

# EPITAPH

THE FRIENDS OF MOUNT HOPE CEMETERY  
Vol.25 No.2 Spring 2005

## FRIENDS OF MOUNT HOPE CEMETERY CELEBRATE 25 YEARS

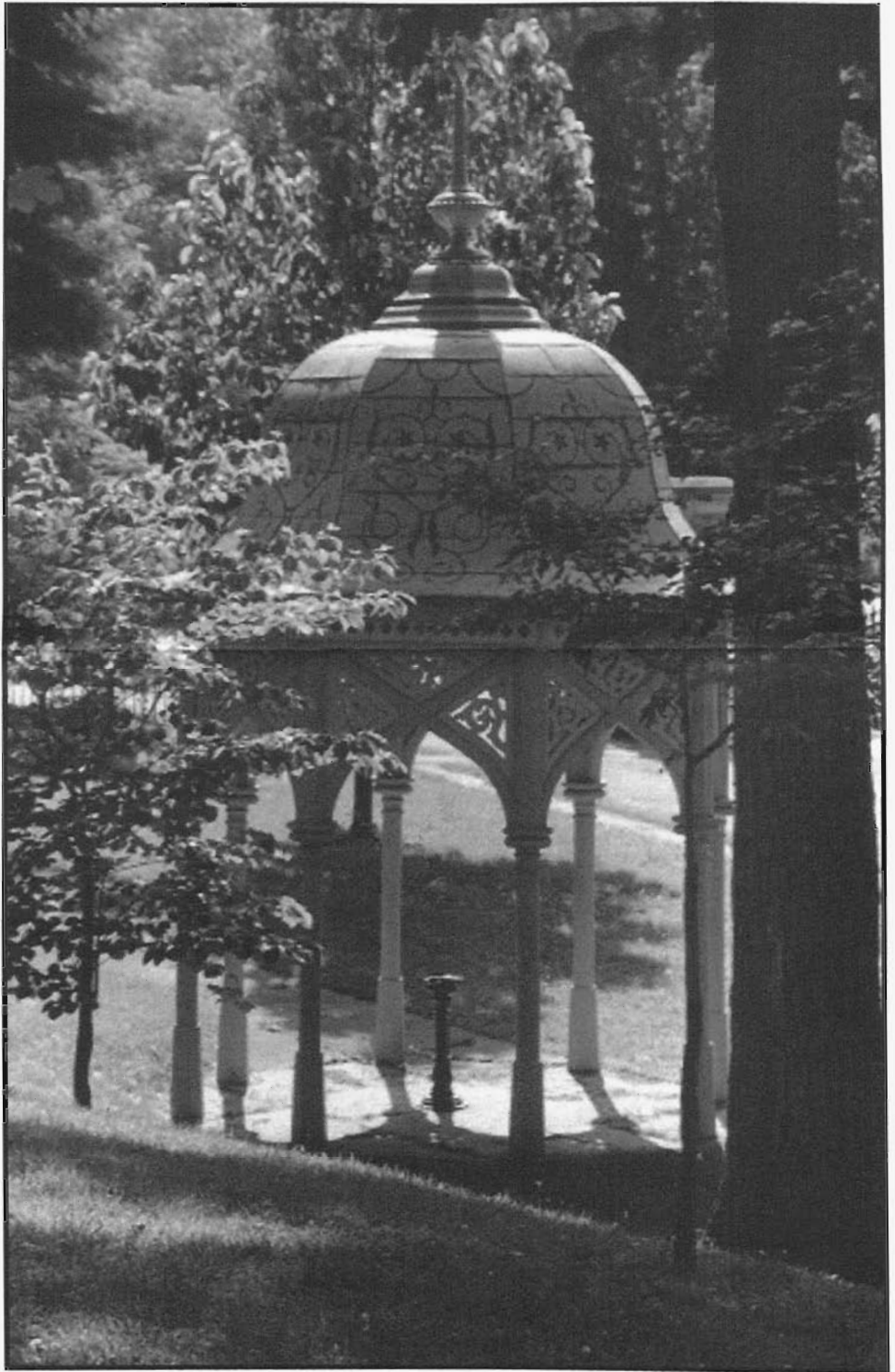
by Richard O. Reisem

(Editor's Note: This is Part 2 of four articles chronologizing the history of the Friends of Mount Hope Cemetery from its beginning in 1980 to the present time. In the Winter 2005 issue, I discussed the events leading up to the beginning of the organization and its initial endeavors.)

