets.

For the Week ending _____

NAMES	AGE	DISEASES	NATIVITY	WARD
<u>Delia Kelly</u>	<u>18</u>		<u>Dela ...</u>	

Figure 10. Return of Interments for “Harmony Ground,” [Aug. 31, 1876]. Source: Philadelphia City Death Records, 1861-1915, Familysearch.org.

Return of Interments made to the Registrar, before 12 o'clock, M., on the Saturday of every Week.

INTERMENTS In the *Harmonian* Burial Ground,
Ludlow Street 41st Location, _____ Streets.

For the Week ending _____

NAMES	AGE	DISEASES	NATIVITY	WARD
<i>Lewis Johnson</i>	.	<i>Smallpox</i>	<i>Philad^a</i>	<i>27</i>
<i>Ludlow Street 41st</i>				
<i>May 19th 1876</i>	<i>20</i>			

Figure 11. Return of Interments in “Harmonian” Burial Ground, [May 19, 1876]. Source: Philadelphia City Death Records, 1861-1915, Familysearch.org.

The 1826 deed to the subject property stipulated that “when and so soon as the s^d association shall obtain a Charter of Incorporation ... Jacob Gardner Philip Bartho and Isaac Lloyd or the survivors or survivor of them or the heirs and assigns ... will” convey the lot to “The African friends to Harmony.” Application for a charter, however, was not made until 1885, by which time the original trustees had died.⁴ At the time of application, the *Times* (Philadelphia) described the lot as “an old burying-ground” (despite bodies having been interred there as late as 1882), and stated that the charter was to enable the African Friends to Harmony to take title to the burial ground in anticipation of selling it. (Figure 12.)

Applications for Association Charters.

Application was yesterday made in Common Pleas Court, No. 1, for the approval of charters for the Culinary Beneficial Association and the Beneficial Society of the St. John's German Evangelical Lutheran Congregation. The Southwestern Presbyterian Church applied for leave to amend its charter by changing the term of service of its trustees. Another charter application was made on behalf of “The African Friends to Harmony,” who desired to take title to an old burying-ground on Ludlow street, between Forty-first and Forty-second streets, which they propose to sell. The title has hitherto been in the name of trustees.

Figure 12. *Times* (Philadelphia), Dec. 25, 1885.

⁴ *Times* (Philadelphia), Dec. 25, 1885.

The Court of Common Pleas of Philadelphia granted the charter on January 23, 1886. Still, the association held on to the property. It proved unable, however, to easily meet its fiscal obligations, and in 1888 the City sued the “Brothers of Harmony” for outstanding taxes on the burial lot. (Figure 13.)⁵

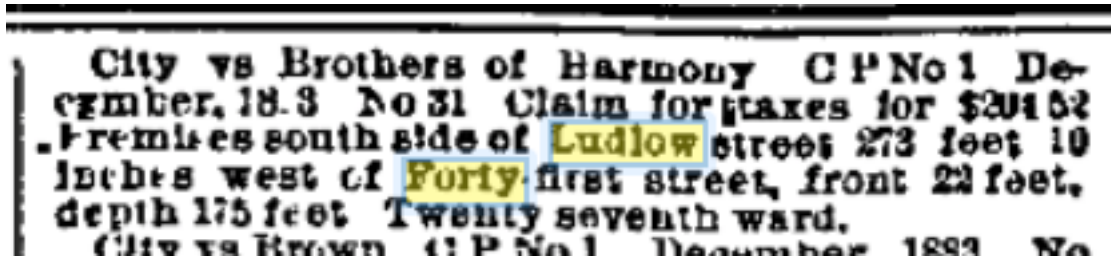


Figure 13. “Municipal Claims,” *Philadelphia Inquirer*, Dec. 24, 1888.

For the next two decades, the incorporated African Friends to Harmony continued to own the burial ground lot. (Figures 14 through 18.) No further interments, however, appear to have been made after 1882. In April 1910, Jacob Gardner, son and heir of one of the original trustees, conveyed the property to the African Friends to Harmony. The newly chartered corporation, in turn, immediately sold the lot to a private party.⁶

⁵ The charter is cited in Jacob Gardner, heir at law of Jacob Gardner, the last surviving of three trustees, to African Friends to Harmony, April 15, 1910, Philadelphia Deed Book WSV no. 1208, p. 435ff (recorded April 16, 1910). According to this deed, the charter was granted on Jan. 23, 1886 and recorded Feb. 1, 1886 in Charter Book No. 11, p. 115ff. The Charter Books are in the collection of the Philadelphia City Archives and Records, and owing to the archives’ temporary closure, are inaccessible to the public.

⁶ Deed Book WSV no. 1208, p. 435ff.; African Friends to Harmony to J. Franklin Miller et al., April 15, 1910, Philadelphia Deed Book WSV no. 1295, p. 146ff (recorded April 16, 1910).

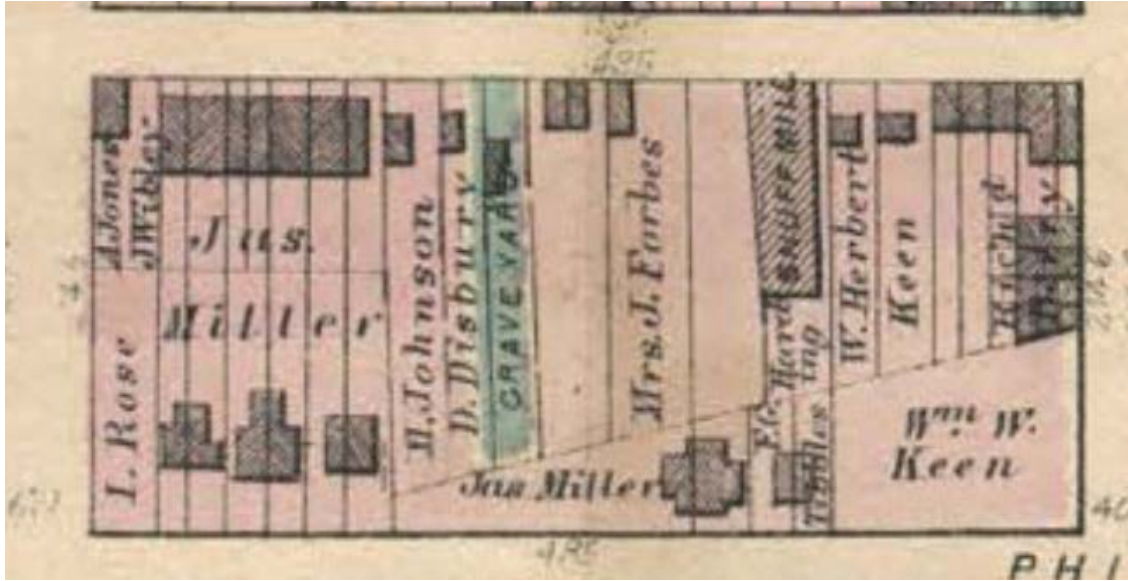


Figure 14. *Atlas of West Philadelphia including the 24th & 27th Wards of the City of Philadelphia from actual surveys & official records.* H.W. Hopkins, 1872. <http://westphillyhistory.archives.upenn.edu/maps/1872-atlas-hopkins/plate-d>

This map inaccurately represents the African Friends to Harmony burial ground boundary. The "L" shaped boundary described in the 1826 deed is more accurately reflected in subsequent maps.

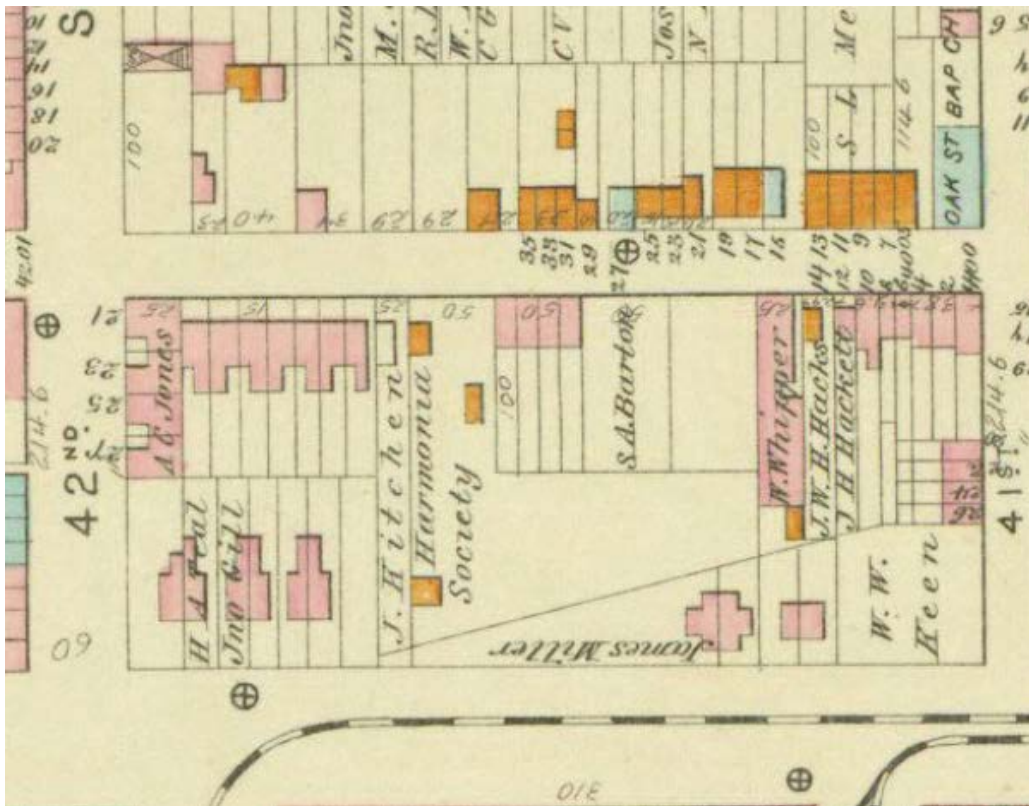


Figure 15. *Atlas of the 24th & 27th Wards, West Philadelphia.* J.B. Scott, 1878. https://www.philageohistory.org/rdic-images/view-image.cfm/SCT1878.PhilaWards24_27.024.Plate_W

African Friends to Harmony Burial Ground, 4111-23 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia
 Nomination to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places, June 2018

