

The Historic Saint-Colomban Cemetery

The Case for Designation as a Heritage Site

Compiled with Sources by Kelley O'Rourke and Jacques Archambault

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Historical Overview

The Saint-Colomban Parish and Cemetery hold profound historical and cultural significance, particularly for the Irish Catholic community that settled in Lower Canada in the early 19th century. The roots of the parish trace back to the 1820s, when Irish immigrants arrived in Montreal and gradually moved to rural areas such as Saint-Colomban to establish farming communities.

The name “Saint-Colomban” honors St. Columban, a 7th-century Irish monk known for his peaceful missionary work and establishment of abbeys across continental Europe. He was a spiritual successor to St. Columba (Columcille) — a more controversial figure exiled from Ireland after a violent act of revenge, who redeemed himself through Christian mission and scholarship. (Graham, n.d.)

Following years of political unrest, famine, and economic hardship, many Irish families sought a new life in Canada. Encouraged first by Father Richard Jackson and followed by Father Patrick Phelan, both belonging to the Sulpician order, settlers from Kilkenny, Carlow, Kildare, Tipperary and other counties began arriving in the region now known as Saint-Colomban in the early 1820s. (Whelan, n.d.)

Father Patrick Phelan, a native of Ballyragget, Kilkenny, named the new parish *Saint-Colomban* to reflect the monastic spirit of renewal, learning, and resilience. His decision was deeply intentional: it connected the hardships and faith of the Irish settlers with the long-standing legacy of Irish spirituality and missionary effort. (Hart 1955)

By 1825, there were at least 250 Irish immigrants living in the region. Since there was no chapel, they often made the nine-mile walk to Ste-Scholastique for Mass. In time, a wooden cross was erected where they could stop to pray — a sacred point that would eventually become the site of the first chapel, built in 1831. Even long after its construction, settlers still referred to it as “*going to the Cross.*” (Bourguignon 1988)

Heritage Value Statement

The Saint-Colomban Cemetery is a historic burial ground bearing exceptional value due to its association with the Irish Catholic colonization of the Laurentian region in the 19th century. It holds deep social, spiritual, and historical importance to the community and is a unique example of rural Irish heritage in Quebec. This site is both a sacred resting place and a living archive of Irish-Canadian identity in Quebec.

Located on land originally donated by Irish settlers, the cemetery represents one of the oldest burial sites in the Laurentians, in continuous use since the 1830s. Its historic section contains numerous unmarked graves, along with visible headstones that testify to the presence of early Irish farming families who contributed significantly to the development of Saint-Colomban.

Legal and Cultural Protection

The cemetery falls under municipal protection and is part of the parish heritage assets managed by La Fabrique. A notarial clause from 1829 stipulates that the Parish land is to be used exclusively for parish purposes, a clause that has been overlooked by the Fabrique in recent years with the sale of property and demolition of a building built by the Irish.

Canadian Irish Migration Preservation Network (CIMPN) wants The Fabrique of Saint-Colomban to immediately stop:

- The encroachment of the urn garden on existing burials, despite there no longer having a visible marker.
- The extension of the Urn Garden. Remove and relocate the urn garden to the newer space in the cemetery where there is space.
- The desecration of the monuments (for example: removing them, burying them, gluing ornamentation to them and gluing stickers on them).
- Reselling perpetuity concessions.
- Issuing new contracts for existing perpetual concessions whereby the Fabrique diminishes both the size of the concession and length of time, i.e., changing it from the original contract of perpetuity to 25 years terms and reducing family plot sizes that were proven in the case of Gerald Phelan from 30' x 15' to the new size by the Fabrique as 14' x 9' and 7' x 9'. (see ELLIOTT HEADSTONE CONTRACT ISSUED TO SUE ALLISON, page 5 and Appendix VI: Historical Timeline of the Saint-Colomban Parish and Cemetery, 1937)



The Fabrique's encroachment of urn garden and headstones on top of Irish historic burials. Many of the Irish burials do not have headstones, because they were removed by the Fabrique at some point.

Image credit: Kelley O'Rourke



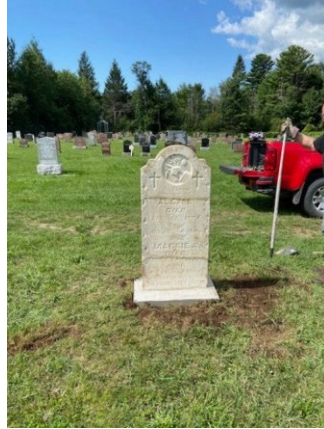
The Fabriques's planned extension (white posts) of the urn garden on top of existing Irish burials. The Fabrique continues to sell perpetual concessions belonging to Irish burials which have been there as early as 1836.

Image credit: Kelley O'Rourke



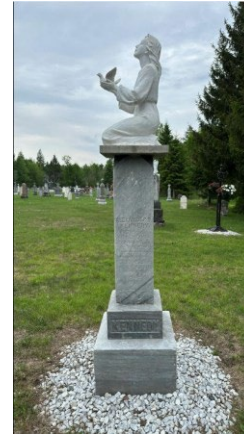
The Canadian Irish Migration Preservation Network (CIMPN) volunteers estimate the damage of the broken Irish historic headstone

Image credit: Kelley O'Rourke



The Canadian Irish Migration Preservation Network (CIMPN) repaired the headstone and have been raising funds to repair other broken headstones.

Image credit: Kelley O'Rourke



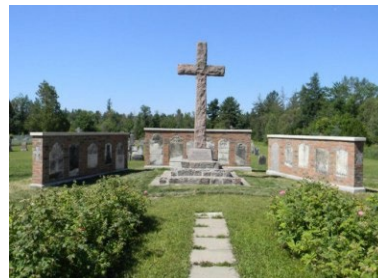
The Fabrique disfigured a historic monument by gluing a patio stone and angel on top of the Kennedy monument located at the head of the urn garden. Following pressure from the CIMPN it was removed.

Image credit: Daphne Petersen



2005 - Condition of headstones when we found them removed and thrown behind the church which is located across the street from the cemetery.

Image credit: CIMPN Collection



2011 - Three walls were built to receive, preserve and protect the broken stones. Money was raised by the Irish descendants.

Image credit: CIMPN Collection



2022 - The Fabrique made no effort to maintain the wall. Meaning, the joints were never resealed and water infiltrated into the back of the bricks.

Image credit: CIMPN Collection



The Fabrique feels they have every right under the cemetery by-law issued in 1994, using the 100-year cap to change the status of a plot contract size and duration thus ignoring the original perpetuity status.

Image credit: Kelley O'Rourke

ELLIOTT HEADSTONE CONTRACT ISSUED TO SUE ALLISON by the Fabrique in 2024. Both the size and duration of existing Elliott family plot, was altered from perpetual to 50 years and to 4' x 9' plot size from what we believe to be originally about 30' x 15'.

SAINT-COLOMBAN PARISH
Old cemetery

CONCESSION AND MAINTENANCE AGREEMENT

Lot	AC
No.	052
Section	Row 12
Cemetery	St. Colomban

BETWEEN

LA FABRIQUE DE LA PAROISSE SAINT-COLOMBAN, a legal person constituted under the "Loi sur les fabriques" (R.S.Q., chapter F-1), having its head office at 342-B Montée de l'Église, in the City of Saint-Colomban, postal code J5K 2H9, here represented by its authorized signatory and hereinafter called "La fabrique. ».

AND

Mr. Susan Allison ^{Susan Allison} ²³⁷⁷ _{domicilial at number 23772 of the}

2. CONCESSION
Subject to the regulations and terms of this contract, "La fabrique" allows the concession holder, to be used exclusively for the maintenance of the funeral work.

2.1. Lot

No. AC 052
Section Row 12
Following dimensions: 7 ft (or m) by 9 ft (or m)

3. CONTRACT LENGTH

This concession contract is for a period of 50 years from the date hereof, i.e. until 31.05.2074. At the dealer's request, six months before the end of the term, this contract may be renewed for a new period by a new contract, terms and conditions then in force.

If there is renewal, any funeral work is maintained in place and remains the property of the concession holder. In the absence of renewal, the funerary work is removed.

Heritage Values of the Saint-Colomban Cemetery


1. Historical Value

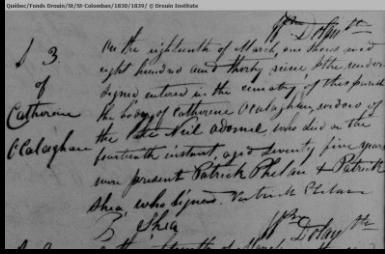
- Officially the parish was founded in 1836. The oldest surviving headstone currently in the Saint-Colomban cemetery belongs to Catherine O’Callaghan who died in 1839.

Note that in the parish record, the last name is written, O’Callaghan, and her age at death was noted as 75 years. She died on the 14th and was buried on the 18th of March 1839. Her husband’s name is recorded as Neil O’Donnell.

Inscription

In memory of
**CATHERINE
 CALLAHAN**
 Died March 17th, 1839
 Aged 66 years
 Native of County
 Tyrone
 Ireland
 May she rest in peace.
 Amen.





GRAVE MATTERS: THE UNTOLD STORIES OF THE MISSING MONUMENTS
 KELLEY O'ROURKE 2024

- The cemetery was established by Irish settlers who also donated the land for both the parish and cemetery.

Tableau 2.1
Recensement de la population du territoire de Saint-Colomban en 1825

Noms des chefs de famille	Nombre total de personnes demeurant dans chaque maison	Noms des chefs de famille	Nombre total de personnes demeurant dans chaque maison
Pierre Miron	8	Owen Manning	10
Jean-Baptiste Miron	8	Michael [illisible]	6
Michael Carthy	4	John [illisible]	4
Michael Molloy	3	Philip Rely	5
Patrick Molloy	1	John Rely	3
Thomas Keogh	10	Hugh Rely	1
Richard Power	9	James Cowley	6
Michael Murphy	12	Patrick [illisible]	8
François [illisible]	2	William McCormick	3
Michael Ryan	4	Michael Fahey	7
Patrick Kelly	3	Cornelius Horan	1
Patrick Shea	5	Anthony Murphy	6
Peter Canfield	7	Michael Borden	4
Anthony Dempsey	4	James Murphy	7
Peter Dempsey	1	Patrick [Murray ?]	1
Edmund Magher	5	John Murray	4
James Quinan	4	James Murphy	4
John Ryan	6	Duncan McNabb	9
Edward Elliott	1	François [Labrosse ?]	5
John O'Brien	4	John Ryan	4
Denis Carthy	4	Richard Burke	1
John Murphy	4	Duncan [McDonald ?]	3
[illisible]	7	Michael Mc [illisible]	5
John [illisible]	2	François [illisible]	9
[illisible] Howard	3	Joseph Houle ou Houde	2
[illisible]	4		
[illisible]	4		
Brian Fenegan	5		
[illisible] Casey	1		
		Total	253

Source : recensement du Bas-Canada, paroisse Sainte-Scholastique, 1825

Census of Lower Canada Sainte-Scholastique, 1825: These are the names that are associated with the Saint-Colomban parish. Image Credit: (Bourguignon 1988)p. 35)

- The cemetery is the final resting place of pre-Famine Irish immigrants, Famine refugees of 1847, and successive generations of Irish-Quebec families. To date, a total of 880 Irish settlers and their descendants have been identified as being buried here.

