S.I. - Vanderbilt Mausoleum
Cemetery, Moravian
Cemetery

LP-1208

LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

BUILDING ✓ Vanderbilt Mausoleum CALENDAR NO. #5

FOR DESIGNATION AS A LANDMARK ___ AGAINST DESIGNATION AS A LANDMARK ✓

REQUEST FOR CONTINUATION OF THE ITEM _____

_____

NAME Rev. G. Howard Hausman

ADDRESS 1256 Todt Hill Rd

REPRESENTING New Dorp Moravian Church & Cemetery

ADDRESS Same

_____

The top of this form goes to the Chairman of the meeting

Retain this part of the form and present it to the person at the speaker's table when you come forward to address the Commission.

BUILDING Vanderbilt Mausoleum CALENDAR NO. #5

FOR DESIGNATION AS A LANDMARK _____ AGAINST DESIGNATION AS A LANDMARK ✓

REQUEST FOR CONTINUATION OF THE ITEM _____

NAME Rev E. H. Hoysradt

REPRESENTING New Dorp Moravian Church & Cemetery

LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

BUILDING Vanderbilt Mausoleum CALENDAR NO. 5

FOR DESIGNATION AS A LANDMARK ✓ AGAINST DESIGNATION AS A LANDMARK _____

REQUEST FOR CONTINUATION OF THE ITEM _____

_____

NAME Mitchell A. Grubler

ADDRESS 165 St. Marks Pl. SI.

REPRESENTING Preservation league of SI.

ADDRESS P.O Box 32 S.I. NY. 10301

_____

The top of this form goes to the Chairman of the meeting

Retain this part of the form and present it to the person at the speaker's table when you come forward to address the Commission.

BUILDING Vanderbilt Mausoleum CALENDAR NO. 3

FOR DESIGNATION AS A LANDMARK ✓ AGAINST DESIGNATION AS A LANDMARK ___

REQUEST FOR CONTINUATION OF THE ITEM ___

NAME Mitchell A Grubler

REPRESENTING Preservation league of SI

LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

BUILDING VANDERBILT MANSION CALENDAR NO. 5

FOR DESIGNATION AS A LANDMARK ___ AGAINST DESIGNATION AS A LANDMARK ✓

REQUEST FOR CONTINUATION OF THE ITEM _____

NAME JAMES A BEHA II

ADDRESS 30 Rockefeller Plaza

REPRESENTING trustees for care of property

ADDRESS (Morgan Guaranty

N.Y.C.)

The top of this form goes to the Chairman of the meeting

LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

BUILDING Vanderbilt Mausoleum CALENDAR NO. ~~4~~ 5

FOR DESIGNATION AS A LANDMARK ✓ AGAINST DESIGNATION AS A LANDMARK ____

REQUEST FOR CONTINUATION OF THE ITEM ____

NAME Terence H. Benbow

ADDRESS 245 Benedict Rd. Staten Island NY 10304

REPRESENTING ____

ADDRESS ____

The top of this form goes to the Chairman of the meeting

LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

(5)

BUILDING Vanderbilt Mausoleum CALENDAR NO. ~~LP 1208~~

FOR DESIGNATION AS A LANDMARK ✓ AGAINST DESIGNATION AS A LANDMARK _____

REQUEST FOR CONTINUATION OF THE ITEM _____

_____

NAME Mrs. Gordon Roberts

ADDRESS 710 Bay Street

REPRESENTING Preservation League of Staten Island

ADDRESS _____ (Board Member)

_____

The top of this form goes to the Chairman of the meeting

LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

BUILDING Van. Mausden CALENDAR NO. 4

FOR DESIGNATION AS A LANDMARK ✓ AGAINST DESIGNATION AS A LANDMARK _____

REQUEST FOR CONTINUATION OF THE ITEM _____

_____

NAME Lorna Nowve

ADDRESS _____

REPRESENTING Municipal Art Society

ADDRESS 457 Mad

_____

The top of this form goes to the Chairman of the meeting

Retain this part of the form and present it to the person at the speaker's table when you come forward to address the Commission.

BUILDING Vanderbilt Mausoleum CALENDAR NO. 4

FOR DESIGNATION AS A LANDMARK _____ AGAINST DESIGNATION AS A LANDMARK ✓

REQUEST FOR CONTINUATION OF THE ITEM _____

NAME C. A. Anderholm

REPRESENTING United Brethren Church

New Dorp, Staten Island

LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

BUILDING Vanderbilt Mausoleum CALENDAR NO. 4

FOR DESIGNATION AS A LANDMARK ___ AGAINST DESIGNATION AS A LANDMARK ✓

REQUEST FOR CONTINUATION OF THE ITEM _____

NAME C. A. Soderholm

ADDRESS 94 Russell St, S.I., N.Y. 10308

REPRESENTING United Brethren Church

ADDRESS Box 35, New Dorp, S.I., N.Y. 10306

The top of this form goes to the Chairman of the meeting

Retain this part of the form and present it to the person at the speaker's table when you come forward to address the Commission.

BUILDING Vanderbilt Mansion CALENDAR NO. No 4

FOR DESIGNATION AS A LANDMARK _____ AGAINST DESIGNATION AS A LANDMARK X

REQUEST FOR CONTINUATION OF THE ITEM _____

NAME Rev. E. Howard Hausman

REPRESENTING United Brethren Church

LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

BUILDING Vanderbilt Mausoleum CALENDAR NO. No 4

FOR DESIGNATION AS A LANDMARK ___ AGAINST DESIGNATION AS A LANDMARK X

REQUEST FOR CONTINUATION OF THE ITEM _____

NAME Rev E. Howard Housman

ADDRESS Box 35 New Dorp Staten Island, N.Y. 10306

REPRESENTING United Brethren Church

ADDRESS Same as above

The top of this form goes to the Chairman of the meeting

Retain this part of the form and present it to the person at the speaker's table when you come forward to address the Commission.

BUILDING Vanderbilt Law. CALENDAR NO. 4

FOR DESIGNATION AS A LANDMARK ✓ AGAINST DESIGNATION AS A LANDMARK ___

REQUEST FOR CONTINUATION OF THE ITEM ___

NAME Lorna Nowvé

REPRESENTING Municipal Art Society

LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

BUILDING Vanderbilt Mansion CALENDAR NO. 4

FOR DESIGNATION AS A LANDMARK ✓ AGAINST DESIGNATION AS A LANDMARK _____

REQUEST FOR CONTINUATION OF THE ITEM _____

_____

NAME Gordon Robert

ADDRESS 710 Bay Street Staten Island

REPRESENTING Preservation League of Staten Island

ADDRESS _____

_____

The top of this form goes to the Chairman of the meeting

Retain this part of the form and present it to the person at the speaker's table when you come forward to address the Commission.

BUILDING Navinia Harbor CALENDAR NO. 5

FOR DESIGNATION AS A LANDMARK ✓ AGAINST DESIGNATION AS A LANDMARK ___

REQUEST FOR CONTINUATION OF THE ITEM _____

NAME Gavin Roberts

REPRESENTING Preservation League of Staten Island

LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

BUILDING Vanderbilt Mausoleum CALENDAR NO. 4

FOR DESIGNATION AS A LANDMARK ✓ AGAINST DESIGNATION AS A LANDMARK ____

REQUEST FOR CONTINUATION OF THE ITEM ____

NAME Mrs. Gordon Robuste

ADDRESS 710 Bay Street

REPRESENTING Staten Island Preservation (Brand Monka)

ADDRESS Staten Island Museum

The top of this form goes to the Chairman of the meeting

Retain this part o
at the speaker's t
Commission.

BUILDING Manhattan's Hank
& The 7 Days A

FOR DESIGNATION AS A LANDMARK

REQUEST FOR CONTINUATION OF TH

NAME Mr. Gordon

REPRESENTING Staten

~~Board Member of~~
Committee

Retain this part of the
at the speaker's table
Commission.

BUILDING VANO MAS.

FOR DESIGNATION AS A LANDMARK

REQUEST FOR CONTINUATION OF THE ITEM

NAME JABeha

REPRESENTING trustee

LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

BUILDING Maundales CALENDAR NO. 4

FOR DESIGNATION AS A LANDMARK X AGAINST DESIGNATION AS A LANDMARK _____

REQUEST FOR CONTINUATION OF THE ITEM _____

_____

NAME Margot Gayle

ADDRESS 239 E - 87

REPRESENTING Victorian Society

ADDRESS same

_____

The top of this form goes to the Chairman of the meeting

Retain this part of the form and present it to the person at the speaker's table when you come forward to address the Commission.

BUILDING Tavern on the Green CALENDAR NO. 4

FOR DESIGNATION AS A LANDMARK X AGAINST DESIGNATION AS A LANDMARK ___

REQUEST FOR CONTINUATION OF THE ITEM _____

NAME Margot Gayle

REPRESENTING 235 E. 87
Victorian Society

# NATIONAL ASSOCIATION for OLMSTED PARKS

175 FIFTH AVENUE • THE FLATIRON BUILDING • NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10010
TELEPHONE: (212) 260-8503 (212) 254-0809



RECEIVED
OCT 30 1980
LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION


October 28, 1980

Mr. Kent Barwick,
Chairman
Landmarks Preservation Commission
305 Broadway
New York, NY 10007

Dear Kent:

We wish to be on record as favoring the designation of the Vanderbilt Mausoleum on Staten Island as an Historic Landmark.

We have made an independent assessment of the situation there and are in agreement with the more detailed comments you have received from Richard Heath in Boston. We support his findings and point of view.

Sincerely yours,

Alexander W. Allport
Executive Director

AWA/s
CC: Richard Heath

LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

305 BROADWAY, NEW YORK, N. Y. 10007

October 10, 1980

Reverend E. Howard Houseman
Moravian Church Parsonage
1256 Todt Hill Road
Staten Island, New York 10304

Re: Vanderbilt Mausoleum & Cemetery
Moravian Cemetery
Tax Map Block 934, Lot 250 in part

Dear Rev. Houseman:

On Tuesday, November 18, 1980, at 10:30 A.M. in the Board of Estimate Chambers at City Hall, the Landmarks Preservation Commission will consider the designation of the above named site.

The Commission has written to the Community Board and the representative owners of the site under consideration. If you would like to submit a statement about the proposed designation, we would read your message into the record that day.

The Commission appreciates your interest in its work.

Sincerely,

Lenore Norman

Lenore Norman
Executive Director

LN:bs

NEW YORK
- Brooklyn
- Buffalo
- Erie County
- Glens Falls
- New York City
- Newburgh
- Niagara Falls
- Rochester
- Utica
- Watertown
- West Point

NORTH CAROLINA
- Gastonia
- Raleigh

OHIO
- Cleveland
- Dayton
- Youngstown

OREGON
- Portland

PENNSYLVANIA
- Bethlehem
- Bryn Mawr
- Harrisburg
- Philadelphia
- Pittsburgh
- Reading
- Somerston
- Wilkes-Barre
- Wyomissing
- York

RHODE ISLAND
- Narragansett Bay
- Newport
- Pawtucket
- Providence
- Wakefield
- Warren

SOUTH CAROLINA
- Charleston

TENNESSEE
- Chattanooga
- Memphis

TEXAS
- Fort Worth

UTAH
- Salt Lake City

VERMONT

VIRGINIA
- Harrisburg
- Richmond
- Wakefield

WASHINGTON
- Seattle
- Spokane
- Olympia

WISCONSIN
- Milwaukee

CANADA
- Calgary
- Montreal
- Truro
- Winnipeg

THE COMPLETE LIST WITH JOB NUMBERS IS AVAILABLE FROM THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR $5 postpaid, $4 to MEMBERS, $3 each IN QUANTITIES OF TEN OR MORE.

* *

IN ADDITION OLMSTED DID CAMPUS DESIGNS FOR THE FOLLOWING EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

University of Maine
University of Massachusetts
Groton School
St. Marks School
Vassar College
Cornell University
Yale, Farnham College
Trinity Collge, Hartford
Columbia University
The American University
Amherst College
Dartmouth College
Princeton University
St. Joseph's Seminary, Yonkers
Phillips Andover Academy
Cornell College, Mt. Vernon, Iowa
Gallaudet College, DC
Washington University, St. Louis
Colgate University
Stanford University
University of California, Berkeley
Lawrenceville School
Bryn Mawr College
Bryn Mawr School, Baltimore
Rexleigh School, Salem, NY
Union College
Northwestern University
Smith College
Springfield College, Mass.
Williams Institute, New London

# NATIONAL ASSOCIATION for OLMSTED PARKS

175 FIFTH AVENUE • THE FLATIRON BUILDING • NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10010
TELEPHONE: (212) 260-8503 (212) 254-0809

## GOALS OF THE ASSOCIATION

To develop a national commitment to preserve, protect and maintain our nation's Olmsted Parks.....

To compile and disseminate educational materials about our culturally and socially important Olmsted Parks.....

To identify and enlist the support of Olmsted Park historians, park professionals and friends in all communities with parks designed by Olmsted or with an Olmstedian legacy....

To raise funds for and work toward the appropriation of funds for the acquisition and maintenance of the Olmstedian archival materials by the appropriate agencies, wherever located.

To work for public recognition of the network of urban Olmsted Parks and the National Association for Olmsted Parks...

Approved October 20, 1980

*A non-profit, membership organization dedicated to the appreciation and preservation of Frederick Law Olmsted's gifts to the American landscape and urban open space, with regional affiliates in Atlanta, Boston and New England, Buffalo and the Great Lakes, Chicago and the Midwest, the New York greater metropolitan area, the Pacific Northwest, San Fransisco and the Bay Area and Washington, D.C.*

RICHARD HEATH
319 Forest Hills St., Jamaica Plain, Mass. 02130 • 617-522-7431

RECEIVED
SEP 24 1980
LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

SEPTEMBER 19, 1980

MR KENT BARWICK, CHAIRMAN
N.Y. LANDMARK PRESERVATION COMMISSION
305 BROADWAY
NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10007

DEAR MR BARWICK:

I UNDERSTAND FROM A GOOD FRIEND ON STATEN ISLAND THAT YOUR COMMISSION VISITED STATEN ISLAND TO CONSIDER CERTAIN SITES FOR LANDMARK DESIGNATION. I'VE BEEN TOLD THAT NOT ONLY IS THE VANDERBILT PLOT NOT INCLUDED BUT THAT THERE APPEARS TO BE OPPOSITION TO ITS NOMINATION. AMONG THE REASONS FOR THIS OPPOSITION IS THE DOUBT THAT F.L. OLMSTED'S ORIGINAL LANDSCAPE EXISTS INTACT.

I VISITED THE PLOT 2 YEARS AGO AND I WAS THOROUGHLY IMPRESSED BY THE LANDSCAPING OF THE PLOT'S LAND. FROM MY FIRST HAND KNOWLEDGE OF F.L. OLMSTED'S WORK, I CAN ASSURE YOU THAT OLMSTED'S PLAN IS INTACT AND - TO THE CREDIT OF THE TRUST WHICH ADMINISTERS THE TOMB AND THE MORAVIAN CHURCH - WELL MAINTAINED.

THREE CHARACTERISTIC OLMSTED TOUCHES CAN BE SEEN IN THE VANDERBILT PLOT (DESIGNED IN 1886): THE SLOWLY MEANDERING DRIVE, THE HIGH BERMS FLANKING THE DRIVE THICKLY PLANTED WITH SHRUBS AND NATIVE TREES AND THE CONTRAST BETWEEN THIS SHADY, QUIET DRIVE AND THE SUNLIT PLAZA WHICH SETS OFF THE TOMB ITSELF.

IT IS APPARENT TH F.L. OLMSTED CHOSE THE SITE BECAUSE THE TOMB IS SET WELL TO THE RIGHT AS ONE ENTERS IN TO THE PLAZA. THIS WAS DONE SO AS TO CONTINUE THE GREENSWARD UNTIL WELL INTO THE OPEN PLAZA. TALL TREES FLANK THE STONE WALL OPPOSITE THE DRIVE. WHAT YOU HAVE IS THE URGE TO CONTINUE INTO THE PLAZA RATHER THAN JUST STOPPING AT ITS EDGE IF THE TOMB WERE SET STRAIGHT ON. THIS IS A CLASSIC OLMSTED TOUCH IN ALL HIS SUBURBAN PLANS; ARCHITECTURE IS SUBORDINATE TO THE LAND.

THE BERMS FLANKING THE DRIVE ARE INTERESTING, I FOUND THEM FASCINATING BECAUSE IT'S A FAVORITE OLMSTED TECHNIQUE WHICH I ADMIRE, THE BERMS FIRST OF ALL SEPERATE THE PLOT FROM THE REST OF THE CEMETERY. CHANCES ARE THEY WERE ROCK LEDGES THROUGH AND AROUND WHICH OLMSTED CAREFULLY BUILT THE ENTRANCE DRIVE. RHODADENDRONS ARE PLANTED ON EITHER SIDE OF THE DRIVE A SHORT WAY UP THE EARTH MOUNDS AND THEN A THICK SCREEN OF OAKS AND CONIFERS BEGIN. THE RESULT IS A SHADY - BUT NOT GLOOMY - CONTEMPLATIVE APPROACH TO THE GRAVE OF A MUCH

THE MUNICIPAL ART SOCIETY OF NEW YORK

October 2, 1980

VANDERBILT ~~MUSEUM~~ Mausoleum and CEMETERY

The Vanderbilt Mausoleum was designed by Richard Morris Hunt, the first President of the Municipal Art Society, in a modified Romanesque Revival style, accented by round arches and two small domes. Its location in the Moravian Cemetery is a reminder of the Vanderbilt family's association with the New Dorp Moravian Church since ~~its~~ the church's founding in 1742.

Frederick Law Olmsted, a frequent collaborator of Hunt's, is responsible for the cemetery's landscaping. Very few Richard Morris Hunt buildings remain today, a sad testament to one of America's leading 19th century architects. The Municipal Art Society urges you to grant landmark status to the Vanderbilt Mausoleum and Cemetery.