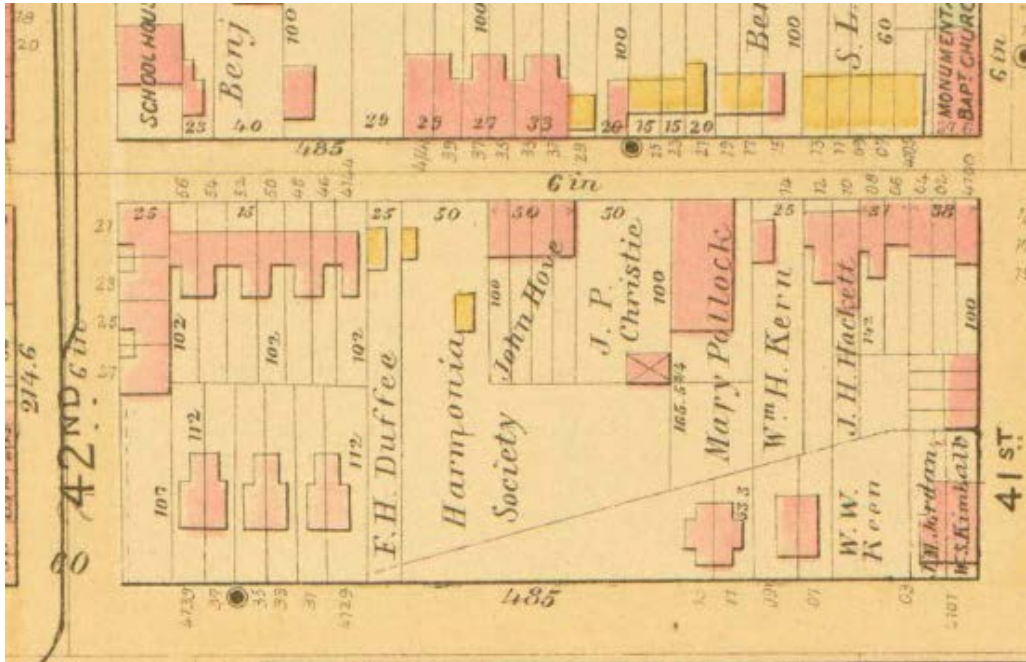


Figure 16. *Atlas of West Philadelphia, 24th and 27th Wards*. William G. Baist, 1886. Pl. 23. Source: <https://www.philageohistory.org/rdic-images/view-image.cfm/BST1886.WPhila.027.Plate23>

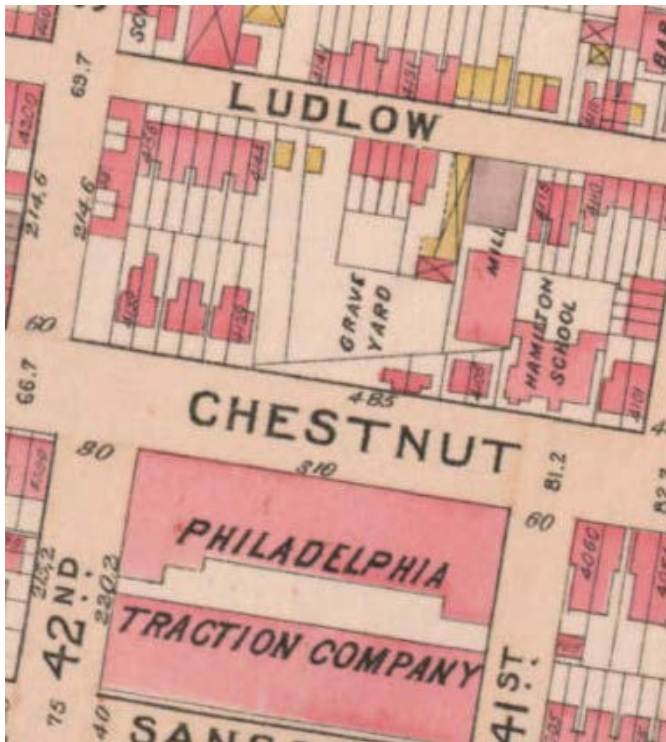


Figure 17. *Atlas of the City of Philadelphia, Complete in One Volume*, 1895. G. W. Bromley & Co., 1895. Source: <https://atlas.phila.gov>

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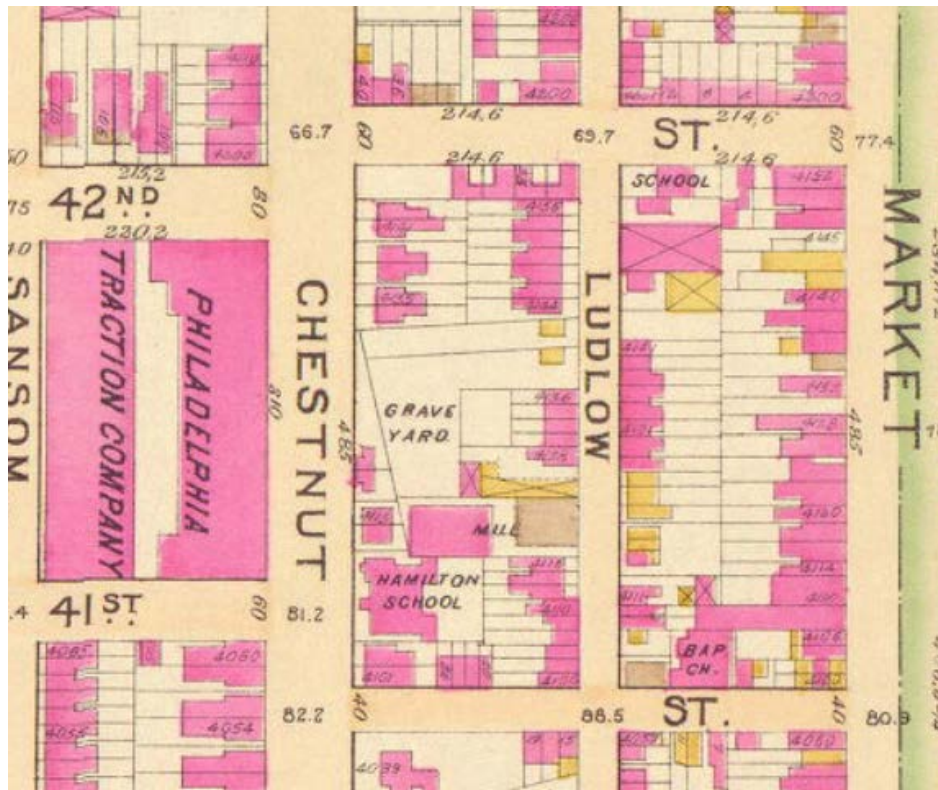


Figure 18. *Atlas of the City of Philadelphia, Complete in One Volume, 1901*. G. W. Bromley & Co. 1901. Pl. 10. Source: <https://www.philageohistory.org/rdic-images/view-image.cfm/BRM1901.Phila.014.Plate10>

Criterion J

West Philadelphia's African American community⁷

According to the U.S. Population census, no persons remained enslaved in Blockley or the adjacent Kingsessing Township in 1820. Of the original trustees of the African Friends to Harmony, only James Gardner was enumerated among the heads of households in the Federal Census of 1820. He was already in his fifties, and had settled in Blockley (having moved, it appears, from Maryland) as early as 1810. Gardner was one of 252 free African Americans residing in the townships of Blockley and Kingsessing, and comprising approximately 6.5% of the population of the two townships. By 1830, black residents accounted for 9% of Blockley Township's population and nearly 12% of Kingsessing's.⁸ Philip Bartho now was among those

⁷ See the maps at Figures 21a and 21b for sites discussed in this section.

⁸ 1820 U.S. Census of Population, Blockley Township, Philadelphia County; 1810 U.S. Census of Population, Blockley Township, Philadelphia County; see also the 1850 U.S. Census of Population, West Philadelphia, Philadelphia County where Gardner's ("Gardiner") age is recorded as 85; Emily T. Cooperman, "Historic Context Statement for University City Planning

heads of household enumerated in the 1830 census. Bartho first appeared in the public record in 1824 when he purchased a lot on Oak Street from Peter Rose for the sum of \$100. By 1826, Bartho had constructed on the parcel “a small Brick Dwelling” assessed at a modest \$400.⁹

The African Baptist Church at Blockley, subsequently called “Oak Street Baptist Church” and, after 1884, “Monumental Baptist Church,” was one of two religious congregations that anchored the West Philadelphia community. The Baptist congregation formed in 1826 and would take its historic place as the second oldest African Baptist Church in Philadelphia.¹⁰ In October 1829, the congregation of twenty-six members sent representatives to the Philadelphia Baptist Association Meeting and “were received into the Association.”¹¹ Bartho and Gardner, trustees of the African Friends to Harmony Burial Ground, were among the representatives. (Figure 19.)

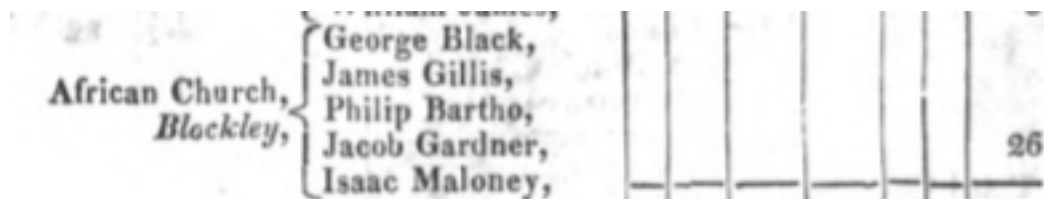


Figure 19. *Minutes of the Philadelphia Baptist Association, Convened ... Philadelphia, October 6, 1829.*

Membership in the church had risen to 52 a decade after affiliation with the Baptist Association. By 1843, the congregation’s “old frame meeting-house,” erected on land sold to Philip Bartho (as trustee) by Peter Rose and subsequently transferred to the church was “too small” for the congregation. Members completed a stone church over the next several years. The congregation continued to regularly send representatives to the Baptist Association’s annual meeting.¹²

The second black congregation in Blockley, Mt. Pisgah African Methodist Episcopal Church, was established in 1833.¹³ David Disberry, born free in Pennsylvania, was one of the founders

District” (2012), 17-18. The 1790 U.S. Census of Population enumerated 24 free persons of color and 4 slaves in Blockley Township, and 54 free persons of color and 7 slaves in Kingsessing Township.

⁹ Peter Rose to Philip Bartho, April 23, 1824, Philadelphia Deed Book GWR no. 6, p. 206ff (recorded Jan. 21, 1825); County Tax Assessment Ledger, Blockley Township, 1826, Philadelphia City Archives and Records [hereinafter “PCAR”].

¹⁰ John A. Saunders, *100 Years After Emancipation: History of the Philadelphia Negro* ([n.p.], 1960), 16-17.

¹¹ *Minutes of the Philadelphia Baptist Association, Convened ... Philadelphia, October 6, 1829; Minutes of the Philadelphia Baptist Association, Held by Appointment in the Meeting-House of the Second Baptist Church, Philadelphia, October 2, 1839* (Philadelphia, 1839).

¹² *Minutes of the Philadelphia Baptist Association, 1843, 1846 and 1848*; Emily Cooperman, “Inventory of African-American Historic Church Resources, City of Philadelphia” (ARCH Historic Preservation Consulting, 2008); 4101-05 Ludlow Street, Nomination to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places (2016).