### PART TWO: THE GAZEBO PROJECT AND MORE

There was one particularly important event that occurred in 1979 which led to the organization of the Friends of Mount Hope Cemetery. In the fall of that year, a group of us improvisational tour guides gave a tour of the cemetery to New York State's new U.S. senator, Daniel Patrick Moynihan. When he was shown the deteriorating Moorish gazebo, Moynihan remarked, "You know, you folks should get out some hammers and nails and a bucket of paint and restore that gazebo. It's too fine a piece of architecture to let it go like this."

Moynihan's statement was one of several important catalysts that prompted the December 6, 1979 meeting of city officials and cemetery lovers to discuss the formation of a citizen's organization to promote public awareness and use of the cemetery as a park. The gazebo became the first restoration project that the Friends undertook. The organization's first official meeting was held on June 4, 1980 in the old gatehouse at the north entrance to the cemetery on Mount Hope Avenue. The meeting was an event of demonstrated dedication and commitment. It was decided that tour guides would be trained, primarily by Steve Thomas, director emeritus of the Rochester Museum and Science Center. A newsletter was proposed. And fundraising for Moynihan's gazebo project would be pursued.



*Restoration of the Moorish gazebo was suggested by U.S. Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan on a tour of Mount Hope.  
Photo by Frank A. Gillespie.*

By the time the gazebo was restored a few years later, the hammers, nails, and bucket of paint had translated into \$13,000 of professional architectural design, construction, and finishing. We got a \$1,500 challenge grant from the Rochester Area Foundation. The Antiquarian Study Club gave us \$500. Lots of individual gifts, many at the \$100 and \$200 level, poured in, and we paid all the bills with just a few dollars to spare. By October 3, 1982, Heritage Day, the gazebo was handsomely painted in shades of cream and tan (the carefully determined original colors), and an intricate arabesque design had been repainted on the metal roof. Only the finial, which was badly deteriorated, was awaiting replication.

The first real celebration of our founding organization occurred on October 3, 1980. It was the suggestion of our first president, Alma Burner Creek, that we have an annual public event, calling it Heritage Day, to honor the original dedication of the cemetery on October 3, 1838. Each succeeding Heritage Day became a little more elaborate, and by the third year, 1982, when the restored gazebo was unveiled, we had special tours, prizes for the best costumes, a stone-rubbing demonstration (we still permitted them then), music, baked goods, and an open house at the old 1862 chapel where people could view the original early 1900s electric chandeliers and sconces, the quartersawn oak paneling, the crematory retorts, and the holding vault deep under the Indian Trail esker. The Pittsford Carriage Association, with their historic carriages and



*The William Rossiter Seward monument was unveiled in the 1980s after decades of being hidden under vines and bushes.*

*Photo by Frank A. Gillespie*



*Detail of the Seward monument designed by Claude Bragdon and depicting a woman holding an eternal flame, symbolizing eternal life.*

*Photo by Frank A. Gillespie.*

decorated horses, lent their colorful presence. There was a competition for the best photographs of the cemetery and a display of all the entries. The theme for the 1982 event was: "Notable Women."

Another nice thing about that 1982 Heritage Day was that during the summer, there were ten CETA workers, part of the City Conservation Corps, who had spent the entire season cleaning and sprucing up the cemetery to make it particularly beautiful for the fall event. The minor catastrophe of 1982 was that a major section of the cemetery's 85-year-old stone wall along Mount Hope Avenue unceremoniously collapsed and which the city had to replace.

In 1984, Rochester celebrated its sesquicentennial. Dr. Joseph Barnes, city historian and Friends trustee, published a book called

"4 Score and 4 Rochester Portraits 1984." It was a collection of Rochester's people—men and women, rich and poor, famous and infamous. The 84 deceased people, whose portraits and brief biographies appeared in the book, represented the colorful lives that are woven into the fiber of our history. The Friends of Mount Hope turned the "4 Score and 4" portraits into four cemetery walking tours. Joe Barnes and trustee Jack McKinney, who were the principals working on the project, found about half of the 84 people were buried in Mount Hope. They designed the four tours to be manageable walks in four discrete sections of the cemetery.