* * *

THE MUNICIPAL ART SOCIETY IN THE URBAN CENTER 457 MADISON AVENUE NEW YORK NY 10022 (212) 935-3960

cc.
Trustee Representative

# LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

305 BROADWAY, NEW YORK, N. Y. 10007

July 25, 1980

Mr. Bob Bartels
c/o Morgan Guarantee Trust Co.
9 West 57th Street
New York, N.Y. 10019

Re: Vanderbuilt Masoleum
Moravian Cementry
Staten Island, New York
Tax Map Block, 934 Lot 250 in part

Dear Mr. Bartels:

Your name appears as the representative of the owner of the above named property. Pursuant to the provisions of Section 207-12.0 of Chapter 8-A (Preservation of Landmarks and Historic Districts) of the Administrative Code of the City of New York, you are hereby notified that on September 9, 1980 at 6:00 in the evening of that day a public hearing will be held in the Recreation Hall at the Snug Harbor Cultural Center, 914 Richmond Terrace, Staten Island, with respect to the proposed designation of the above named property.

Public notice of said hearing identifying the proposed Landmark and Landmark Site and setting forth its location, will appear in the City Record of August 25, 1980, and on each day (other than Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays) thereafter until and including September 9, 1980.

You may appear at such public hearing and present any facts and express any views relating to the proposed designation.

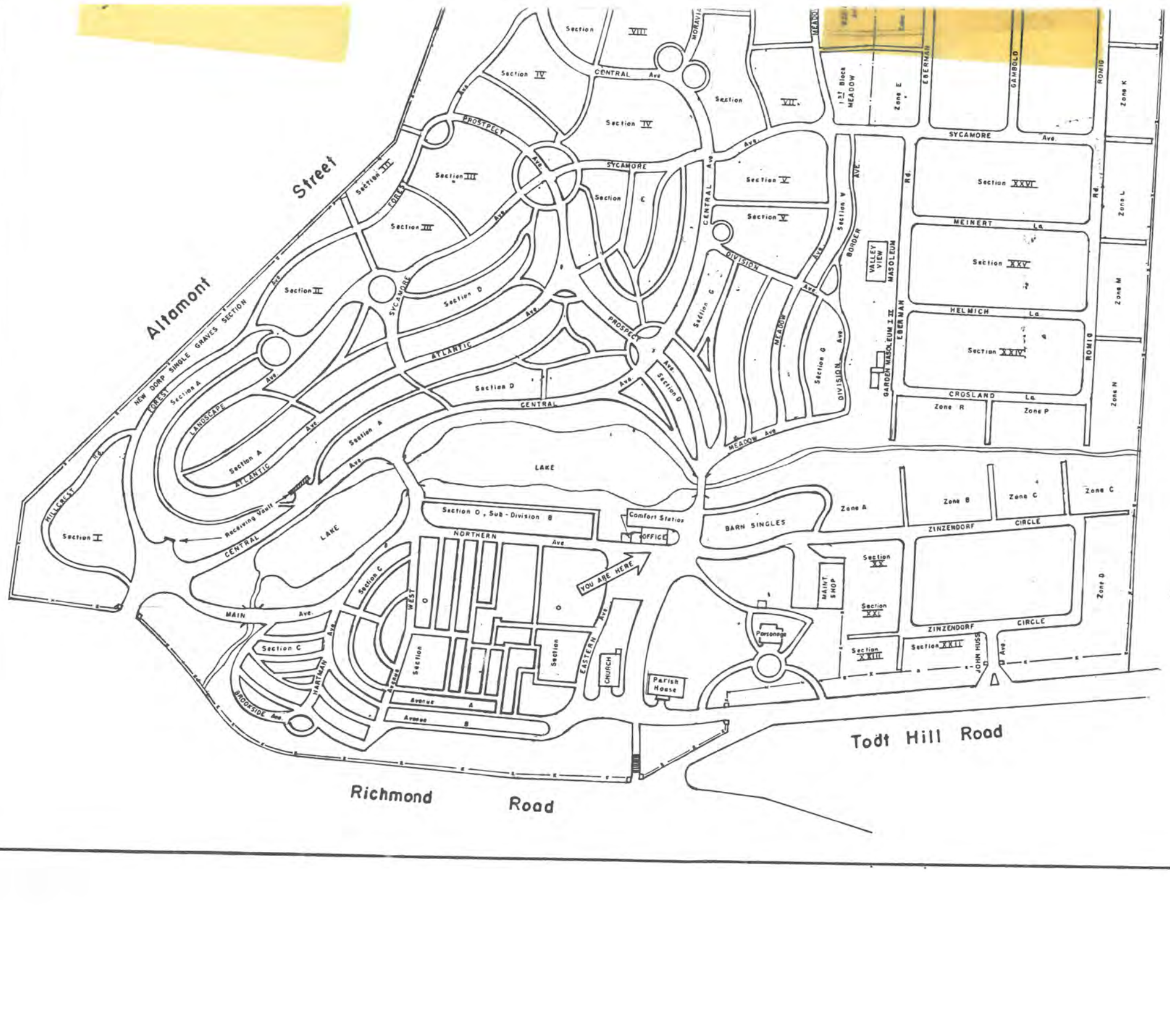
Please contact me at 566-7577 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Lenore Norman

Lenore Norman
Executive Director

LN:rb
Enc.




Map Prepared by
Wm. A. Rogers, Surveyor
50 Decker Ave.
Staten Island, N.Y.
10302

# 1979

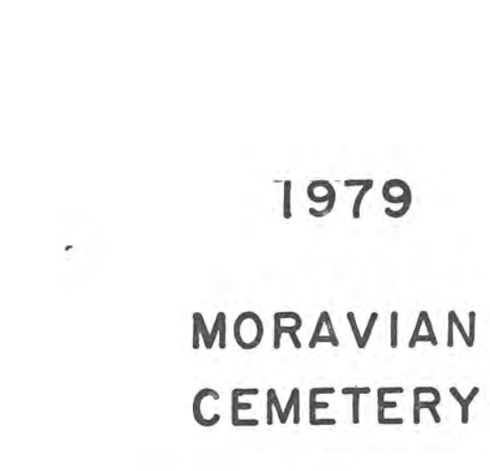
# MORAVIAN CEMETERY

OWNED BY
UNITED BRETHREN'S CHURCH
ON STATEN ISLAND

ONE OF AMERICA'S MOST BEAUTIFUL BURIAL PARKS

NEW DORP
N.Y.

Dated : March 8, 1979



SEE VOL. 3

RICHMOND PARKWAY

1064

240

427.68

408.08

SEE VOL. 3

FLAGG PL.

VALLEY ROAD

1914

510

TODT HILL

565.62

SEE VOL. 3

SEE PAGE 2

735.90

1372.14

677

2577.30

1550.30±

350±

114.61

934

280±

194.70

ROAD

450±

421.08

17

28.92±

GREELEY AVE.

Vanderbilt Cemetery

702

342.94

203.66

ROAD

SEE SEC. 16

250

349.80

584.76

104.50

865.70

341.88

7128

149.62

51

339.92

139.33

112.03

SEE PAGE 2

ALTAMONT

1016.40

RICHMOND

189.30

171.02

73.04

196.02

ST.

LOCUST AVE.

SEE PAGE 4

SEE PAGE 3

1

SCALE, ONE INCH = 200 FEET

1

LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

305 BROADWAY, NEW YORK, N. Y. 10007

October 10, 1980

Mr. Joseph Manifold, Chairperson
Seaview Hospital Administration Building
460 Brielle Avenue
Staten Island, New York 10324

Re: Vanderbilt Mausoleum & Cemetery
Moravian Cemetery
tax Map Block 934, Lot 250 in part

Dear Chairperson Manifold:

The above named site in your district will be considered at Public Hearings starting at 10:30 A.M. on Tuesday, November 18, 1980 in the Board of Estimate Chambers at City Hall.

The purpose of the hearing is to ascertain whether the site qualifies for Landmark designation, and the Commission would appreciate receiving the views of the Board.

If you have any questions before the hearing, please call me at 566-7577. A representative of the Board may want to appear or you may want to send a statement to be read into the record on November 18, 1980.

With best wishes.

Sincerely,

Lenore Norman

Lenore Norman
Executive Director

LN:mc
Enc.

LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

305 BROADWAY, NEW YORK, N. Y. 10007

October 10, 1980

Honorable Guy V. Molinari
182 Rose Avenue
Staten Island, New York 10306

Re: Vanderbilt Mausoleum & Cemetery,
Moravian Cemetery, Staten Island
Tax Map Block 934, Lot 250 in part.

Dear Assemblyman Molinari:

On Tuesday, November 18, 1980, at 10:30 A.M. in the Board of Estimate Chambers at City Hall, the Landmarks Preservation Commission will hold a Public Hearing on proposed New York City Landmarks. That day the Commission will consider the designation of the above named site in your district.

The Commission has written to the Community Board and the owner of the property. If you would like to submit a statement about the proposed designation we would be happy to read the message into the record that day.

The Commission appreciates your interest in its work.

Sincerely,

Lenore Norman

Lenore Norman
Executive Director

LN:mc
Enc.

LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

305 BROADWAY, NEW YORK, N. Y. 10007

October 14, 1980

Honorable Anthony I. Giacobbe
1492 Victory Boulevard
Staten Island, New York 10301

Re: See Attached

Dear Councilman Giacobbe:

On Tuesday November 18, 1980 at 10:30 A.M. in the Board of Estimate Chambers at City Hall, the Landmarks Preservation Commission will hold a Public Hearing on proposed New York City Landmarks. That day the Commission will consider the designation of the above named sites in your district.

The Commission has written to the Community Boards and the owners of the properties. If you would like to submit a statement about the proposed designations we would be happy to read the message into the record that day.

The Commission appreciates your interest in its work.

Sincerely,

Lenore Norman

Lenore Norman
Executive Director

LN:mc
Enc.

Re: Mariners Harbor Baptist Church/now
Staten Island Seventh Day Adventist Church
72 Union Avenue, Staten Island, Tax Map
Block 1225, Lot 43.

Vanderbilt Mausoleum & Cemetery, Moravian
Cemetery, Staten Island, Tax Map Block 934, ✓
Lot 250 in part.

LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

305 BROADWAY, NEW YORK, N. Y. 10007

October 14, 1980

Honorable Mary T. Codd
City Council, City Hall
New York, New York 10007

Re: See attached

Dear Councilwoman Codd:

On Tuesday November 18, 1980 at 10:30 A.M. in the Board of Estimate Chambers at City Hall, the Landmarks Preservation Commission will hold a Public Hearing on proposed New York City Landmarks. That day the Commission will consider the designation of the above named sites in your district.

The Commission has written to the Community Boards and the owners of the properties. If you would like to submit a statement about the proposed designations we would be happy to read the message into the record that day.

The Commission appreciates your interest in its work.

Sincerely,

Lenore Norman

Lenore Norman
Executive Director

LN:mc
Enc.

**Re:** Mariners Harbor Baptist Church/now
Staten Island Seventh Day Adventist Church
72 Union Avenue, Staten Island, Tax Map
Block 1225, Lot 43.

Vanderbilt Mausoleum & Cemetery, Moravian
Cemetery, Staten Island, Tax Map Block 934,
Lot 250 in part.

LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

305 BROADWAY, NEW YORK, N. Y. 10007

October 14, 1980

Honorable Nicholas La Porte
104 Islington Street
Staten Island, New York 10308

Re: See attached

Dear Councilmember La Porte:

On Tuesday November 18, 1980 at 10:30 A.M. in the Board of Estimate Chambers at City Hall, the Landmarks Preservation Commission will hold a Public Hearing on proposed New York City Landmarks. That day the Commission will consider the designation of the above named sites in your district.

The Commission has written to the Community Boards and the owners of the properties. If you would like to submit a statement about the proposed designations we would be happy to read the message into the record that day.

The Commission appreciates your interest in its work.

Sincerely,

Lenore Norman

Lenore Norman
Executive Director

LN:mc
Enc.

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Staten Island Seventh Day Adventist Church
72 Union Avenue, Staten Island, Tax Map
Block 1225, Lot 43.

Vanderbilt Mausoleum & Cemetery, Moravian
Cemetery, Staten Island, Tax Map Block 934,
Lot 250 in part.

LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

305 BROADWAY, NEW YORK, N. Y. 10007

October 17, 1980

Honorable Anthony Gaeta:
Borough President of Staten Island
Staten Island Borough Hall
Staten Island, New York 10301

Re: See attached list

Dear Borough President Gaeta:

On Tuesday, November 18, 1980 at 10:30 A.M. in the Board of Estimate Chambers at City Hall, the Landmarks Preservation Commission will hold a Public Hearing on proposed New York City Landmarks. That day the Commission will consider the designation of the above named sites in your borough.

The Commission has written to the Community Boards and the owners of the properties. If you would like to submit a statement about the proposed designations, we would be happy to read the message into the record that day.

The Commission appreciates your interest in its work.

Sincerely yours,

Lenore Norman

Lenore Norman
Executive Director

LN:mc
Enc.

**Re:** Mariners Harbor Baptist Church/now
Staten Island Seventh Day Adventist Church
72 Union Avenue, Staten Island, Tax Map
Block 1225, Lot 43.

Vanderbilt Mausoleum & Cemetery, Moravian
Cemetery, Staten Island, Tax Map Block 934,
Lot 250 in part.

LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

305 BROADWAY, NEW YORK, N. Y. 10007

October 15, 1980

Honorable John J. Marchi
358 St. Marks Place
Staten Island, New York, 10361

Re: See attached list

Dear Senator Marchi:

On Tuesday November 18, 1980 at 10:30 A.M. in the Board of Estimate Chambers at City Hall, the Landmarks Preservation Commission will hold a Public Hearing on proposed New York City Landmarks. That day the Commission will consider the designation of the above named sites in your district.

The Commission has written to the Community Boards and the owners of the properties. If you would like to submit a statement about the proposed designations we would be happy to read the message into the record that day.

The Commission appreciates your interest in its work.

Sincerely,

Lenore Norman

Lenore Norman
Executive Director

LN:mc
Enc.

**Re:** Mariners Harbor Baptist Church/now
Staten Island Seventh Day Adventist Church
72 Union Avenue, Staten Island, Tax Map
Block 1225, Lot 43.

Vanderbilt Mausoleum & Cemetery, Moravian
Cemetery, Staten Island, Tax Map Block 934,
Lot 250 in part.

Cary Building, 105-107 Chambers Street,
Manhattan, Tax Map Block 145, Lot 3.

White Building, 361 Broadway, Manhattan,
Tax Map Block 174, Lot 31.

LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

305 BROADWAY, NEW YORK, N. Y. 10007

October 15, 1980

Honorable John M. Murphy
26 Federal Plaza
New York, New York 10007

Re: See attached list

Dear Congressman Murphy:

On Tuesday November 18, 1980 at 10:30 A.M. in the Board of Estimate Chambers at City Hall, the Landmarks Preservation Commission will hold a Public Hearing on proposed New York City Landmarks. That day the Commission will consider the designation of the above named sites in your district.

The Commission has written to the Community Boards and the owners of the properties. If you would like to submit a statement about the proposed designations we would be happy to read the message into the record that day.

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Sincerely,

Lenore Norman

Lenore Norman
Executive Director

LN:mc
Enc.

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Block 1225, Lot 43.

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Cemetery, Staten Island, Tax Map Block 934,
Lot 250 in part.

Cary Building, 105-107 Chambers Street,
Manhattan, Tax Map Block 145, Lot 3.

White Building, 361 Broadway, Manhattan,
Tax Map Block 174, Lot 31.

Puck Building, 295 Lafayette St.,
Manhattan, Tax Map Block 510, Lot 45.

# LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

305 BROADWAY, NEW YORK, N. Y. 10007

August 18, 1980

Mr. Joseph Manifold, Chairperson
Staten Island Community Board # 2
Sea View Hospital - Administrative Building
460 Brielle Avenue
Staten Island, New York 10324

Re: see attached list

Dear Mr. Manifold:

Due to a clerical error, we neglected to list one of the properties in the Borough of Staten Island, located within the boundaries of Community Board # 2. The extra item is:

Vanderbilt Mausoleum and Cemetery
Morvarian Cemetery
Richmond Road and Altamont Street
Staten Island.
Tax Map Block 934, Lot 250 in part.

I am sorry for any inconvience this may have caused.

Sincerely,

Lenore Norman
Executive Director

LN:mc
Enc.

Re: 710 Bay Street House
Staten Island, New York
Tax Map Block 528, Lots 12 & 50

23-25 Belair Road House
Staten Island, New York
Tax Map Block 2860, Lot 35

33-37 Belair Road House
Staten Island, New York
Tax Map Block 2860, Lot 30

Vanderbilt Mausoleum and Cemetery
Moravian Cemetery
Richmond Road and Altamont Street
Staten Island, New York
Tax Map Block 934, Lot 250 in part

LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

305 BROADWAY, NEW YORK, N. Y. 10007

July 25, 1980

Honorable Guy V. Molinari
60th Assembly District
182 Rose Avenue
Staten Island, New York 10306

Re: see attached list

Dear Assemblyman Molinari:

On Tuesday, September 9, 1980 at 6:00 P.M. in the Recreation Hall at the Snug Harbor Cultural Center, 914 Richmond Terrace, Staten Island, the Landmarks Preservation Commission will hold a Public Hearing on proposed New York City Landmarks. That day the Commission will consider the designation of the above named sites in your district.

The Commission has written to the Community Boards and the owners of the properties. If you would like to submit a statement about the proposed designations, we would read the message into the record that day.

The Commission appreciates your interest in its work.

Sincerely,

Lenore Norman

Lenore Norman
Executive Director

LN:rb

Residential Buildings:
F. Bredt House (Old New York Yacht Club)
30 Hylan Blvd.
Staten Island, New York
Tax Map Block 2830, Lot 49

Poillon-Seguine-Britton House
361 Great Kills Road
Staten Island, New York
Tax Map Block 5195, Lot 6

Miscellaneous:
Vanderbilt Mausoleum
Moravian Cemetery
Stateb Uskabdm Bew Tirj
Tax Map Block 934, Lot 250 in part

LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

305 BROADWAY, NEW YORK, N. Y. 10007

July 25, 1980

Councilwoman Mary T. Codd
City Council, City Hall
New York, N.Y. 10007

Re: see attached list

Dear Councilwoman Codd:

On Tuesday, September 9, 1980 at 6:00 P.M. in the Recreation Hall at the Snug Harbor Cultural Center, 914 Richmond Terrace, Staten Island, the Landmarks Preservation Commission will hold a Public Hearing on proposed New York City Landmarks. That day the Commission will consider the designation of the above named sites in your district.