¹³ The website of the still extant congregation of the Mt. Pisgah African Methodist Episcopal Church states that the congregation first met in Richard Berry’s home at 4100 Ludlow St. (then the southwest corner of Oak and Mulberry Streets). But Berry did not yet live in West

of Mt. Pisgah. Disberry used his own resources to purchase land located at Locust Street and Till (later 40th) Street.¹⁴ The seller was the white owner of a snuff (tobacco) manufactory whose lot was partially adjacent to the subject burial grounds on the ground's east. Several nearby African Americans worked in the mill.¹⁵ "After purchasing the lot," Disberry later recalled, "I went forward to build with my own means, and from what help I could get from subscriptions." By 1836, congregants had erected a frame church.¹⁶ In 1847, the church incorporated under Pennsylvania Commonwealth laws and formally joined with the African Methodist Episcopal Church. The congregation replaced its frame structure with a substantial stone building in 1867/1868.¹⁷

Manumitted African Americans, men and women who had completed their indentured servitude or bought the remaining time of their terms, freeborn persons, and some fugitives from enslavement gravitated to the West Philadelphia neighborhood.¹⁸ They concentrated along Oak

Philadelphia when the church was beginning. Berry was born in Cecil County, Maryland in December 1815. He moved to Philadelphia with his parents in 1834 and joined Mother Bethel. In 1847, Berry was living in Moyamensing. Sometime that year, he moved with his wife to West Philadelphia and joined Mt. Pisgah, "then in its infancy." His first purchase of property in West Philadelphia (on the southwest corner of Oak and Mulberry Streets, later 4100 Ludlow Street) was on September 30, 1847. In 1833 when Mt. Pisgah was established, moreover, Richard Berry would have been a mere 17 years old—too young to have his own household. The confusion likely arose because Berry was active in the church by 1847, the year Mt. Pisgah incorporated. By March 1849, he had constructed a three-story brick house on his own property, and that impressive achievement (many of the houses in the neighborhood were frame) could have contributed to producing memories of an earlier role for Berry.

http://www.mtpisgahamec.org/church_history; Richard R. Wright, *Centennial Encyclopedia of the A.M.E. Church* (Philadelphia, 1916), 266-67; John Francis et uxor to Richard Berry, March 21, 1849, Philadelphia Deed Book JOD no. 63, p290ff (recorded March 22, 1849).

¹⁴ Philip Hardin et uxor to David Disberry, Sept. 18, 1833, Philadelphia Deed Book GS no. 38, p 317ff (recorded April 4, 1842).

¹⁵ According to the 1847 census, several African Americans were employed in a snuff mill, and although it is impossible to document, I suggest that the Hardin[g]s employed their neighbors in the years prior to 1847. African-American Census of Philadelphia, 1847, Friends Historical Collection, Swarthmore College (Ancestry.com database online).

¹⁶ Deposition of David Disberry, in Robert Beatie, Michael Johnson, William Harris, John Wesley and James J. Williams, Trustees of the African Methodist Episcopal Mount Pisgah Church v. John Henry, James Kane, Aaron Randolph, Curtis Kane, March Term 1870, Equity Proceedings, Court of Common Pleas of the City and County of Philadelphia, PCAR.

¹⁷ *Christian Recorder*, May 18, 1867; Charles H. Carpenter v. Mt. Pisgah A.M.E. Church, Mechanic Liens, March Term 1868, no. 186, District Court of the City and County of Philadelphia, PCAR; "Mt. Pisgah A.M.E. Church Celebrates 100th Anniversary," *Philadelphia Tribune*, Feb. 16, 1933; "Colored People Spend Millions in Church Houses," *Philadelphia Tribune*, April 2, 1921.

¹⁸ On fugitives arrested in the West Philadelphia neighborhood, see for example: Letter from a Chas E. Heath, Feb 15, 1836, to T.I. Wharton, Box 17, Legal Papers, Wharton Papers, Coll.

Street between Till (40th) and Rose (42st) Streets, with some settling closer to Mt. Pisgah around Locust and Till Streets. The published report of the 1847 census undertaken by the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends summarizes the origins of these residents. Over a third were migrants to Pennsylvania. More than 11% of the men and women in West Philadelphia had been born into slavery but had purchased or otherwise earned or taken their freedom (figure 20):

12

	City.	S. Gard.	N. L.	South-wark.	Moyam-ensing.	W. Phil.	Total.
Born slaves,	814	74	42	12	97	38	1077
Manumitted,	604	40	24	10	61	21	767
Bought their freedom,	194	24	10	2	33	15	275
Am't paid for their freedom	\$45,751	2575	2660	350	8960	2738	63,034
By persons,	181	17	10	1	32	15	256
Not stated how,	16	10	8		3	2	39

Figure 20. Source: *A Statistical Inquiry into the Condition of the People of Colour, of the City and Districts of Philadelphia*. Philadelphia, 1849, p. 12.

By 1847, the households hugging Oak Street Baptist and Mt. Pisgah A.M.E. churches had grown to a stable laboring community. The census found 338 “coloured” persons in West Philadelphia, nearly half of whom were 15 years and older. (The 1847 census did not extend to all of Blockley, but centered on the West Philadelphia Borough and “Roseville” to its west.)¹⁹ More than half of the households lived on Oak Street, likely between present-day 40th and 42nd Streets. Although little more than two percent of Philadelphia County’s black population enumerated in the 1847 census, West Philadelphia’s African Americans stood out. The *Statistical Inquiry* aggregating the census results singled residents out for their social, economic and moral achievements:

The superior condition of the poorer class of the people of colour in West Philadelphia above all the other districts of Philadelphia, cannot fail to strike the reader. They are nearly all common labourers, and their houses are frame buildings, presenting little to attract the eye, yet one in three owns the house he lives in, and the property is generally free from incumbrances; and nearly six in ten of the house-keepers own personal effects exceeding one hundred dollars. A larger proportion of their children attend school; and

1500, Historical Society of Pennsylvania [hereinafter “HSP”]; Acting Committee Minutes, April 3, 1835, 1822-1842, Pennsylvania Abolition Society Papers, Coll. 490, HSP.

¹⁹ *A Statistical Inquiry into the Condition of the People of Colour, of the City and Districts of Philadelphia* (Philadelphia, 1849), quotation at p. 5; population percentages calculated from table on p. 8. The *Inquiry* stipulated that the figure did not include persons living in white households as domestics. The 1850 U.S. Census, Blockley Township, however, shows few African Americans living with white families. The *Inquiry* also noted the likelihood that the census undercounted African Americans.

they are greatly better off as regards their general condition, than those of the same occupations living in the City.²⁰

The report noted that 1 in 2.9 heads of households in West Philadelphia owned real estate, in contrast to 1 in 16.6 in Moyamensing, 1 in 8.8 in Northern Liberties, and similarly dramatic differences in property holding in other areas of Philadelphia county.²¹

The Oak/Ludlow Street vicinity continued to be the core of Blockley's African American population for the next several decades. It was the home of Underground Rail Road activists.²² William Whipper, the Columbia, Pennsylvania based partner of black leader and abolitionist Stephen Smith, bought property on Oak Street (touching the burial site) in 1852, perhaps for their lumber business but suspiciously strategic for Underground Rail Road activities.²³ African American men who enlisted in the Civil War lived in the Oak/Ludlow Street community.²⁴ Members from both churches formed a "Union Freedmen's Relief Association" to assist slaves newly liberated from territories held by Federal troops in 1863.²⁵ They pushed for passage of the Fifteenth Amendment (voting rights for black men) to the U.S. Constitution.²⁶ The "colored Citizens of the 24th and 27th Wards" staged political rallies to support political candidates—"Come one, come all, to the great Republican call!"²⁷ Oak Street/ Monumental Baptist and Mt. Pisgah A.M.E. hosted regional annual religious conventions. In the decades after the Civil War, both churches gained congregants, employed full-time pastors, and engaged in religious, social and educational outreach, participating in the steady growth and prominence true of Philadelphia's African American religious congregations.²⁸

A strong African American community did not erase the fact that black and white households lived side-by-side along the 4100 block of Oak/Ludlow and Chestnut, and along 41st and 42nd

²⁰ *Statistical Inquiry*, 41.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 14.

²² Reverend William Jackson served Oak Street Baptist as pastor from 1841-1851. Jackson was involved in rescuing a fugitive slave from the custody of a marshall, then disguising the slave and sending him safely to Canada. He was arrested for his leadership in the incident, but was quickly released; Mark Morrison-Reed, *Darkening the Doorways: Black Trailblazers and Missed Opportunities in Unitarian Universalism* (Boston: Skinner House Books, 2011); see also <https://www.thembc.org/history> for Jackson's connection to the Underground Rail Road. Monumental Baptist's website suggests that Jackson served till 1854, though Morrison-Reed, relying on Jackson's unpublished memoirs, gives the date as 1851.

²³ Amelia Carter to William Whipper, April 24, 1852, Philadelphia Deed Book TH no. 162, p. 264ff (recorded August 7, 1854).

²⁴ "The Colored Regiment," *Christian Recorder*, April 18, 1863.

²⁵ "Union Freedmen's Relief Association of West Philadelphia," *Christian Recorder*, March 7, 1863.

²⁶ "Equal Rights Demonstration," *Christian Recorder*, Sept. 29, 1866.

²⁷ "United We Stand Divided We Fall!... A Grand Ox Roast and Dinner!" *Christian Recorder*, September 28, 1872.

