

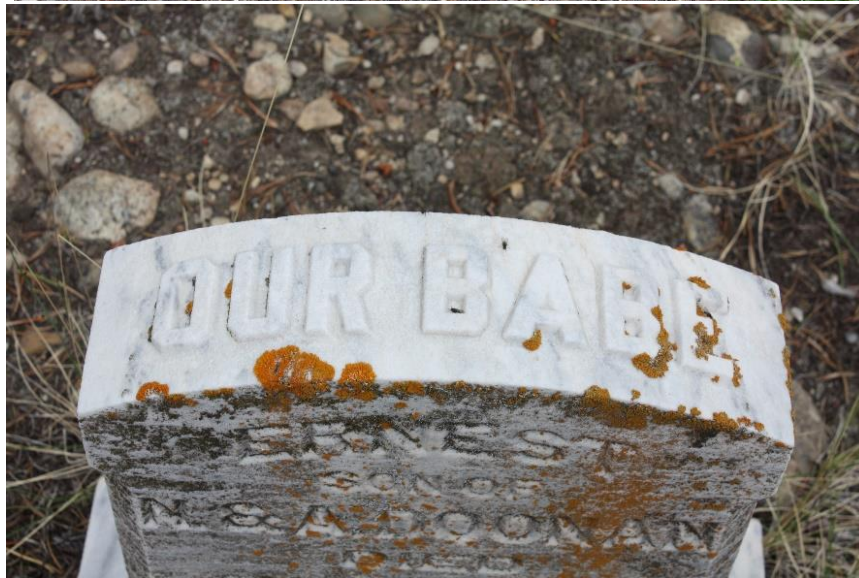
1. Grave of Joseph Sindelbach:

The site of Joseph Sindelbach's grave provides an example of the wooden markers that were provided to those buried in free sections of the cemetery. When the individuals buried in the Catholic Free section died, they or their families did not have the \$15—about a week's wage for a miner—necessary to pay for burial in the regular sections of the cemetery. With their free burial, the deceased received a small wooden plank to mark their graves. These often did not stand the test of time, which is why the majority of graves in the Catholic Free section are now unmarked.



2. Grave of Ernest Doonan:

Ernest Doonan, son of a laborer named Nicholas Doonan, is one of hundreds of infants buried in the Catholic Free section. The stone marker makes the site unique. This gravestone would have been a significant expense for a family living on a laborer's wage. The money spared on the marker and the inscription "OUR BABE" on top of it gives one a sense of the profound sense of loss and tragedy families faced when enduring the death of a child.



3. Block 14 and Infant mortality:

Most of the burials in the Catholic Free section are those of children. Forty five percent of individuals buried here were under the age of three when they died. Block 14 is one of the most densely populated sections of the cemetery and all but two of the people buried here are children and infants. Note the small size of plots in this section. Blocks 4, 11, and 19 are similarly almost entirely comprised of children's graves.



4. Grave of Philip Nash:

Philip Nash, the “Self-Proclaimed King of Leadville,” was a former member of the Molly Maguires, a secret society of Irish coal miners from the anthracite region of Pennsylvania. The group organized in order to combat poor wages and unsafe working conditions. At times, they used violence and intimidation to make their demands heard. The Reading Railroad Company and the Pinkerton Detective Agency investigated the group and brought members of the Molly Maguires to trial beginning in 1876. Many Irish miners, including Nash, fled Pennsylvania to avoid persecution for their involvement in the group.

Nash came to Leadville in 1883 under the alias Philip Frenny. In 1885, Nash and a man named Henry Kirby engaged in a heated verbal confrontation. Kirby murdered Nash by nearly decapitating him with an axe. It was not until after his death that the press reported Nash’s use of an alias and his Molly Maguire past. Nash was one of over a dozen former members who came to Leadville.



5. Grave of Nicola, Joseph, and Louis Prettie

This is the grave site of Nicola, Joseph, and Louis Prettie. Only Nicola Prettie's marker remains, but all three men, who were either brothers or cousins, are buried next to one another. All three men were working in the Colonel Sellers mine on June 2nd, 1882, when it caved in. The Pretties and one other man were killed. The recovery of their bodies took nearly two weeks; based on the condition their bodies were found in, the Pretties likely died instantly. The Pretties belonged to a large family in Leadville—their deaths were likely devastating both financially and emotionally to their kin. This tragic accident represents the dangerous conditions miners faced daily.



6. Grave of Fread Leaning and 19th century grave symbolism

Most tombstones in the Catholic Free section are not as large or ornate as that of Fread Leaning. Leaning's gravestone provides interesting examples of nineteenth century gravestone symbolism. The marker is in the shape of an obelisk. Originally an Egyptian symbol designed to worship the sun gods, the obelisk came to symbolize a divine connection between heaven and earth in cemeteries in western societies. The obelisk is a simpler shape to make, and thus more affordable. Since it is tall and narrow, obelisk-shaped gravestones are also ideal for populated cemeteries, like the Catholic Free section, that lack space for more elaborate markers.

Leaning's marker is also adorned with daffodils, ivy, and sheaths of wheat. The daffodil, and flowers in general, often represent youth and life taken prematurely. For this reason, flowers are also common symbols on the graves of children. Daffodils, ivy, and sheaths of wheat all symbolize resurrection and eternal life, which is indicative of Leaning's Catholic faith. Sheaths of wheat can also represent a long and accomplished life. In the case of Leaning's grave, this is likely not the case since he was only 32 years old when he died.





7. The Flannerys

This is the collective marker for Mary Agnes Flannery, Thomas Flannery, and eight of their fifteen children. Mary and Thomas outlived all eight children buried in Evergreen cemetery. A smallpox epidemic in 1883 claimed the lives of five of the Flannery children. Daniel Flannery (20 years), Mary Agnes Flannery (18 years), Bridget Flannery (12 years), Catherine Flannery (8 years), and Jennie Flannery (1 year). The five Flannery children perished within less than a month from one another.

Several epidemics like this took place in Leadville throughout the 1880s and 1890s. In addition to the smallpox epidemic of 1883, 1887, 1894, and 1897 saw large outbreaks of scarlet fever and measles. City authorities enforced quarantines and, in the case of smallpox, encouraged citizens to receive vaccination. Children experienced the highest rates of illness and death.

Like many of Leadville's miners, the Flannerys were extremely poor. In addition to Leadville's high altitude and harsh winters, impoverished families like the Flannerys faced malnourishment and poor living conditions that made them vulnerable to disease.



8. Border between the Catholic Free and Old Catholic Sections

The Catholic Free section is filled with some of Leadville's poorest citizens. The road at the southern edge of the Catholic Free section comprises part of the border between the Old Catholic section and the Catholic Free section. Looking between the two, it is easy to see which section holds the paupers. Markers are rare in the Catholic Free section, and the graves are tightly packed together. The caretakers of the cemetery used the least amount of resources possible when burying individuals in free sections. One had to pay to be buried in the Old Catholic section. It is clear the individuals buried here had wealth and resources available to them. Many have large markers and spacious family plots. Family plots are much less common in the pauper section. Being transient workers, many of the parents of the children buried in the Catholic Free section left Leadville before they had the chance to be laid to rest next to the young ones they lost. When looking closely, cemeteries can tell one much about the lives of the dead.



The Catholic Free section.



The Old Catholic section.