- Key historical figures are connected to the cemetery. A list is provided in Appendix V on page 30. The cemetery also includes memorials to Irish veterans who served in pre-1815 European conflicts, the American wars, the 1837–38 Rebellion, and the World Wars.

2. Archaeological Value

- The cemetery contains visible and subsurface graves, foundations, and artefacts documenting Saint-Colomban’s early Irish settlement.
- The graves and monuments represent some of the earliest burials of Irish Catholics in the Laurentians.
- The cemetery offers potential for future research into the origins, health, and migration history of the community’s founders.

3. Architectural and Artistic Value

- The cemetery contains hand-carved Irish tombstones, markers, and Celtic crosses created by early stonemasons and artisans. A few examples below:

Image Credit: Canadian Irish Migration Network

Sources: *Billion Graves* (Wallace 2023), *Stories In Stone* (Keister 2004), *Understanding Cemetery Symbols* (Snider 2017)



Elizabeth Carey: “The vine is one of the most powerful symbols of the relationship between God and man.” (Keister 2004, 59) The grapes represent the Eucharist wine (Blood of Christ) and the cross represents Christianity. The circles can mean a symbol of eternity.



Margaret Jacob: The evening primrose was a symbol for things such as eternal love, hope and sadness. Mixed with the morning glory which is a symbol of the resurrection. The circles can mean eternity. The 3-pronged tips of the cross represent the trinity. The wreath can mean memory or remembrance.



Patrick Murphy and Ellen Molloy: A laurel wreath can be interpreted as a victory over death or immortality. The cross represents Christianity

(O'Rourke 2024)



Catherine O'Callaghan: The weeping willow paired with a cross can be interpreted as a sign of immortality.



Heloise Elizabeth and James Ryan: Hand pointing up and holding a cross can be understood as the soul has gone to heaven and signify life after death/resurrection. The initials, IHS are the initials for the Greek name for Jesus.

(O'Rourke 2024)



Mary and John Phelan: There was no adornment on the Phelan monument, but the obelisk shape of the headstone would suggest eternal life in heaven.

- The cemetery features a large central cross, donated by Thomas Collins in 1936, stands as an enduring community symbol.



(Photo by Daphne Peterson)

- The stone craftsmanship, script styles, and motifs reflect Irish artistic traditions and 19th-century funerary aesthetics.
- The stone walls and iron gates define the cemetery's historic boundaries and must be preserved as integral elements of the original site.
- Any remaining structures or foundations from the Irish settlers' original donation form part of the cultural landscape.

4. Ethnological and Social Value

- The cemetery embodies the faith, resilience, and communal life of Saint-Colomban's Irish settlers.
- The cemetery represents a shared space of memory for descendants and for the Irish-Quebec community.
- The cemetery continues to serve as a gathering place for commemoration, storytelling, and restoration projects led by volunteers and the CIMPN.
- The memorial wall and restoration of displaced headstones reflect ongoing intergenerational stewardship.

5. Emblematic and Identity Value

- The cemetery serves as a symbol of Saint-Colomban's Irish origins and its early bilingual, bicultural community.

- The cemetery is visually and spiritually linked to the parish church and the heart of the village.
- Saint-Colomban and the cemetery are now part of the Global Irish Famine Way, connecting it to Ireland and the worldwide Irish diaspora through the Bronze Shoes memorial installation.

La plaque du mémorial de la Voie mondiale de la Famine irlandaise / Global Irish Famine Way Memorial de Saint Colomban fait partie maintenant du Répertoire du patrimoine culturel du Québec.

<https://www.patrimoine-culturel.gouv.qc.ca/rpcq/detail.do?methode=consulter&id=239277&type=bien>

6. Landscape and Urbanistic Value

- The cemetery is an integral component of Saint-Colomban's historic village core, associated with the parish and early settlement patterns.
- The 19th-century layout, stone boundaries, and natural setting reflect the original rural environment.
- The cemetery acts as a landmark for residents and visitors, anchoring the town's historic identity.

7. Scientific and Technological Value

- The cemetery offers opportunities for interdisciplinary study in history, archaeology, genealogy, and material culture.
- The tombstone materials, inscriptions, and construction methods provide insight into 19th-century craftsmanship and technology.

Physical Characteristics of the Cemetery

The cemetery includes:

- A historic section dating to the 1830s
- A newer section added in 1937
- A central granite cross, installed in 1936 to commemorate the centennial of the parish (donated by Thomas Collins)
- Original foundations of the old parish school nearby, uncovered during construction and recently removed in about 2023 when the land was sold by the Fabrique and the building demolished.

- 3 brick walls erected in 2011 (located behind the granite cross) by descendants of the Irish (now Canadian Irish Migration Preservation Network) to safeguard the headstones that were removed from the cemetery by the Fabrique. The Irish descendants led by Claude Bourguignon, Ken Neil, Kelley O'Rourke and Fergus Keyes, cleaned, repaired and returned the markers to the cemetery. (See photo on page 10.)

The cemetery is surrounded by stone walls, with headstones made of granite and limestone, often engraved in both English and French, reflecting the bilingual character of the parish.

The photograph on the following page shows the outline of the historic and new areas of the cemetery and their relationship to the church and other buildings close by.

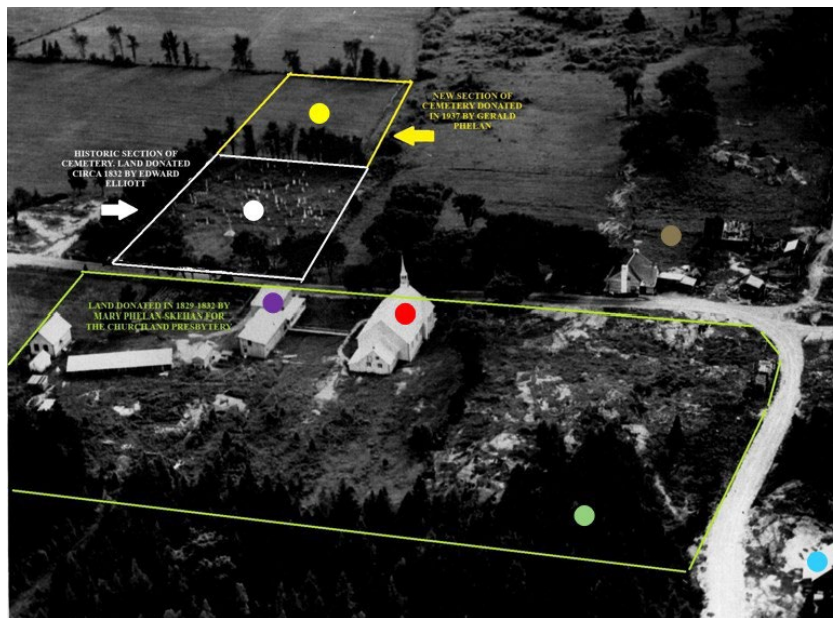


Image Credit: Claude Bourguignon collection, Aerial view of church and cemetery (c. 1939)

- **Yellow:** New part of cemetery, **White:** Old part of cemetery 1829, **Green:** donated land in 1832
- **Purple:** presbytery, **Red:** church, **Brown:** hotel and post office, **Light blue** was the schoolhouse (demolished to make way for a gas station)

See Appendix I: Documentary and Physical Evidence on page 19 for more historical information about the original notarial documents and additional maps and photographs.

Cultural and Genealogical Significance

Saint-Colomban Cemetery is a key repository of Irish-Canadian history. It is directly connected to the migration of pre-Famine Irish settlers who arrived via Montreal in the 1820s and established a strong agricultural presence in the region. Due to the absence of a local parish until 1836, earlier

baptisms, marriages, and burials were registered in surrounding parishes like Saint-Benoît and Sainte-Scholastique.

The site reflects a unique genealogical footprint. Modern mapping and research efforts by Kelley O'Rourke have uncovered the names of 156 individuals buried between 1836–1847, of which 137 were Irish, many buried without headstones. See Appendix II on page 25 for a complete list. The research continues to uncover more names.

Only 10 headstones and markers (a marker is a monument that is no longer situated on the original burial plot) remain from the period between 1836 - 1847. Pictured below are all 10 of the names of the Irish headstones and markers remaining in the cemetery from the 1836-1847 years. They are shown in 3 columns: Column 1- how we found them, Column 2 - after they were repaired and Column 3 - after we cleaned them. The numbers with each picture correlate to their number on the map of the historic layout. *Image Credit: Canadian Irish Migration Preservation Network. (O'Rourke 2024)*



#12-Elizabeth Carey and Michael Skelly monument first sighted broken off the foundation and, in the cemetery, and later found broken in half and behind the church.



#12-Elizabeth Carey and Michael Skelly monument mounted on the wall and before cleaning. A scaffolding piece obstructs the top of the picture.



#12-Elizabeth Carey and Michael Skelly monument mounted on the wall and cleaned.



#57-Margaret Jacob and John Kenny headstone



#57-Margaret Jacob and John Kenny headstone in good shape.



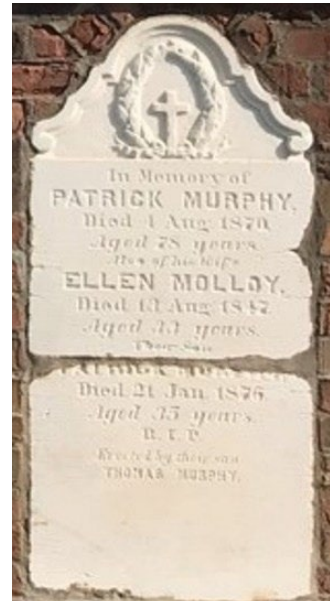
#57-Margaret Jacob and John Kenny headstone cleaned.