²⁸ Matthew S. Hopper, "From Refuge to Strength: The Rise of the African American Church in Philadelphia, 1787-1949" (Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia, [n.d.]).

streets between Market and Chestnut Streets. At times, affiliation by class rather than race seemed to prevail. In 1860, David Disberry's near neighbors on Oak/Ludlow Street, for example, included laborers and washerwomen born in Ireland. And at times, relationships defied both racial and class lines. William Washington, one of the earliest members and trustees of Blockley African Baptist/Oak Street Baptist, for example, named his "friend Hugh McIlvain" executor of his 1863 will. McIlvain was a white member of the Society of Friends and prosperous merchant who owned a lumberyard near present-day Thirty-Second Street and Lancaster Avenue. Though Washington might have been McIlvain's employee, he still counted the Quaker a "friend." McIlvain, in fact, executed meticulously Washington's estate with assets of \$536. Not included in that sum was the value of a Bucks County farm and two West Philadelphia building lots, suggesting moreover that Washington was a model the *Statistical Inquiry* would have admired.²⁹

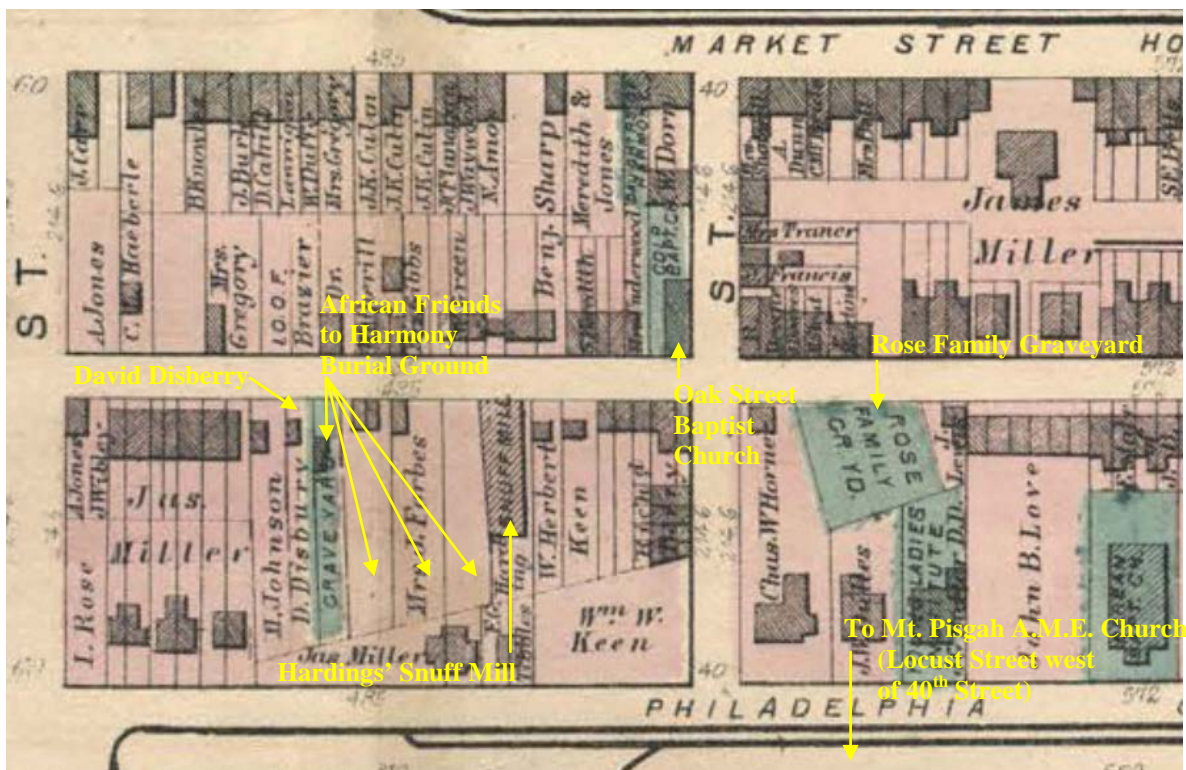


Figure 21a. Oak/Ludlow Street's African American neighborhood. Detail, Market to Chestnut and mid-40th to 42nd Streets. Shaded green on the map are Oak Street Baptist Church ("Col'd Bap. Ch.") on the northwest corner of 41st and Ludlow Streets; the African Friends to Harmony "graveyard" (south side Ludlow St. between 41st and 42nd Streets); Hardings' Snuff Mill (south side Ludlow St. between 41st and 42nd Streets); and the Rose Family Grave Yard (south side Ludlow St. between 40th and 41st Streets). Among the lots owned by African Americans also shown are those of David Disberry (Disbury), 4138 Ludlow, bordering the African

²⁹ William Washington, Will, 1863, no. 168, Recorder of Wills, Philadelphia County; William Barton Marsh, *Philadelphia Hardwood, 1798-1948; the story of the McIlvains of Philadelphia and the Business they founded* (Philadelphia, 1948); 1850 U.S. Census of Population, West Philadelphia and the 1860 U.S. Census of Population, Ward 24, Precinct 7, Philadelphia County recorded Washington's occupation as "labourer."

Friends to Harmony “graveyard” on the west; Richard Berry (west side 41st between Ludlow and Chestnut Streets); M. Johnson (adjacent Disberry’s lot on the west); J. Francis (east side 41st between Ludlow and Chestnut Streets); and Mrs. Underwood (adjacent Oak Street Baptist Church on the west side). Source: *Atlas of West Philadelphia including the 24th & 27th Wards of the City of Philadelphia from actual surveys & official records*. H.W. Hopkins, 1872. <http://westphillyhistory.archives.upenn.edu/maps/1872-atlas-hopkins/plate-d>

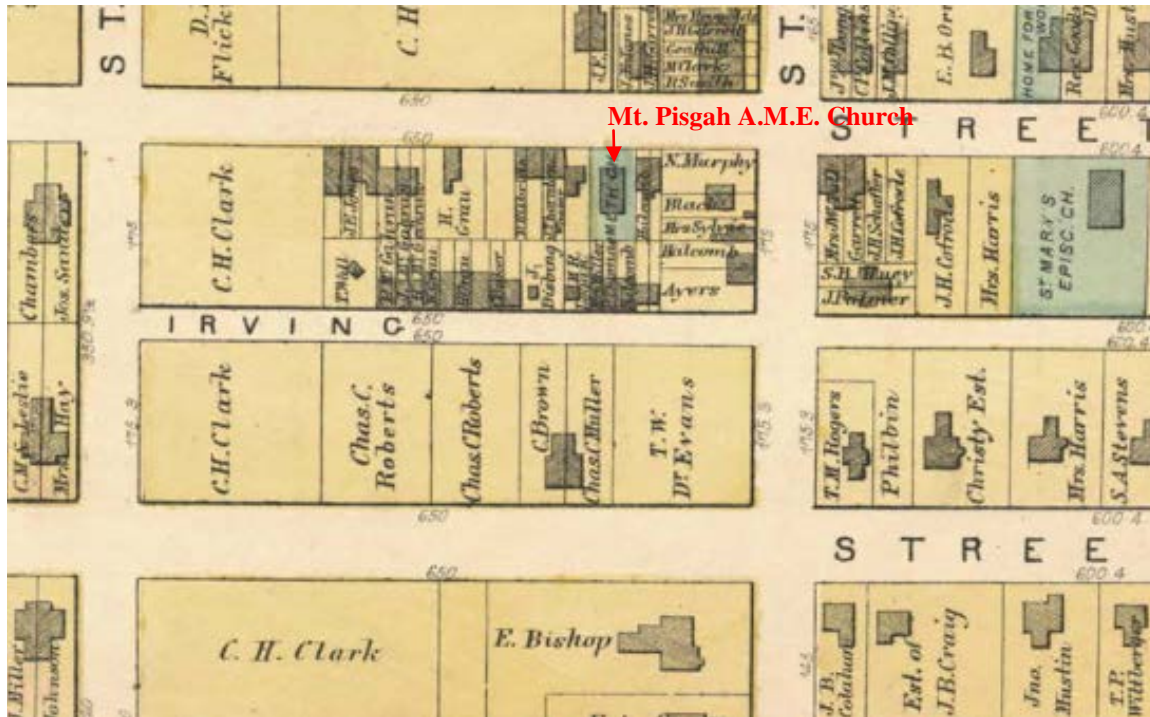


Figure 21b. Detail of Locust to Spruce Streets and mid-39th to 41st Streets. In 1872, Mt. Pisgah A.M.E. Church, Locust Street west of 40th Street, continued to be surrounded by small lots owned by African Americans. *Atlas of West Philadelphia including the 24th & 27th Wards of the City of Philadelphia from actual surveys & official records*. H.W. Hopkins, 1872. <https://westphillyhistory.archives.upenn.edu/maps/1872-atlas-hopkins/plate-c>

Beneficial and burial societies

Securing a place where African Americans could be interred with dignity must have been foremost on the minds of those who established African Friends to Harmony. Trustees Gardner, Bartho and Lloyd focused the community’s modest resources first on buying a burying ground property, and only three years later did African Baptist members purchase a lot on which to construct a church. This timing also suggests that the organizers intended the burying ground to serve the growing free black community in West Philadelphia, regardless of religious affiliation. In 1826, Blockley Township was remote from burial grounds that served African Americans on the east side of the Schuylkill River. Family burying grounds, such as that east of African Friends to Harmony maintained by the Rose family, were not options for African Americans who owned small plots of land when they owned any property. Blacks likely were barred from the few church graveyards that existed in Blockley in 1826. Impoverished persons, both black and white, might be interred in the potters’ fields of the Lower and Upper Burying Grounds on

the west side of the Schuylkill.³⁰ But the founders of African Friends to Harmony clearly sought more dignified graves for family and community members and met an immediate need for the growing black population in its vicinity. Both Blockley African Baptist/Oak Street and Mt. Pisgah A.M.E. would later have their own church graveyards, but the subject burial ground continued to serve church members and Philadelphia's extended African American community.³¹

Beginning in 1849, Olive and Lebanon Cemeteries provided additional, nondenominational alternatives for black interments.³² African Friends to Harmony continued until 1882, nonetheless, to provide critical space for African American burials in the Roseville/ West Philadelphia community. A substantial number of burials in the cemetery's last two decades were of infants and young children whose parents were just beginning to form families; some of these couples, perhaps as they gained more economic stability, buried subsequent children in Olive Cemetery. "Harmonia" grounds, nonetheless, remained a charitable resting place for elderly community members as well. Henry Winder, for example, was an early trustee of Mt. Pisgah A.M.E. Church. When he died in the Philadelphia Hospital (or the Almshouse) in 1882, friends claimed his body and had it interred in the subject burial ground. (Figure 22.)

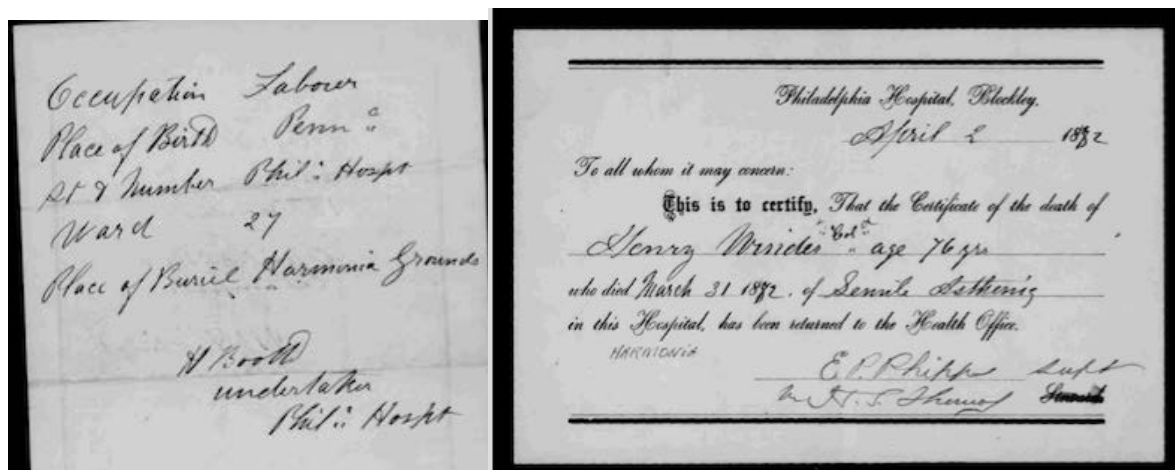


Figure 22. Death Return, Henry Winder, April 2, 1882. Source: Philadelphia City Death Records, 1861-1915, Familysearch.org.