The Commission has written to the Community Boards and the owners of the properties. If you would like to submit a statement about the proposed designations, we would read the message into the record that day.

The Commission appreciates your interest in its work.

Sincerely,

Lenore Norman

Lenore Norman
Executive Director

LN:rb

Re: Residential Buildings:

710 Bay Street House
710 Bay Street
Staten Island, New York
Tax Map Block 528, Lots 50 & 12

23-25 Belair Road House
23-25 Belair Road
Staten Island, New York
Tax Map Block 2860, Lot 35

33-37 Belair Road House
33-37 Belair Road
Staten Island, New York
Tax Map Block 2860, Lot 30

F. Bredt House (old New York Yacht Club)
30 Hylan Boulevard
Staten Island, New York
Tax Map Block 2830, Lot 49

92 Harrison Street House
92 Harrison Street
Staten Island, New York
Tax Map Block 531, Lot 1

Poillon-Seguine-Britton House
361 Great Kills Road
Staten Island, New York
Tax Block Map 5195, Lot 6

387 St. Pauls Avenue House
387 St. Pauls Avenue
Staten Island, New York
Tax Map Block 519, Lot 82

General William B. Ward House "Oneata"
Wagner College
631 Howard Avenue
Staten Island, New York
Tax Map Block 597, Lot 65 in part

Churches:

Mariners Harbor Baptist Church
now Seventh Day Adventist Church
72 Union Avenue
Staten Island, New York
Tax Map Block 1225, Lot 43

St. Marys Church, Rectory & Parish Hall
347 Davis Avenue
Staten Island, New York
Tax Map Block 142, Lot 1

Public Buildings:
Curtis High School
Hamilton Avenue & St. Marks Place
Staten Island, New York
Tax Map Block 22, Lot 1 in part

Richmond County Courthouse
Richmond Terrace
Staten Island, New York
Tax Map Block 7, Lot 12

Staten Island Borough Hall
Richmond Terrace
Staten Island, New York
Tax Map Block 7, Lot 1

Interiors:
Sailors Snug Harbor
Building C & Chapel Interiors
914 Richmond Terrace
Staten Island, New York
Tax Map Block 76, Lot 200 in part

Miscellaneous:
Vanderbilt Mausoleum
Moravian Cemetery
Staten Island, New York
Tax Map Block 934, Lot 250 in part

LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

305 BROADWAY, NEW YORK, N. Y. 10007

July 25, 1980

Councilman Anthony I. Giacobbe
1492 Victory Boulevard
Staten Island, N.Y. 10301

Re: see attached list

Dear Councilman Giacobbe:

On Tuesday, September 9, 1980 at 6:00 P.M. in the Recreation Hall at the Snug Harbor Cultural Center, 914 Richmond Terrace, Staten Island, the Landmarks Preservation Commission will hold a Public Hearing on proposed New York City Landmarks. That day the Commission will consider the designation of the above named sites in your district.

The Commission has written to the Community Boards and the owners of the properties. If you would like to submit a statement about the proposed designations, we would read the message into the record that day.

The Commission appreciates your interest in its work.

Sincerely,

Lenore Norman

Lenore Norman
Executive Director

LN:rb

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Tax Map Block 531, Lot 1

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Tax Map Block 934, Lot 250 in part

LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

305 BROADWAY, NEW YORK, N. Y. 10007

July 25, 1980

Councilman Nicholas La Porte
Council District #1
104 Islington Street
Staten Island, N.Y. 10308

Re: see attached list

Dear Councilman La Porte:

On Tuesday, September 9, 1980 at 6:00 P.M. in the Recreation Hall at the Snug Harbor Cultural Center, 914 Richmond Terrace, Staten Island, the Landmarks Preservation Commission will hold a Public Hearing on proposed New York City Landmarks. That day the Commission will consider the designation of the above named sites in your district.

The Commission has written to the Community Boards and the owners of the properties. If you would like to submit a statement about the proposed designations, we would read the message into the record that day.

The Commission appreciates your interest in its work.

Sincerely,

Lenore Norman

Lenore Norman
Executive Director

LN:rb

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Staten Island, New York
Tax Map Block 528, Lots 50 & 12

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Moravian Cemetery
Staten Island, New York
Tax Map Block 934, Lot 250 in part

LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION
305 BROADWAY, NEW YORK, N. Y. 10007

July 25, 1980

Congressman John M. Murphy
Congressional District #17
26 Federal Plaza
New York, N.Y. 10007

Re: see attached list

Dear Congressman Murphy:

On Tuesday, September 9, 1980 at 6:00 P.M. in the Recreation Hall at the Snug Harbor Cultural Center, 914 Richmond Terrace, Staten Island, the Landmarks Preservation Commission will hold a Public Hearing on proposed New York City Landmarks. That day the Commission will consider the designation of the above named sites in your district.

The Commission has written to the Community Boards and the owners of the properties. If you would like to submit a statement about the proposed designations, we would read the message into the record that day.

The Commission appreciates your interest in its work.

Sincerely,

Lenore Norman

Lenore Norman
Executive Director

LN:rb

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Tax Map Block 528, Lots 50 & 12

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Tax Map Block 2860, Lot 30

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Tax Map Block 7, Lot 12

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Tax Map Block 76, Lot 200 in part

Miscellaneous:
Vanderbilt Mausoleum
Moravian Cemetery
Staten Island, New York
Tax Map Block 934, Lot 250 in part

LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

305 BROADWAY, NEW YORK, N. Y. 10007

July 25, 1980

Honorable John J. Marchi
358 St. Marks Place
Staten Island, New York 10301

Re: see attached list

Dear Senator Marchi:

On Tuesday, September 9, 1980 at 6:00 P.M. in the Recreation Hall at the Snug Harbor Cultural Center, 914 Richmond Terrace, Staten Island, the Landmarks Preservation Commission will hold a Public Hearing on proposed New York City Landmarks. That day the Commission will consider the designation of the above named sites in your district.

The Commission has written to the Community Boards and the owners of the properties. If you would like to submit a statement about the proposed designations, we would read the message into the record that day.

The Commission appreciates your interest in its work.

Sincerely,

Lenore Norman

Lenore Norman
Executive Director

LN:rb

Re: Residential Buildings:

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Staten Island, New York
Tax Map Block 528, Lots 50 & 12

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Staten Island, New York
Tax Map Block 2860, Lot 35

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Tax Map Block 76, Lot 200 in part

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Vanderbilt Mausoleum
Moravian Cemetery
Staten Island, New York
Tax Map Block 934, Lot 250 in part

LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

305 BROADWAY, NEW YORK, N. Y. 10007

July 31, 1980

Mr. Brian Norris
Office of the Staten Island
Borough President
Staten Island Borough Hall
Staten Island, New York

Re: See attached list

On Tuesday, September 9, 1980, at 6:00 in the evening of that day, the Landmarks Preservation Commission will hold a public hearing in the Recreation Hall at the Snug Harbor Cultural Center, 914 Richmond Terrace, Staten Island. The purpose of the hearing will be to consider a number of Staten Island items including Staten Island Borough Hall and the Richmond County Courthouse for possible Landmark status.

If I can be of any assistance, please contact me at 566-7577.

Sincerely,

Lenore Norman

Lenore Norman
Executive Director

LN:mc
Enc.

Re: Residential Buildings:

710 Bay Street House
710 Bay Street
Staten Island, New York
Tax Map Block 528, Lots 50 & 12

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Tax Map Block 531, Lot 1

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General William B. Ward House "Oneata"
Wagner College
631 Howard Avenue
Staten Island, New York
Tax Map Block 597, Lot 65 in part

Churches:

Mariners Harbor Baptist Church
now Seventh Day Adventist Church
72 Union Avenue
Staten Island, New York
Tax Map Block 1225, Lot 43

St. Marys Church, Rectory & Parish Hall
347 Davis Avenue
Staten Island, New York
Tax Map Block 142, Lot 1

Re: Public Buildings

Curtis High School
Hamilton Avenue & St. Marks Place
Staten Island, New York
Tax Map Block 22, Lot 1 in part

Richmond County Courthouse
Richmond Terrace
Staten Island, New York
Tax Map Block 7, Lot 12

Staten Island Borough Hall
Richmond Terrace
Staten Island, New York
Tax Map Block 7, Lot 12

Interiors

Sailors Snug Harbor - Building "C"
914 Richmond Terrace
Staten Island, New York
Tax Map Block 76, Lot 200 in part

Sailors Snug Harbor - Chapel
914 Richmond Terrace
Staten Island, New York
Tax Map Block 76, Lot 200 in part

Miscellaneous:

Vanderbilt Mausoleum
Moravian Cemetery
Staten Island, New York
Tax Map Block 934, Lot 250 in part

LAHR, DILLON & MANZULLI, P.C.
COUNSELORS AT LAW
207 TAYLOR STREET
STATEN ISLAND, N. Y. 10310
TELEPHONE: 447-8841

FRED C. LAHR
WILLIAM J. DILLON (1946-1976)
MICHAEL F. MANZULLI
JAMES L. KELLEY

ADDRESS ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO:
P. O. BOX 207
STATEN ISLAND, N. Y. 10314

August 26, 1980

C

Mr. Anthony M. Tung
Landmarks Preservation Commission
305 Broadway
New York, N. Y. 10007

O

Dear Mr. Tung:

The Staten Island Advance has published stories that the Landmark Commission proposes to designate the Vanderbilt Mausoleum as a City landmark and that there will be a hearing on same September 9th.

The United Brethrens Church on Staten Island, owner of the Moravian Cemetery, hereby goes on record as very strongly opposed to such designation.

P

The opposition is for the following reasons:-

1. There is no access to the Vanderbilt Mausoleum. The property being entirely surrounded by property of the Moravian Cemetery, Boy Scout Camp or other private owners.

Y

2. Anyone seeking access to view the Mausoleum would have to trespass and the logical way to trespass would be by using the roads thru the Moravian Cemetery leading to the large gate of the Vanderbilt Cemetery.

The Trustees of the Vanderbilt family and estates have kept this gate barred and bolted and locked for many years and there is no way anyone can go through the gate with a vehicle or on foot without going over an 8 or 10 foot barred fence.

It is clear that if the Vanderbilt Mausoleum and Cemetery are designated as landmarks that many people would

wish to view same, trespass through Moravian property and become frustrated because of their inability to see the Vanderbilt Mausoleum.

3. The Vanderbilt Mausoleum and Cemetery are in a poor state of maintenance and repair and certainly, even if accessible, are nothing to brag about as to condition at this time.

Once again we urge the members of the Landmark Commission to contact the undersigned or the office of the Moravian Cemetery and we should like to give you a tour of the premises so that you will have the facts before you vote on a vital matter on which the evidence is not before you.

We should be pleased to meet you and take you through the property by previous appointment at any time.

Copies of this letter are being sent to Mrs. Norman, your Executive Director, to Borough President Gaeta, to Rev. Housmann of the New Dorp Moravian Church and to Mr. Boden, President of the Cemetery corporation.

Your earnest consideration of the foregoing is requested.

Very truly yours,

Lahr, Dillon, Manzulli & Kelley, P.C.

Fred C. Lahr

FCL:gs
CC: Lenor Norman, Executive Director
Boro Pres. Anthony Gaeta
William Boden, Pres., United Brethrens Church on Staten Island
Rev. Howard Housmann
U-1582

(4)

LP1208

Public Hearing
November 18, 1980

Vanderbilt Mausoleum & Cemetery

James. Beha - trustee against
keep record open

~~C.E.~~ Rev. G. Howard Housman
-sp. United Brethren's Church.
~~read a letter from attorney into record~~ against
keep record open

(didn't have pink slip) Charles Satterholm - Trustee of cemetery.
against

Gordon Roberts - Pres. league of S.I.
for

Mrs. Gordon Roberts - S.I. Pres league for

Margot Gayle - Vic Society N.Y. chapter Preservation Com. for

Lorna Nouse - M.A.S. for

Close hearing - record kept open
~~until Feb 1, 1981~~
for 60 months

LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION
305 BROADWAY, NEW YORK, N. Y. 10007

July 25, 1980

Mr. Jones A. Behar II, Esq.
c/o Gasser & Hayes
30 Rockerfeller Plaza
New York, N.Y. 10020

Re: Vanderbuilt Mausoleum
Moravian Cementery
Staten Island, New York
Tax Map Block 934, Lot 250 in part

Dear Mr. Behar II, Esq.:

Your name appears as the representative of the owner of the above named property. Pursuant to the provisions of Section 207-12.0 of Chapter 8-A (Preservation of Landmarks and Historic Districts) of the Administrative Code of the City of New York, you are hereby notified that on September 9, 1980 at 6:00 in the evening of that day a public hearing will be held in the Recreation Hall at the Snug Harbor Cultural Center, 914 Richmond Terrace, Staten Island, with respect to the proposed designation of the above named property.

Public notice of said hearing identifying the proposed Landmark and Landmark Site and setting forth its location, will appear in the City Record of August 25, 1980, and on each day (other than Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays) thereafter until and including September 9, 1980.

You may appear at such public hearing and present any facts and express any views relating to the proposed designation.

Please contact me at 566-7577 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Lenore Norman

Lenore Norman
Executive Director

LN:rb
Enc.

LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

305 BROADWAY, NEW YORK, N. Y. 10007

October 7, 1980

James A. Beha, II Esq.
c/o Glasser & Hayes
30 Rockefeller Center
New York, New York 10020

Re: Vanderbilt Mausoleum & Cemetery, Moravian Cemetery, Staten Island, Tax Map Block 934, Lot 250 in part.

Dear Mr. Beha:

Your name appears as the representative of the owner of the above named property. Pursuant to the provisions of Section 207-12.0 of Chapter 8A (Preservation of Landmarks and Historic Districts) of the Administrative Code of the City of New York, you are herby notified that on Tuesday, November 18, 1980 at 10:30 in the morning of that day a public hearing will be held in the Board of Estimate Chambers at City Hall, with respect to the proposed designation of the above named property.

Public notice of said hearing identifying the proposed landmark and setting forth its location, will appear in the City Record of October 31, 1980 and on each day (other than Saturdays, Sundays and holidays) thereafter until and including November 18, 1980.

You may appear at such public hearing and present any facts and express any views relating to the proposed designation.

Please contact me 566-7577 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Lenore Norman

Lenore Norman
Executive Director

LN:rb

enc.

cc: Mr. Bob Bartels, c/o Morgan Guarantee Trust Co.,
9 West 57th Street, New York, N.Y. 10019

# The Vanderbilt Mausoleum

# Tomb is closed to the public, but it still attracts many visitors

By ROBERT MIRALDI

Donald McTernan is the curator of the rambling, 200-acre mansion in Hyde Park, N.Y., that in the 1920s housed multi-millionaire Frederick William Vanderbilt and his wife, Louise Anthony Torrance, who with the Hudson River as a backdrop would sit and admire her jewel collection.

Knowing that Frederick and his wife are entombed in the Vanderbilt Mausoleum in New Dorp, McTernan traveled last year to Staten Island to see the famed tomb about which he had heard so much.

"I was simply appalled," McTernan recalled. "I couldn't believe my eyes."

McTernan's eyes saw dozens of youths 40 feet above the ground, sitting on the tomb's roof, drinking beer, sunning themselves. He saw debris — beer cans, broken bottles, paper bags — and gaping holes in the fence surrounding the thickly wooded, 14-acre property where 50 Vanderbilts are buried.

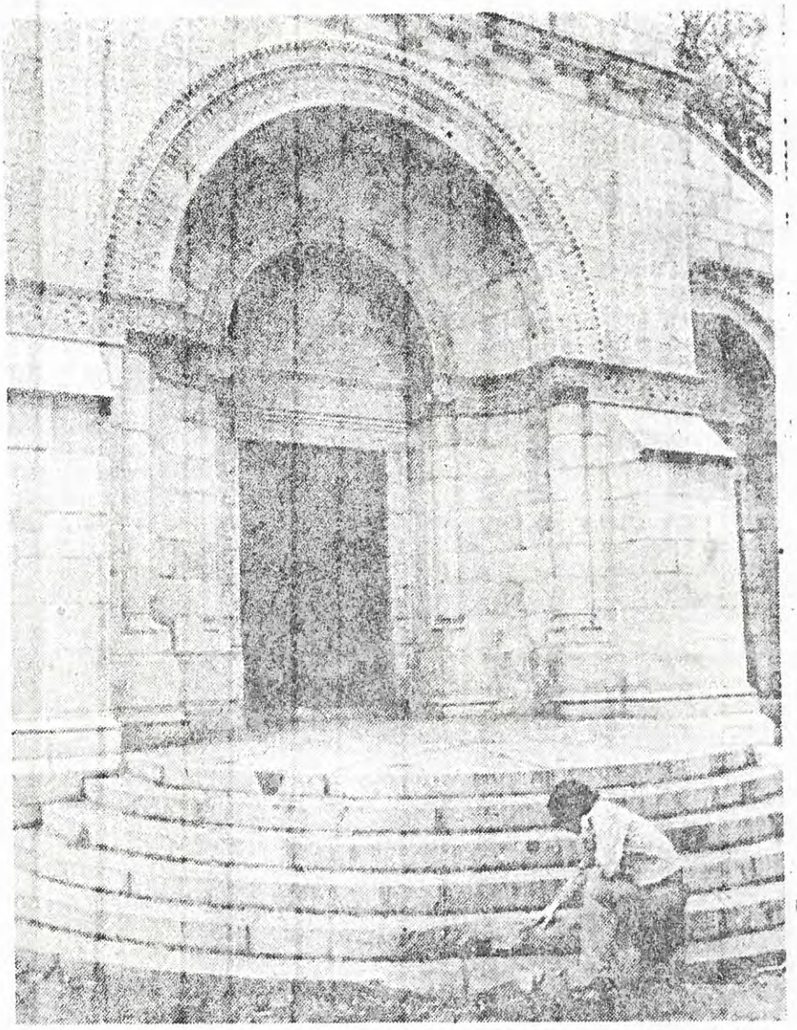
"It was ludicrous," McTernan said.