In November 1984, John C. Clark

III, Friends president, made a personal gift of \$25,000 to restore the 1875 cast-iron

## **EPITAPH**

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*Basic annual membership is \$20. Call (585) 461-3494 for a free pocket guide to Mount Hope Cemetery and a membership application. See our colorful and informative web page: [www.fomh.org](http://www.fomh.org)*

Florentine Fountain in the north entrance area. Architectural Iron Company of Millford, Pennsylvania, undertook the restoration. They removed 22 layers of paint to reveal badly deteriorated iron parts, which largely needed to be recast. The city of Rochester contributed matching funds to run a new water line to the fountain, repair the basin, and install a new pump system. Rededication of the restored fountain occurred on July 28, 1985.

Despite the gladness brought from the fountain restoration, 1985 was otherwise a particularly sad year for the Friends of Mount Hope. On February 7, Alma Burner Creek—Friends organizer, first president, editor of our newsletter, tour guide, and the person who introduced Heritage Day—died after a long brave fight with cancer. Then, on May 17, one of our founders, honorary president, and eloquent spokesman for our group, Dr. Rowland Collins died. I remember a speech given by Rowland that was so moving and wonderfully expressive that it made me weep. Oh, to write like that, I thought. And at the time, I was a speechwriter myself. Alma was 39 years old, and Rowland was 50. A bright spot in 1985, perhaps, was the planting on Arbor Day of seven trees donated by Genesee Valley Finger Lakes Nurserymen's Association. The trees included crabapple, Kentucky coffee, and oak.

It was also around this time that another Friends trustee, Carolyn Swanton, on a determined search for the gravesite of William Rossiter Seward (1834-1926), finally found it, after a number of trips and severe cases of poison ivy, on the steep slope in Section F. The monument, fully six feet high, was completely covered with vines and forsythia bushes, not to mention the poison ivy. It was a monumental (pun intended) discovery, because Seward's beautiful Art Deco granite memorial was created by the famous Rochester architect and designer, Claude Bragdon. It is a fine stone bas relief depicting a woman holding an eternal flame. Rossiter was a prominent banker and philanthropist who financed the construction of Dr. Algernon Crapsey's "Brotherhood House" after the Episcopal parish priest was accused of heresy and excommunicated. The reason: Crapsey believed the Bible should not be interpreted literally. That was 1906. Dr. Crapsey's enlightenment appears to have eluded much of American society even today, almost 100 years later, when his arguments are more compelling than ever.

## THE TRAGIC STORY OF DONALD MANN

by Rachel Slater

It is continually said in our society that parents should never have to bury their own child. The sudden and early death of one's child defies the natural proceedings of human life in which children are intended to bury their deceased parents. The death of Donald Mann is one such instance of the unnatural early death of a child. In order to understand the death of Donald, perhaps we should first examine his life and family.

Donald Mann was born in 1850, the eldest son of Jane Caroline Parker Mann and Alexander Mann. He was born in Monroe County in 1850 and was joined by a younger brother, John Parker Mann, two years later. Both boys were the grandsons of John Goldsbury Parker, a merchant in Sackets Harbor, New York, on Lake Ontario. Together with his brother Reuben, John G. Parker owned and operated a steamboat line doing a lot of business in Canada. A member of reform-oriented Niagara Presbyterian Church, Parker was an enthusiastic dispenser of reform principles. John Parker's liberal views in addition to his friendship with Canadian reform politician, William Lyon McKenzie, caused John to be noted as a troublemaker by British authorities. At the

time, McKenzie was organizing a bid for democratic self rule and unification of Upper and Lower Canada. When McKenzie's 1837 uprising began, the British arrested John Parker and held him without trial. After being taken to Fort Henry at Kingston, Parker joined in an escape attempt with John Montgomery, who had been sentenced to death for treason. The inmates made their way down a 28-foot wall, separating in the night. John Parker was recaptured by a corporal of the 83rd Regiment, who is said to have refused a \$900 offer by Parker to let him go.

According to his own diary, Parker was transported to Quebec, bound hand and foot, where he was charged with treason and shipped to England. When his case was reviewed, it was determined that Parker had not actively participated in the rebellion against England but had simply shown support for those who wanted to see democracy implemented in Canada. He insisted that he never had any intention to see the overthrow of the legal authority in Upper Canada. Parker was released on a writ of habeas corpus, after the

court ruled his imprisonment was illegal, and he settled in Rochester, New York, where his wife, Jane, had taken the family after his 1838 arrest.

John Parker's fourth child, Jane Caroline, who became Donald's mother, went by her middle name, Caroline, to avoid confusion with her mother. While in Rochester, Caroline met and married local resident, Alexander Mann. The exact date of the couple's marriage



The front face of Donald Mann's tombstone in Section G, Lot 62.