³⁰ J. Thomas Scharf and Thompson Westcott, *History of Philadelphia, 1609-1884*. 3 vols. (Philadelphia, 1884), vol. 3: 2358.

³¹ Some evidence suggests that before construction of the stone church in 1867-68, the congregation used a portion of its lot for a graveyard. Death returns of at least two persons identify Mt. Pisgah as their burial site (Joseph Hackett, died March 30, 1866; John Bullet, died April 3, 1866, buried "Mt. Pisga (Locust above 40th)"). A *Philadelphia Tribune* article commemorating the church's one-hundredth anniversary claims as well that the church lot served also as a burying ground; *Philadelphia Tribune* Feb. 16, 1933. Mt. Pisgah owned no other real estate except the church lot until the 1870s.

³² Aaron Wunsch, "Bethel Burial Ground, Philadelphia, Penna." National Register of Historic Places Inventory/Nomination Form. January 5, 2016.

In forming African Friends to Harmony, organizers drew on examples of mutual aid societies. The earliest known free black mutual aid society, the African Union Society of Newport, Rhode Island, was founded in 1780 and forged ties to free African Americans throughout the North. Shortly after the American Revolution, it sent a representative to Philadelphia to advocate for emigration of African Americans to Africa (a cause rejected by black Philadelphians), and encountered the Free African Society, which Philadelphia blacks had established in April 1787. In 1796, Newport's African Union Society exchanged "rules and regulations as a means of advancing mutual interests" and continued in the next decade to correspond with Philadelphia's African Humane Society. Other mutual aid societies were established in 1808 in Newport (the African Benevolent Society) and New York City (the African Mutual Relief).³³

Those West Philadelphia African Americans who were not born in Pennsylvania migrated principally from Virginia, Maryland and Delaware, and might well have been familiar with several mutual aid societies of the Upper South, such as the Resolute Beneficial Society of Washington, D.C. (1818), the Burying Ground Society of Richmond, Virginia (1815), and the Beneficial Society of Richmond, Virginia (1815).³⁴ The Columbian Harmony Society, established in Washington City (the District of Columbia) in November 1825, foreshadowed the name and purpose of Blockley's African Friends to Harmony. The Columbia Harmony Society was created "to aid each other in infirmity, sickness, disease, or accident, and to provide burial for [members] after death." By 1828, the Society had purchased a plot for its own burial ground.³⁵

The "benevolent society," scholar Robert Harris asserts, "quickly became the most prevalent form of organization for free Blacks." These societies were not modeled on white organizations (though white mutual aid societies existed), but created to meet "distinctive needs of the free black populace, many of whom had recently emerged from slavery" and faced racial exclusion, economic hardships, migration, loss of extended kin, and adjustment to a free labor economy.³⁶

Philadelphia exemplifies the rapid adoption of the benevolent society form. An 1813 periodical tallied a dozen such associations "established among the coloured people," to which about ten percent of the city's African American population belonged. A white writer (no doubt) remarked in 1831 on the "much more extensive system of benevolent operations, than is generally supposed to exist" among blacks. Several prominent African American men testified to their deliberate effort to form mutual aid societies and keep free blacks from becoming public burdens. They listed forty-four male and female benevolent societies, and suggested more

³³ Gary B. Nash, *Forging Freedom; the Formation of Philadelphia's Black Community, 1720-1840* (Cambridge, Mass., 1988), 98-104; Robert L. Harris, Jr., "Early Black Benevolent Societies, 1780-1830," *Massachusetts Review* 20, no. 3 (1979), 603-625, quotation at 611.

³⁴ In the Lower South, Charleston, South Carolina's Brown Fellowship Society (founded 1790), while largely composed of mulatto men of means, established a burial plot in 1794 to serve the town's entire black population, regardless of status or means. *Ibid.*, 617.

³⁵ Paul E. Sluby and Stanton L. Wormley, Jr., *History of the Columbian Harmony Society and of Harmony Cemetery, Washington, D.C.* (Washington, D.C., 1976; revised 2001).

³⁶ Harris, "Early Black Benevolent Societies," quotations at 611 and 609.

existed. Historian Gary Nash finds that black mutual aid societies increased in the early nineteenth century in response to the depression of 1817-1823 and the erroneous claim that poor blacks were draining the public poor relief funds. “By the early 1830s,” Nash asserts, these “societies were virtually operating as a privately supported substitute for the public poor relief in the city.” They increased in number to close to 100 in 1837. “Collectively, these societies by 1837 were gathering annually nearly \$18,000 in dues and distributing \$14,000.... Far from living off the tax dollars of their white neighbors, black Philadelphians appear to have been among the most provident and self-reliant of city dwellers.”³⁷ Over time, Harris argues, mutual aid organizations furthermore “served as the linchpin of the free black community, generating the church, fraternal orders, insurance companies, and the national convention movement, which became important components of black institutional life.”³⁸

The *Statistical Inquiry* calculated from the 1847 census of Philadelphia’s African Americans that “nearly one-half the adult population, are members of Mutual Beneficial Societies, the funds of which are appropriated to support the members in sickness, and to bury the dead.” Contributions ranged from 25 to 37 ½ cents per month, and “ten to twenty dollars is usually allowed for funeral expenses.”³⁹ Participation among West Philadelphian African Americans similarly approached fifty percent. Although the manuscript census age ranges make it difficult to calculate the proportion of adults in West Philadelphia who belonged to beneficial societies, at least 50% of persons over the age of 15 paid into them. In some West Philadelphia households, two or three persons paid dues, suggesting the strong associations African American laborers had with mutual aid societies. Of the West Philadelphians who responded to the 1847 census investigator, only two persons who belonged to beneficial societies did not also attend religious services, underscoring the close connection between African Friends to Harmony and the church communities.

From the outset, African Friends to Harmony was both nondenominational and to some extent, charitable. Although at least two of the original trustees of African Friends to Harmony (Bartho and Gardner) were members of the African Baptist/ Oak Street Church, members of Mt. Pisgah also supervised the grounds and buried family members on the subject site. Robert Beatty, a trustee of Mt. Pisgah in 1847, was sexton and “grave digger” for the African Friends to Harmony burial grounds in the 1860s. (Figures 23 and 24.)

³⁷ *Juvenile Magazine*, no. 3, July 1, 1813; “Beneficial Societies,” *Hazard’s Register of Pennsylvania*, 7 (March 1831), 163-64; Nash, *Forging Freedom*, 273.

³⁸ Harris, “Early Black Benevolent Societies,” 609.

³⁹ *Statistical Inquiry*, 22.

Enterments in the Harminian Burial Ground, Pa
 For the Week ending July 23rd 1861

NAME.	AGES.	WARD.	DISEASES.	NATIVITY.
<u>John Hancock</u>	<u>24</u>		<u>Slap on eye</u>	<u>Irish</u>
			<u>R. Beatty</u>	<u>Irish</u>

Figure 23. Return of Interments, “Harminian” Burial Ground, Week ending July 23, 1861. Source: Philadelphia City Death Records, 1861-1915, Familysearch.org.

Return of Interments made to the Health Officer, before 12 o'clock, M., on the Saturday of every week.

Enterments in the Harminian Burial Ground,
 Location, oak ^{near} between Rose Streets.

For the Week ending

NAME.	AGES.	WARD.	DISEASES.	NATIVITY.
<u>Annamary Disberry</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>24</u>	<u>Discom of Lungs</u>	<u>Irish</u>
			<u>R. Beatty</u>	<u>Irish</u>

Figure 24. Return of Interments, “Harminian” Burial Ground, [Oct. 1863]. The child interred was the granddaughter of David Disberry; see next figure. Source: Philadelphia City Death Records, 1861-1915, Familysearch.org.

THIS ONE CERTIFICATE TO BE RETURNED TO THE HEALTH OFFICE, ON SATURDAY OF EACH WEEK, BEFORE 12 M.

RETURN OF A DEATH
IN THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA.
PHYSICIAN'S CERTIFICATE.

1. Name of Deceased, *Anna Mary Dusenberg*
2. Colour, *Coloured*
3. Sex, *Female*
4. Age, *Eight Years.*
5. Married or Single,
6. Date of Death, *Sept. 27th 1863*
7. Cause of Death, *Disease of Lungs & Heart*
M. M. Beach, M.D.
Residence, *West Philadelphia*

UNDERTAKER'S CERTIFICATE, IN RELATION TO DECEASED.

8. Occupation,
9. Place of Birth, *Media Delaware County*
10. When a Minor, } *Name of Father, Frank Dusenberg*
} *Name of Mother, Philip Dusenberg*
11. Ward, *2^d*
12. Street and Number, *4138 Chestnut St*
13. Date of Burial, *Sept. 29th 1863*
14. Place of Burial, *Harmonian Cemetery*
John Redburn **UNDERTAKER.**
1204 Market Street

Figure 25. Death Return for Anna Mary Dusenberg [Disberry], died Sept. 27, 1863, buried Sept. 29, 1863 in "Harmonian Cemetery." Frank Disberry was the son and Philis Disberry the daughter-in-law of David Disberry, an early founder of Mt. Pisgah A.M.E. Church. Source: Philadelphia City Death Records, 1861-1915, Familysearch.org.

David Disberry, who bought the lot on which to erect the church of Mt. Pisgah A.M.E., continued throughout his life to be a member of the A.M.E. church, and served as sexton for the burial ground in the 1870s. As of 1846, Disberry owned a lot with a two-story frame house adjacent to the burial grounds to its northwest (later 4138 Ludlow Street), putting him in easy proximity to the cemetery.⁴⁰ Disberry's infant granddaughter Anna Maria Disberry (figures 24 and 25) was interred in the African Friends to Harmony ground in 1863, as was another granddaughter, Virginia Marshall, in 1871. (See Appendix.) Another grandchild, Augustus

⁴⁰ Jacob Broom et uxor to David Disberry, May 8, 1846, Philadelphia Deed Book JTO no. 106, p. 256ff (recorded Dec 20, 1867).

Marshall, was President of the African Friends to Harmony society in 1910 when the Society finally sold the subject lot.⁴¹ The Baptist and A.M.E. churches and the subject burial ground were so intermingled, that even the undertaker who routinely served the community (and who appears to have filled out the lower section of the form) confused “Harmonian” and “Mt. Pisgah” as the burial site on at least one death return. (Figures 26 and 27.)

Returns of Interments made to the Health Officer, before 12 o'clock, M., on the Saturday of every week.