#101-Ellen Molloy and Patrick Murphy monument found broken behind the church.



#101-Ellen Molloy and Patrick Murphy monument mounted on the wall and before cleaning



#101-Ellen Molloy and Patrick Murphy monument mounted on the wall and cleaned.



#112-Mary Murphy and Felix Kennedy: monument found broken and behind the church.



#112-Mary Murphy and Felix Kennedy monument mounted on the wall and before cleaning.



#112-Mary Murphy and Felix Kennedy monument mounted on the wall and cleaned.



#115-Catherine O'Callaghan (as written in the Parish record) headstone is broken off its foundation and remains in the cemetery.



#115-Catherine O'Callaghan headstone will be placed on a new foundation in 2024.



#115-Catherine O'Callaghan headstone is the oldest still in the cemetery and in its original location - cleaned.



#123-124-Mary and John Phelan's headstone shows signs of wearing. It is in the cemetery



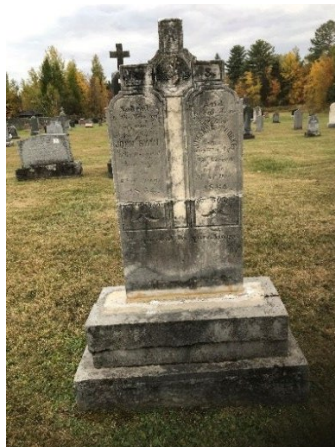
#123-124-Mary and John Phelan's headstone is porous so light cleaning required.



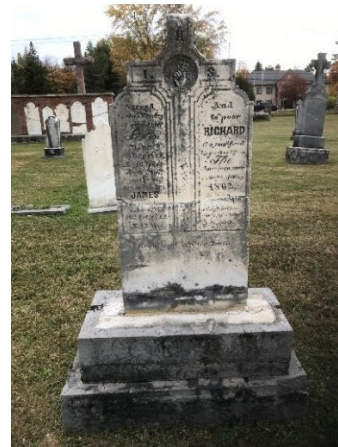
#123-124-Mary and John Phelan's headstone after light cleaning. It remains in its original location.



#136-137-James and Heloise Elizabeth Ryan headstone broken in the cemetery. Parents names on Front view.



#136-137-James and Heloise Elizabeth Ryan headstone repaired & cleaned. Remains in the cemetery. Front view.



#136-137-James and Heloise Elizabeth Ryan headstone remains in its original location. Children's names on back view. Cleaned.



#155-George Williams monument found broken and behind the church.



#155-George Williams monument mounted on the wall and before cleaning.



#155-George Williams monument mounted on the wall after cleaning

Conclusion

The Saint-Colomban Cemetery represents an irreplaceable testimony to Quebec's Irish heritage and early Catholic settlement in the Laurentians. Its historic, archaeological, architectural, ethnological, emblematic, and landscape values together form a complete cultural ensemble that embodies nearly two centuries of faith, migration, and community life.

Preserving the cemetery grounds, the Irish tombstones and markers, the stone walls, the iron gates, and any associated structures from the original donation is essential to protecting the integrity of this site. The designation of the historic section of the cemetery as a heritage site will ensure the long-term safeguarding of both its physical and intangible heritage — a legacy of the Irish families who helped shape Saint-Colomban and Quebec itself.

Appendices

Appendix I: Documentary and Visual Evidence, page 19

Appendix II: Burials between 1836-1847, page 25

Appendix III: Layout of the Entire Cemetery including Historic and Newer Section, page 28

Appendix IV: Layout of the Historic or Upper Section of the Cemetery, page 29

Appendix V: Notable People Associated with the Cemetery, page 30

Appendix VI: Historic Timeline of the Saint-Colomban Paris and Cemetery, page 31

Appendix VII: Letters of Support, page 36

Appendix I: Documentary and Visual Evidence

- Notarial Documents:
 - Mary Phelan donation (1829 - 1832)

Pages 1 & 2 – 1829

The first letter of intent written on Sept. 7th, 1829 and was signed by Norman Benjamin Doucet, notary and Norman Fitzgerald Unaicke, a judge in Lower Canada.

The September 7th, 1829, document listed Mary Phelan and Patrick Skehan's minor-age children, Catherine, Patrick, Ellen and William .

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*Notarial Documents:
Mary Phelan Skehan
donates Land for
Parish - 1829*

→ Pages 3 & 4 - 1829

→ Sheehan – a spelling variation of the last name, Skehan.

→ Whelan – a spelling variation of the last name, Phelan.

(Bourguignon 1988, page 47)

Notarial Documents: Archives nationales à Montréal: archives.montreal@banq.qc.ca,

otarial oc ments rchi es na onales ontr al [archi es montreal ban c.ca](https://www.archivesmontreal.banq.qc.ca)
GRAVE MATTERS: THE UNTOLD STORIES OF THE MISSING CEMETERY MONUMENT SAINT - COLOMBANI, QUEBEC KELEY O'Rourke 2024 NTS

SUR QUEL Nour Juge nait avec homologues
Paris cédant, en conséquence et conformément à l'acte de son
la dit. Régularité
qu'il sera et demeurera. notarié. à l'usage
de l'Université de Paris
et à en prime exorbitant au plus offrant et dernier enchère
devant un Notaire qui en dressera acte et en gardera minute, après
réception, sans cause et publication faite à la porte de l'Église Pa-
roissiale de la rue de la Harpe, par le
Notaire
qui sera désigné par le Procureur Général, le Procureur de Ser-
vice Extra-Paroissial, dans une desépoche Verbal en forme, qui sera
soumis aux-sept des procureurs à la suite de la Vente. Sur ce
le Procureur Général et le Procureur de Service Extra-Paroissial
ont signé et apposé leurs sceaux et cachets
le Procureur de Service Extra-Paroissial
(Signé) Mary Phelan
(Signé) Joseph Quiblier
(Signé) Joseph Quiblier
Notaire

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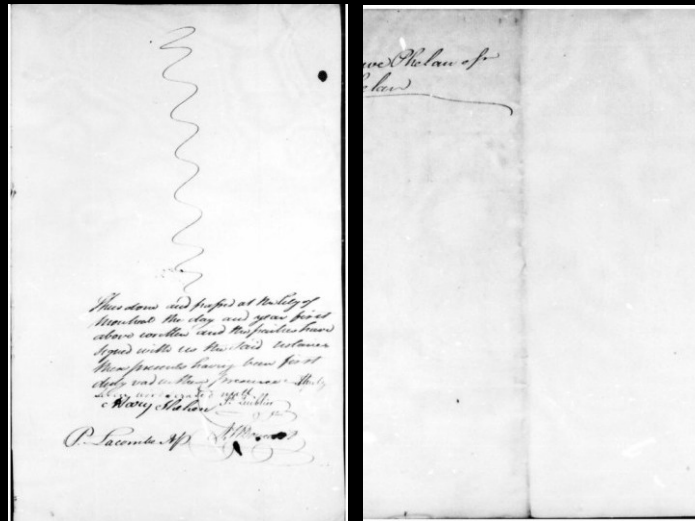
by the...
The...
Mary Phelan
Joseph Quiblier
Notary

Pages 1 & 2 - 1832
Donation by Mary Phelan to
Joseph Quiblier, September
15th, 1832 .

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Pages 3 & 4 – 1832

The document was notarized and signed on September 15th, 1832, by J. Quiblier, Mary Sheehan, P. Lacombe, N.P and Norman Benjamin Doucet.



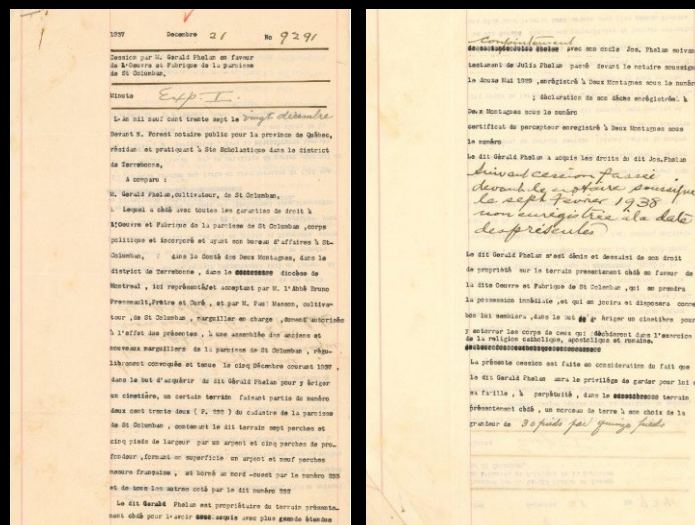
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("BanQ numérique," n.d.)

- o Gerald Phelan donation (1937)

Notaire Narcisse Forest : Cession, L'oeuvre et fabrique de la paroisse de St-Colomban, 20 décembre 1937, nu 51766 ("Narcisse Forest," n.d.).

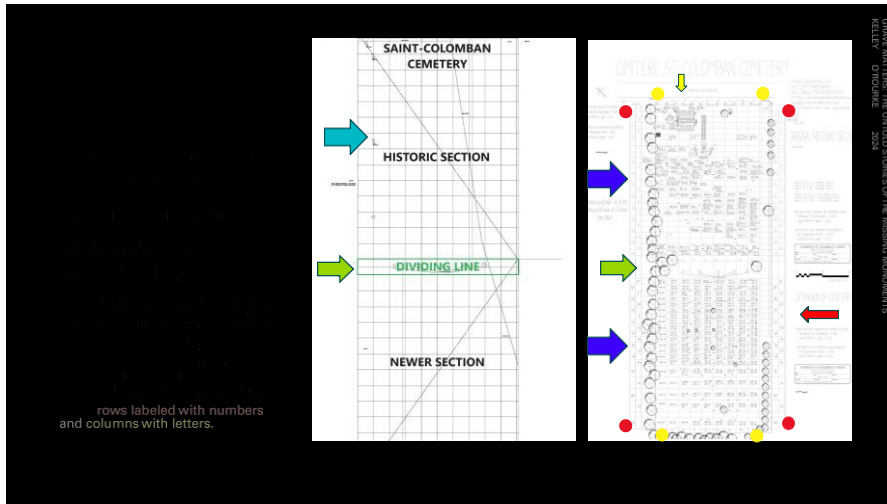
Pages 1 & 2.