Photo by Frank A. Gillespie.

is not known, but occurred prior to the 1850 U.S. Census, at which point Caroline and Alexander Mann were living in the home of Caroline's father, John Parker.

Alexander, along with his brother, the Reverend Donald C. Mann, co-founded the *Rochester Daily American*, a local newspaper. Alexander Mann was editor and proprietor; his office was located in the American Building across Main Street from the Arcade. Other principals in the firm were Daniel Lee and Chester P. Dewey. In addition to the *Rochester Daily American*, the firm of Lee, Mann, and Company published the *Rochester Tri Weekly American* and the *Rochester Weekly American*. Later, the papers were consolidated with the *Rochester Democrat and Chronicle*.

Caroline Mann also served as an editor in Rochester, heading the *Journal for the Home*. This monthly paper published by the Rochester Home for the Friendless reported the activities of the home and appealed for public assistance. Founded in 1849, the Rochester Home for the Friendless was originally designed to provide a temporary home for women coming to the city to seek employment. It was originally located on Edinburgh Street, but due to high occupancy, the Home for the Friendless relocated to East Avenue, at which point children began to be accepted in the home, and a day school was established. Later, in 1859, the organization's constitution was amended, and it became a permanent home for aged women. Residents of the home, or inmates as they were sometimes called, paid a sum of money in proportion to their age and ability and in return were provided with care for the rest of their lives, including a "Christian burial" in plots that the home owned in Mount Hope Cemetery.

In addition to serving as editor of the paper he founded, Alexander Mann was named, in February 1853, to a committee investigating the cause of diseases in the city. A short time later, in April 1856, Mann became ill with a serious case of pleurisy. Following his recovery in early 1858, he joined the editorial staff of the *New York Times*, and the family relocated to New York City. This move forced Caroline Mann to resign her position as editor of the *Journal for the Home*, which she had

held since its commencement in September 1857. In the February 1858 issue, she gave the following valedictory:

"My connection with the *Journal of the Home* as editress ceases with the present number, owing to removal from the city. Six months ago, I was designated by the partiality of the lady managers to conduct, in their behalf, this little sheet, a trust which has been

tance with Mrs. Mann as an editress was brief, but the remembrance of it will be enduring. When any of us were doubtful with success, her hopeful spirit ever inspired us with confidence, and while some were disposed to treat this little paper with contempt, we are entirely indebted to her superior abilities for its present respectable position, and we shall ever remember her for her own sake as the inspiring genius of our infant enterprise."

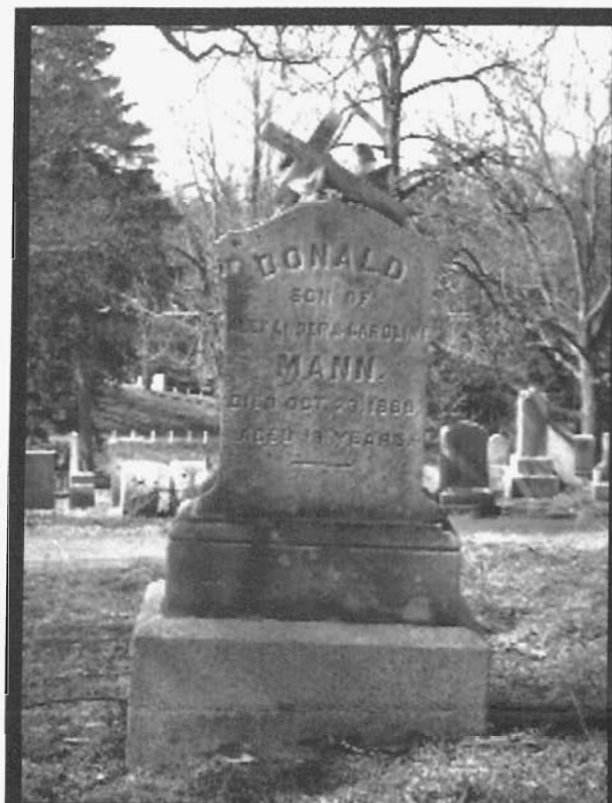
This statement of thanks by the Home for the Friendless reveals that Caroline Mann was a persistent individual who was dedicated to the publication that was considered meaningless by some. She was dedicated to informing citizens of the happenings of the benevolent institution and furthering its mission in Rochester. Sadly, due to Alexander Mann's acceptance of the position at the *New York Times*, she had to leave Rochester and the publication that she so dearly loved.