Interments in the Harmonian Burial Ground,
 Location, 44th St between 4th & 5th Streets.

For the Week ending April 11 1863

NAME.	AGE.	WARD.	DISEASES.	NATIVITY.
Alexander Randolph	40			
Mary Randolph				
None at above from April 7th				
H C Shortliff				
4 mo 1863				
Robert Matig				
6 months				

Figure 26. Return of Interments, “Harmonian” Burial Ground, Week ending April [8th?], 1863. Source: Philadelphia City Death Records, 1861-1915, Familysearch.org.

⁴¹ Deed Book WSV no.1295, p146ff. On the Disberry family descendants, see Louise Disberry et alia to Julia Marshall, Nov. 19, 1921, Philadelphia Deed Book JMH no. 1120, p. 591ff (recorded Nov. 19, 1921).

**RETURN OF A DEATH,
IN THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA.
PHYSICIAN'S CERTIFICATE.**

1. Name of Deceased, *Alexander Randolph*
 2. Colour, *Black*
 3. Sex, *Male*
 4. Age, *11 Months*
 5. Married or Single, *Single*
 6. Date of Death, *April 5th*
 7. Cause of Death, *Cataract*

E. Crowell. M. D.

Residence, *Market & 40th St*

UNDERTAKER'S CERTIFICATE, IN RELATION TO DECEASED.

8. Occupation,
 9. Place of Birth, *Ohio*
 10. When a Minor, } Name of Father, *William Johnson*
 } Name of Mother, *Mary Ann Johnson*
 11. Ward, *24th*
 12. Street and Number, *Stones above Spruce*
 13. Date of Burial, *April 7th*
 14. Place of Burial, *Mt Pisgah*

J. C. Y. ... UNDERTAKER.

Residence, *322 Market St*

Date of Certificate, *April 6 1863*

THIS CONSTITUTES ONE CERTIFICATE. TO BE RETURNED TO THE HEALTH OFFICE, ON SATURDAY OF EACH

Figure 27. Death Return for Alexander Randolph, April 5, 1863. While the Return of Interments indicates “Harmonian” Burial Ground, the Death Return notes “Mt. Pisgah” as the place of burial. Parents’ surnames might have also been confused on the certificate. Source: Philadelphia City Death Records, 1861-1915, Familysearch.org.

Likewise, African Friends to Harmony burial ground might be called the “Babtis Burying Ground,” as it was on John Cooper’s death return. Cooper was a black laborer born in Virginia who had relocated to Philadelphia. As an elderly man of 75, he resided in the Blockley Almshouse. He died in the Philadelphia Hospital in 1864. His friends claimed his body, and Disberry dug his grave and interred him in “Harmony” at “Oak near Rose” Streets. (Figures 28 and 29.)

RETURN OF DEATH IN THE PHILADELPHIA HOSPITAL.

PHYSICIAN'S CERTIFICATE.	UNDERTAKER'S CERTIFICATE.
1. Name of Deceased, <i>John Cooper</i>	8. Occupation, <i>Labourer</i>
2. Color, <i>Black</i>	9. Place of Birth, <i>Virginia</i>
3. Sex, <i>Male</i>	10. When a Minor, } Name of Father,
4. Age, <i>75 years</i>	} Name of Mother,
5. Married or Single, <i>Married</i>	11. Ward, <i>2nd Ward</i>
6. Date of Death, <i>3. 3. 1864</i>	12. Street and Number, <i>Blockly Amshouse</i>
7. Cause of Death, <i>Debility</i>	13. Date of Burial, <i>March 5th 1864</i>
	14. Place of Burial, <i>Burial Ground</i>
	<i>Chas Wright Undertaker.</i>
<i>Edmund Rhoads.</i> RESIDENT PHYSICIAN <i>Philadelphia Hospital.</i>	Residence, <i>Haverford 236 St</i>
	Date of Certificate,

Figure 28. Death Return, John Cooper, March 3, 1864. Source: Philadelphia City Death Records, 1861-1915, Familysearch.org.

Return of Interments made to the Health Officer, before 12 o'clock, M., on the Saturday of every week.

Interments in the *Harmonyan* Burial Ground,
Location, *1st near 10th Streets.*

For the Week ending *Mar 3rd 1864*

NAME.	AGES.	WARD.	DISEASES.	NATIVITY.
<i>John Cooper</i>	<i>75</i>		<i>Debility</i>	<i>Virginia</i>
			<i>for Robert Beatty & Sister</i>	
			<i>B. Bishop</i>	

Figure 29. Return of Interments, “Harmonyan” Burial Ground, Week ending March 3, 1864. Source: Philadelphia City Death Records, 1861-1915, Familysearch.org.

In December 1882, African Friends to Harmony interred the last body (so far as the returns found in the death/burial records) in the subject site. Once incorporated under its 1886 charter, the African Friends likely looked for a buyer for the property. The organization finally sold the subject burial lot in 1910 for the sum of \$3500.

Conclusion

One hundred thirty-six burials have been documented for the site. (Appendix.) No record of the removal of the bodies has yet been found. Twentieth-century property atlases (1910, 1916, 1918, 1927, 1942, and 1962 shown at figures 30 through 35) suggest strongly that no construction, and certainly none requiring a deep foundation, has occurred on the burial ground. Consequently, the

subject site meets Criterion I, as it “may be likely to yield ... information important to pre-history or history.” The critical role the African Friends to Harmony Burial Ground played in West Philadelphia’s African American community and its archetypicality as a black mutual aid society support Criterion J, as it “exemplifies the cultural, political, economic social or historical heritage of the community.” The subject site meets Criteria I and J and should be added to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

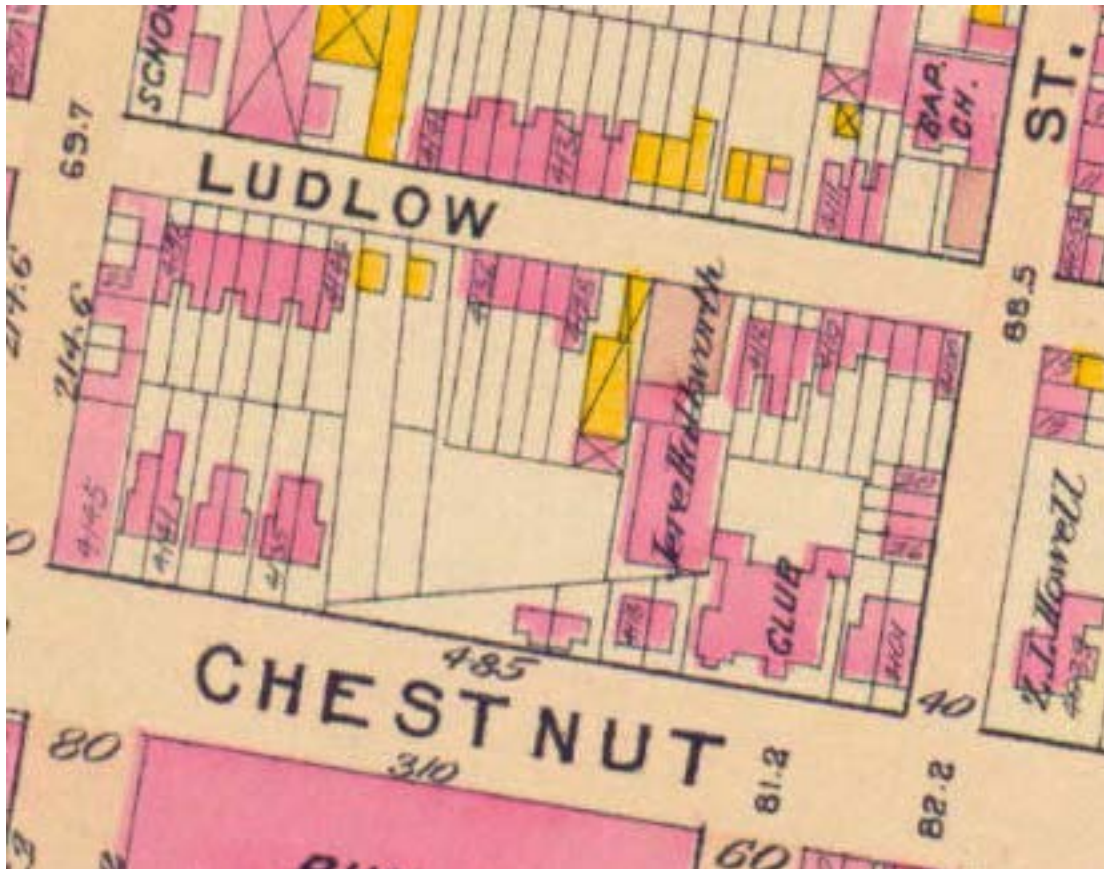


Figure 30. *Atlas of the City of Philadelphia, 1910*, G.W. Bromley & Co., 1910. Yellow connotes a frame structure. Source: <https://atlas.phila.gov>

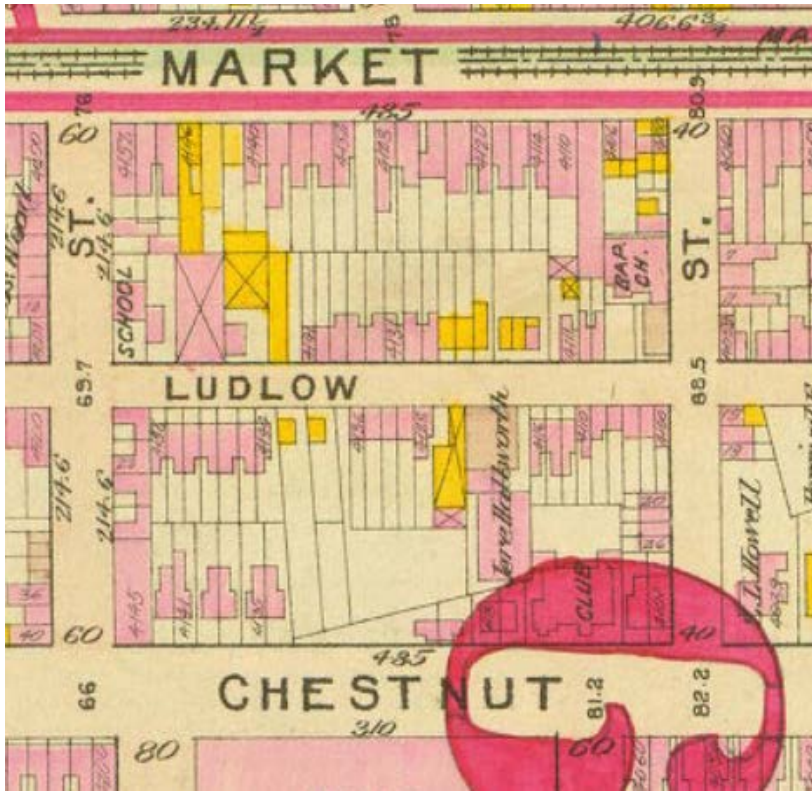


Figure 31. *Atlas of Philadelphia: West Philadelphia, 1916*. G. W. Bromley, 1916. Pl. 10. Yellow connotes a frame structure.