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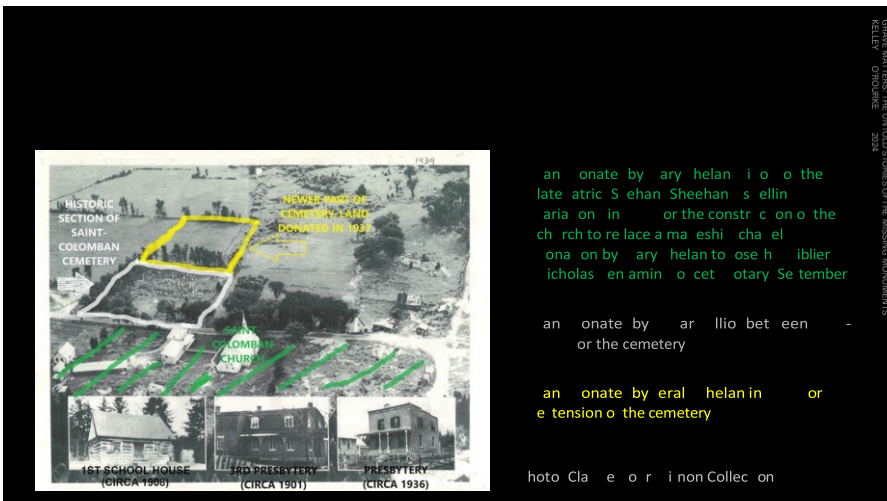
- **Photographs and Maps:**

- Cemetery mapping by Kelley O'Rourke (2024)



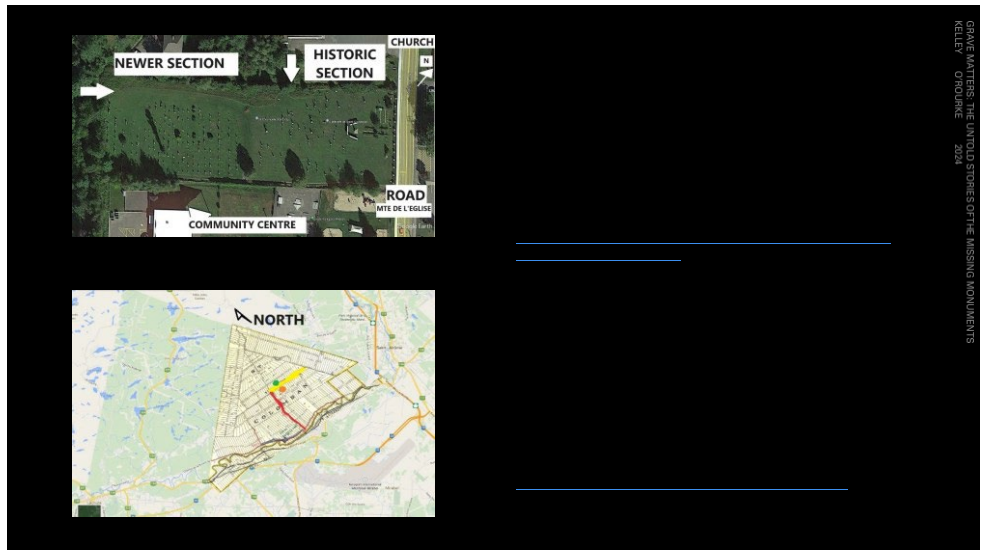
Road located at top – yellow arrow.

- Claude Bourguignon's annotated land maps (1939)

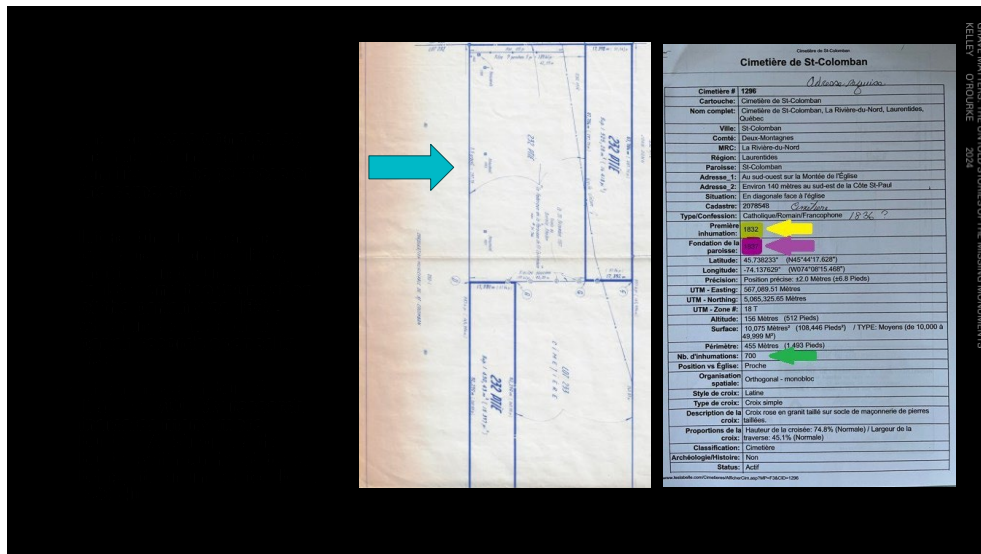


- Cadastral maps:

- 1929 overlaid map



- 1987 cadastral showing first burial in 1832



Appendix II: List of Burials Between 1836-1847

The following table lists the 156 names of people identified as buried in the Saint-Colomban cemetery between 1836 and 1847. There are six (6) people with headstones, four (4) people with monuments, and the proposed locations of 25 burials without headstones or monuments. One person of the six with headstones had no parish burial record. There are also two (2) children with a headstone who died shortly after immigrating in 1847. There are nine (9) people who have cultural backgrounds other than Irish. (O'Rourke 2024)

	Sex	Last Name	First Name	Place of Baptism	Date of Birth: D/M/Y	Date of Death: D/M/Y	FIND A GRAVE LINK
1	F	Barrett	Mary	St-Colomban, Québec	13/04/1841	14/04/1841	MARY BARRETT GRAVE
2	M	Barrett	Thomas	Québec	1837	20/04/1841	THOMAS BARRETT GRAVE
3	M	Boyle	John	County Sligo, Ireland	ABT 1774	05/10/1836	JOHN BOYLE GRAVE
4	?	Boyle	Baby	St-Colomban, Québec	14/04/1840	15/04/1840	BABY BOYLE GRAVE
5	M	Boyle	Francis	County Sligo, Ireland	1807	06/06/1842	FRANCIS BOYLE GRAVE
6	F	Boyle	Sara	Ireland	1796	08/02/1843	SARAH BOYLE GRAVE
7	M	Boyle	James	Ireland	1798	03/03/1847	JAMES BOYLE GRAVE
8	M	Breen	Patrick	County Wexford, Ireland	1760	23/07/1842	PATRICK BREEN GRAVE
9	F	Brophy	Helen	St-Colomban, Québec	14/02/1837	27/02/1837	HELEN BROPHY GRAVE
10	F	Buckley	Catherine	Ireland	ABT 1793	24/03/1838	CATHERINE BUCKLEY GRAVE
11	F	Cahill	Ellen	Ireland	1795	27/05/1842	ELLEN CAHILL GRAVE
12	F	Carey	Elizabeth	County Westmeath, Ireland	1807	07/02/1843	ELIZABETH CAREY GRAVE
13	M	Casey	William	County Tipperary, Ireland ?	ABT 1772	26/08/1836	WILLIAM CASEY GRAVE
14	F	Casey	Catherine	County Tipperary, Ireland	ABT 1814	01/04/1841	CATHERINE CASEY GRAVE
15	M	Casey	William	St-Colomban, Québec	22/08/1844	05/04/1845	WILLIAM CASEY GRAVE
16	M	Cash	William	?	ABT 1791	26/05/1836	WILLIAM CASH GRAVE
17	M	Culliton	Michael	St-Colomban, Québec	25/11/1840	28/11/1840	MICHAEL CULLITON GRAVE
18	M	Daly	Thugh	Ireland	1767	22/04/1842	HUGH DALY GRAVE
19	?	Dempsey	Baby	St-Colomban, Québec	24/04/1838	25/04/1838	BABY DEMPSEY GRAVE
20	M	Dempsey	Anthony	County Kilkenny, Ireland	ABT 1758	19/06/1838	ANTHONY DEMPSEY GRAVE
21	M	Dempsey	Thomas	County Kilkenny, Ireland	ABT 1811	07/02/1841	THOMAS DEMPSEY GRAVE
22	M	Dempsey	James	St-Colomban, Québec	11/02/1839	13/02/1839	JAMES DEMPSEY GRAVE
23	M	Dempsey	Anthony	St-Colomban, Québec	14/02/1840	27/10/1840	ANTHONY DEMPSEY GRAVE
24	F	Develin	Anne (twin)	St-Colomban, Québec	07/03/1836	18/03/1836	ANN DEVLIN GRAVE
25	M	Develin	Patt (twin)	St-Colomban, Québec	07/03/1836	09/03/1836	PATT DEVLIN GRAVE
26	F	Develin	Margaret	St-Colomban, Québec	28/12/1836	29/05/1840	MARGARET DEVLIN GRAVE
27	M	Develin/Devin	Peter	Ireland	1811	30/04/1842	PETER DEVLIN GRAVE
28	M	Doran	William	County Kilkenny, Ireland	ABT 1817	10/12/1836	WILLIAM DORAN GRAVE
29	M	Doyle	Patrick	County Wicklow, Ireland ?	ABT 1776	21/08/1836	PATRICK DOYLE GRAVE
30	F	Duffy	Bridget	County Tyrone, Ireland	ABT 1798	01/05/1836	BRIDGET DUFFY GRAVE
31	M	Dunn	Stephen	St-Colomban, Québec	18/03/1839	28/03/1839	STEPHEN DUNN GRAVE
32	M	Dunn	William	St-Colomban, Québec	11/02/1837	26/11/1839	WILLIAM DUNN GRAVE
33	F	Elliot	Alice	St-Jérôme, Québec	13/03/1838	19/05/1838	ALICE ELLIOTT GRAVE
34	F	Fahy	Margaret	St-Colomban, Québec	03/03/1838	31/07/1841	MARGARET FAHEY GRAVE
35	F	Finnigan	Anne	Ste-Scholastique, Québec	13/02/1831	03/03/1845	ANN FINNIGAN GRAVE
36	F	Flannery	Judith	Ireland	1803	02/07/1843	JUDITH FLANNERY GRAVE
37	F	Flint	Ellen/Helen	Ireland	1769	07/03/1843	HELEN FLINT GRAVE
38	M	Forrester	John	St-Colomban, Québec	14/08/1844	14/08/1844	JOHN FORRESTER GRAVE
39	F	Forrester	Ann	St-Colomban, Québec	21/10/1842	18/06/1845	ANN FORRESTER GRAVE
40	F	Gavan	Mary	St-Jérôme, Québec	07/07/1840	19/06/1841	MARY GAVAN GRAVE
41	F	Gavan	Honora	?	1835	26/04/1843	HONORA GAVAN GRAVE
42	M	Gavin	Malachy	Ireland	1808	18/02/1844	MALACHY GAVAN GRAVE
43	F	Gavin/Gordon	Mary	Ireland	1763	22/07/1842	MARY GAVIN GRAVE
44	M	Gravel	Martin	St-Eustache, Québec	1795	31/08/1845	MARTIN GRAVEL GRAVE
45	F	Hall	Mary	Ste-Scholastique, Québec ?	Nov. 1832	28/09/1836	MARY HALL GRAVE
46	M	Hall	James	St-Colomban, Québec	14/06/1839	22/05/1841	JAMES HALL GRAVE
47	F	Haly	Winifred	Ireland	1804	15/01/1844	WINIFRED HALY GRAVE
48	M	Hart	John	St-Colomban, Québec	26/11/1837	28/11/1837	JOHN HART GRAVE
49	M	Hart	Thomas	Québec	1835	17/10/1839	THOMAS HART GRAVE
50	M	Hennessy	Martin	Ireland	1817	16/05/1841	MARTIN HENNESSY GRAVE
51	F	Higgins	Ann	King's County, Ireland	ABT 1801	04/03/1837	ANN HIGGINS GRAVE
52	M	Howard	Denis	St-Colomban, Québec	04/02/1838	01/05/1843	DENIS HOWARD GRAVE
53	M	Hughes	James	Montréal, Québec	09/05/1833	25/08/1836	JAMES HUGHES GRAVE
54	?	Innis/Ennis	Baby	St-Colomban, Québec	25/03/1839	25/03/1839	BABY ENNIS GRAVE
55	M	Innis/Ennis	James	County Wexford, Ireland	1801	21/12/1846	JAMES ENNIS GRAVE
56	M	Innis/Ennis	John	St-Colomban, Québec	21/05/1846	18/10/1847	JOHN ENNIS GRAVE
57	F	Jacob	Margaret	Queen's County Ireland	1791	21/03/1844	MARGARET JACOB GRAVE
58	F	Joyce	Mary	County Tipperary, Ireland	ABT 1808	10/02/1836	MARY JOYCE GRAVE
59	F	Keohoe/Keogh	Mary	St-Colomban, Québec	21/01/1843	04/04/1846	MARY KEHOE GRAVE
60	F	Keohoe/Keogh	Ellen	St-Colomban, Québec	24/06/1846	10/11/1846	ELLEN KEHOE GRAVE
61	M	Keohoe/Keogh	Patrick	Ireland	1821	01/04/1847	PATRICK KEHOE GRAVE
62	F	Keohoe/Keogh	Mary	St-Colomban, Québec	16/07/1839	13/04/1840	MARY KEHOE GRAVE
63	M	Kelly	Patrick	St-Jérôme, Québec	31/10/1838	15/08/1839	PATRICK KELLY GRAVE
64	F	Kelly	Judith	St-Colomban, Québec	03/04/1837	12/08/1840	JUDITH KELLY GRAVE
65	M	Kelly	James	Ireland	1795	14/11/1843	JAMES KELLY GRAVE
66	F	Kelly	Mary	County Kilkenny, Ireland	1823	20/02/1844	MARY KELLY GRAVE
67	F	Kelly	Ellen	St-Colomban, Québec	09/1845	27/10/1845	ELLEN KELLY GRAVE