While in New York City, the 1860 New York State Census lists the residence of the Manns on 18 West Street in the Fourth District. Shortly after, Alexander Mann again became ill and the family relocated to St. Augustine, Florida in the hope that the southern climate would assist in his recovery. Mann, who was 48 years old at the time, denoted his occupation as a farmer. The value of his real estate was listed at \$600, and the value of his personal estate was listed at \$500 (1860 U.S. Census).

Although Mann enjoyed the agrarian lifestyle, tending a small patch of land as he recovered from his illness, in a letter to friends at the *Union and Advertiser*, he stated how he longed for his favorite employment. He craved to return to journalism in a northern city following his recovery. He wrote in September 1860:

"This superb climate has made a new man out of me, physically—wiping out all vestiges of my illness of four years ago. But the climate is the chief attraction here. It is a poor country—good for gardening and fruit growing, but possessing no enterprise, life, or activity. My affections begin to travel north again."

In a second letter written in October of that same year, Mann restated his desire for a return to the North: "I do not intend to stay here much longer. The climate has done me a great good—so great perhaps as I can reason-



*The back face of Donald Mann's tombstone in Section G, Lot 62.*

*Photo by Frank A. Gillespie.*

rendered most pleasant to me by their friendly continence and kindly aid. My thanks are cordially tendered to them, individually and collectively, and to those who have so greatly assisted with their welcome contributions. The editorial charge of the *Journal* has been indeed a labor of love, and did circumstances permit, most gladly would I continue it. May I hope that the paper has not altogether failed its mission? But I may not multiply words. The sadness of parting with the patrons of the paper is mitigated by the pleasure with which I introduce my successor."

Caroline Mann continued on to name her successor as Mrs. Robinson, the wife of University of Rochester Professor Robinson. Additionally, the paper lauded Caroline on her leadership and success as editor: "Our acquaint-

ably expect, and I crave the activity and congenial pursuits of the North.”

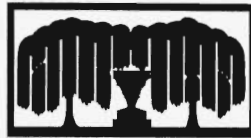
Sadly, Alexander Mann would not see his beloved North again, as he died from a stroke on December 6, 1860 at the age of 49 years. Following his death, Caroline and her two sons, Donald and John Parker, returned north to Rochester. At the time of their father’s death, John Parker was eight years old and Donald was just ten. Little is known about the activities of the family when they returned to the city. The residence of the Manns at this time is also not known, because no census was conducted during the short time they were residing in Rochester.

In the years while living in the city, Caroline met and made the acquaintance of Isaac Hills. Then, in 1863, at a ceremony held in her father’s New Jersey home, Caroline married the former Rochester mayor and prominent lawyer. A considerable age difference existed between Caroline and Isaac; she was 39 years old and he was 65 at the time of their marriage. Caroline and Isaac Hills lived in the city in the early 1870s, and the Rochester City Directory lists their residence as 7 Plymouth Avenue. Isaac Hills continued his career and with great success as the 1870 U.S. Census reported. The value of his real estate was \$18,000, and the value of his personal property was \$40,000. This amount of money was in sharp contrast to the meager salary that Alexander Mann earned while married to Caroline. In addition to being mayor of the city in 1843, Hills assisted in the preparation of the first city charter. He served as the first attorney of Rochester Savings Bank from 1859-1861, where it is presumed he accumulated a considerable amount of his wealth. In 1861, Hills served as the first vice-president of the Rochester Historical Society. While in Rochester, Caroline Hills returned to editing the *Journal of the Home* with the May 1872 issue. She actually offered her services as editor after the previous editor fell ill, which served as further indication of her willingness and dedication to the benevolent institution.

Caroline’s son, Donald, is presumed to have lived with his mother, brother, and stepfather in Rochester until his departure for college. While attending the University of Vermont, Donald suddenly committed suicide by hanging himself in October 1869. An article in the *Burlington Free Press* recounts the details of the suicide. He was last seen by his friends on a Saturday afternoon, and when he

was absent from recitation on Monday morning, it was assumed he had gone out of town. By Tuesday morning, he was still unaccounted for and the door of his room was broken open by order of the president of the college. Donald’s lifeless body was found on the floor of his room.

When Donald was seen by his college mates on that Saturday afternoon, nothing unusual was noted about him. At the time, a friend had asked him to join a game of croquet, but Donald simply replied that he “felt pretty bad.” Donald was also absent that evening from a meeting of the College Society of which he was a member. A fellow student on Donald’s dormitory floor heard him enter his room around eleven that night, at which point the paper surmised that Donald immediately set to work at taking his own life. The paper reported, “It seems probable that immediately after entering his room Saturday evening, taking off his coat and one boot, he proceeded to the work of self destruction.”