https://www.philageohistory.org/rdic-images/view-image.cfm/BRM1916.WestPhila.004.Plate_10

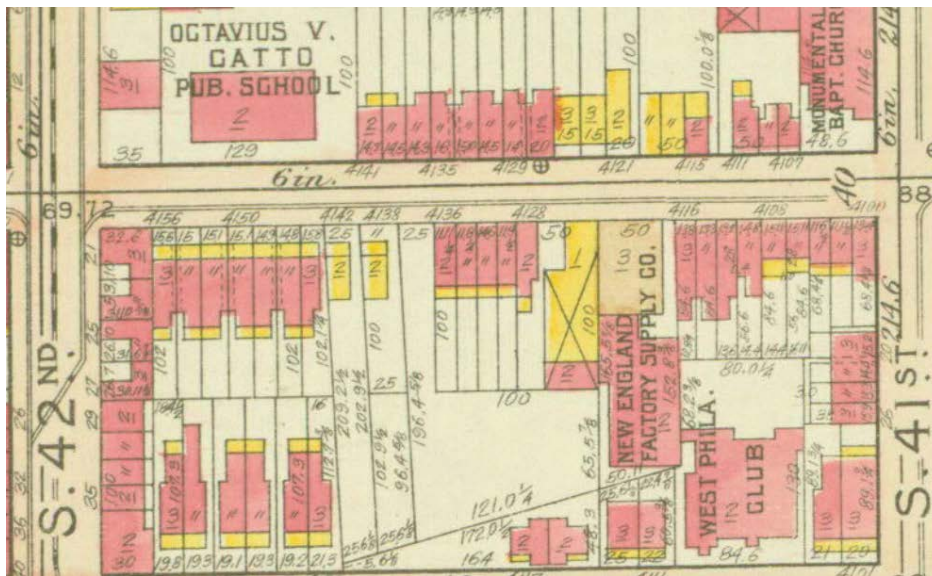


Figure 32. *Atlas of the City of Philadelphia (West Philadelphia), 1918*. G. W. Bromley & Co., 1918. Pl. 24.

<https://www.philageohistory.org/rdic-images/view-image.cfm/BRM1918.WestPhiladelphia.028.Plate24>

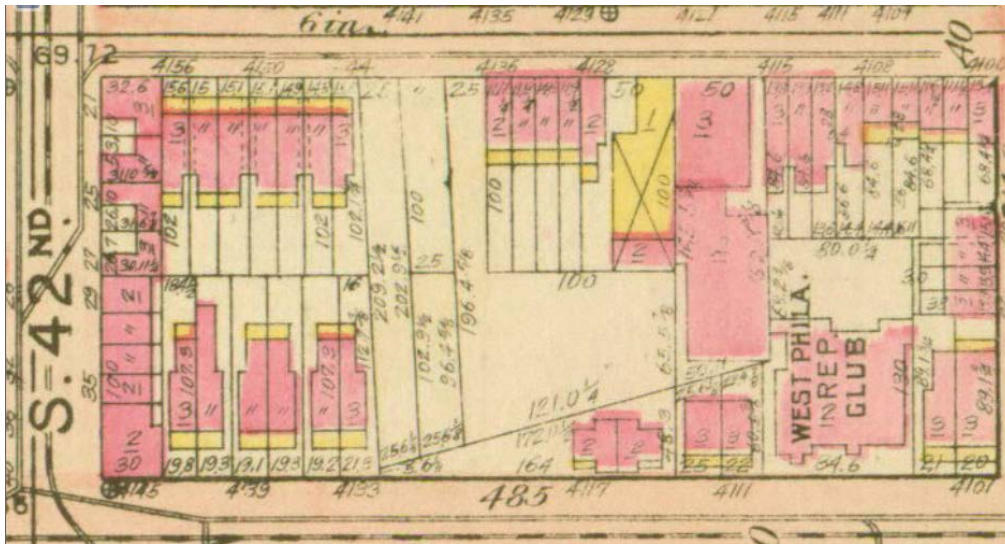


Figure 33. *Atlas of the City of Philadelphia (West Philadelphia)*, 1927. G. W. Bromley & Co., 1927. Plate 24. https://www.philageohistory.org/rdic-images/view-image.cfm/BRM1927.WestPhila.027.Plate_24

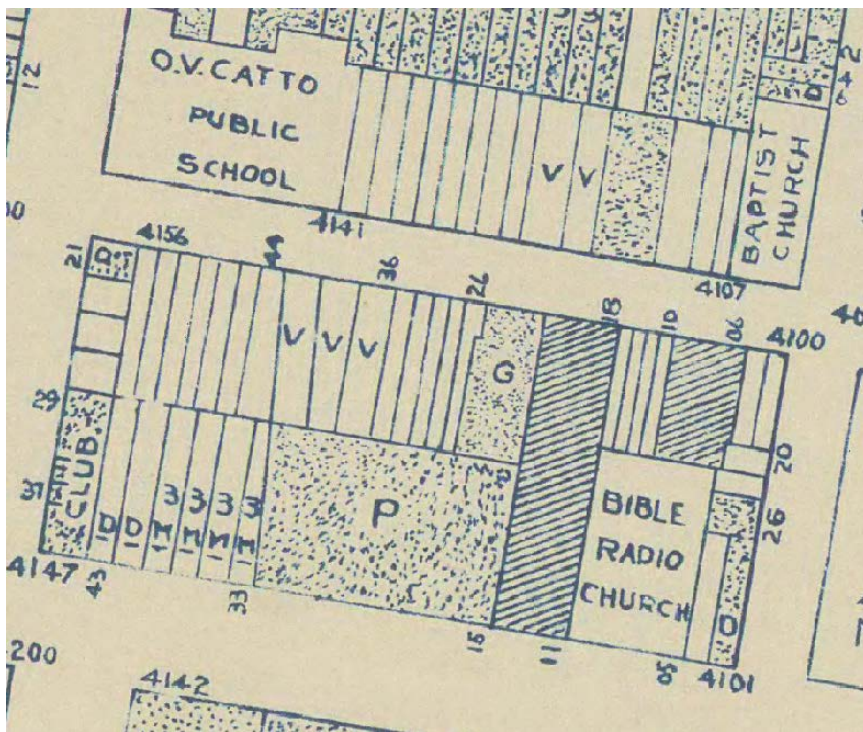


Figure 34. *Philadelphia Land Use Map, 1942: Land-Use Zoning Project No. 18313*. Plans & Registry Division, Bureau of Engineering Surveys & Zoning, Department of Public Works, Federal Works Progress Administration for Pennsylvania. Map Collection, Free Library of Philadelphia. Legend: V=Vacant land; G=private garage; P=Open Land-Automobile Parking; M=Multifamily dwelling, attached [3 stories]; D=detached dwelling. The cross-hatching at 4111-13 indicates “industrial use.” Stippling indicates commercial use.

<http://www.philageohistory.org/rdic-images/view-image.cfm/LUM1942.Index>

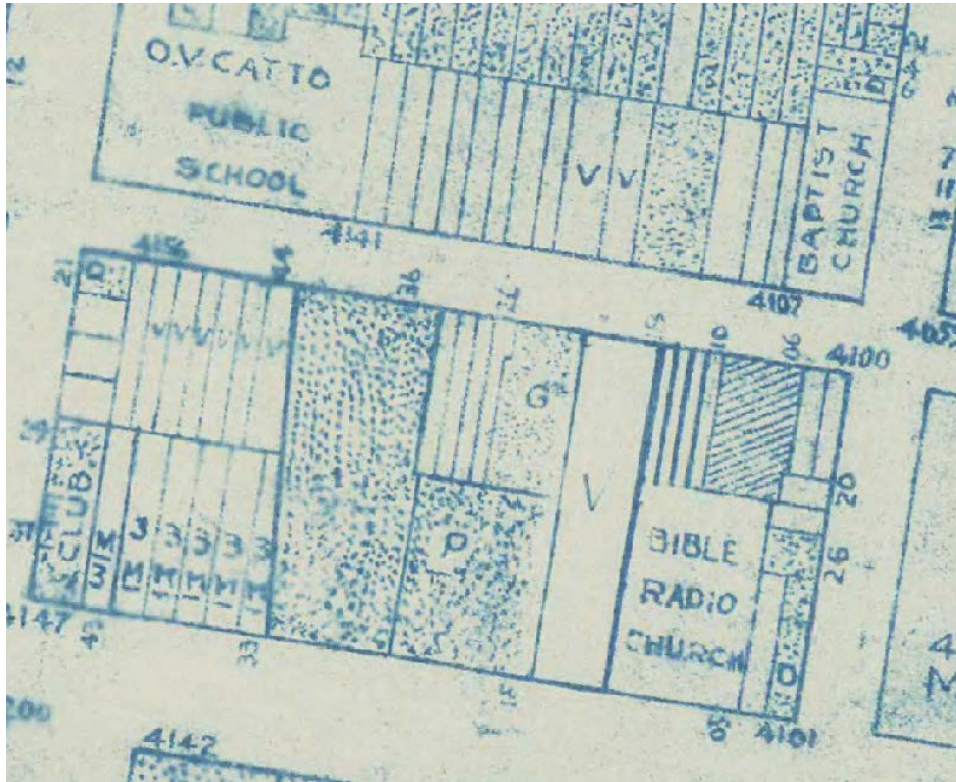


Figure 35. *Philadelphia Land Use Map, 1962. Land-Use Zoning Project No. 18313.* Plans & Registry Division, Bureau of Engineering Surveys & Zoning, Department of Public Works, Federal Works Progress Administration for Pennsylvania. Map Collection, Free Library of Philadelphia. Shading indicates commercial uses such as Parking. <http://www.philageohistory.org/rdic-images/view-image.cfm/LUM1962.Index>

