

**Roanoke Public Libraries
Virginia Room
Interments in Old Lick, First Baptist Church, and City Farm Cemeteries
1912-1960**

Collection Description:

Repository: Roanoke Public Libraries, Virginia Room

Title: Interments in Old Lick, First Baptist Church, and City Farm Cemeteries, 1912-1960

Physical Characteristics: 1 record storage box

Arrangement: Death certificates are arranged chronologically by year and alphabetically by surname thereafter.

Reproduction Restrictions: No known restrictions on publication. Virginia Room copy fees apply.

Historical Note:

Old Lick and First Baptist Church cemeteries, though separate cemeteries, are situated adjacent to one another on the same tract of land along the 300 block of Orange Avenue NE in Roanoke, Virginia. As a result, the names of each cemetery have been used interchangeably over the years, leading to inaccuracies in documentation of where interments were located. Both cemeteries are predominately African American. In October 1961, 933 graves from Old Lick were relocated to Coyner Springs in Botetourt County by the City of Roanoke to prepare for the construction of I-581. An archeological site survey conducted in the year 2000 by the Roanoke Regional Preservation Office for the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, found that a minimum of 943 graves remain in Old Lick cemetery.

City Farm cemetery, also referred to as the poorhouse, almshouse, and city home cemetery, was located on the campus of what is now Virginia Western Community College. City Farm housed more than 2,400 indigent, aged, and infirmed individuals from 1890 to 1958. In 1958, Coyner Springs, once a tuberculosis sanatorium, was converted into the City Home to take on the functions of City Farm. By 1959, plans were underway for a "technical institute" to be built on the former City Farm property in Roanoke. As a result, some 550 graves were moved from the City Farm property to Coyner Springs for reinterment.

Scope and Content:

This collection consists of death certificates of individuals buried in Old Lick, First Baptist Church, and City Farm cemeteries beginning with the earliest available certificates in 1912 and concluding with 1960 when burials at the cemeteries ceased. The graves at City Farm and those from the western portion of Old Lick cemeteries were relocated to Coyner Springs in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Many of the graves were unmarked and as a result, the remains were reinterred in mass graves at Coyner Springs. Nine hundred thirty-three graves were removed from Old Lick/First Baptist cemetery. Over 550 graves were removed from City Farm cemetery. In an effort to help identify individuals relocated to Coyner Springs, this collection includes death certificates of over 2,600 individuals originally interred in Old Lick/First Baptist Church and City Farm cemeteries. It is not definitively known which of these graves were relocated as the remains were not identified during the relocation process. Certificates are arranged alphabetically by surname for each year. It should be noted that some stillbirths were not included with death certificates. Only certificates issued in the City of Roanoke, Roanoke

County, Salem, and Vinton were searched. Persons who may have died outside of these areas and buried in these cemeteries have not been identified in this process.