From an examination of his room, the manner in which Donald killed himself was quickly deduced. The newspaper reported: “Taking a bedsheet he had wrapped the most of it tightly round a stick about two feet long, put one end of the sheet in a noose, and standing on a chair, he had thrust the stick between the upper panel of the door and the casing, drawing the sheet over the upper edge of the door, then kicking away the chair, the weight of his body instantly closing the door fast upon the sheet, while the stick prevented it from being drawn out, and the noose did its fatal work.”

No evident reason was given for Donald’s suicide. He was noted as having an epileptic fit during his freshman year, but that occurrence seemed unrelated to the tragedy at hand. He was noted as a bright, intelligent young man and reported by one student as being “a little odd in some of his ways, but of a cheerful disposition and a good scholar.” His death, especially due to the manner in which it occurred, was felt throughout the university and among those who knew him in the community.

A telegram was sent from Burlington, VT to the family in Rochester, who surely

responded with shock at the tragic news. As the newspaper article stated, “Nothing perhaps will ever be known of the reasons that caused this melancholy suicide.” One can hypothesize that the stress of being at college and away from his family contributed to his despondency. Additionally, the combination between the early death of his father and the remarriage of his mother may have had a negative impact on the young teenager’s life. Although one may theorize about the reasons for Donald’s actions, the true rationale was only known to him.

Donald’s younger brother, John Parker Mann, remained closer to home for his college career. He studied at the University of Rochester and later at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris. He married Julia Mullany of Nantucket on June 29, 1884 and spent several years painting in Europe, followed by work in Washington, D.C. as a landscape painter. From 1899 to 1906, he lived and worked in New York City. By 1910, John Parker had left New York City and established art studios in Princeton, New Jersey and Arkville, New York. He became a member of the Hudson River School of painters and led a relatively quiet life. John Parker Mann died in 1918, but his place of burial is unknown.

Caroline Mann Hills, following Isaac Hills’ death in 1881, was involved in an intense legal struggle to retain control of the estate as guardian for her son. Successful in this battle, Caroline and Isaac Hills, Jr., her only child by her late husband, invested their money in vacation rental cottages on Nantucket. The U.S. entry into the first World War dried up the tourist trade to the island, creating financial ruin for Caroline and her son. The bad business venture cost Caroline the fortune for which she had fought so hard. Caroline died in Nantucket in 1922, outliving both of her husbands, both sons from her first marriage, and all of her brothers and sisters. She passed away at the age of 97 years. The cause of death listed in the Mount Hope Cemetery interment records was arteriosclerosis. Although she died in Nantucket, interment was at Mount Hope Cemetery on March 7, 1922. Her gravesite is in the same lot, Section G, Lot 62, as that of her son, Donald Mann. No stone, however, currently exists at her burial site.

Lot 62 in Section G lies at the top of several steep stone stairs. There is a lone tombstone for Donald Mann. The solitary marble

monument stands by itself, in sharp contrast to the family plot of his stepfather, which lies directly to the left. Donald's small marble tombstone stands about three feet high. Climbing the stairs to observe the stone, one is greeted by the name "Donald" encircled by a wreath of stone flowers. In addition to adorning Donald's name, the wreath of carved tulips and morning glories has symbolic purpose as well. The garland is symbolic of victory over death. The morning glories are symbolic of youth and the brevity of life. The tulips are considered to be a symbol of love.

Lying across the top of the stone is a small marble cross, a lily, and a rose. Donald's uncle, for whom he was named, was a Presbyterian minister, so Christian ideals may have been instilled in Donald from a young age. The emblem of Christian faith lies on top of a blooming rose and lily. The lily is a Christian symbol for purity which is appropriate considering Donald's early and sudden death. He was a young man just beginning his college career, in the prime of his life. Additionally, the lily is representative of rebirth, which could have been the hope of his mourning mother. Donald's life may have been unhappy and brief in this world, but Caroline may have held the Christian notion that Donald was happier in his eternal life. The rose is also symbolically appropriate as it represents purity and triumphant love. Surely, Donald was loved by his mother who was undoubtedly shocked with the sudden news of her son's suicide. The rose is also considered to be symbolic of beauty combined with pain. The beauty of Donald's life was not without the thorns of emotional distress. As happy as Donald's life may have appeared on the surface, he may have had deeper feelings of misery.