Appendix

AFRICAN FRIENDS TO HARMONY BURIAL GROUND INTERMENTS

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	AGE	DOD	BURIAL DATE
Abbott	Aaron	10 years, 8 mo.	Jan. 31, 1876	Feb. 3, 1876
Adams	Mary	12 hours	Nov. 24, 1874	Nov. 26, 1874
Adams	Mary	[married]	Dec. 1874	Dec. 28, 1874
Anderson	James	24 years	July 8, 1873	July 10, 1873
Austin	Christopher	26 years	Aug. 9, 1874	Aug. 12, 1874
Bayard	William	36 years	July 7, 1881	July 11, 1881
Billingsler	Sarah	4 mo.	July 7, 1871	July 10, 1871
Black	Edward	15 years	Sept. 28, 1871	Oct. 1, 1871
Black	John	36 years	Oct. 17, 1879	Oct. 19, 1879
Black	Mary Elizabeth Estella	4 mo. 5 days	July 16, 1877	July 18, 1877
Black	Martha	22 mo.	July 10, 1876	July 12, 1876
Boyd	Jeremiah	7 or 8 years	May 22, 1876	May 23, 1876
Boyd	Octavius	3 mo.	Dec. 29, 1877	Dec. 30, 1877
Bradshaw	John Wesley	24 years	July 11, 1874	July 13, 1874
Brockins	Frederick	6 mo.	Dec. 22, 1880	Dec. 24, 1880
Brown	Amelia	26 years	April 6, 1882	April 20, 1882
Bullett	Benjamin Franklin	1 day	Dec. 11, 1881	Dec. --, 1881
Butler	George	7 years	Dec. 5, 1863	Dec. 6, 1863
Cain/Kane	Albert H.	12 weeks	July 21, 1880	July 25, 1880
Cain/Kane	Harriet	6 mo.	Aug. 8, 1878	Aug. 11, 1878
Camomile	Unknown	stillborn	Feb. 1880	Feb. 22, 1880
Carter	Adeline	18 years	May 18, 1882	May 20, 1882
Carter	John S.	70 years	Oct. 17, 1882	Oct. 20, 1882
Chambers	Harriet	50 years	Oct. 1, 1876	Oct. 4, 1876
Chase	Betsy	1 year	Aug. 19, 1880	Aug. 21, 1880
Chew	George E.	2 years 4 mo.	March 28, 1871	March 31, 1871
Clarkson	Emma	30 years	Sept. 25, 1881	Sept. 28, 1881
Cole	Fanny	30 years	Jan. 2, 1878	Jan. 4, 1878
Coleman	Rose	7 mo.	June 19, 1882	June 20, 1882
Cooper	Frank Edgar	2 mo.	March 25, 1882	March 26, 1882
Cooper	Georgia Lilla	1 year 11 mo.	April 10, 1881	April 12, 1881
Cooper	John	75 years	March 3, 1864	March 5, 1864
Cropper	Edward H.	18 days	Aug. 28, 1873	Aug. 29, 1873
Cropper/Kropper	Isaac	2 weeks	Aug. 24, 1875	Aug. 26, 1875
Cropper	?	6 hours	Jan. 27, 1876	Jan. 30, 1876
Custellon	Walter	1 year 4 weeks	Aug. 8, 1880	Aug. 9, 1880
Davis	Edward	3 mo.	March 7, 1881	March 9, 1881
Davis	Hannah Ann	4 mo.	March 8, 1870	March 10, 1870
Dawson	John H.	11 days	June 17, 1877	June 20, 1877

Derry	William T.	21 years	March 28, 1877	March 30, 1877
Deys / Deyo	Charles	23 years	June 27, 1877	June 29, 1877
Doyle	William H.	42 years	April 21, 1881	April 24, 1881
Disberry	Anna Mary	8 years	Sept. 27, 1863	Sept. 29, 1863
Dysberry	Allen	[abt 62]	?	April 30, 1882
Easdley	Rebecca	1 day	May 3, 1878	May 4, 1878
Forman	Richard	24 years	Sept. 5, 1875	Sept. 10, 1875
Rogers	John A.	6 years, 4 mo.	Oct. 1, 1878	Oct. 3, 1878
Green	Ann	45 years	Sept. 30, 1867	Oct. 4, 1867
Green	Emma	6 years	Dec. 4, 1877	Dec. 6, 1877
Green	George	8 years	March 28, 1877	March 30, 1877
Green	Harry	18 mo.	Dec. 7, 1882	Dec. 9, 1882
Green	Howard	7 mo.	Sept. 10, 1882	Sept. 12, 1882
Green	Mary A.	64 years	Aug. 5, 1880	Aug. 9, 1880
Greene	Albert	12 hours	Nov. 28, 1863	Nov. 28, 1863
Grey	Charles	18 mo.	March 18, 1881	March 20, 1881
Grey	Elmina	8 years	May 19, 1881	May ?, 1881
Grey	Mary	12 years	May 13, 1881	May 15, 1881
Grey	Samuel	10 years	April 28, 1881	May 1, 1881
Grey	Viola	17 mo.	March 26, 1881	March 30, 1881
Grey	William	6 mo.	Oct. 14, 1878	Oct. 17, 1878
Griffin	Charles	15 mo.	June 15, 1861	June 19, 1861
Griffin	William	6 mo.	July 8, 1878	July 9, 1878
Hackett	Aifral	22 years	June 25, 1873	June 26, 1873
Hackett	Elmer	7 weeks	Aug. 13, 1873	Aug. 16, 1873
Haller	Not named	2 hours	May 3, 1878	May 4, 1878
Hammond	George	24 years	March 19, 1880	March 23, 1880
Hardcastle	John	1 year	July 23, 1861	July 25, 1861
Harris	Caroline	5 mo.	July 8, 1874	July 9, 1874
Harris	Sarah Jane	4 years, 7 mo.	March 18, 1871	March 20, 1871
Henry	Unnamed	5 hours	Feb. 12, 1881	Feb. 15, 1881
Henry	Elizabeth S.	11 mo.	Dec. 18, 1881	Dec. 21, 1881
Henry	Emma Jane	1 year	Aug. 7, 1876	[none]
Henry	William	3 weeks	Dec. 23, 1882	Dec. 25, 1882
Henry	Rebecca	3 years	Jan. 6, 1882	Jan. 9, 1882
Henry	William	4 yrs, 3 mo., 24 days	March 30, 1881	April 1, 1881
Hogan	Maria	25 years	Oct. 24, 1879	Oct. 26, 1879
Hunter	Maus	30 years	Aug. 26, 1882	Sept. 1, 1882
Johnson	Martha	unknown	Sept. 4, 1877	Sept. 6, 1877
Johnson	David M.	1 year	Dec. 23, 1878	Dec. 25, 1878
Johnson	Harry	11 mo. 20 days	June 29, 1880	June 30, 1880
Johnson	Lewis	25 years	May 19, 1876	May 19, 1876
Jones	Ella	2 mo.	July 17, 1874	July 18, 1874
Jones	Hannah Ann	5 mo.	July 10, 1862	July 12, 1862
Jones	Mary Elizabeth	11 mo.	May 22, 1878	May 23, 1878

Jones	Miles	6 years	June 9, 1879	June 11, 1879
Jones	William	50 years	March 7, 1878	March 8, 1878
Jordan	Lizzie	16 years	March 6, 1880	March 7, 1880
Kane	Priscilla	40 years	Sept. 19, 1880	Sept. 21, 1880
Kelly	William	17 mo.	March 3, 1864	March 6, 1864
Land	George F.	2 years	Dec. 19, 1874	Dec. 21, 1874
Leary	Matthew	33 years	May 27, 1876	June 1, 1876
Lee	Charles	2 years 4 mo.	July 7, 1882	July 8, 1882
Lewis	George	60 years	March 26, 1873	March 29, 1873
Lewis	Hester	6 mo.	July 26, 1873	July 28, 1873
Marshall	Virginia	2 mo.	June 28, 1871	June 30, 1871
Massey	Henry Garnett Douglas	11 mo.	May 27, 1873	May 29, 1873
Maus	Hunter	30	Aug. 26, 1882	Sept. 1, 1882
Mebston	John Wesley Francis	8 mo. 21 days	July 18, 1882	July 19, 1882
Montegue / Monticue	Jeremiah	8 weeks	Dec. 22, 1881	Dec. 23, 1881
Moore	Kate	3 mo.	April 20, 1881	April 21, 1881
Morris	Mary Ann	8 mo.	Aug. 14, 1877	Aug. 18, 1877
Munson	Martha	15 years	April 17, 1881	April 18, 1881
Orick	Minnie	6 weeks	July 9, 1878	July 10, 1878
Parker	Hannah	stillborn	March 16, 1878	March 18, 1878
Parks	Elizy	22 years	April 11, 1876	April 13, 1876
Price	Charles	12 years	April 21, 1877	April 22, 1877
Randolph	Alexander	11 mo.	April 5, 1863	April 7, 1863
Randolph	Mary	62 years	Feb. 3, 1873	Feb. 9, 1873
Reed	Howard	3 years, 7 mo.	Dec. 25, 1874	Dec. 27, 1874
Rickerts	John A.	10 mo.	Aug. 2, 1862	Aug. 4, 1862
Robbins	Daisy Nell	10 mo.	June 9, 1882	June 10, 1882
Roman	Mary	17 mo.	Nov. 15, 1875	Nov. 17, 1875
Ross	Robert V.	4 years 6mo.	Sept. 15, 1882	Sept. 18, 1882
Ross	Mary Ellen	9 years	Aug. 24, 1881	Aug. 28, 1881
Ruby	Delia	18 years	Aug. 31, 1876	Sept. 3, 1876
Scott	Bertha Virginia	1 year 11 mo.	Aug. 30, 1881	Sept. 1, 1881
Simmons	Morris	1 day	Aug. 15, 1877	Aug. 17, 1877
Smith	Amy	19 years	March 22, 1878	March 23, 1878
Smith	Anne M.	56 years	June 7, 1872	June 9, 1872
Stafford	Charles	68 years	April 23, 1881	April 27, 1881
Strang	Philip	2 years	April 1, 1881	April 3, 1881
Talbot	Frank W.	30 years	July 10, 1882	July 13, 1882
Taylor	Jane L.	16 years	May 13, 1882	May 16, 1882
Temple	Louisa	5 years	March 31, 1873	April 3, 1873
Turner	Spencer Elwood	23 years	Sept. 5, 1874	Sept. 10, 1874
Harris	Sarah	47 years	Jan. 8, 1879	Jan. 12, 1879
Maston	Unknown	3 mo.	Dec. 23, 1879	Dec. 24, 1879
Unknown	Unknown	premature	Feb. 3, 1880	?
Unknown	William	33 years	Jan. 9, 1881	Jan. 13, 1881

Walker	Daniel	6 mo.	July 8, 1881	July 10, 1881
Williams	Unknown	1 week	Dec. 10, 1875	Dec. 12, 1875
Williams	Charles	9 mo.	June 3, 1874	June 5, 1874
Williams	Hannah Jane	10 mo.	June 11, 1879	June 13, 1879
Williams	James	33 years	Dec. 15, 1874	Dec. 16, 1874
Winder	Henry	76 years	March 31, 1882	April 2, 1882
Wright	Letticia	14 mo.	Nov. 18, 1878	Nov. 20, 1878
Wright	Thomas	15 mo.	July 2, 1877	July 4, 1877

136 total persons

Source: Philadelphia City Death Records, 1861-1915. Familysearch.org

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I thank Douglas Mooney for initially contacting me with questions about African Friends to Harmony. I had been researching the surrounding African American community, and the burial ground added a new dimension to my discoveries. Doug supplied me with initial names of interred persons, and inspired me to search for many more and to nominate the property to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

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