

Joseph A. Sylvia Jr., former boxer and County register of deeds, at 77

NEW BEDFORD — Joseph A. Sylvia Jr., a former Bristol County Register of deeds who also served as a city councilor and state representative, died yesterday at St. Luke's Hospital after a long illness. He was 77.

Mr. Sylvia, who lived on Dartmouth Street, was the husband of Evelyn (Amerin) Sylvia. He was a communicant of Mount Carmel Church.

He was a lifelong New Bedford resident and was named as register in 1957 to fill the unexpired term of Lawrence W. Caton. He was elected to full, six-year terms in 1958 and in 1964, and retired at age 64 in February 1969.

Mr. Sylvia served as representative of the 7th Bristol District from 1949-1957. He was a city councilor for Ward 5 from 1943-49.

In 1969, then Secretary of State John F. X. Davoren presented Mr. Sylvia with a citation that recognized his years in public service.

As a young man, Mr. Sylvia built a reputation as a flyweight boxer, fighting under the name Young Joe Burke. He worked at the time as a millworker.

Before entering politics, Mr. Sylvia was active in local labor organizations. He served as secretary-treasurer of the Yarn Finishers Union and was president of the New Bedford Textile Council in 1943. He was employed earlier as an agent for the Prudential Insurance Co.

Mr. Sylvia was also a former president of the John S. Mello Memorial Club and the Gem



Joseph A. Sylvia Jr.
Former Register of Deeds

Athletic Club, and was a delegate to the Central Labor Union.

Survivors include his widow; four sons, Richard, Raymond and Ronald, all of New Bedford, and Joseph A. III of Assonet, Freetown; two daughters, Mrs. Elsie Louro and Cynthia E. Sylvia, both of New Bedford; a brother, Manuel of New Bedford; three sisters, Elsie Sylvia, Mrs. Margaret Souza and Mrs. Florence Vasconcellos, all of New Bedford; 12 grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren.

Arrangements are by the Perry Funeral Home, 111 Dartmouth St.