68	F	Kenna	Mary	St-Colomban, Québec	19/11/1842	15/12/1842	MARY KENNA GRAVE
69	M	Kenna	Michael	Ireland	1787	23/12/1843	MICHAEL KENNA GRAVE
70	F	Kenna	Mary	Ireland	1826	08/09/1844	MARY KENNA GRAVE
71	M	Kenna	Michael	St-Colomban, Québec	27/08/1847	12/11/1847	MICHAEL KENNA GRAVE
72	F	Kennedy	Rose	St-Colomban, Québec	22/02/1837	10/09/1837	ROSE KENNEDY GRAVE
73	F	Kinsella	Martha	St-Colomban, Québec	07/02/1840	22/06/1840	MARTHA KINSELLA GRAVE
74	M	Lachappelle	Honore	St-Augustin, Québec	11/07/1846	30/01/1847	HONORE LACHAPPELLE GRAVE
75	M	Lafferty	Hugh	St-Colomban, Québec	21/03/1842	15/06/1843	HUGH LAFFERTY GRAVE
76	M	Lafferty	Thomas	St-Colomban, Québec	12/02/1844	01/03/1844	THOMAS LAFFERTY GRAVE
77	F	Lafferty	Marian	St-Colomban, Québec	12/01/1847	19/01/1847	MARIAN LAFFERTY GRAVE
78	F	Lawlor	Margaret	County Meath, Ireland	ABT 1791	05/11/1836	MARGARET LAWLOR GRAVE
79	F	Locas/Lacasse	Olive	Ste-Thérèse, Québec	01/04/1822	25/12/1836	OLIVE LACASSE GRAVE
80	F	Madden	Helen	St-Colomban, Québec	30/07/1836	03/12/1837	HELEN MADDEN GRAVE
81	F	Madden	Ann	Ste-Scholastique, Québec	21/09/1833	09/09/1839	ANN MADDEN GRAVE
82	M	Madden	Patrick	County Mayo, Ireland	1765	15/05/1840	PATRICK MADDEN GRAVE
83	M	Madden	Patrick	St-Colomban, Québec	07/03/1841	14/03/1841	PATRICK MADDEN GRAVE
84	M	Madden	John	St-Colomban, Québec	09/07/1837	04/05/1841	JOHN MADDEN GRAVE
85	M	Madden	James	Ste-Scholastique, Québec	31/03/1831	01/06/1841	JAMES MADDEN GRAVE
86	M	Madden	William	St-Colomban, Québec	23/03/1837	08/06/1842	WILLIAM MADDEN GRAVE
87	M	Madden	John	Québec	1829	05/06/1842	JOHN MADDEN GRAVE
88	M	Madden	Ambroise	St-Colomban, Québec	11/02/1841	09/06/1842	AMBROSE MADDEN GRAVE
89	M	Mangan/Manning	Eugene	County Kilkenny, Ireland	1776	25/04/1846	EUGENE MANGAN GRAVE
90	M	Marshall	Thomas	Ireland	1776	07/10/1846	THOMAS MARSHALL GRAVE
91	M	McArdle	John	St-Jérôme, Québec	29/01/1837	12/02/1837	JOHN MCARDLE GRAVE
92	M	McArdle	Francis	St-Jérôme, Québec	27/07/1838	08/08/1838	FRANCIS MCARDLE GRAVE
93	F	McArdle	Ann	St-Colomban, Québec	03/08/1839	15/08/1839	ANN MCARDLE GRAVE
94	M	McArdle	Michael	St-Colomban, Québec	26/09/1840	04/10/1840	MICHAEL MCARDLE GRAVE
95	M	McArdle	Patrick	St-Colomban, Québec	14/11/1841	13/12/1841	PATRICK MCARDLE GRAVE
96	M	McCarthy	John	Ste-Scholastique, Québec	14/11/1831	30/06/1836	JOHN MCCARTHY GRAVE
97	F	McCarthy	Bridget	County Wexford, Ireland	1821	15/10/1842	BRIDGET MCCARTHY GRAVE
98	M	McCarthy	Patrick	Ireland	1803	19/05/1846	PATRICK MCCARTHY GRAVE
99	M	McCarthy	John	Ste-Scholastique, Québec	17/06/1826	13/11/1847	JOHN MCCARTHY GRAVE
100	F	McGarr	Bridget	Québec	Dec. 1834	09/06/1839	BRIDGET MCGARR GRAVE
101	F	Molloy	Ellen	Ireland	1814	13/08/1847	ELLEN MOLLOY GRAVE
102	M	Mooney	David	St-Colomban, Québec	27/02/1836	03/03/1836	DAVID MOONEY GRAVE
103	M	Murphy	Michael	County Kilkenny, Ireland?	ABT 1792	30/07/1836	MICHAEL MURPHY GRAVE
104	M	Murphy	James	Ste-Scholastique, Québec	29/08/1831	14/10/1836	JAMES MURPHY GRAVE
105	M	Murphy	Matthew	St-Colomban, Québec	13/02/1839	01/03/1839	MATHEW MURPHY GRAVE
106	F	Murphy	Jane	St-Colomban, Québec	08/01/1840	15/01/1840	JANE MURPHY GRAVE
107	M	Murphy	Peter	Ste-Scholastique, Québec	08/08/1838	27/12/1841	PETER MURPHY GRAVE
108	F	Murphy	Margaret	St-Colomban, Québec	15/09/1840	28/12/1841	MARGARET MURPHY GRAVE
109	?	Murphy	Baby	Ste-Scholastique, Québec	02/06/1842	08/06/1842	BABY MURPHY GRAVE
110	M	Murphy	John	Ireland	1799	12/06/1842	JOHN MURPHY GRAVE
111	F	Murphy	Anastasia	Ireland	1758	25/06/1842	ANASTASIA MURPHY GRAVE
112	M	Murphy	Patrick	County Leitrim, Ireland	1803	22/08/1846	PATRICK MURPHY GRAVE
113	F	Murphy	Elizabeth	Ireland	1821	17/10/1846	ELIZABETH MURPHY GRAVE
114	F	Nugent	Margaret	Ireland	1797	31/01/1847	MARGARET NUGENT GRAVE
115	F	O'Callaghan	Catherine	County Tyrone, Ireland	1764	17/03/1839	CATHERINE O'CALLAGHAN GRAVE
116	F	O'Leary	Johanna	Ste-Scholastique, Québec	18/12/1834	05/08/1840	JOHANNA O'LEARY GRAVE
117	F	O'Leary	Helen/Ellen	St-Colomban, Québec	09/03/1836	10/10/1842	ELLEN O'LEARY GRAVE
118	?	O'Neil	None given	St-Colomban, Québec	07/04/1836	07/04/1836	BABY O'NEIL GRAVE
119	M	O'Shaughnessy	James	St-Jérôme, Québec	06/04/1838	13/04/1838	JAMES O'SHAUGHNESSY GRAVE
120	M	O'Shaughnessy	John	St-Colomban, Québec	19/04/1841	26/04/1841	JOHN O'SHAUGHNESSY GRAVE
121	M	O'Shaughnessy	John	St-Colomban, Québec	18/05/1842	27/05/1842	JOHN O'SHAUGHNESSY GRAVE
122	F	Phelan	Anne	County Kilkenny, Ireland	1787	05/05/1845	ANN PHELAN GRAVE
123	M	Phelan	John	County Kilkenny, Ireland	1844	05/09/1847	JOHN PHELAN GRAVE
124	F	Phelan	Mary	County Kilkenny, Ireland	1846	16/09/1847	MARY PHELAN GRAVE
125	F	Phelan	Anne	St-Colomban, Québec	09/10/1846	30/10/1847	ANN PHELAN GRAVE
126	F	Poitou StJean	Marie	Terrebone, Québec	15/08/1779	27/06/1847	MARIE POITEAU GRAVE
127	F	Poitou StJean Blair	Archange	Ste-Anne-des-Plaines, Québec	1792	02/05/1846	ARCHANGE POITEAU GRAVE
128	M	Power	Philip	St-Colomban, Québec	13/08/1841	22/08/1841	PHILIP POWER GRAVE
129	F	Power	Anastasia	County Waterford, Ireland	03/10/1777	19/03/1846	ANASTASIA POWER GRAVE
130	M	Purcell	Patrick	Ste-Scholastique, Québec	05/03/1835	31/08/1839	PATRICK PURCELL GRAVE
131	M	Riopelle	Pierre	Québec	ABT 1754	05/11/1836	PIERRE RIOPELLE GRAVE
132	M	Ryan	Edward	St-Colomban, Québec	18/03/1838	12/04/1838	EDWARD RYAN GRAVE
133	M	Ryan	Edward	County Tipperary, Ireland	ABT. 1773	02/06/1840	EDWARD RYAN GRAVE
134	M	Ryan	Patrick	St-Colomban, Québec	26/02/1836	10/09/1840	PATRICK RYAN GRAVE
135	F	Ryan	Judith	Ste-Scholastique, Québec	06/06/1826	15/08/1842	JUDITH RYAN GRAVE
136	F	Ryan	Héloïse Elizabeth	Ste-Scholastique, Québec	28/01/1827	21/09/1843	HELOISE E. RYAN GRAVE