Ludicrous, indeed, that what might be the largest private burial plot in America — with a tomb designed by one of America's premier architects, with grounds planned by the most famous landscaper in the nation's history, with a rich and fascinating history — should be overgrown with weeds, covered with debris, its destiny controlled by vandals and closed to the public.

That is the state of the Vanderbilt Mausoleum today, 92 years after Frederick Law Olmsted selected his trees and Richard Morris Hunt ordered the granite facade chiseled.

William Henry Vanderbilt, 77, whose

(Continued on Page 8)



A visitor checks the steps of the Vanderbilt Mausoluem, which have been chipped by vandals who burned bonfires on the tomb's steps and then chipped the Quincy granite exterior. S.I. Advance Photo by Robert Parsons

Staten Island Advance
9/26/78

# The Vander

# Tomb is closed to the public,

(From Page 1)

reat-grandfather, Commodore
us Vanderbilt, began the family
in the mid-1800s, would like to
tomb gates swing open as they
en he was a youth; he'd like to
e cement removed from the
above the tomb, and he'd like to
stained-glass windows specially
England put back in.
rbilt has what he calls the "not
larly enviable position" of being
st surviving direct descendant of
mmodore (there are 800 survi-
The family's treasures and heir-
ave been passed down to him.
ially, he acts as the family
an.
k it is a good idea," Vanderbilt
ut suggestions that the tomb be
and opened again to the public.
stand it is in a state of disrepair
He understands correctly.
mb, in which 25 Vanderbilts are

th room for 47 more, has re-
ssentially intact since its com-
1886. But two football-sized
ve been chipped off the front
from a pedestal on the roof.
setting bonfires at night, ap-
have been able to crack the
anite exterior, something the
its didn't think possible in 1886.
some weeds creeping through
the tomb's walls, the facade is
nt condition. The granite has
thousands of beer bottles
gainst its walls over the de-
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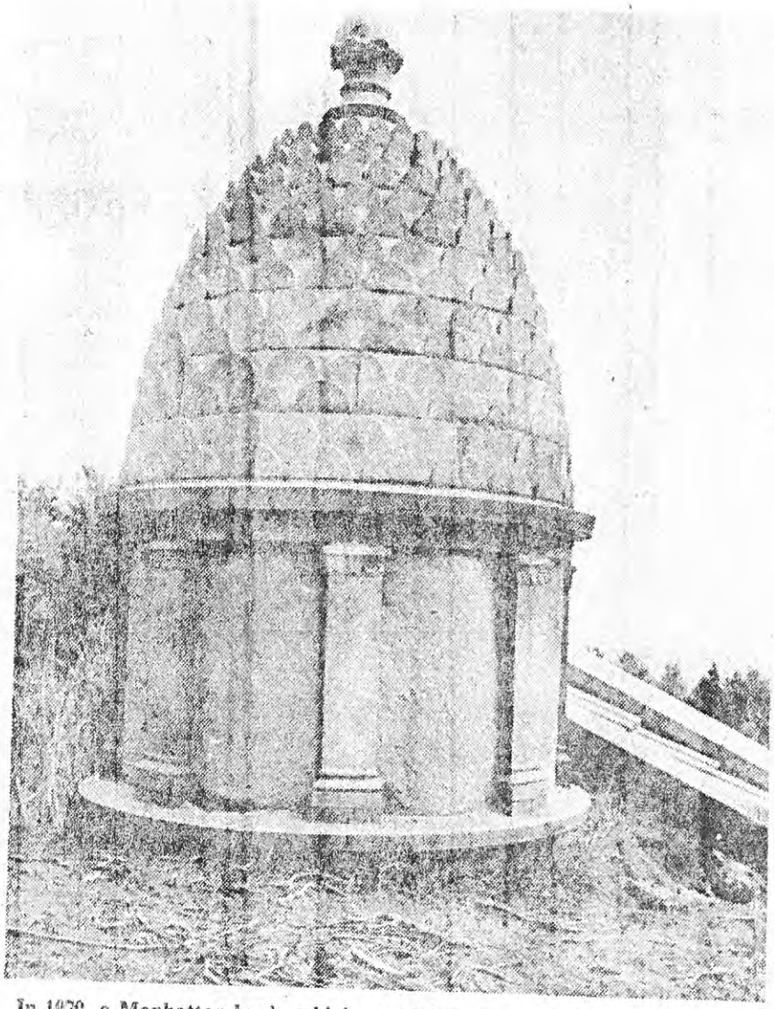

In 1970, a Manhattan bank, which now takes care of the mausoleum property, had to cement up this tower. It once had stained glass windows framed by brass.

S.I. Advance Photo by Robert Parsons

tion, enter to inspect the property it now oversees. Commodore Vanderbilt had left $40,000 in a trust fund for perpetual upkeep of the property. The trust now earns $8,000 a year, barely enough for a part-time gardener to clean up the beer bottles.

Ever since a 15-foot gate fell off its hinges at the entrance to the property in 1967, killing a 24-year-old Grant City woman, the bank has taken an active part in caring for the tomb.

The bank now spends an average of $2,100 a year for maintenence. Big expenses came in 1963, when a general overhaul cost $10,000, and in 1967, when fence repairs cost $4,000.

Then in 1970, in a major attempt to secure the tomb, the bank had steel doors placed over the brass front gates. And in a move that crushed some longtime admirers of the site, the bank felt forced to cement over the stained-glass towers above the tomb. Light no longer streams into the chapel.

"I wanted to cry when the bank did that," one family member said.

The bank's part-time gardeners do little more than pick up debris and cut grass on the grounds' 14 acres — a far cry from the Depression and war years when five gardeners kept the grass on the terrace before the tomb perfectly manicured.

Now, weeds cover much of the gravel entrance on the terrace. The so-called Tree of Heaven, a pervasive weed, has sprouted on the once manicured hills adjacent to the tomb.

Hedges and flowering bushes, planted

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## identified

By HARRY TRIMBORN

Special to the Advance

# ilt Mausoleum

# ut it still attracts many visitors

by landscaper Olmsted, are badly in need of trimming and pruning.

Perhaps the sorriest loss for the tomb is the view from its front steps, now blocked by a row of hemlock and Norway spruce trees. Visitors no longer can see to Miller Field in New Dorp or to the Atlantic Ocean.

Despite the problems of the tomb and its grounds today, it is still a tourist attraction and recreation area. Over the past years, joggers, hikers, naturalists, Frisbee and football players sunbathers, musicians and lovers have been enjoying and, indeed, marveling at the beauty of the quiet burial site.

The mausoleum grounds are officially closed to the public, but gaping holes in the surrounding fence make it as public as it ever has been. Only neglect and vandals mar its overall appearance.

Numerous persons connected with the Vanderbilts and interviewed by the Advance have expressed interest in having the tomb opened again to the public. Such a move would be in keeping with Vanderbilt tradition. Here's what has happened to other famous Vanderbilt properties:

**Biltmore Gardens and Estates:** George Washington Vanderbilt, grandson of the commodore, disliked the family's Newport, R.I., social swirl. So, in 1890 he bought 2,000 acres of property in Asheville, N.C.

He had Hunt build a 250-room chateau, the largest, most beautiful country place in America. And Olmsted designed an extensive arboretum and garden that would become a model of forest management.

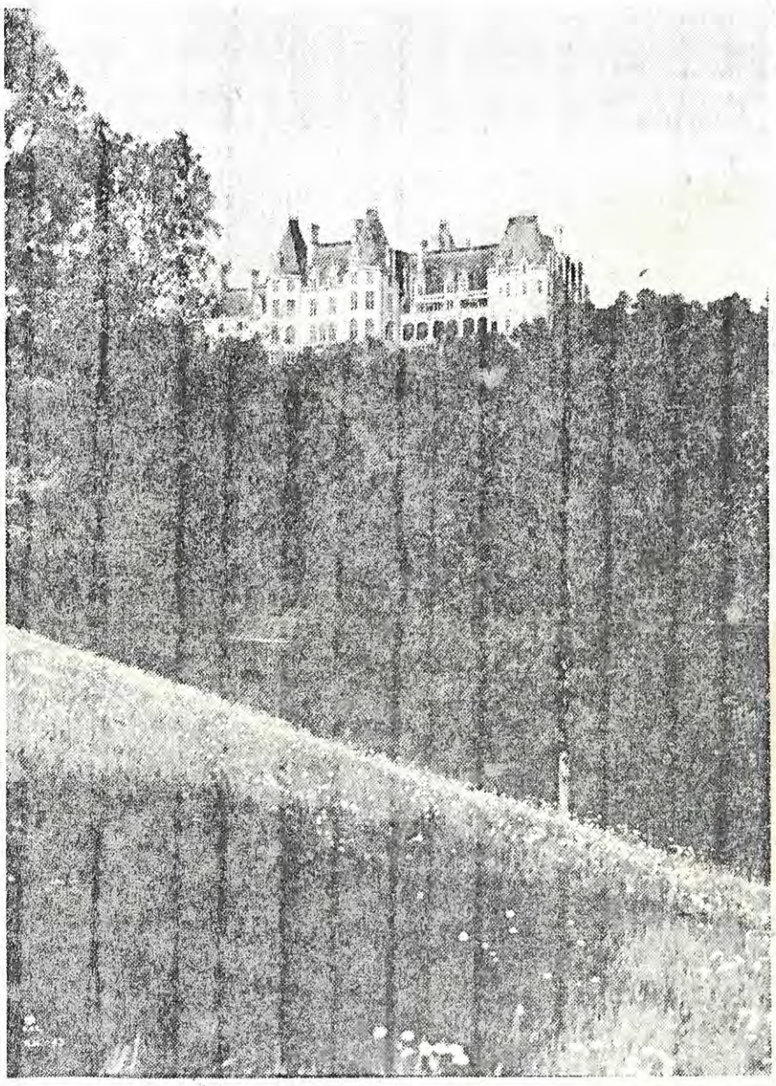
In 1930 the property was opened to the public and today is a working farm and a public museum. The woodland is part of Pistah National Forest.

**The Breakers Mansion:** Designed in 1895 by Hunt for Cornelius Vanderbilt, George's brother, this mansion resembles a 16th century northern Italian palace with 70 rooms. It overlooks the Atlantic Ocean in Newport, R.I.

In 1948 the family turned the mansion over to the Preservation Society of Newport. Last year 302,781 tourists visited the house. Newport garden clubs take care of the grounds. The society receives no public funds but exists on fees charged tourists.

**Marble House:** In 1888 William Kissam Vanderbilt, another brother, called on Hunt to design a sumptuous mansion constructed mostly of marble. The mansion is almost indescribable, with gold and marble rooms, dazzling mirrors and staircases in classical design.

But it too has been turned over to the Newport Preservation Society and last year it drew 115,631 tourists.



**The same architect and landscaper who collaborated on the Vanderbilt Mausoluem also did this 250-room French chateau in Asheville, N.C., the former home of George Washington Vanderbilt.**

**Hyde Park:** This classical Renaissance mansion was the spring-fall residence of Frederick William Vanderbilt, the fourth brother, and was built in 1899. In 1940, Frederick's niece attempted to sell the house and its 200 acres, but President Franklin D. Roosevelt persuaded her to give it to the federal government.

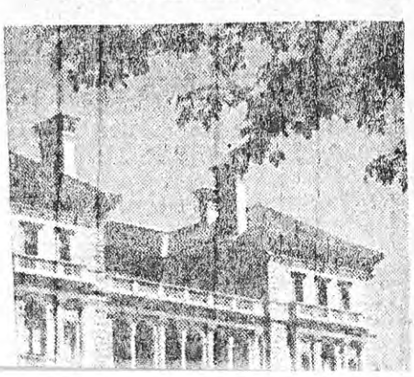
She did and it and FDR's old house on adjacent property are now tourist attractions administered by the National Park Service.

**Centreport Mansion:** Overlooking Long Island Sound, this 24-room Spanish-Moroccan design mansion was built by William Kissam Vanderbilt, whose father owned Marble House. It is now a public museum and planetarium on 43 acres of lush garden property. The property is administered by Suffolk County.

The pattern then is clear. The elegant Vanderbilt properties have all been opened to the public, with restrictions and for fees. But they are open and they have been restored.

Why can't the same be done with Staten Island's Vanderbilt Mausoleum?

**(This is the last of three articles. Next Sunday, the third installment in the Advance's series, "The Seven Wonders of Staten Island," continues.)**



Landmarks Preservation Commission
March 16, 1967, Number 1
LP-0275

ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S CHURCH AND COMMUNITY HOUSE, 109 East 50th Street, Borough of Manhattan. Church begun 1917, completed 1919; architect Bertram G. Goodhue (porch by McKim, Mead & White); Community House completed 1928, B. G. Goodhue Associates, architects.

Landmark Site: Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 1305, Lot 1.

On May 10, 1966, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation as a Landmark of St. Bartholomew's Church and Community House and the proposed designation of the related Landmark Site. (Item No. 28). Two witnesses spoke in favor of designation. This hearing was continued to subsequent hearings of the Commission. The public hearing on St. Bartholomew's Church and Community House was closed on January 31, 1967. (Item No. 9). The hearings had been duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of law. There were no speakers in opposition to the designation at any hearing.

DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

Imposing in mass, striking in appearance and in form, this impressive Church occupies a prominent Park Avenue site where it sits enthroned in all its splendor. One of the most striking features of St. Bartholomew's is its polychromy produced by the attractive blending of salmon colored brick with greyish limestone, marble, and tiles of various hues. The inspiration for the dome is undoubtedly Byzantine and derives more particularly from adaptations of the Byzantine style in Venice.

St. Bartholomew's Church is built on a Latin cross plan and owes its basic architectural characteristics to Byzantine models. A high arched central portal is framed by two lower arched side doors. A frieze of low relief sculpture, resting on slender columns, unifies these three openings. The bronze doors, whose panels depict Old and New Testament themes, are considered by many critics to be the finest of their kind in the City. The clerestory walls of the nave rise high above the comparatively narrow side aisles and are pierced for almost their entire length by large, round-arched windows. A beautiful rose window, with intricate tracery, lights the south wall of the shallow transept. Over the crossing, atop a high drum, sits the octagonal dome sheathed with tiles and marbles in highly colored and intricate designs. When this handsome dome glitters in the sun, its brilliance offers a glowing contrast to its surroundings.

St. Bartholomew's Church was organized in 1835. Its first site was at Lafayette Place and Great Jones Street. In 1872 they moved to their second home at Madison Avenue and 44th Street, where they remained until the erection of the present edifice, in 1918. The congregation includes some of the City's most prominent families.

The construction of St. Bartholomew's was begun in 1917 according to the plans of Bertram G. Goodhue. Goodhue incorporated in his new building the beautiful Romanesque porch then part of the church at Madison Avenue and 44th Street. This porch, designed by McKim, Mead & White, was given by his family as a memorial to Cornelius Vanderbilt II. Its model was the much admired portico of the Church of St. Gilles du Gard at Arles, in southern France, one of the earliest Romanesque examples of the grouping of three doorways into a single composition. Royal Cortissoz, the famous art critic, has called the portal of St. Bartholomew's Church one of the most noble works of its kind in modern times.

In 1926, Mayers, Murray & Phillip, associates of B. G. Goodhue, drew the plans for the adjoining terraced Community House which was completed in 1928. Although the style of this building is well suited to its functional requirements, it harmonizes with the Church through the use of the same warm-colored building materials, the continuation of the limestone band courses from the Church and chapel, and the interspersing of decorative details similar in character and scale to those used in construction of the main house of worship. These same architects put up the present dome in 1930 when the Church was completed.