The use of flowers on the stone ties into the association with the life of a plant to that of man's life. We are born into this world, blossom, and eventually wither like plants. In accordance with Christian belief this metaphor goes even further to say that just as flowers and plants blossom again in spring, so too will believers in Christ be reborn to eternal life. It is interesting to note that the flowers on Donald's stone appear to be in full bloom, much as his life was at the time of his death. He, like a flower, was blossoming into adulthood when his life was cut tragically short.

At the base of the stone an inscription reads: "Very pleasant hast thou been unto me."

This phrase is an excerpt from Samuel II, Chapter 1, Verse 26. The full text of the verse reads: "I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan; very pleasant hast thou been unto me; thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women." Due to the familial relationship in the Biblical text, the most likely candidate for placing the inscription on Donald's stone was his younger brother, John Parker Mann.

The back side of the stone bears the following inscription:

DONALD  
SON OF  
ALEXANDER AND CAROLINE  
MANN  
DIED OCTOBER 23, 1869  
AGED 19 YEARS

Donald's early death is proclaimed through the inscription of his age making one wonder what tragedy led to his early demise. Donald Mann's tombstone in Mount Hope Cemetery stands alone, perhaps reflective of his feelings of solitude in life. When a young adult commits suicide one can only speculate as to what led the individual to such extreme action. By examining the life of Donald Mann and those of his parents, one is still left wondering what led the young man to take his own life.

(Editor's Note: Rachel Slater is a student at the University of Rochester. She prepared this essay as part of the requirements for the course, Religion 167: Speaking Stones, taught by Professor Emil Homerin, who is also a trustee of the Friends of Mount Hope Cemetery.)

## JOHN CHURCH AND HIS FATHER, MOTHER, AND SISTER IN THEIR ECCENTRIC PLOT

by Gordon Chang

Often dismissed by the misinformed public, cemeteries are a direct link to the past: documented, cherished, or forgotten. For such a small family as the Churches, unfortunately, documentation is quite rare, especially for the first three to pass away: sister, father, and mother. John R. Church, the last to be laid to rest, however, held the key to unlocking the

mystery of how such an eccentric memorial could have been chosen for such a seemingly ordinary family.

To describe the Church plot, the word "eccentric" is not just a subjective term, for, compared to its surrounding stones, the centerpiece of the plot might be considered a misplaced eyesore. But this is what caught my eye at first; among a row of crosses and plain stones, there stood an almost phallic monument. There seemed to be nothing Victorian about it, nor were there any religious references or epitaphs. Wrapped around this overgrown thimble is the name of the family, Church. Clearly engraved on the stones are the names of the family members, their birth and death dates, and their relation to John.

After searching through census records and comparing them with other sources, I concluded that Rudolph and Marie Church both immigrated to the United States between 1850 and 1854 from Switzerland. Concerning the surname "Church," not being of Swiss origin, one can infer that they changed their family name either out of convenience or in order to fit in more comfortably with other Americans. According to *The Industries of the City of Rochester*, they gave birth to their son, John, in the Niagara region in 1854. Mary came later on September 12, 1856. Rudolph was first found in the Rochester directories in 1869, when they lived in a small house on Vincent Place.

As a result, the family did not appear in the Rochester census until 1870, when Marie kept house while Rudolph worked for one of the local shoe factories as a last maker. A shoe last is the solid form around which a shoe is molded, and it requires anatomical information of the foot; this was a precision craft that required much skill. Mary was attending school at age 15 while John was a clerk at a furniture store at age 16. The family was, by now, living at 204 Monroe Avenue, which changed to 345 Monroe Avenue by 1875 as Rochester became more populous.

John climbed the ranks of furnishing hierarchy to become a carpenter ten years later (1880 census). Unfortunately, his sister had passed away at age 20 in 1877 from tuberculosis or consumption as they called it then, and his father was nowhere to be found in Rochester. Much to my dismay, the next and final entry in Rudolph's life was his Mount Hope Cemetery interment record. He passed

away in 1884 in New York City, also from tuberculosis, and was buried on November 5. Marie, John's mother (sometimes spelled Mary or Maria) died of carcinoma at age 65, three years later while keeping home for John when he was putting his carpentry drafting skills to better use. Over the next five years, he secured a reputation as one of Rochester's leading architects of his time, designing the premier hotel of the early 1900s and beating out 121 architects in a nationwide contest for his concept of a tornado fall-out shelter, an idea that earned him \$200.