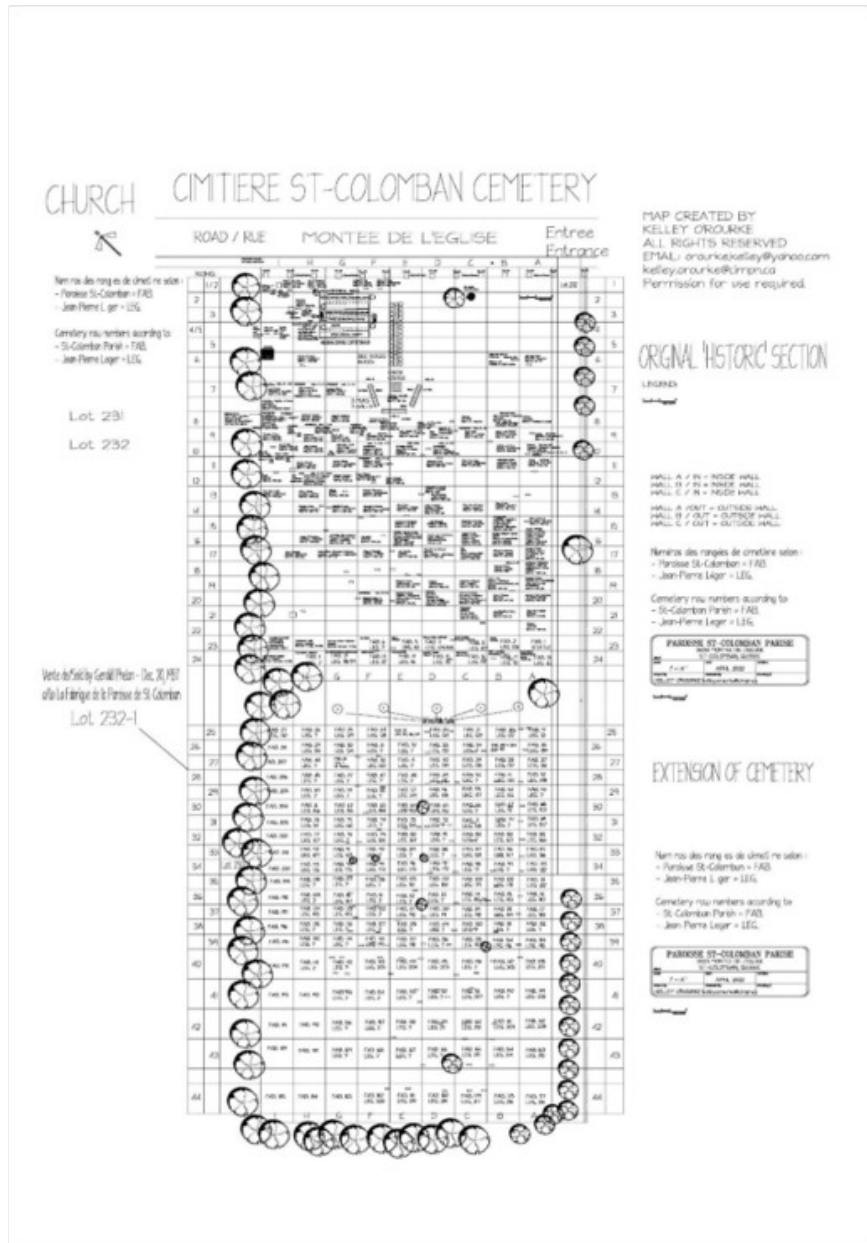
137	M	Ryan	James(missing Parish Record)	Ste-Scholastique, Québec	23/07/1831	30/10/1843	JAMES RYAN GRAVE
138	M	Scheffer	Thomas	Ste-Scholastique, Québec	11/01/1844	27/03/1845	THOMAS SCHEFFER GRAVE
139	F	Scheffer	Mary Madeleine	Ste-Scholastique, Québec	15/01/1842	21/06/1845	MARY MADELEINE SCHEFFER GRAVE
140	F	Scheffer	Mary Elisabeth	Ste-Scholastique, Québec	28/10/1844	09/10/1845	MARY ELIZABETH SCHEFFER GRAVE
141	M	Shea	Patrick	County Kilkenny, Ireland	ABT 1793	13/11/1841	PATRICK SHEA GRAVE
142	M	Stapleton	Michael	St-Colomban, Québec	10/10/1838	9/11/1838	MICHAEL STAPLETON GRAVE
143	M	Stapleton	Lawrence	County Meath, Ireland	1793	13/02/1843	LAWRENCE STAPLETON GRAVE
144	M	Tracey	Daniel	County Tipperary, Ireland	ABT. 1789	28/03/1838	DANIEL TRACY GRAVE
145	M	Tracey	Daniel	County Tipperary, Ireland	ABT. 1797	24/02/1837	DANIEL TRACY GRAVE
146	M	Tracey	David	St-Colomban, Québec	27/07/1844	23/08/1844	DAVID TRACE GRAVE
147	M	Walsh	George	County Meath, Ireland	ABT 1776	08/06/1836	GEORGE WALSH GRAVE
148	?	Walsh/Welsh	Baby	St-Colomban, Québec	04/07/1839	04/07/1839	BABY WALSH GRAVE
149	F	Walsh/Welsh	Bridget	County Meath, Ireland	1820	07/11/1845	BRIDGET WALSH GRAVE
150	M	Walsh/Welsh	Charles	St-Colomban, Québec	01/03/1846	08/06/1846	CHARLES WALSH GRAVE
151	F	Walsh/Welsh	Mary	Ireland	1807	25/02/1847	MARY WALSH GRAVE
152	M	Walsh/Walsh	Robert	Possibly Co. Meath, Ire.	ABT 1814	25/03/1838	ROBERT WALSH GRAVE
153	M	Whelan/Phelan	Michael	Ireland	1804	10/05/1841	MICHAEL WHELAN GRAVE
154	F	Whelan/Phelan	Mary	Québec or United States	1839	05/11/1842	MARY WHELAN GRAVE
155	M	Williams	George	Glanmire, County Cork	ABT 1800	13/06/1842	GEORGE WILLIAMS GRAVE
156	M	Williams	George	St-Colomban, Québec	25/02/1847	16/07/1847	GEORGE WILLIAMS GRAVE

LEGEND:

COLOURS

	J.P. LEGER NECROLOGY NUMBERS
	FABRIQUE SAINT COLOMBAN NUMBERS
	MONUMENTS RELOCATED TO WALL
	COLUMNS AND ROWS OF BURIAL LOCATIONS
	1836-1847 BURIALS
	PROPOSED LOCATION OF BURIALS
	MISSING PARISH RECORD
	THE GLOBAL IRISH FAMINE WAY
	EXISTING MONUMENTS FROM 1836-1847
	FROM CULTURAL BACKGROUNDS OTHER THAN IRISH
	MISSING FROM LEGER'S BOOK

Appendix III: Entire Layout of the Cemetery Including Historic and Newer Section



(O'Rourke 2024)

Appendix IV: Layout of the Historic or Upper Section of the Cemetery



(O'Rourke 2024)