# THE VANDERBILT FAMILY TREE

1794-1877

## The Commodore: Cornelius Vanderbilt I *m.* (1) Sophia Johnson *m.* (2) Frank Crawford

12 children

- **Phoebe Jane Vanderbilt** *m.* James M. Cross
- **Ethelinda Vanderbilt** *m.* Daniel B. Allen
- **William Henry Vanderbilt I** 1821–1885 *m.* Maria Louisa Kissam
- **Emily Vanderbilt** *m.* W. K. Thorn
- **Cornelius Jeremiah Vanderbilt** *m.* Ellen Williams
- **Eliza Vanderbilt** *m.* G. A. Osgood
- **Sophia Vanderbilt** *m.* Daniel Torrance
- **Maria Alicia Vanderbilt** *m.* N. B. La Bau
- **Catherine Vanderbilt** *m.* (1) Smith Barker *m.* (2) Gustave Lafitte
- **Maria Louise Vanderbilt** *m.* (1) Horace F. Clark *m.* (2) Robert Sterne
- **Frances Vanderbilt**
- **George Washington Vanderbilt I** 1862–1914 *m.* Edith Stuyvesant Dresser

8 children

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**Cornelius Vanderbilt II** 1843–1899 *m.* Alice Gwynne
- William Henry Vanderbilt II
- Alice Gwynne Vanderbilt
- Cornelius Vanderbilt III *m.* Grace Wilson
  - Cornelius Vanderbilt IV *m.* (1) Rachel Littleton *m.* (2) Mary Weir *m.* (3) Helen Varner
  - Grace Vanderbilt *m.* (1) H. G. Davis III *m.* (2) Robert L. Stevens
- Gertrude Vanderbilt *m.* Harry Payne Whitney
  - Cornelius Vanderbilt Whitney *m.* (1) Marie Norton *m.* (2) Gwladys Hopkins
  - Flora Whitney *m.* (1) Roderick Tower *m.* (2) G. Macculloch Miller
  - Barbara Whitney *m.* Barklie McKee Henry
- Alfred Gwynne Vanderbilt I *m.* (1) Elsie French
  - William Henry Vanderbilt III *m.* (1) Emily Davies *m.* (2) Anne Colby
  - *m.* (2) Margaret Emerson McKim
    - Alfred Gwynne Vanderbilt II *m.* Manuela Hudson
    - George Washington Vanderbilt III *m.* Lucille Parsons
- Reginald Claypole Vanderbilt *m.* (1) Cathleen Neilson
  - Cathleen Vanderbilt *m.* (1) H. C. Cushing III *m.* (2) L. W. Lowman
  - *m.* (2) Gloria Morgan
    - Gloria Vanderbilt
- Gladys Moore Vanderbilt *m.* Count László Széchényi of Hungary
  - Cornelia Széchényi *m.* Eugene Bowie Roberts
  - Gladys Széchényi *m.* Viscount Maidstone
  - Alice Széchényi *m.* Count Dula Hadik
  - Sylvia Széchényi
  - Nadine Széchényi

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**Margaret Louisa Vanderbilt** *m.* Elliott F. Shepard
- Maria Louisa Shepard *m.* William Jay Schieffelin Jr.
- Edith Shepard *m.* Ernesto Fabbri
- Margaret Shepard
- Alice Shepard *m.* Dave Hennen Morris
- Elliott F. Shepard II *m.* Eleanor Terradell

Alice m. Investigate

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**William Kissam Vanderbilt I** (1849–1920) *m.* (1) Alva Smith *m.* (2) Anne Harriman Sands Rutherford (no issue)
- Consuelo Vanderbilt *m.* (1) Ninth Duke of Marlborough
  - John, Marquis of Blandford
  - Lord Ivor Charles Spencer Churchill
  - *m.* (2) Louis-Jacques Balsan
- William Kissam Vanderbilt II *m.* (1) Virginia Graham Fair
  - Muriel Vanderbilt *m.* (1) Frederic C. Church Jr. *m.* (2) Henry D. Phelps
  - Consuelo Vanderbilt *m.* (1) Earl E. T. Smith *m.* (2) H. C. Davis III
  - William Kissam Vanderbilt III
  - *m.* (2) Rose Lancaster Warburton
- Harold Stirling Vanderbilt *m.* Gertrude Conaway

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**Emily Thorn Vanderbilt** *m.* (1) William D. Sloane
- Florence Sloane *m.* (1) James A. Burden *m.* (2) Richard Tobin
- Edith Sloane *m.* John Henry Hammond
- Lilian Sloane *m.* William B. Osgood Field
- Malcolm Douglas Sloane *m.* Elinor Lee
- William Douglas Sloane Jr.

*m.* (2) Henry White

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**Frederick William Vanderbilt** *m.* Louise Anthony Torrance

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**Florence Adèle Vanderbilt** *m.* Hamilton McKown Twombly I
- Ruth Vanderbilt Twombly
- Florence Adèle Twombly *m.* William A. M. Burden
- Hamilton McKown Twombly II
- Alice Twombly

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**Eliza Osgood Vanderbilt** *m.* William Seward Webb I
- William Seward Webb II *m.* Gertrude E. Dayton
- James Watson Webb *m.* Electra Havemeyer
- Frederica Vanderbilt Webb *m.* (1) Ralph Pulitzer *m.* (2) Cyril H. Jones
- Vanderbilt Webb *m.* Aileen Osborn

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**George Washington Vanderbilt II** 1873–1914 *m.* Edith Stuyvesant Dresser
- Cornelia Vanderbilt *m.* Hon. John Francis Amherst Cecil
  - George Harry Vanderbilt Cecil
  - William Amherst Vanderbilt Cecil

Bill Cecil

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Cornelius Vanderbilt II ? related to Jared Flagg's wife who was a Platt

Grace Wilson's sister May married Ogden Goelet; their son was Robert Goelet (1880–1966)

# CENTRAL PARK

# DESIGNATION REPORT

1974

City of New York
Abraham D. Beame, Mayor

Landmarks Preservation Commission
Beverly Moss Spatt, Chairman
Terence H. Benbow, Vice-Chairman

Commissioners

Edward A. Ames
Elisabeth Coit
Barbaralee Diamonstein
Warren W. Gran
James J. Heslin
Morris Ketchum, Jr.
Hawthorne E. Lee
Henry F. Ludder, Jr.
Paul E. Parker, Jr.

Landmarks Preservation Commission
April 16, 1974, Calendar No. 1
LP-0851

CENTRAL PARK, BOROUGH OF MANHATTAN.

Landmark Site: Tax Map Block 1111, Lot 1.

## BOUNDARIES

The proposed Central Park Scenic Landmark consists of the property bounded by the southwestern curb line of Frawley Circle, the southern curb line of West 110th Street, the southern curb line of Cathedral Parkway, the southeastern curb line of Frederick Douglass Circle, the eastern curb line of Central Park West, the northeastern curb line of Columbus Circle, the northern curb line of Central Park South (West 59th Street), the western and northern curb line of the "unnamed roadway" around the Grand Army Plaza and the western curb line of Fifth Avenue to Frawley Circle.

## TESTIMONY AT THE PUBLIC HEARINGS

On March 26, 1974, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation of this Scenic Landmark (Item No. 1). The hearing had been duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of law. Thirty-four persons spoke in favor of the proposed designation, including Paul O'Dwyer, President of the City Council and Edwin L. Weisl, Jr., Administrator of the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs Administration. There were no speakers in opposition to designation. The witnesses favoring designation clearly indicate that there is great support for the designation of this Scenic Landmark.

## DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

Central Park was the first large-scale, public park in the nation that was designed and constructed according to a plan - a plan which reflected the aspirations of a people for their city. It was to be a place where all the people, from all walks of life, could find physical and spiritual relief from the pressures of an urban industrial society.

As New York City was transformed under the impact of the Industrial Revolution and massive immigration from Europe during the first half of the 19th century, the shortcomings of the Commissioners' Plan of 1811, for laying out the streets on a grid system, became evident. The population center had shifted northward away from the traditional open areas of lower Manhattan, the Battery and City Hall Park. The street grid made little provision for new squares, promenades or parks. The green spaces that were created were either for private use, such as Gramercy Park and St. John's Park, or were cemeteries and converted graveyards like Washington Square.

By the 1830s, it was clear that this oversight on the part of the municipal government was a serious mistake which compounded the difficulties with which the City was faced. Those were difficulties that no one could have planned for or foreseen. Few could have predicted the astounding rate at which the population would increase -- an average of 15,000 people a year between 1830 and 1850. This taxed municipal facilities to such an extent that they were often unable to meet the demands made upon them. The notoriously inadequate water supply was a particularly dangerous health hazard that encouraged the spread of disease and made impossible proper protection against fire. During the oppressive summer months, outbreaks of cholera and malaria plagued the City. In the summer of 1832, over 100,000 New Yorkers fled from a severe cholera epedemic. Most of the City below Wall Street burned to the ground in 1835. These problems, which jeopardized the viability of the City, were alleviated by the construction of the Croton Water Works that brought an abundant supply of fresh, healthy water into New York. The construction of this system with its up-town reservoir influenced to some extent the selection of the site of Central Park.

In the 1840s, a serious campaign was begun to create a park to benefit all the people of New York. One of the earliest and most influential leaders in this campaign was William Cullen Bryant, the powerful journalist who began to write editorials in favor of a park in his newspaper, the New York Evening Post, on July 3, 1844. As Russell Lynes reminds us, in a recent article in the magazine Smithsonian, "He was not just a friend of artists .... he was a promoter of the arts, a patron and a preservationist at a time when all three were rare." He advocated that the area known as Jones' Wood, which lay along the East River between 68th and 77th Streets, extending west to Third Avenue, be set aside for park purposes. This picturesque woodland was one of the few remaining tracts of natural shoreline lying close to the City. This fact was not lost on those who wanted the area left free for real estate development and commercial use.

Another important voice that called for the establishment of a park was Andrew Jackson Downing, the Hudson River landscape architect and author who was internationally recognized for his books and for his creative landscaping. Downing's proposal which appeared in The Horticulturist in August 1851 was more ambitious than Bryant's; he advocated the creation of a "central" park of at least 500 acres surrounding the receiving reservoir of the Croton Water Works near 80th Street. Today, the Great Lawn occupies the site of that old reservoir.

The creation of a park had been an issue in Ambrose C. Kingsland's winning mayoralty campaign of 1850. On April 5, 1851, he sent a letter to the Common Council urging that land be set aside for a park. Three months later a bill was introduced in the State Legislature which allowed the City to acquire the land at Jones' Wood as a park. Opposition arose and the Board of Aldermen chose a more central tract of land extending from 59th to 106th Streets between Fifth and Eighth Avenues. Even though the statute which made Jones' Wood the site of the park was still valid, the State government authorized the City to begin acquisition of the "central" park area. The legislature authorizing the Jones' Wood Park was repealed in 1854. An addition extending Central Park north to 110th Street was made in 1859 when it was discovered that the rocky terrain was too rough to develop profitably according to the inflexible grid plan.

It was not until the financial panic of 1857 that major work was begun. Thousands of men were unemployed at this time when the state of affairs within the City was, at best, unsettled. During the year a number of civil disturbances had erupted; the mood of the people was growing uglier as the economic life of the City continued to stagnate. Mayor Fernando Wood used the construction of the park as the safety valve that would release the pressure on his administration. It would also provide Wood with a source for thousands of jobs.

In 1857, Egbert L. Viele was appointed Chief Engineer and charged with laying out the park. His topographical study of Manhattan Island became a classic of its type, serving as a primary source for locating hidden and forgotten features of the island. It was to Viele that Frederick Law Olmsted (1822-1903) reported after he had been elected Superintendent of the Park on September 11, 1857. Olmsted, at that time under the authority of Viele, was in charge of policing the park, seeing that its regulations were enforced, and that the work of clearing the area was carried out. He had a background in engineering which he had studied for two-and-a-half years with Frederick A. Barton. His involvement in scientific farming in Owego, New York, and while living on Staten Island, his classic studies of the southern states for the New York Times, and his travels through Europe had stimulated his interest in landscape architecture and its role in urban development.

The Park Commission announced a public competition for a design for the park in October. It was then that Calvert Vaux (1824-1895), an architect who had worked with A. J. Downing, approached Olmsted and suggested that they submit a plan together. Olmsted had first met Vaux through Downing and was undoubtedly familiar with the work he had done with Downing on the Smithsonian Institution and the Capitol at Washington, D. C. Olmsted was initially hesitant, wishing to speak first with Viele to find out whether he had any objections. When Viele indicated that it did not matter to him if Olmsted entered the competition, Vaux and Olmsted began their collaboration. They annonymously submitted their design, entitled "Greensward", and were awarded first prize in April 1858. Olmsted was appointed Architect-in-Chief of the new park, and

Vaux became Assistant to the Architect-in-Chief.

The concept of Central Park as envisioned by these two men is the result of certain ideas and attitudes about man's relationship to Nature and the City and the effects that they have upon him. The park not only incorporates certain landscape traditions, but it also reflects the intellectual climate in which it was conceived.

The rise of Transcendentalism as a force in American intellectual life had its effect on Olmsted. It is known that while he was living on Staten Island, he was a neighbor of Judge William Emerson, elder brother of the leading spokesman for Transcendentalism, Ralph Waldo Emerson. He was also familiar with the Utopian movement in this country and had visited the Fourierist community in Red Bank, New Jersey. Although he thought highly of this community, he was not uncritical of it because it lacked the civilizing influence of urban life. Olmsted and Vaux were not members of any particular sect or philosophical school, but they did share with their contemporaries a belief in the salutary effect of Nature upon man; that is, that the future health of society and of our cities depended on the spiritual health of the people which could be insured by re-establishing their link with Nature that had been broken by the rapid growth and industrialization of urban centers.

It was obvious that the land chosen for the park, with its shanties, pig farms and dismal swamps, would do little to inspire the people of the City if left in its natural state. Landscaping was a necessity, and the work done by Olmsted and Vaux incorporated certain elements derived from English sources.

The English landscapist broke from the geometric formality of Continental gardens as planned by the Frenchman Le Notre at the beginning of the 18th century. One of the leading principles of the English tradition was that the landscape architect should create an environment which was an extension of the countryside -- an environment both informal and unrestricted where the works of man were a complement to the works of Nature. Buildings, a necessary element in every park, were not to intrude upon the scenery.

Among the early English landscape architects whose influence may be seen in Central Park are "Capability" Brown and Sir Uvedale Price. Brown advocated parks that made use of curved lines, meadows, lawns, and ponds and lakes with irregular shorelines. One of Price's treatments for the landscape was to make it picturesque -- emphasizing dramatic scenery with sudden shifts in terrain and using the natural elements of the area. It is possible to see Brown's influence in the southern section of the park, while the northern section exhibits characteristics of Price's work. The genius of Olmsted and Vaux was combined to adapt these and other elements into a new type of park which was unique. It set a precedent for other American cities and was also seen as a fine expression of the democratic ideal.

In planning the northern and southern sections of the park Olmsted and Vaux saw the southern section as "far more heterogeneous in its character" requiring "much more varied treatment". The Lake and the Pond, the pastoral Sheep Meadow, and the intricate Ramble all add to the type of variety they sought for this section of the park. The northern section of the park is predominantly "natural" in character. Steep hills, rock outcroppings, thick woods, and three bodies of water linked by a brook combine to create a wilderness setting.

Although Olmsted closely controlled the overall design of the park he needed the assistance of a skilled horticulturist to carry out the actual planting of trees and shrubbery. In this he relied upon the expertise of Ignatz A. Pilat, a native of Austria, who, after several visits to this country, settled here in 1856. A graduate of the University of Vienna, he received his practical training in horticulture at the Imperial Royal University Botanical Garden where he was appointed assistant gardener in 1846. Samuel B. Parsons, Jr., who succeeded Vaux in 1895 as Landscape Architect to the Park Department, commented on the fact that the park needed just such a man as Pilat, one who was not only a plant expert but also a landscape gardener.

Trees are the prime adornment of the park whether found in an isolated grove, bordering a body of water or a meadow, or as splendid solitary examples. With the assistance of Pilat, Olmsted designated the settings in which he desired to place them, making use of those already there and of those they introduced from other locations to obtain variety.

Most lordly among the deciduous trees in the park, and having the greatest longevity (up to 500 years or more), are the oak trees. Most rapid growing among them is the red oak. The pin oak gets its name from the short pin-like shoots of its branches, while the willow oak would readily be confused with the willow tree were it not for its acorns.

The maple trees include the prolific red maple, among the first to bloom in springtime, the Norway maple, so similar to the sugar maple, and the silver maple identified by downward curving branches which jut upward just at the ends.

Among other varieties in the park are the elms. The American elm, often referred to as the "wineglass elm" because of its graceful shape, is threatened with extinction due to the Dutch elm disease. The walnut, horse chestnut and cherry tree are also in evidence in the park, as are the tulip poplar, mulberry and ironwood tree.

Among the conifers, or cone bearing trees, the white pine, the Canadian hemlock and the eastern red cedar were the only evergreens to be found in the park when Pilat made his initial survey in 1857. In addition to those, the Scots pine, the Austrian pine, the Himalayan pine and the Korean pine may also be seen in the park today. The bald cypress, which often grows near ponds, loses its leaves in the fall just like the deciduous trees.

Invaluable, as they define or punctuate the landscape, shade trees are probably the most important element in the park. They lend it an indefinable quality which Wayne Trimm described in a recent article in The Conservationist magazine: "... here among the rocks and trees and water and wild life there is a special quality that helps man endure. Pause and see the patterned sunlight on the water or the texturing of the rocks and bark. Listen to the birds and the wind among the trees. Touch the growing grass beneath the shifting shadows, pause, relax and wonder".

Among the most attractive natural features of the park are the outcropping of bedrock. These huge stone areas which occur in many places in the park have been enhanced over the years by smooth lawns which sweep up to them and by clumps of rhododendrons and other plantings. Many have steps cut into them, facilitating the way of the pedestrian. These great areas of stone are exposed portions of the bedrock which underlies all of the soil and loose broken surface rock in Manhattan. It is basically a coarse textured material called schist, and is composed of quartz, feldspar and mica minerals. This bedrock is metamorphic in origin in that it has undergone a physical change in form and structure due to enormous pressures in the earth's crust. This accounts for the intricate bends and twisted patterns displayed by the mineral layers of this rock.

Another interesting phenomenon in the park is the appearance, at various locations, of enormous boulders which sit in splendid isolation. This was caused by a glacier which once covered Manhattan to a depth of at least 1200 feet some 17,000 years ago. It pushed along its lower surface loose rocks and boulders, many of which were left sitting wherever they happened to be when the glacier melted. These great boulders are consequently known as "glacial erratics" and are in themselves picturesque features of the park.

Those who had advocated the necessity of Central Park for the city were quickly proven right. Hordes of people flocked to the park, even before its completion, and made it the city's foremost recreation and pleasure ground. By 1861, according to an account in Harper's Magazine, the park's most popular features were the Carriage Drive, the Bridle Road, the Ramble and the Lake. During the winter the Lake was crowded with hundreds of skaters. By 1866, it was estimated that an average of 20,000 people visited the park every day.

The city had spent $9,750,000 on the park by January 1, 1866, but as an investment the park had proved itself. The assessed property values of the land surrounding the park had increased by $34,600,000 to $61,000,000, and the city had received an increased $1,000,000 in tax revenues. In 1866, A. H. Guernsey, writing in Harper's Magazine, was able to point out: "but great as is this pecuniary advantage to the city and to individuals, it is the least of the benefits arising from the Park ... The Park is useful because it adds to human enjoyment ... No man can say...how much the health of the city is owing to the Park... Its civilizing and humanizing influence is something wholly incalculable."

Olmsted and Vaux had created Central Park for the people of New York City, and the people were eager to enjoy its beauty and recreational benefits. Clarence Cook, the noted critic, wrote in 1869; "The Central Park is the pleasure-ground of the chief city in a great republic. It has not been set aside by any privileged class for its own use and entertainment, but it is the creation of the whole people of the City of New York for their own enjoyment..." Cook also recognized the historical significance of the park when he wrote: "We are proud of it because it is the first undertaking of the kind in our own country, and because its entire management, from the first day until now, has been such as to recommend enterprises of this nature to the whole country." In addition he was aware that the park was a living and growing entity and subject to constant upkeep: "...let those who conceived the idea of this pleasure-ground, those who designed its beauties, and those whose public spirit and untired zeal have brought it to perfection, be sure that their memory will not pass away, but will renew itself year by year..."

