

EPITAPHS FROM THE CEMETERY OF THE FIRST ROMAN CATHOLIC  
CHURCH IN GEORGIA

THE CHURCH OF THE PURIFICATION  
of the  
BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

at  
Locust Grove  
(now near Sharon, Taliaferro Co., Ga.)

Founded 1794

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copied by

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These tombstone inscriptions from the cemetery of the first Roman Catholic Church in the State of Georgia were copied exactly as they appear in the old churchyard near what is now the town of Sharon, in Taliaferro County. A group of English Roman Catholics from Maryland settled in what was then Wilkes County (later Warren and now Taliaferro) after the Revolution and established this church, the first Roman Catholic Church in the new State. A log church was built and a large plot of ground consecrated for burial purposes; another frame church was built later, but, in the mid-1800's, the people gravitated toward the railroad and the village of Sharon, some few miles distant. Another church, bearing the same name, was erected in Sharon, followed later by a convent and school. LOCUST GROVE ACADEMY, the first Roman Catholic school in Georgia, was organized at the first log church about 1819 and was incorporated by the State in 1826, some 17 years before the next chartered Roman Catholic school, St. Vincent de Paul, in Savannah. Alexander Hamilton Stephens, the Vice-President of the Confederacy, was among the pupils of this early academy.

Lunceford - 1/6/1958

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In / memory of / Thomas Turley / a native of Balinasloe Co / of Galway  
Ireland / who departed this life / on the 20th day of Nov. 1835 /  
in the 28th year of his age. / Requiescat in pace / Amen.

Erected / to the memory of / Elizabeth Lockett / who departed this life  
Nov. 10th / 1838 / Aged 66 years / Requiescat in Pace / Amen.

Sacred / to the memory of / Mr. / Thomas H. Lockett, / who departed  
this life / Oct. 5th 1827 / aged 56 years 11 mo. / and 10 days. /  
Requiescat in Pace. / Amen.

Departed this life / Oct. the 6th, 1826 / Thos. Mulleedy / a native of  
the County / Galway, Ireland / aged 16 years. / May He Rest in Peace. /  
Amen.

Sacred / to the memory of / Patrick Turley / a native of the County /  
of Galway, Ireland / who departed this life / on the 19th January  
1832 / in the 32nd year of his age. / Requiescat in Pace. / Amen.

Sacred / to the memory of / Joseph W. Lockett / who departed this life /  
March the 15th 1828 / aged 32 years.

Rebecca Lockett / died Jan. 15th / 1854 / aged 4 weeks / May she rest  
in peace. / Amen.

Sacred to the memory of / William R. Lockett, Sr. / who departed this life  
on / the 18th Sept. 1831 / in the 57th year of / his age. / May he  
rest in peace. / Amen.

In memory / of / Joseph Brooke / Born Oct. 14th  
Sacred / to the memory / of / Master Thomas Mulleedy / who died / Aug. the  
23rd 1829 / Aged two years / and six months.



Sacred / to the memory of / Robt. Emmett Griffin / born / Aug. 23rd 1839 /  
and departed this life / Sept. 26th 1861. / Requiescat in Pace.

Erected / To the memory of / Wm. O. S. Griffin / who departed this life /  
January the 9th 1859. / Aged 29 years / May he rest in peace / Amen

Sacred / to the memory of / Mortimer Griffin / born in County Carlow (Garlow?)  
Ireland / and departed this life / Sept. 9th 1861 / aged 69 years. /  
Requiescat in Pace.

In Memory of / Maria / Infant daughter of / M. & E. Griffin.

Sacred / to the memory of / Mr. John Cratin / who died / Sept. 8th 1826 /  
in the 31st year of his age. / Requiescat in pace. / Amen.

In / memory of / Silvester B. J. Craten / who departed this life / on the  
22nd day of June / 1835, / in the 31st year of his age. / Requiescat  
in pace. Amen.

Sacred to the memory / of / Mary Anastatia Wilkinson / who was born / the  
8th of February 1828 / and departed this life / 28th of September  
1842 / Requiescat in Pace. Amen.

Erected to the memory / of / Marcia A. Cratin / Died Aug. 30th 1850, /  
Aged 96 yrs. / Requiescat in Pace. Amen.