Appendix V: Notable People Associated with the Cemetery

- Timothy Collins (Oldest man in Canada to die at 111 years old),
- Thomas Collins (Donated granite cross in center of cemetery in 1936 and well-known builder in Montreal),
- Father John Falvey (Served as Parish priest for 45 years)
- Edward Elliott (Donated land for school and cemetery between 1832 – 1835 and contributed to the parish’s founding and early community building.)
- Emmett Hall (Superior court judge, relocated to Saskatoon and known, along with Thomas Douglas, as the father of Medicare in Canada),
- Mary Phelan Skehan (Donated land for the Parish in 1829),
- Sister Mary Josephine Phelan (Became Mother Superior of Sisters of Charity in Ottawa and returned to help the sick in 1847),
- Gerald Phelan (Postmaster and donated land for extension of cemetery in 1937),
- Father Patrick Phelan (Sulpician priest and founder of Saint-Colomban. He became Bishop of Kingston),



Appendix VI: Historical Timeline of the Saint-Colomban Parish and Cemetery

1817: Father Richards Jackson notices Irish immigrants in Montreal attending Bonsecours Church. He becomes their spiritual shepherd. [Source: Rev. Lawrence Whelan; Bro. Jerome Hart]

1819: First Irish settlers arrive in the Rivière-du-Nord concession under Father Jackson. (Bourguignon 1988)

1825: Father Patrick Phelan takes over Irish settlement efforts, initiating new colonization in concessions Saint-Nicholas, Saint-Paul, Saint-Georges, and Saint-Patrick. (Bourguignon 1988)

1829: Mary Phelan Skehan donates land for the future site of the parish church. [Source: Original notarial document signed by Norman Fitzgerald Uniacke]

Prior to the formal establishment of a local parish in 1836, baptisms, marriages, and burials of the Irish settlers were recorded in neighboring parishes such as Ste-Scholastique, St-Jerome, St-Benoît, St-Canut, and Ste-Sophie. Due to the distance, settlers erected a wayside cross where they gathered to pray when unable to travel. A chapel was later built on that site, which included a classroom and became the nucleus of the Irish Catholic community. The cemetery was established soon after, serving as the resting place for hundreds of Irish pioneers. (O'Rourke 2024)

1830 - 1832: First chapel is built at the site of 'The Cross' where settlers previously prayed. (Graham, n.d.)

Cemetery: While no official notarial act has been found, Claude Bourguignon's 1988 ethnographic work references a letter dated June 3, 1830, from Father Hudon (Rigaud) to Bishop Lartigue confirming land was also donated by Edward Elliott for use as a cemetery. This parcel is believed to form part of the original burial grounds. (Bourguignon 1988)

1835: Formal organization of the parish community. Chapel trustees and wardens are elected by Father Phelan. (Hart 1955)

Father Patrick Phelan and Father Vallée of Sainte-Scholastique preside over a meeting to elect **churchwardens** from five cotes (neighbourhoods):

- Cote St. Paul: John Phelan, Richard Blansfield, James Conway
- Cote St. Patrick: Capt. D. Phelan, John O'Neill, William McGrath
- Cote St. Nicholas: Thomas McKenna, Felix Murphy, James Madden



- Cote St. George: Patrick Ryan, Philip Kennedy, Hugh Madden
- North River: Capt. Sexton, Richard Power, John Ryan

Wardens-in-chief: John Phelan, Capt. D. Phelan, John Ryan (Bourguignon 1988)

1836: Saint-Colomban parish is officially founded. First resident priest appointed: Father Stephen Higginson Blythe.(Whelan, n.d.)

1837: Concessions fully settled. Irish Catholic population grows to over 100 families.(Bourguignon 1988)

1838: Father Dolan becomes pastor until 1840.(Whelan, n.d.)

1840: Father John Falvey arrives; he will serve Saint-Colomban for the next 45 years.(Hart 1955)

1843: Bishop Patrick Phelan is appointed coadjutor bishop of Kingston.(Hart 1955)

1847: The Great Hunger : Two families flee Ireland and arrive in Saint-Colomban, supported by the Saint-Colomban Community, Michael Rush and Mary Barrett Rush with their 3 children. They survive.

However, John Phelan and Catherine Murphy arrive with 4 children. Two children, John and Mary Phelan die of Typhus and are buried in the cemetery.(O'Rourke 2024)

1850s: Edward Elliott donates land for community expansion (including school purposes).(Bourguignon 1988)

1854: Locust plague devastates crops in Saint-Colomban.(Whelan, n.d.)

1879: Father Falvey retires, continues to reside in Saint-Colomban.(Whelan, n.d.)

1885: Father Falvey dies and is buried in Saint-Colomban cemetery.(Hart 1955)

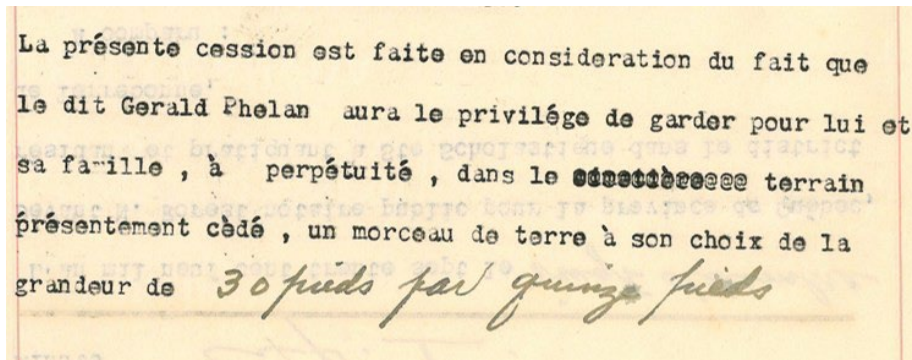
1905: Death of Sister Mary St. Patrick, a long-serving catechist and caregiver in the parish.(Hart 1955)

1936: Granite Cross Erected in Cemetery

Thomas Collins donated and oversaw the erection of a large granite cross in the cemetery to mark the centennial of the parish of Saint-Colomban. This monument remains a key feature of the site and commemorates the endurance and devotion of the founding Irish community.

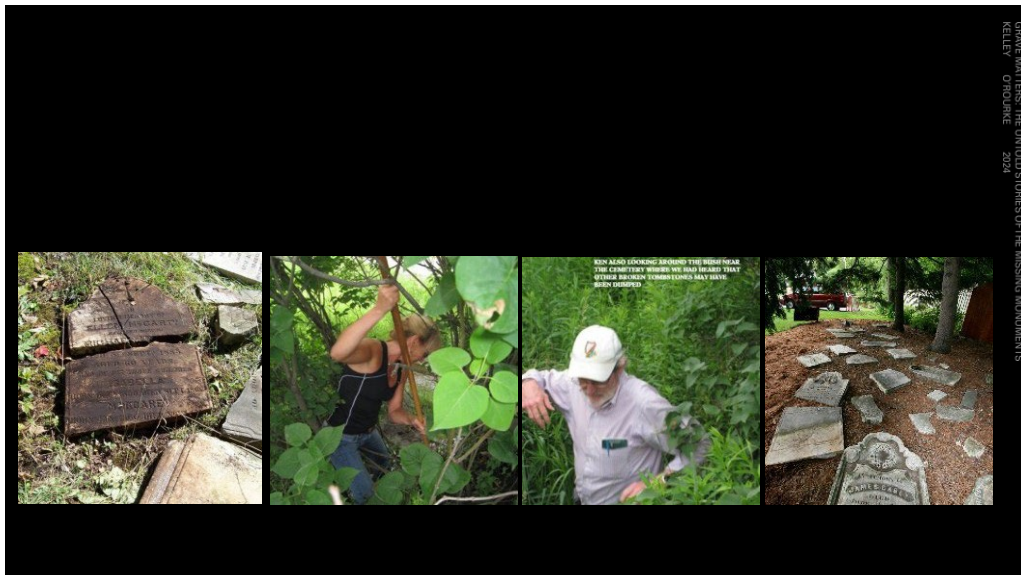
1937: Gerald Phelan donates land to the parish during the centennial celebration.
(Bourguignon 1988)

Gerald Phelan donated Lot 232, extending the cemetery and granting a 30 ft x 15 ft plot in perpetuity for his family. The notarial documents confirm that the land was intended to accommodate family burials, which supports evidence of traditional Irish burial practices emphasizing large family plots. This documentation is critical in affirming the cultural significance of burial layouts.



Notarial Documents: Archives nationales à Montréal: archives.montreal@banq.qc.ca,
www.banq.qc.ca

2005: Threatened historic landmarks at risk of disappearing: Over 50 broken pieces of headstones are discovered by Irish descendants. The Fabrique had removed the headstones from the cemetery and thrown them in the bushes behind the Parish Church.





The Irish descendants (now CIMPN) gather the pieces and raise funds to return the stones to the cemetery.

2011: \$15,000 is raised to erect 3 walls and return the headstones (now called markers, as they are no longer in their original location in the cemetery) to the cemetery.

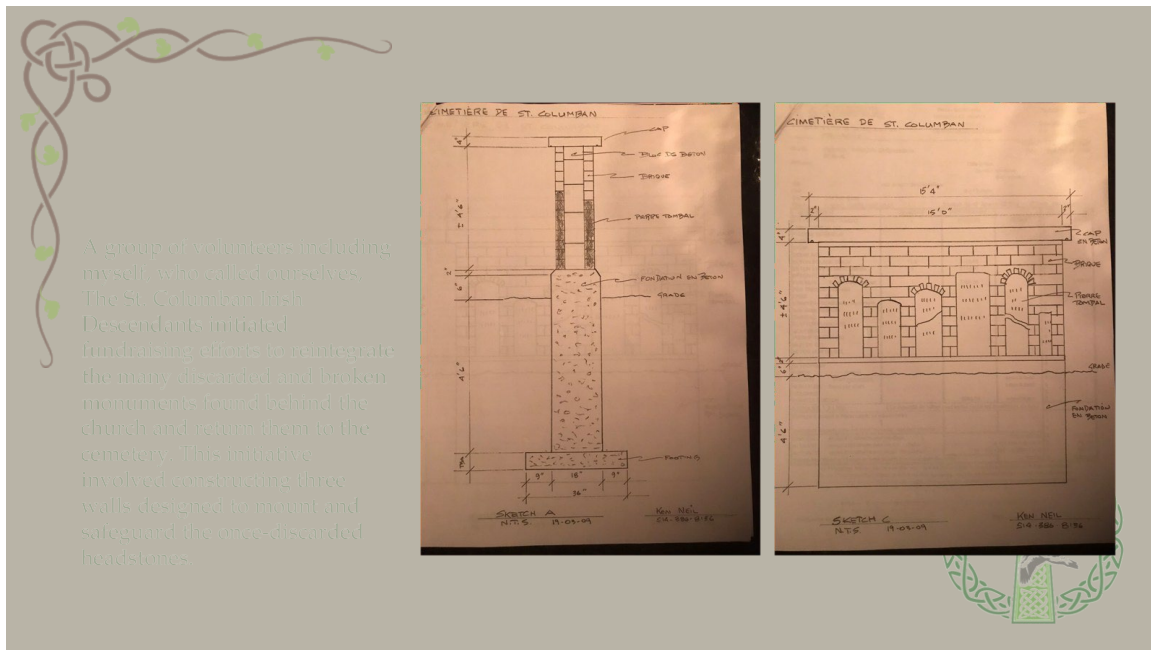


Image Credit: St. Columban Irish Descendants Collection –The proposed 3 walls, sketches by Kenneth Neil.