Since the park's beginning, it has been the prime recreation site of Manhattan and its most notable green space, offering a country-like respite from brick and concrete. Millions of New Yorkers visit the park every year, both to enjoy its scenery and to use its recreational facilities. In keeping with the original ideals of the park, it still belongs to all the people of New York, and it offers its many pleasures to all. It is as true in 1974 as it was in 1866 that its value to the city is incalculable, and that we must preserve it for future generations.

One of the important things which sets Central Park apart from so many other parks, which simply grew on their sites, is the fact that, despite the great size (840 acres), it was the result of a carefully laid-out plan. Not merely content to have their plan win in competition, Olmsted and Vaux literally lived with it. During construction they moved their families into a building at the northern end of the park. In this way they were able to build creatively, day by day, always ready to modify it to achieve the best results as new conditions arose on the site. Their imaginations were constantly challenged to take advantage of the functional and aesthetic possibilities as they arose.

It has been said that Central Park literally brought the open country into the heart of the City. How was it possible that, confronted with a squatters' town of some three hundred hovels set in an open plain interspersed with outcroppings of rock, swamps and meandering waterways, Olmsted and Vaux were able to achieve such a fine result? The answer lies in the fact that much of what we see today was man made. Just as an architect erects his buildings, Olmsted and Vaux, working with Egbert Viele's excellent topographical survey of the area, creatively gave three-dimensional form to the park. They not only introduced such features as mounds, swales and lakes, they also embellished natural features already present such as outcroppings of rock to further enhance the scene. Only a great artist could create such man made beauty working with earth, rocks, water and vegetation as his palette. The end result was romantic and picturesque in the extreme and needed only such naturalistic touches as sheep grazing in a meadow, swans gliding on a pond, rustic trellised arbors and

stone arches. All structures, they felt, should blend harmoniously with this natural setting and for this reason bridges and buildings whether of stone, wood or iron were made intentionally picturesque in the best Victorian tradition.

The creation of the park as an artistic masterpiece had, of necessity, to be laid on a firm functional foundation. It was first necessary to construct a drainage system, 95 miles in length, which channelled the underground streams, carried off excess surface water, and allowed fresh water from the reservoir to flow into the lakes. Confronted with the problem of reconciling five different types of circulation which cross and recross each other at different levels, Olmsted and Vaux met the challenge with great originality and imagination. These five elements of circulation include: footpaths, bridle paths, carriage drives, waterways and the functionally effective sunken transverse roads. Extending a park up the heart of the City for some fifty blocks (approx. 2-1/2 miles) would of necessity require that transverse roads be permitted to cross it at stated intervals. This problem was solved by depressing these roads considerably beneath the general surface of the park so that no one walking in the park was aware of the east-west traffic rumbling along below it. This was not a completely original idea as such, there having been other precedents for it.

Considering that these transverse roads were built for carriages, carts and drays, people today are amazed at the foresight of those who conceived this feature which serves the heavy flow of motor traffic so well. Picturesque serpentine carriage drives, which discouraged the racing of trotters, ran primarily north and south. They crossed unobtrusively over the transverse roads on bridges which were scarcely noticed by the brilliant array of carriages drawn by horses which were a conspicuous feature of the afternoon drive when New Yorkers turned out in force to see and be seen.

Some of the many footpaths which laced the park in all directions followed the drives at certain points so that the pedestrian could also have a good view of the passing parade. A series of handsome arches of brick, stone and iron permitted the pedestrian to pass under the drives without crossing them and likewise to pass over the independent but interlacing system of bridle paths which they crossed at various points.

The waterways, whether lakes or streams, are traversed at various points by bridges for the pedestrian permitting the rowboat on the lake to pass unimpeded over the water. Today the functional plan of the park remains so effective that one barely thinks of it -- an unconscious tribute to the mastery of the overall design of Olmsted and Vaux.

Among the structures which blend most harmoniously with the site are the bridges which carry the east and west drives over the transverse roads, the footpaths over lakes, and the smaller bridges or arches which generally carry the footpaths over the bridle paths or the drives over footpaths. These are constructed of a wide range of materials including wood, rough-faced stonework, dressed stonework, brick, and even cast iron. Of those bridges which exemplify the materials mentioned above are some which are more or less typical of the approximately fifty bridges and arches in the park today: the wood footbridges at the Ramble, the bold faced, picturesque stone archway known as the Glen Span at the entrance to the Ravine, the rather formal Trefoil Arch of dressed stonework at the eastern end of the Lake, which passes under the East Drive, and the Willowdell Arch of brick trimmed with stone, east of The Mall, which also passes under the East Drive. Several extremely handsome cast-iron bridges also adorn the park, most notable of which is the recently restored Bow Bridge with its wide low span which crosses the Lake at mid-point. These arches and bridges are an important part of that planning which makes circulation in the park so safe and so attractive.

The twenty gates in the wall around Central Park were dedicated to the people of New York City. The gates were named in 1862 by the Park Commissioners honoring: Artisans, Artists, Merchants, Scholars, Cultivators (changed to Farmers), Warriors, Mariners, Engineers, Hunters, Fishermen, Woodmen, Miners, Explorers (changed to Pioneers), Inventors, Foreigners (changed to Strangers), Boys, Girls, Women, Children, and All Saints. Clarence Cook wrote in 1869: "In naming the gates, ... it has been thought fittest to select such names as will make every working member of the community, whether he worked with his head or his hands, feel his personal ownership of the Park ..." Basically

simple openings in the wall, the gates do not emphasize architecture at the expense of landscape.

The Mall and the Terrace, also called the Esplanade, were an integral part of the original Greensward Plan. Stretching across the lower section of the park from 65th Street to 73rd Street, it is the one formal element in an otherwise picturesque plan. T. Addison Richards, writing in Harper's in August 1861 described the Terrace: "Its elegance and stateliness, together with the grace and symmetry of the Mall, ... will give to this portion of the Park a feeling of the beautiful which will be in most grateful contrast to that vagrant and laissez aller humor of the picturesque which prevails through the rest of the grounds."

The Mall, which was planted with four rows of elm trees, was planned so that its vista would terminate with a view of the Belvedere. The physical termination point of the Mall as one walks northward is the Esplanade or Terrace, constructed in two levels, at the lower edge of the Lake. The pedestrian can choose one of two ways to descend to the lower Terrace: either by crossing the roadway and using one of two wide flights of stairs lined with impressive carved railings; or by descending through the gallery and arcade beneath the roadway. At both levels the Terrace is outlined by piers and balustrades of carved Albert freestone. The imaginative detailing of stylized foliation and birds was designed by Jacob Wrey Mould in keeping with Victorian prototype. The ceiling of the gallery is lined with colored Minton tiles.

The dominant feature of the lower Terrace is the Bethesda Fountain, designed by Emma Stebbins. A large bronze figure of the Angel of the Waters rises above a basin supported on a pedestal carved with four youthful figures representing Health, Purity, Temperance and Peace. The inspiration for the fountain is the story told in the Gospel of John, chapter 5, verses 2-4.

Olmsted and Vaux felt strongly that any buildings in the park should serve a secondary function -- the landscape and the preservation of the natural setting being their foremost considerations. At the same time, they designed a number of structures which enhanced the appearance of the park; in the text for "Greensward", their winning plan for the park, they said: "...we conceive that all such architectural structures should be confessedly subservient to the main idea, and that nothing artificial should be obtruded in view as an ultimatum of interest. The idea of the park itself should always be uppermost in the mind of the beholder."

Calvert Vaux was trained as an architect in England and came to this country to work for Andrew Downing, the landscape architect whose writings popularized the Italian villa style and the planned environment. Vaux's interest in landscaping grew out of this association. To him was entrusted the design of many of the park's structures after he and Olmsted were appointed park architects. Jacob Wrey Mould, who had also been born and trained as an architect in England, began assisting Vaux in the design of park structures about 1858. Vaux is generally credited with the overall designs for the buildings and for many of the bridges, while Mould has been credited with the elegant details of the cast-iron bridges and with the refinements of the Terrace.

The park buildings were generally designed in the Victorian Gothic style and, characteristically, many are built of red brick trimmed with stone and surmounted by steeply pitched roofs. Those structures built of cast iron made excellent use of that material, being light and graceful in form and enhanced by delicate detail. Although many schemes for buildings in the park have been proposed over the years, most of them have fortunately not been realized. The actual number of buildings in the park remains relatively small, and a number of the original Vaux and Mould structures, of the 1860s and 1870s, remain standing.

Sculpture has also found its way into the park. The 19th-century residents of the City, who loved monuments, felt that the park was an appropriate place for them. The statues in the park may generally be divided into three types. Most noticeable are the formal portrait statues or busts, many of which are concentrated along the Mall. Just above the circle at the southern end of the Mall, the seated figures of Sir Walter Scott and Robert Burns, placed opposite each other, form a handsome entrance to it. Among other

statues on the Mall is a bust of the German poet Schiller, the first statue to be erected in the park. Figures of other writers and artists, popular in the 19th century, are also on the Mall.

A second group may be called children's sculpture because the subject matter or style of execution tends to appeal to children. In this group are such statues as Alice in Wonderland, Hans Christian Andersen with the Ugly Duckling, the Honey Bear, and the Dancing Goat. The sculpture of this type is grouped around the Zoo and the Conservatory Water.

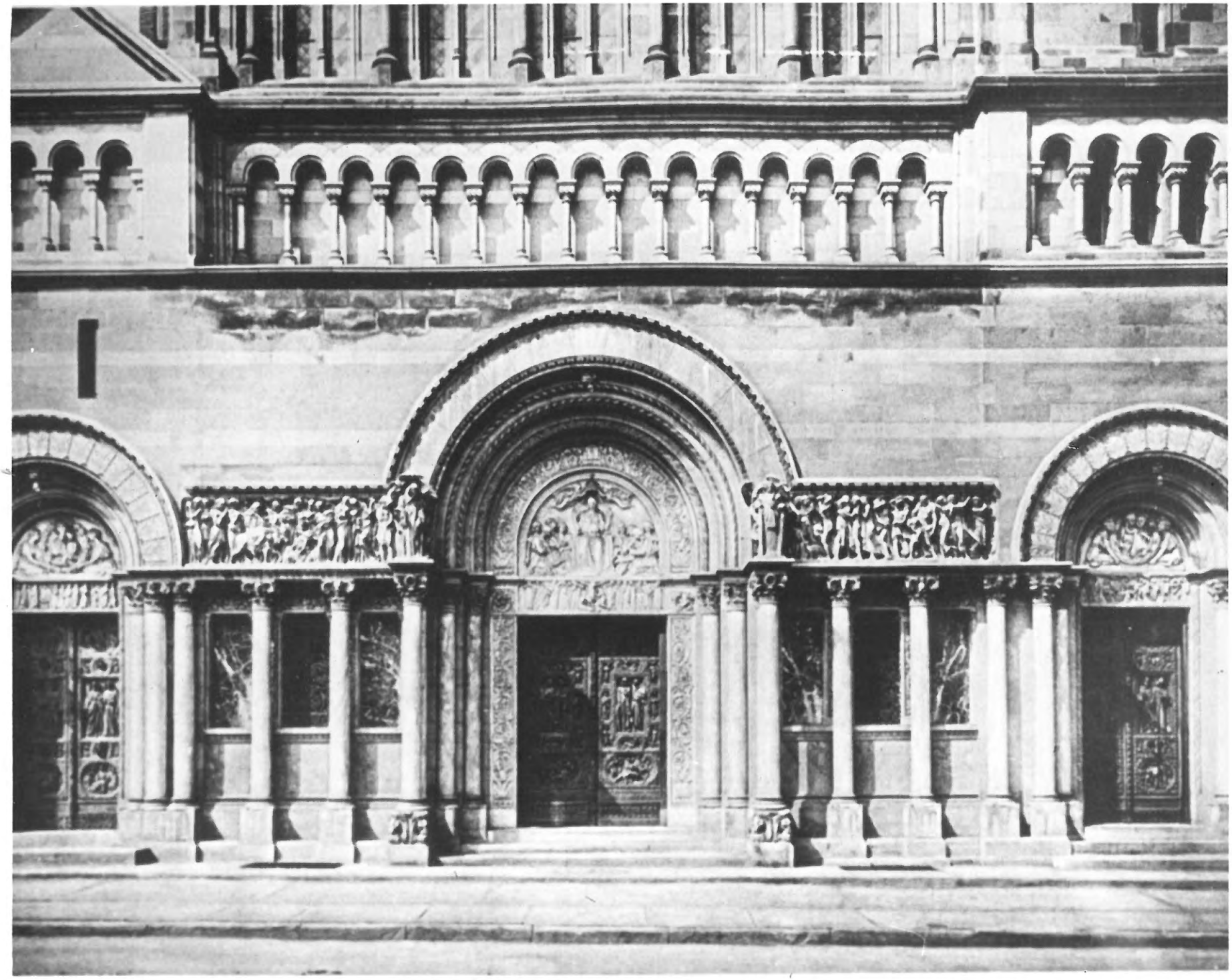
The third group of sculpture is also a product of 19th-century taste. These are sculptures that depict subjects in nature. The Indian Hunter, the Tigress and Cubs, and the Still Hunt are examples of this type.

## FINDINGS AND DESIGNATIONS

On the basis of a careful consideration of the history, natural features, landscaping, waterways, architecture and other features of this park, the Landmarks Preservation Commission finds that Central Park has a special character, special historical and aesthetic interest and value as part of the development, heritage and cultural characteristics of New York City.

The Commission further finds that, among its important qualities, Central Park is one of the largest and most beautiful urban parks in this country, that it was laid out in accordance with a carefully prepared plan, that it inaugurated the urban park movement in the United States, that it provided a large open space for recreational purposes in New York City which had, until the time the park was built, been almost nonexistent, that its creation was guided with foresight and imagination by Frederick Law Olmsted, the greatest landscape architect in the country, that the plan for the park required an exceptional knowledge of engineering in order to utilize the existing topography while at the same time creating a new and beautiful environment, that a remarkable system of circulation involving five different elements was devised, that the structures in the park were designed by Calvert Vaux and Jacob Wrey Mould to blend and harmonize with their surroundings, and that Central Park continues to be used every year by millions of New York City residents as well as tourists from other states and from abroad.

Accordingly, pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 63 of the Charter of the City of New York and Chapter 8-A of the Administrative Code of the City of New York, the Landmarks Preservation Commission designates as a Scenic Landmark, Central Park, Borough of Manhattan, which consists of the property bounded by the southwestern curb line of Frawley Circle, the southern curb line of West 110th Street, the southern curb line of Cathedral Parkway, the southeastern curb line of Frederick Douglass Circle, the eastern curb line of Central Park West, the northeastern curb line of Columbus Circle, the northern curb line of Central Park South, (West 59th Street), the western and northern curb lines of the "unnamed roadway" around the Grand Army Plaza and the western curb line of Fifth Avenue to Frawley Circle and designates as its Landmark Site Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 1111, Lot 1 excluding the Grand Army Plaza portion of this lot.



October 6, 1978

Mr. Robert Miraldi
Staten Island Advance
950 Fingerboard Road
Staten Island, NewwYork 10305

Dear Mr. Miraldi

Thank you very much for the extremely interesting articles on the Vanderbilt Mansoleum. Since we are currently examining Olmsted's work in New York City with an eye to the designations of scenic landmarks, they are especially timely. I was unaware of his involvement with the project.

It is my understanding that an appointment to visit the Mansoleum is being arranged with the Staten Island Borough President. The articles will, indeed, provide useful background material.

Sincerely,

Gail T. Gillet

GTG:lg

RE: Vanderbilt Mausoleum

ADDRESS Moravian Cemetery Richmond

BLOCK 935. (~~934~~) LOT 1

OWNER United Brethrens Chur.
Richmond Rd.
Richmond, N.Y. 10306

C.P.D.

ELECTED OFFICIALS

BORO_ PRESIDENT

SENATOR

ASSEMBLY

COUNCILMAN

CONGRESSMAN

OTHER

Nominated 9/75 by Commissioners

Vanderbilt Mausoleum
Richmond

# LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

RE: VANDERBILT MAUSOLEUM & CEMETERY

ADDRESS: MORAVIAN CEMETERY, RICHMOND ROAD & ALTAMONT ST, STATEN ISLAND

LP NUMBER: 1208 ITEM NUMBER: 4

ARCHITECT: RICHARD MORRIS HUNT

ORIGINAL OWNER: WILLIAM HENRY VANDERBILT

ARCHITECTURAL STYLE: Hunt used a modified Romanesque Revival to create the tomb while the landscaping was done by Frederick Law Olmsted.

REMARKS: Built between 1881 and 1889 the Vanderbilt Mausoleum is one of the few surviving works of Richard Morris Hunt in New York City.

PREVIOUS HEARINGS: continued from September 9, 1980 public hearings

NATIONAL REGISTER: no

VANDERBILT MAUSOLEUM AND CEMETERY, Moravian Cemetery, Richmond Road and Altamont Street, New Dorp, Staten Island

The Vanderbilt Mausoleum, located in the Vanderbilt Cemetery which itself is a part of the Moravian Cemetery, is one of the rare surviving works of architect Richard Morris Hunt in New York City. Commissioned by William Henry Vanderbilt (1821-1885), it was built between 1881 and 1889. Members of the Vanderbilt family had been associated with the New Dorp Moravian Church since its founding in 1742. Consequently, the desire of W.H. Vanderbilt to locate the family cemetery within the Moravian Cemetery is quite understandable. Hunt, the foremost American architect of his day and designer of several houses for members of the Vanderbilt clan, used a modified Romanesque Revival style to create a severe, yet imposing, family tomb, accented by the use of round arches and two small domes. A massive round-arched gate, echoing the design of the mausoleum, sets off the entrance to the Vanderbilt Cemetery. The landscaping of the cemetery was undertaken by Frederick Law Olmsted, America's most notable landscape architect, who collaborated with Hunt on other projects. Tombs and grave sites of other Vanderbilt family members are also in the cemetery.