Erected To the memory / of / Mrs. Elizabeth M. Wilkinson / Born in 1790 /  
Died Oct. 22nd, 1866.

In memory / of / Joseph Brooke / Born Oct. 14th 1783 / Died Aug. 26, 1856 /  
A Wit's a feather and a chief's a rod / But here is laid the noblest  
work of God. / Requiescat in Pace.

3  
This monument is erected by / Ann McGuire / in Memory of her husband /  
James McGuire / who was born in Hexford, Ireland / and died in  
Crawfordville, Ga. / the 7th Feb. 1846, / aged 42 years. / May he  
rest in peace.

Erected by / Thomas J. Burke / To the memory of his Father / Myles Burke /  
A native of Bellinasloe / County of Galway / Ireland. / Who departed  
this life / Sept. 22nd 1837 / Aged 54 years. / Requiescat in pace.

In memory / of / John J. Ward. / Born May 12th, 1853, / Died Aug. 16th 1863.  
Also, / Ellen. / Aged 6 weeks. / Annie. / Aged 3 weeks. / Margaret. /  
Aged 4 months. / Michael. / Aged 3 weeks.

Sacred / to the memory of / Michael Ryan / A native of the Co. Tipperary /  
Ireland / who died Sept. 27th 1846; / Aged 52 years. / May he rest in  
peace. / (Made by T. Grier, Raleigh, N. C.)

In memory of / Catharine Naughton / wife of / Michael Ryan / of Co. Tipperary  
Ireland / who died Aug. 17th 1866 / aged 72 years / Erected by care of  
Rev. Patrick Ryan, D. D. / to a pious and devoted mother / Her children  
shall rise up and call her blessed.

Sacred / To the Memory of / Mary Anne

Mary Anne / Daughter to Michael & Catharine / Ryan. / Departed in peace /  
Apr. 14, 1858 / In her 26th year.

Sacred / To the memory of / Doctor John J. Ryan

In / memory of / Doct. Ignatius Semmes / who departed this life / on the 5th  
day of June 1834 / in the 67th year of his age. / Requiescat in Pace. /  
Amen.

Erected / to the memory of / Mary A. Smith / who departed this life / on  
the 18th August 1844 / in the 26th year / of her age. / May she rest  
in peace. / Amen.

Sacred / to the memory of / Patrick Burke / A native of the / County  
Tipperary, / Ireland, / Who departed this life / Oct. 12th 1872 /  
in the 58th year of his age. / He was a kind father / and affectionate  
husband. / Requiescat in Pace.

Sacred / to the memory of / Mrs. Margaret Burke / A native of / Co.  
Tipperary, / Ireland / who departed this life / March 29th 1856 /  
in the 49th year of her age. / May she rest in peace. / Amen.

Our / Mother. / Sacred to the Memory / of / Catharine Burke; / Wife of  
John Burke; / A Native of / Co. Tipperary, Ireland; / Departed this  
life Nov. 13, 1859, aged 60 years. / Requiescat in Pace. Amen.

In Memory of / Michael Hynes, / Born in / County Tipperary, / Ireland, /  
Died in Taliaferro Co., Ga., / August 1849 / Aged 37 years. / Erected /  
by his brother / Thomas Hynes / Requiescat in pace. Amen.

Sacred / To the Memory of / Daniel / Infant son of / Philip and Margret /  
Mahony / who died Oct. 14th 1853 / Aged 1 Year, 9 months / and 5 days.

Sacred / To the memory of / Timothy John O'Neill / A Native of the Co. Kerry,  
Ireland / Who departed this life / on the 27th day of December 1854 /  
Aged 72 years & 4 months. / Requiescat in pace. / Amen.

In Memory of / Katharine E. Shannon / Born Mar. 25, 1850

Peace be with her.



To / the memory of / John Burke / a Native of the County / Tipperary, Ireland /  
 who departed this life / on the 25th of / September, 1846. / Aged 62  
 years. / Requiescat in pace. / Amen. / Amen.

Erected / to the Memory of / Mary A. Smith / who departed this life / on the  
 13th of May 1853 / in the 13th year of her age. / May she rest in peace. /  
 Amen.