John did not marry and had no survivors. During the last years of his life, he was part of a committee that inspected public buildings for safety concerns. He was honored with this position due to the ingenious designs of his building projects. Unfortunately, John did not live to see the completion of his final project, the Hayward Hotel, which opened in 1913 on Clinton Avenue South near Main Street. The Hayward went on to become a music and dance haven for the era after the first World War. Carl Dengler, a Rochester native, who presented a nationally broadcast radio program was also a band-leader for the Peacock Room in the Hayward. He was a close associate of the famous composers, Alec Wilder and Howard Hanson, as well as many other local and nationally prominent musicians of the time. Hard times fell on the Hayward during the Great Depression, however, as patron participation stretched thin, and so did funding. The building was poorly maintained and as a result, began to crumble. It was demolished in 1947.

According to *The Industries of the City of Rochester* directory, John R. Church was an innovative architect who created designs with a modern style. It is no wonder, then, that the monument he chose for his family was one that took some imagina-



*The eccentric monuments constituting the Church plot are in Range 1, Section 253, designed by architect John R. Church. Photo by Frank A. Gillespie.*



*The headstone of architect John R. Church, who designed the other Church family monuments, is particularly simple and straightforward, obviously not designed by the innovative architect himself. Photo by Frank A. Gillespie.*

tion to understand. The centerpiece for his family plot, as mentioned, is one that seems to carry no traditional symbolism. There is the presence of a rose motif, a belt of roses around the top, which signify unending love, beauty,

hope, heavenly joy, and happiness. The two roses on the shaft of the monument may be directed to the two people with whom John was the closest. One would definitely be for his mother, although it is unclear whether his father (who apparently traveled a lot later in his life) or his sister (who died young and was in school during her teenage years) was closer to him. The first object to which I could liken this monument is a grain silo. As awkward and irrelevant a reference as this may seem, after much thought, I realized that John may have been on to something. Silos were designed to store grain over time. Grain was harvested in bulk and placed in a silo for future use. John may have taken the Victorian symbol of a sheaf of wheat, which symbolizes God's harvest, a step further. Also note that the headstones for his family members resemble loaves of bread. I interpret this "silo" and "bread loaves" as representing the culmination of the entire family's accomplishments, and the nurturing that John may have gained from their lives that led to his own success.

(Editor's Note: Gordon Chang is a student at the University of Rochester and prepared this essay as part of the requirements for a course, Religion 167: Speaking Stones, taught by Professor Emil Homerin, who is also a trustee of the Friends of Mount Hope Cemetery.)

**MARK SEPTEMBER 17  
ON YOUR CALENDAR  
FOR FRIENDS 25TH  
ANNIVERSARY  
VICTORIAN PICNIC**

*by Richard O. Reisem*

As a reader of this newsletter, you have become aware that 2005 is the 25th anniversary of the Friends of Mount Hope Cemetery, so this is a year of special importance, and we are planning a series of interesting events to celebrate this milestone. The highlight of the year will be a Victorian picnic in Mount Hope Cemetery on Saturday, September 17. Save the date by marking it on your calendar right now. You can bring your own picnic basket or order a box lunch for the event.

Mount Hope was Rochester's first park. In the years following the opening of the cemetery in 1838, Rochesterians flocked to the cemetery on weekends for picnics, carriage rides, and walks in their new and beautiful cemetery/park. The Friends of Mount Hope Cemetery are reinstating that 19th-century custom, but with some 21st-century twists.

We are planning, among other ideas, to present the following on September 17:

- Historic horse-drawn carriages for 19-century color and rides
- Actors in costume playing the parts of Rochester's famous departed citizens
- Brief walking tours to significant burial sites
- Show Wagon with music and entertainment
- A Friends of Mount Hope Cemetery tent with information, maps, literature, and merchandise
- An exhibit in the gatehouse of Friends' discoveries made in the last 25 years
- Free computer search for gravesite locations of friends and family members
- Display of photo contest entries and winners from submittals by RIT photography students
- A formal program with dignitaries, musicians, historic readings—each element of which will be introduced by ringing the great bell in the gatehouse tower
- And more

Bring your friends. Bring the whole family.



**MISSION STATEMENT**

**The purpose of the Friends of Mount Hope Cemetery is to optimize the cemetery's potential as a cultural resource through education, preservation, and promotion of Mount Hope Cemetery's unique heritage.**



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