Eleven years later he prevailed on the college authorities to establish a separate chair of mathematics, and after that time he filled the chair of natural philosophy and astronomy until his death. His wife died in 1829 and in 1831 he married Julia Mason of Rensselaer County, N. Y. He had five sons and two daughters. A teacher by nature, he assisted the friends of common-schools by writing, lecturing, and appearing before legislative bodies. While he was unable to carry out the normal-school idea himself, he nevertheless wrote much on the necessity of such a project.

As an instructor of scientific subjects, he introduced experiments into his lectures and inaugurated laboratory work for the students. He advocated an astronomical observatory for the use of students, and another for scientific research. A lamentable lack of textbooks led him to prepare such aids, not only for the colleges, but for academies and the general reader. His *Introduction to Natural Philosophy* (2 vols., 1831–32) was used for many years after his death in the edition revised by E. S. Snell of Amherst. It was followed by *Compendium of Natural Philosophy* (1833), which went through more than a hundred editions; *Introduction to Astronomy* (1839); *A Compendium of Astronomy* (1839), for schools; *Letters on Astronomy, Addressed to a Lady* (1840), prepared for school libraries by request of the Massachusetts Board of Education; and *Rudiments of Natural Philosophy and Astronomy* (1844), which also appeared in raised letters for the use of the blind. All his books show excellent arrangement of material, and thoroughness and clearness of presentation.

His contributions in physics and astronomy were mainly on meteors, hailstorms, aurora, and zodiacal light. The papers dealing with the famous meteoric showers of Nov. 13, 1833 (*American Journal of Science and Arts*, January–April 1834, January 1836), brought him scientific fame. In these he collected and arranged in logical and orderly manner all the available data on the subject. The cause of such showers, he concluded, is due to particles of cosmic origin (suggesting comets) passing through the earth's atmosphere and proceeding from a definite radiant ($\gamma$-Leonis), and, recalling similar observations of other times, he assumed a probable periodicity of occurrence of the phenomenon. Although he refers to the November showers of 1799, it was left for later generations to connect meteoric showers with a definite comet. His study of hailstorms led him to show the electrical theory then held (especially in France) to be incorrect and to give substantially the explanation, accepted today, based on dynamics and thermodynamics of the atmosphere (*Ibid.*, April 1830). His work on geological subjects was mainly concerned with the mineral resources and their utilization. He invented a process for "gas light from cotton seed," patented July 21, 1827, a useful stove, patented Nov. 5, 1834, and a lubricant of lard and rosin for machinery. He wrote many articles on religious subjects and also a number of biographical sketches.

[F. B. Dexter, *Biog. Sketches Grads. Yale Coll.*, vol. VI (1912) contains full bibliog. See also T. D. Woolsey, in the *New Englander*, Aug. 1859; C. S. Lyman, in *Am. Jour. of Science and Arts*, July 1859; H. K. Olmsted and G. K. Ward, *Geneal. of the Olmsted Family in America* (1912); K. P. Battle, *Hist. of the Univ. of N. C.* (2 vols., 1907–12); Alexander von Humboldt, *Cosmos* (London, 1850, trans. by Edward Sabin); *Columbian Weekly Reg.* (New Haven, Conn.), May 21, 1859.]

A. F. K.



**OLMSTED, FREDERICK LAW** (Apr. 26, 1822–Aug. 28, 1903), landscape architect, was born in Hartford, Conn. His paternal forbears had been numbered among the intelligent townsmen and farmers of the region since its settlement in 1636, when James Olmsted, an emigrant of 1632 from Essex County, England, came thither from Boston. His father, John Olmsted, a prosperous merchant, took a lively interest in nature, people, and places, which was inherited by both Frederick Law and his younger brother, John Hull. His mother, Charlotte Law (Hull) Olmsted, died when he was scarcely four years old, to be succeeded in 1827 by a congenial step-mother, Mary Ann Bull, who shared her husband's strong love of nature and had perhaps a more cultivated taste.

Frederick was sent to be educated, first to dame schools and then to a succession of rural parsons, but his lessons were broken by solitary country rambles from the home of one friend or relation to another. Moreover, holidays took the form of long tours mostly by carriage, in which his father and step-mother, accompanied by the two boys, took great pleasure. When Frederick was sixteen he had thus made four journeys, each over a thousand miles, in New England, New York State, and Canada, during which he observed populous towns as well as various types of rural scenery, and was encouraged to discuss what he saw. When he was almost ready to enter Yale in 1837, sumach poisoning weakened his eyes and, giving up college plans, he spent two and a half years studying engineering with Frederick A. Barton, first at Andover, Mass., and later at Collinsville, Conn. In August 1840, he went to work for Benkard & Hutton, French dry-goods importers in New York, remaining until March 1842, but finding

Olmsted

mercantile employment uncongenial after the outdoor life he loved. For the next year, he attended lectures in a desultory way at Yale, leaving in April 1843, before the mast in the bark *Ronaldson* for China in search of adventure; during a year-long voyage his eyes were open for strange people and scenes.

On his return, he determined to take up farming as a career, and spent some months at his Uncle Brooks's farm in Cheshire, Conn., followed by a summer (1845) on Joseph Welton's farm at Waterbury, Conn., and a winter attending scientific lectures at New Haven, more enjoyable socially because of his brother John's presence at Yale. Frederick's Yale affiliations later caused him to be made an honorary member of his brother's class, that of 1847, and the circle of his brother's friends, there and in New York, numbering among them Charles Loring Brace [*q.v.*], brought him in touch with the great sociological problems of the period. From April to October 1846, he pursued his agricultural apprenticeship on the prize farm of George Geddes, "Fairmount," near Owego, N. Y., and in 1847 he felt himself ready to begin independent farming, first on a small place at Guilford, Conn., and from January 1848, on the more adequate Ackerly farm, "South Side," Staten Island, N. Y., purchased for him by his father, and operated with enthusiasm for several years until literary activities came to overshadow agricultural interests. He himself in later life considered this practical experience in agriculture, combined with his attempts at home landscaping and his modest nursery business, and also his active participation in local county affairs, an important part of his preparation for his career.

In 1850 he began the series of travels which were to draw forth his literary ability, and sailed with his brother and Charles Brace for Europe—following four weeks on the Continent by a walking tour of rural Britain, recorded in *Walks and Talks of an American Farmer in England* (1852). While farming and writing, he had made the acquaintance of Andrew Jackson Downing [*q.v.*], who, in consequence of Olmsted's earlier contributions to the *Horticulturist*, sent him letters of introduction. He visited Downing at Newburgh, and they must have compared impressions of foreign parks and gardens. Late in 1852, impelled by a stirring discussion with William Lloyd Garrison, who was visiting the farm with Charles Brace, Olmsted started on his first Southern journey, commissioned by Henry J. Raymond, editor of the *New York Times*, to write his unbiased impressions of slavery and of actual economic and social conditions in the South. The success of his letters, later published as *A Journey in the Seaboard Slave States* (1856), suggested a second tour, also largely on horseback, which took Frederick with his brother John into Texas, followed by a solitary return journey from New Orleans to Richmond, described respectively in *A Journey Through Texas* (1857) and *A Journey in the Back Country* (1860). Acclaimed as the most accurate picture of conditions in the South prior to the Civil War, the three books were condensed and published in America as *The Cotton Kingdom* (2 vols., 1861), and in England as *Journeys and Explorations in the Cotton Kingdom* (2 vols., 1861). His service in his Southern books, however, was not limited merely to a fair record of what he saw. "Olmsted did what he could to save the pot from boiling over. . . . For passion he sought to substitute thoughtfulness, for raving rationality, and for invective a calm examination of facts and their historical antecedents that should induce tolerance" (Mitchell, *post*, p. xi).

Meanwhile, brief sojourns on the somewhat neglected Staten Island farm, shortly to be sold, editorial work for *Putnam's Monthly Magazine*, and, in company with George William Curtis [*q.v.*], a financially disastrous dabbling in the publishing business of Dix & Edwards, led up to further travels in Europe (1856), partly on publishing matters. A pleasure visit to Italy with his sister yielded much in landscape inspiration. In 1857, somewhat at loose ends, he was still trying to wind up the publishing business, when chance gave him the opportunity for which his variety of experience had given him extraordinary preparation. The City of New York, inspired by the appeals of William Cullen Bryant and Andrew Jackson Downing, had embarked on the novel undertaking of providing a great public pleasure ground comparable with those of Europe.

Indorsed by such notables as Asa Gray, Washington Irving, and Peter Cooper, on Sept. 11, 1857, he was appointed superintendent of the new Central Park in New York, then under construction from the design of Captain Egbert L. Viele; and there Olmsted, at thirty-five, learned to engage in the bitterly fought but generally victorious battles between art and politics which were to tax his energies throughout the rest of his professional career. Associating himself with Calvert Vaux [*q.v.*], a young English architect whom he had previously met as Downing's pupil, he entered the competition for a new design for the park, which the two young men won under the name of "Greens-

ward." On May 17, 1858, Olmsted was appointed architect in chief of the Central Park, and, with Vaux, strove in the face of almost insuperable political difficulties, to make the first American park not only a work of art but also a successful municipal enterprise. (The full story of this great undertaking, told partly in Olmsted's own reports, may be found in Olmsted and Kimball, *post*, vol. II.)

On June 13, 1859, Olmsted married the widow of his brother John (who had died in 1857), Mary Cleveland (Perkins) Olmsted, thus becoming step-father to her three children, among them John Charles Olmsted [*q.v.*]; and to this family, first living in the Central Park, and then mainly in New York, were added two children that survived infancy, a daughter and a son, Frederick Law, Jr. In the fall of 1859, Olmsted paid an official visit to the parks and gardens of Europe to procure information of advantage for the development of Central Park, which, by 1860, to a large degree took the form intended by its designers and acquired a gratifying measure of public use and popularity. In that year, Olmsted and Vaux were appointed "landscape architects and designers to the Commissioners North of 155th Street," and thus began certain significant phases of city planning.

Shortly after the outbreak of the Civil War, Olmsted secured leave of absence from the Park to go to Washington, at the invitation of Henry W. Bellows [*q.v.*], to become general secretary of the United States Sanitary Commission, the parent of the American Red Cross; in some respects this was his most important single public service (F. L. Olmsted, Jr., *post*). Worn out by his arduous labors behind the battle-lines, the more difficult because of lameness caused by an accident during the Park's construction, Olmsted in 1863 was obliged to resign from the Sanitary Commission, but not before its work was thoroughly established and its ideals perpetuated in the newly formed Union League Club, of which he was a founder. To regain his health, Olmsted, having with Vaux resigned from the Park work largely for political reasons, accepted (August 1863) the superintendency of the Frémont Mariposa mining estates in California, where he was joined by his family in the early spring of 1864. The primitive life in Bear Valley, exploratory camping trips in the Yosemite and the High Sierras, and landscape designing in the region of San Francisco Bay, redirected Olmsted's thoughts to his career in landscape architecture. Two notable achievements resulted from his two-year sojourn: the erection of the Yosemite as a state reservation, Olmsted

Olmsted

serving as first president of the commission, and the design of the grounds and residential village for the new University of California at Berkeley.

In the summer of 1865, Olmsted and Vaux having been reappointed landscape architects to the commissioners of Central Park, and also designers of the new park for Brooklyn, Olmsted decided to return to New York, bringing his landscape work for the San Francisco park, the Oakland Cemetery, and the University of California to be completed by the firm of Olmsted, Vaux & Company. From 1865 dates the steady development of his national practice of the new art of landscape architecture, for seven years in close combination with Vaux, who supplied the architectural background which Olmsted himself lacked, and ultimately, after looser arrangements with Vaux and Jacob Weidenmann, with John Charles Olmsted and his own son Frederick Law, Jr., and other pupils. During this New York period to 1878 when, after ups and downs, political machinations finally removed him from Central Park, the most important other enterprises of Olmsted and Vaux were the laying out of upper New York, including Riverside Park, Prospect Park in Brooklyn, the suburban village at Riverside near Chicago, a park for Buffalo, the Chicago South Park, Staten Island improvement, and land subdivisions at Tarrytown and Irvington, N. Y. In 1874, Olmsted was commissioned to design the grounds of the United States Capitol at Washington, and in 1875 began his connection with what was to become the Boston park system. Early in 1878, accompanied by his stepson John, Olmsted sought relief from political persecution by a four months' holiday in Europe during which the two men studied parks and scenery with keen enjoyment. After Olmsted's return, he made the vicinity of Boston his principal headquarters, devoting himself to the plans of the Arnold Arboretum with Professors Asa Gray and Charles Sprague Sargent [*qq.v.*], the Boston parks, and the campaign for the protection of Niagara Falls in association with his friend Charles Eliot Norton [*q.v.*], which resulted in the general approval of Olmsted's scheme in 1879. Mount Royal Park in Montreal (1874–76), too, belongs to this period.

Although the permanent Olmsted home combined with office on Warren Street, Brookline, was not purchased until 1883, from 1881 Olmsted himself resided mainly in Brookline, leaving John in New York. The chief work of the next few years concerned the Albany State Capitol (with Leopold Eidlitz and H. H. Richard-

son), Belle Isle Park in Detroit, the Boston parks in which John became especially interested, the improvement of station grounds along the Boston & Albany Railroad near Boston, and numerous land subdivisions, grounds of educational and other institutions, and private estates, small and large, all over the country. (An extensive list of public and private clients of the Olmsted firm, which was constantly developing as a working organization, may be found in Olmsted and Kimball, *post*, vol. I.) In the later 1880's, the selection of site and development plans for Governor Leland Stanford's new university in Palo Alto, Cal., the publication of the improvement plan for the whole Niagara Reservation by Olmsted and Vaux, and Olmsted's participation with Charles Sprague Sargent in the founding of the journal *Garden and Forest*, were combined with work on the parks of Rochester, N. Y., and a large number of land subdivisions East and West, and advice to the City of New York, with Vaux, on Morningside Park and other matters.

The outstanding works which particularly filled Olmsted's mind during the last six years of active professional life were the "Biltmore" estate for George W. Vanderbilt at Asheville, N. C., other Vanderbilt and Rockefeller estates, the Boston and Hartford parks, parks for several Southern cities, especially Louisville, Ky., and above all the World's Fair at Chicago, to which, with "Biltmore," he personally gave the greater part of his time, although still traveling about the country to visit other works of the firm then in progress. When Henry Sargent Codman, who had been a member of the Olmsted firm since 1889, died suddenly, early in 1893 before the completion of the World's Fair grounds, Olmsted, refreshed by a rest and study tour abroad in 1892, was able to take charge and bring the landscape development to a successful outcome. At the famous dinner of Mar. 25, 1893, in New York, marking the collaboration of artists in creating the White City, Olmsted's life was summed up by Charles Eliot Norton: "Of all American artists, Frederick Law Olmsted, who gave the design for the laying-out of the grounds of the World's Fair, stands first in the production of great works which answer the needs and give expression to the life of our immense and miscellaneous democracy" (Charles Moore, *Daniel H. Burnham*, 1921, vol. I. 79). To this appreciation, Burnham added his own, "Each of you knows the name and genius of him who stands first in the heart and confidence of American artists. . . . he paints with lakes and wooded slopes; with lawns and banks and forest-covered hills; with mountainsides and ocean views. He should stand where I do to-night, not for his deeds of later years alone, but for what his brain has wrought and his pen has taught for half a century" (*Ibid.*, I, 74).

Olmsted

Two more years of professional work were vouchsafed Olmsted, who leaned more and more on John and on young Charles Eliot [*q.v.*], a partner since 1893. The last year was spent, with his son as apprentice, largely at "Biltmore," and there in the spring his portrait was painted outdoors by John Singer Sargent. On his last tour abroad in 1895–96 he had "Biltmore" much at heart, although he had definitely retired from practice in the fall of 1895. Subsequently his mind failed after nearly forty years of professional activity in landscape architecture. He died at Waverly, Mass. In 1898 his firm had become Olmsted Brothers, having successively been called F. L. & J. C. Olmsted (1884–89); F. L. Olmsted & Company (to include Henry S. Codman); Olmsted, Olmsted & Eliot (1893–1897), and F. L. & J. C. Olmsted (for the remainder of 1897), until F. L. Olmsted, Jr., became a full participant.

It is difficult to choose the most significant of the many great works through which Olmsted, with his various partners, shaped the art of landscape architecture in America. Aside from the World's Fair, which gave the first impulse to the cooperation of designers and which profoundly influenced the art and science of city planning, and Central Park, which set a new ideal of municipal amenity and constructive development, perhaps the Prospect Park at Brooklyn, and Franklin Park in Boston together with its related parks and parkways, are the living examples in which the beholder may catch the spirit of repose and relief from urban distractions which Olmsted sought.