2020 – 2024: More headstones are damaged and disappearing. About \$10,000 is raised by the CIMPN to repair, clean and unbury the headstones that the Fabrique had buried.



Historic Irish Burials continue to be at risk: Discovery of urn garden and headstones being placed over existing Irish burials. The Fabrique refuses to relocate them despite there being space elsewhere in the cemetery. The Fabrique is reselling these historic Irish plots to be used for urns.

2025: Saint-Colomban officially becomes part of the Global Famine Way, receiving their Bronze Shoes. The Global Irish Famine Way extends from the National Famine Way in Ireland to follow the journeys of all the Irish Famine emigrants around the world. These evocative and iconic Bronze Shoes and accompanying information that mark the National Famine Way – the Mother Trail, will also now signify each key location on the Global Irish Famine Way. (“Saint-Colomban, Quebec – National Famine Way,” n.d.)

La plaque du mémorial de la Voie mondiale de la Famine irlandaise / Global Irish Famine Way Memorial de Saint Colomban fait partie maintenant du Répertoire du patrimoine culturel du Québec.

<https://www.patrimoine-culturel.gouv.qc.ca/rpcq/detail.do?methode=consulter&id=239277&type=bien>



Appendix VII: Letters of Support



UNIVERSITY OF
ST. MICHAEL'S COLLEGE
IN THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

9 October 2025

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in support of the Canadian Irish Migration Preservation Network's effort to preserve the integrity of the old cemetery at St. Columban, Quebec. Established in 1836, this cemetery served one of Canada's earliest and most vibrant Irish immigrant communities. Many of the initial migrants to the region were buried there and their descendants both stayed in the area and also dispersed across Canada, making this burial ground of national significance to the Irish Diaspora in Canada.

While the original headstones that survive are few, there is ample genealogical and historical evidence supporting the fact that many graves in this old section of the cemetery still hold the remains of this pioneering Irish community. As an expert on the Irish migration and settlement in Canada, I am deeply dismayed by any suggestion that this cemetery be tampered with and its graves desecrated. St. Columban is of such national significance to the Irish community that it was recently honoured by a "Bronze Shoes" memorial within the Global Irish Famine Way, an Irish Famine heritage trail that spans Ireland, Canada, and soon the United States, Australia, and South Africa. As national co-convenor of the GIFW, I cannot underscore too strongly the importance of St. Columban as a centre of memory for pre-Famine and Famine Irish migration to Canada. Its old cemetery is a national treasure.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark McGowan".

Dr. Mark G. McGowan, FRSC
Emeritus Professor of History & Celtic Studies
Principal Emeritus, St. Michael's College, University of Toronto
mark.mcgowan@utoronto.ca



United Irish Societies
of Montreal, Inc.

Organizers of the St. Patrick's Parade

October 7 2025

To :
Municipal Committee of the City of Saint-Colomban,

On behalf of The United Irish Societies of Montreal we express our strong support for the Canadian Irish Migration Preservation Network's (CIMPN) submission requesting that the historic section of the Saint-Colomban Cemetery be formally designated as a protected heritage site.

Founded in 1836 on land donated by Irish settlers, the cemetery is one of the earliest Irish Catholic cemeteries in Quebec. It holds the burials of pre-Famine Irish immigrants, Famine refugees of 1847 (some of whom are buried there), and memorials to Irish veterans of pre-1815 European conflicts, the American conflicts, the 1837-38 Rebellion, and both World Wars. It is therefore a site of exceptional historical, cultural, and community significance.

We are deeply concerned that the historic section of the cemetery is under threat, with urns and new headstones being placed directly over pre-existing Irish burials. These actions compromise the integrity of the cemetery and risk erasing an irreplaceable site of Irish-Canadian memory.

We strongly support CIMPN's efforts to preserve this cemetery and respectfully urge the City of Saint-Colomban to grant official historic designation to ensure its protection for future generations.

Sincerely,

Lori Morrison
President
United Irish Societies of Montreal

P.O. Box 97544, CSP Wellington, Verdun, Québec H4G 3M6
www.montrealirishparade.com





Sociétés irlandaises unies de Montréal, inc.

Organisateurs du défilé de la Saint-Patrick

October 7 2025

À l'attention du :

Comité municipal de la Ville de Saint-Colomban,

Au nom des Sociétés Irlandaises Unies, nous désirons exprimer notre ferme appui à la demande soumise par le Réseau canadien pour la préservation de la migration irlandaise (RCPMI), visant à faire reconnaître officiellement la section historique du cimetière de Saint-Colomban comme site patrimonial protégé.

Fondé en 1836 sur un terrain offert par des colons irlandais, le cimetière est l'un des plus anciens cimetières catholiques irlandais du Québec. Il abrite les sépultures des premiers immigrants irlandais arrivés avant la Grande Famine, de réfugiés de 1847 (dont certains y reposent), ainsi que des monuments commémoratifs en hommage aux anciens combattants irlandais des conflits européens antérieurs à 1815, des conflits américains, de la Rébellion de 1837-38 et des deux guerres mondiales. Ce lieu constitue donc un site d'une importance historique, culturelle et communautaire exceptionnelle.

Nous sommes vivement préoccupés par le fait que la section historique du cimetière soit menacée, alors que des unes et de nouvelles pierres tombales sont placées directement sur d'anciennes sépultures irlandaises. Ces actions compromettent l'intégrité du cimetière et risquent d'effacer un lieu de mémoire irlando-canadien irremplaçable.

Nous appuyons pleinement les efforts du RCPMI pour préserver ce cimetière et demandons respectueusement à la Ville de Saint-Colomban de lui accorder une désignation patrimoniale officielle afin d'assurer sa protection pour les générations futures.

Cordialement.



Lori Morrison

Présidente

Sociétés Irlandaises Unies de Montréal





ERIN SPORT(S ASSOCIATION INC.,

1119 Hickson Ave. Verdun, Que, Canada, H4G 2L3

October 10, 2025

President
Daniel Doyle
Vice-President
Ron James
Secretary
Howie Myers
Treasurer
Shawn Doyle
Entertainment
Albert Diorio
Health & Welfare
Ron Diano
Manager
Gerry Tibbo
Inner-Guard
Dona Id Jones
Immediate Past
President
*Tim Furlong

To / À l'attention du:
Municipal Committee of the City of Saint-Colomban / Comité municipal de la Ville de Saint-Colomban

On behalf of the Erin Sports Association Inc], we express our strong support for the Canadian Irish Migration Preservation Network's (CIMPN) submission requesting that the historic section of the Saint-Colomban Cemetery be formally designated as a protected heritage site.

Founded in 1836 on land donated by Irish settlers, the cemetery is one of the earliest Irish Catholic cemeteries in Quebec. It holds the burials of pre-Famine Irish immigrants, Famine refugees of 1847 (some of whom are buried there), and memorials to Irish veterans of pre-1815 European conflicts, the American conflicts, the 1837-38 Rebellion, and both World Wars. It is therefore a site of exceptional historical, cultural, and community significance.

We are deeply concerned that the historic section of the cemetery is under threat, with urns and new headstones being placed directly over pre-existing Irish burials. These actions compromise the integrity of the cemetery and risk erasing an irreplaceable site of Irish Canadian memory.

We strongly support CIMPN's efforts to preserve this cemetery and respectfully urge the City of Saint-Colomban to grant official historic designation to ensure its protection for future generations.

Sincerely,

Daniel Doyle
President
Erin Sports Association

Au nom de [Nom de l'organisme], nous désirons exprimer notre ferme appui à la demande soumise par le Réseau canadien pour la préservation de la migration irlandaise (RCPMI), visant à faire reconnaître officiellement la section historique du cimetière de Saint-Colomban comme site patrimonial protégé.

Fondé en 1836 sur un terrain offert par des colons irlandais, le cimetière est l'un des plus anciens cimetières catholiques irlandais du Québec. Il abrite les sépultures des premiers immigrants irlandais arrivés avant la Grande Famine, de réfugiés de 1847 (dont certains y reposent), ainsi que des monuments commémoratifs en hommage aux anciens combattants irlandais des conflits européens antérieurs à 1815, des conflits américains, de la Rébellion de 1837-38 et des deux guerres mondiales. Ce lieu constitue donc un site d'une importance historique, culturelle et communautaire exceptionnelle.

Nous sommes vivement préoccupés par le fait que la section historique du cimetière soit menacée, alors que des urnes et de nouvelles pierres tombales sont placées directement sur d'anciennes sépultures irlandaises. Ces actions compromettent l'intégrité du cimetière et risquent d'effacer un lieu de mémoire irlando-canadien irremplaçable.

Nous appuyons pleinement les efforts du RCPMI pour préserver ce cimetière et demandons respectueusement à la Ville de Saint-Colomban de lui accorder une désignation patrimoniale officielle afin d'assurer sa protection pour les générations futures.

Cordialement.

Daniel Doyle
President
Association sportive Erin



Resources

Videos

[Bronze Shoes](#)

[John Concannon, Ireland's Ambassador to Canada - Irish Famine Way Bronze Shoes](#)

[Souliers en bronze](#)

[Les histoires irlandaises du cimetière Saint-Colomban](#)

[The Irish Stories of the Saint-Colomban Cemetery](#)

[History of Saint-Colomban Presentation](#)

Historical Studies

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Testimonies

New "Histories of Saint-Colomban Cemetery" Atlas

<https://atlascine.org/en/posts/new-histories-of-saint-colomban-cemetery-atlas/>

Claude Bourguignon: <https://rs-atlascine.concordia.ca/saint-colomban/index.html?module=module.stories&cinemapId=1f73e0b49775583ea97862cb3c0c10e1>



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