Rev. Jer. F. O'Neill, Jr. / Presbyter / Savannensis Dioceseos. / Natus mense /  
 Januarii 1827. / Obiit die 6 / Novembris / 1868. / Requiescat in pace. /  
 Amen.

Sacred / to the memory of / Capt. Geo. W. Flynt / who departed this life on /  
 the 18th of October 1869, / in the 75th year / of his age. / Requiescat  
 in Pace.

Sacred / to the memory of / Henry Hare / a native of the City of / Dublin,  
 Ireland, / who departed this life / in Warrenton, April 29, / 1832. /  
 Aged 33 years. / Requiescat in Pace. / Amen.

In memorium / Guilielmi T. Quinlan, M. D. / qui circuei trigessimum quintum /  
 suae aetatis annum mortem obiit / decimo septimo die Octobris A. D. /  
 MDCCCXXXIII. / Requiescat in Pace.

In Memory / of / Catherine Elizabeth / only daughter of M. J. & F. M. Sheehan /  
 Born July 21, 1861 / Died June 26, / 1862.

In Memory of / Fanny M. Sheehan / Born Mar. 25, 1836 / Died May 8, 1882. /

Peace be with her.

Sacred / to the Memory of / Mary O'Neill / Consort of Timothy John O'Neill /  
A Native of the Co. Kerry, Ireland, / Who departed this life / On the  
3rd Day of March 1859 / Aged 66 Years / Requiescat in Pace / Amen .

(FRAGMENT) . . . . . in the 43rd . . . / May her soul rest in pea . . /  
Amen. Erected by her affectionate husband / Patrick Burke.

Sacred / to the memory of / Patrick Harty / a native of / the County of  
Tipperary / Ireland / Who departed this life / on the 21st day of August  
1836 / Aged 52 years. / This stone is erected to his / memory by his  
daughter / Ellen Condon. / Requiescat in pace.

Sacred / to the memory of / Our Mother and Brother / Mrs. Mary Harty /  
Died July 3rd, 1874 / Aged 96 Years / and / Edward Harty, / Died  
August, 1841 / Aged 25 Years. / Requiescat in Pace.

Sacred / to the memory of / Patrick Henry Lawlor / Adopted son of / Pierce  
Condon / who departed this life / the 27th day of July 1850 / Aged 6  
years / and 11 months.

Erected / to the memory of / Ellen Treanor / who died in Milledgeville / on  
the 4th of March 1853 / Aged 4 months and 3 weeks.

Sacred / to the memory of / Miss Sarah C. Norton / Died April 17th, 1857 /  
Aged 18 years. / Requiescat in pace.

Sacred / to the memory of / Mrs. Honora Hines / Born Oct. 13th, 1835 / Died  
Aug. 2nd, 1860. / Requiescat in Pace. Amen.

Sacred / to the memory of / Phillip J. Norton / who died, / Oct. 14th, 1864 /  
in the 23rd year of / his age. / May his soul rest in peace.



Erected by / Wm. J. Mann, / in honor of his affectionate Spouse / Isabella  
 & their children / Margaret, John Jas., and Wm. Mann. / Isabella Mann  
 was born in / Aberdeen, Scotland Dec. 16, 1818, / departed this life  
 Oct. 29th, 1840, / Aged 27 years and 10 months. / May she rest in peace.  
 Amen. / Margaret Mann was born / August 26, 1834, died the same day. /  
John Jas. Mann was born / Sept. 9, 1836, departed this life Sept. 17,  
 1840. / Wm. Mann was born June 16th / 1839, died the same day.

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These inscriptions were copied in the Fall of 1956; with the exception of several large monument fragments, which were lying face downward and could not be moved, the foregoing is a complete and accurate record of monuments in the cemetery. The number of existing stones, however, should not be taken as an accurate measure of the number of persons buried in this cemetery, which is quite large. There are probably three or four unmarked graves (unmarked, that is, by formal monuments; most have crude head and foot markers of one sort or another) for every one which is marked. A great many of the markers are quite large and imposing, eloquent reminders of the relative affluence which once existed in this now-vanished community. The spelling, punctuation, capitalization, etc., are exactly recorded. The mark "/" is used to designate a line of carving; i. e., "Sacred / to the memory / of " would be, on the monument, three lines of carving.