He was the more able to advocate his ideals because of his literary ability, applied not only to his earlier books, but freely to the reports and documents which explained his professional landscape problems. Among such very numerous writings, perhaps the most interest attaches to reports on Central Park written in 1873 (Olmsted and Kimball, II, p. 569) when a favorable turn of political events enabled him to control its policies for a short period, and to the retrospective pamphlet, *The Spoils of the Park* (1882), written in a lighter vein after the bitterness of his overthrow had subsided, but laying bare the political filth which had constantly retarded his efforts to do justice to the public interest. His article "Park" in Appleton's *New American Cyclopædia* (vol. XII, 1863) was the

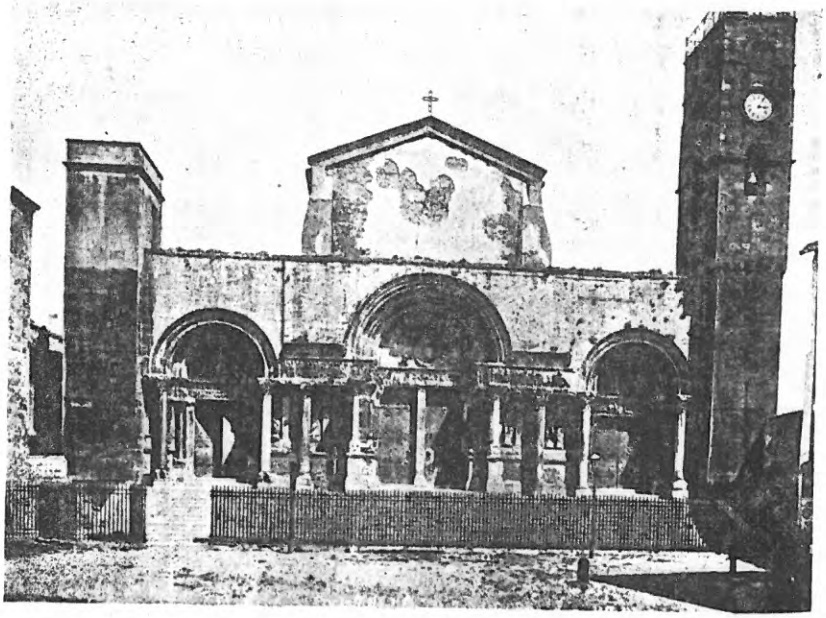
first on the subject in any American encyclopaedia; and his two addresses, before the American Social Science Association, published as *Public Parks and the Enlargement of Towns* (1871) and *A Consideration of the Justifying Value of a Public Park* (1881), were milestones in the development of American civic consciousness. His interest in *Garden and Forest*, largely editorial, promoted increased public appreciation of the landscape art, and a late report on Central Park (1889) prepared with J. B. Harrison, "Observations on the Treatment of Public Plantations," represented his long experience in park planting as it reached approximate maturity. Among the reports for specific designs, in addition to the original "Greensward" document, that for Franklin Park, Boston, is perhaps the most illuminating of all in expressing his considered ideals for park scenery. By his writings he gave definition to the terminology of landscape art, establishing, with Vaux, the term landscape architect as applied to the professional designer and the term park as connoting scenery to be preserved and defended from urban encroachment.

Olmsted found landscape art in America at a low ebb. Even Downing reflected the horticultural taste which pervaded public as well as private landscape work, and, except for H. W. S. Cleveland [*q.v.*] and a very few others, "landscape gardeners" were usually ill-trained and interested rather in specimen plants than in picturesque compositions. Downing, however, had the ideal of public parks, which, deprived of his advocacy by his sudden death in 1852, descended to Olmsted who transmuted it into a living force. In him was the rare combination of philosopher and fighter; his conceptions, ardently expressed, could be comprehended by many who were originally hostile to them and thus be transformed on the ground into great instruments of public service. He was slightly built and never physically strong, yet his inborn vision, his qualities of leadership, and his penetrating sincerity, enabled him incomparably to direct urban life towards outdoor recreation and to leave in dozens of American cities continuing memorials to his foresight and genius.

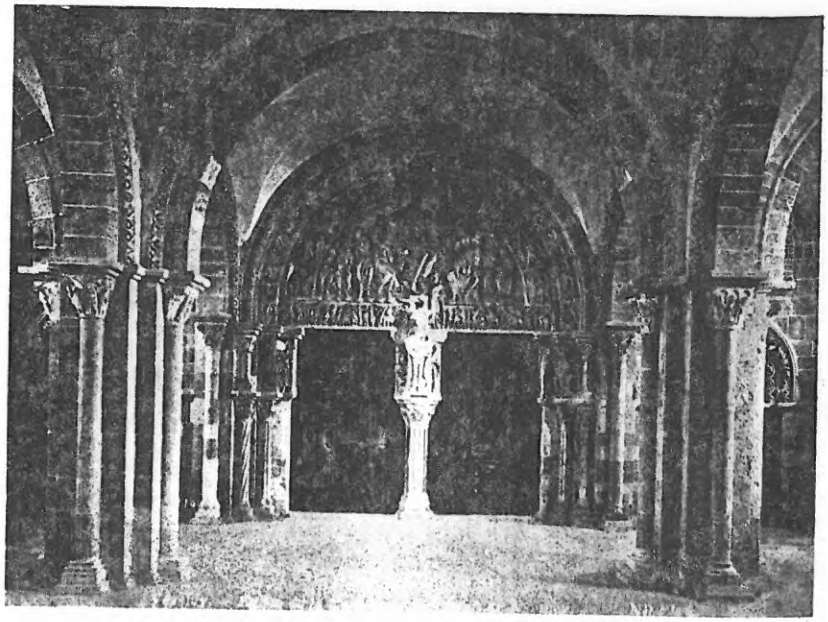
[The most extensive source, consisting chiefly of his professional papers, is F. L. Olmsted, Jr., and Theodora Kimball, eds., *Frederick Law Olmsted, Landscape Architect, 1822–1903* (2 vols., 1922, 1928); vol. I, "Early Years and Experiences," contains a chronology and some autobiographical passages; vol. II bears the subtitle, "Central Park as a Work of Art and as a Great Municipal Enterprise, 1853–1895." To this should be added Broadus Mitchell, *Frederick Law Olmsted, A Critic of the Old South* (1924), prepared after a thorough analysis of unpublished manuscripts in possession of the family, as well as of the three books on the South. A brief sketch by F. L. Olmsted, Jr., is in *A Journey in the Seaboard Slave States* (1904 ed.), I, xi–xxvi. M. G. Van Rensselaer, a friend, published, on the basis of a long interview, "Frederick Law Olmsted" in the *Century Illustrated Monthly Mag.*, Oct. 1893. See also a serial article by John Nolen, "Frederick Law Olmsted and His Work," *House and Garden*, Feb.–July 1906, with the accepted photographic portrait of his later years; H. K. Olmsted and G. K. Ward, *Genealogy of the Olmsted Family in America* (1912); *N. Y. Times*, Aug. 29, 1903.] T. K. H.

Olmsted

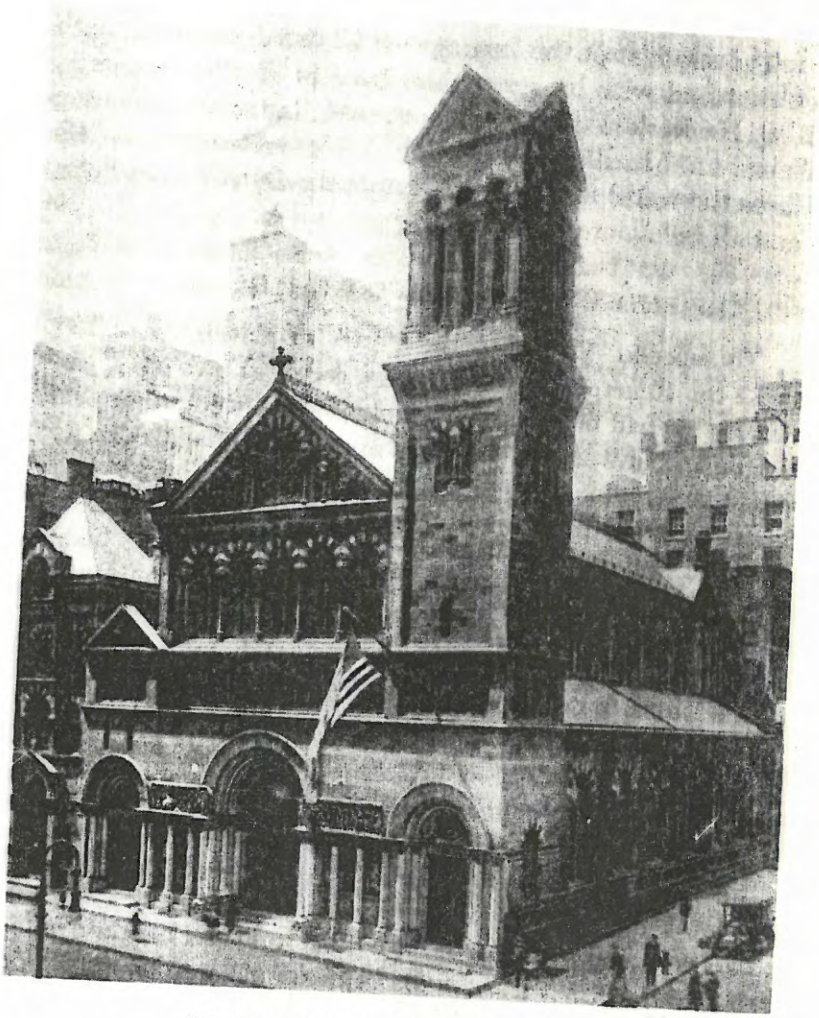
**OLMSTED, GIDEON** (Feb. 12, 1749–Feb. 8, 1845), sea captain and privateersman, was born at East Hartford, Conn., the son of Jonathan and Hannah (Meakins) Olmsted and a descendant of James Olmsted or Olmstead, who came to Boston in 1632. In youth he shipped on vessels engaged in the West Indies trade, and in 1775–76 served with Connecticut militia around Boston. Back at sea later in 1776, he became master of the sloop *Seaflower*, but returning from Guadeloupe was captured Apr. 6, 1778, by the British privateer *Weir*. Upon his release at Cape François he took command of the French privateer *Polly* (16 guns). Off Jamaica on July 8 the *Polly* engaged H. M. S. *Ostrich* (16 guns) and had fairly beaten her when the British *Lowestoffe's Prize* (10 guns) entered the action and after three hours' hard fighting forced the *Polly* to surrender, with a loss of fifty-five of her 102 men. While still a prisoner Olmsted was sent from Jamaica to New York as second mate in the British sloop *Active*, with three other Americans in his watch. About midnight on Sept. 6, off Long Island, he and his watch confined the remaining nine officers and men below, overcame resistance (in which struggle Olmsted suffered a pistol wound) by firing a four-pounder into the cabin, and steered for the Delaware. They were escorted in by the Pennsylvania state brig *Convention*, which subsequently laid unjustified claim to the *Active* as prize. In the litigation over ship and cargo, the latter alone worth $98,800, the Pennsylvania Admiralty court granted Olmsted only a fourth part, but with the support of Gen. Benedict Arnold he secured in December 1778 a wholly favorable decision in the court of appeals established by Congress. Because of the dangerous conflict between state and union, no immediate action was taken, and the state's share was retained by the Pennsylvania treasurer, David Rittenhouse, as stakeholder. Olmsted's prosecution of his claim in state and federal courts during the next thirty years made his case celebrated but not until 1809 did he gain substantial restitution; then a peremptory *mandamus* from the United States Supreme Court was served



A. S. GILLES: WEST FAÇADE



B. S. MADELEINE, VÉZELAY: THE NARTHEX



*The Second St. Bartholomew's Church*
*Madison Avenue and 44th Street*
*1872-1918*

in the Union to Secure Practical Electric ction"—and a reporter announced: "The bray he festive mule must go." In the winter of 5–86 Van Depoele's system was adopted in neapolis, Minn., Montgomery, Ala., and oth- ities, and by the end of 1886 eight lines had installed in the United States and Canada. his year he contributed an article, "Electric smission of Power," to the *Telegraphic nal and Electrical Review* of London (Mar. 886). Two years later, in March 1888, the Depoele system was operating in ten cities, three other lines under construction—claim- a greater number of lines than all other com- es combined (*Senate Miscellaneous Docu- No. 84*, 50 Cong., 1 Sess.).

1888 Van Depoele's electric railway patents sold to the Thomson-Houston Electric pany of Lynn, Mass., and Van Depoele him- was engaged by that concern as electrician, American and foreign royalties for his pat- d railway systems. The sale of the Van De- Electric Manufacturing Company followed 889, and in this year Van Depoele's telpher reciprocating patents were assigned to the mson-Houston International Company. In ember 1891, while planning an electrical ex- for the World's Columbian Exposition in ago, Van Depoele contracted a severe cold, h with resulting complications caused his h after an illness of over four months.

an Depoele filed in all some 444 applications patents, of which at least 249 were granted m under his own name. After his death seven- vo further applications were made, and of some forty-six were allowed and assigned e Thomson-Houston Electric Company. Van oele's achievements covered a wide variety lectrical inventions and improvements, es- ally in the field of traction. His little "Giant" rator, patented Sept. 21, 1880, with its oth regulation of power, was considered one ie best on the market. His first patent on ric railways was granted Oct. 2, 1883; his on an overhead conductor, Aug. 11, 1885. patent for his carbon contact or commu- brush, which he first used in 1882 and h revolutionized motor construction, was n up Oct. 9, 1888. Other basic patents of ie importance were his alternating-current ric reciprocating engine (1889); his multi- urrent pulsating generator (1890); his tel- system (1890), first used in the mines at ator, Ill., in 1885; his multiple rock-drill 1); his coal-mining machine (1891); and earless electric locomotive (1894). He was rimenting with electric refrigeration before June 16, 1886, and in the winter of 1889–90 at his residence at 502 Essex Street in Lynn he made several photographs in color. The two most distinctively original of his achievements, however, were the pivoted spring-pressed under-running trolley and the carbon commutator-brush. Of this latter epochal invention alone it has been justly said that the traction industry "would have been indefinitely postponed"—even "impossible" —"without the discovery of the carbon brush" (Rice and Crowther, *post*, p. 600).

Van Depoele was a man of broad culture. Bilingual from the beginning in French and Flemish, he became proficient as well in Dutch, Latin, Greek, English, and other languages. On Nov. 23, 1870, he married Ada Mina, daughter of Cornelius and Cornelia (Weavers) van Hoogstraten of Detroit, and by her he had three sons and four daughters. He became a naturalized American citizen on Apr. 23, 1878. He died in Lynn, Mass., and was buried in St. Mary's Cemetery there. A portrait bust of him, in bronze, by Robert Kraus of Boston, is in the Lynn Public Library.

[Notes, drawings, letters, etc., assembled by Van Depoele's daughter, Romanie Adeline (Van Depoele) Phelan, of Lynn, Mass.; catalogues of the Van Depoele Electric Light and Manufacturing Company, Chicago, Ill.; *The Official Gazette of the U. S. Patent Office*, 1878–98; *The Canadian Patent Office Record*, vol. XVII (1889); *Selected U. S. Patents Relating to Electric Railways Owned or Controlled by the Thomson-Houston Electric Co., Brush Electric Co., and Allied Corporations* (1891); T. C. Martin and J. Wetzler, *The Electric Motor and Its Applications* (1892); *U. S. Circuit Court for the District of Conn.: In Equity, No. 753, Thomson-Houston Electric Co. vs. The Winchester Ave. Railroad Co., et al., Complainant's Proofs* (4 vols., 1895), and report of case in 71 *Federal Reporter*, 192; "The Work of Van Depoele," *Electrical Rev.* (London), June 5, 1896; D. McKillop, "The Father of the Trolley," *Electrical Age*, Dec. 1905; B. G. Lamme, "The Development of the Street Railway Motor in America," *Electric Jour.* (Pittsburgh, Pa.), Oct. 1918; E. W. Rice, Jr., and S. Crowther, "Trials of the Early Electric Trail," *Magazine of Business*, Nov. 1928; *Detroit Free Press*, Mar. 20, 1892.] C. B. M.

**VANDERBILT, CORNELIUS** (May 27, 1794–Jan. 4, 1877), steamship and railroad promoter, financier, born at Port Richmond, Staten Island, N. Y. (now part of New York City), was the fourth child and second son of Cornelius and Phebe (Hand) Vander Bilt. His paternal ancestors, who came from Holland and settled on Long Island in the latter half of the seventeenth century, wrote the family name in three words, van der Bilt. The subject of the present sketch preferred to write it Van Derbilt, but during his lifetime other members of the family consolidated the name into one word. His father, a poor man with a large family, did a bit of farming on Staten Island, and some boating and lightering around New York harbor. The blue-

eyed, flaxen-haired, boisterous boy Cornelius had no inclination and little opportunity for education, and did not spend a day in school after he was eleven. Already big in body and strong, he became at that age his father's helper. At about thirteen he is said to have superintended the job of lightering a vessel, his father being engaged elsewhere. He had barely reached his sixteenth birthday when, with $100 advanced by his parents, he bought a small sailing vessel called a piragua and began a freight and passenger ferrying business between Staten Island and New York City. On Dec. 19, 1813, when he was only nineteen years old, he married his cousin and neighbor, Sophia Johnson, daughter of his father's sister Eleanor, and set up a home of his own near his birthplace.

The War of 1812 had opened new opportunities for him, and he was busy day and night. Among other important jobs, he had a three months' contract from the government for provisioning the forts in and around New York harbor. Before the war was over, he had several boats under his command. He built a schooner in 1814 for service to Long Island Sound, and, in the following two years, two larger schooners for the coastwise trade. These he sent out—he himself being in command of the largest—not only as cargo boats, but also as traders up the Hudson River and along the coast from New England to Charleston. In 1818 he startled his friends by selling all his sailing vessels and going to work as a captain for Thomas Gibbons [*q.v.*], owner of a ferry between New Brunswick, on the Raritan estuary, and New York City—an important link in the New York-Philadelphia freight, mail, and passenger route. Gibbons was fighting for life against the steam-navigation monopoly in New York waters which had been granted to Robert Fulton by the New York legislature several years before. Vanderbilt loved a fight; he took Gibbons' one small vessel, put her in better condition, selected a hard-bitten crew and drove them to the limit of endurance, and within a year had turned a losing venture into a profitable one. When he entered Gibbons' service, he removed his family to New Brunswick, took over a rundown tavern by the river-side there, and installed his wife as hotel keeper. She renovated the house and made it famous for good food and service. "Bellona Hall," as it was called, became a favorite stopping place for travelers between New York and Philadelphia. In addition to her duties as chief factotum of the hotel, Mrs. Vanderbilt gave birth to a child about every two years while living in New Brunswick; she had thirteen in all.

Vanderbilt

Vanderbilt soon induced Gibbons to build a larger and finer steamer, the *Bellona* (1818). Meanwhile, the New York monopoly had brought suit against Gibbons, and for several years there was legal, and sometimes physical, warfare. Only Vanderbilt's lusty, dynamic spirit and resourcefulness kept his employer's line in operation. For months on end New York deputy sheriffs tried to arrest him whenever his boat entered New York waters, but he foiled them in one way or another. He is said to have built a secret compartment on the vessel in which he would hide at such times. Finally, in 1824, the United States Supreme Court ruled that a monopoly such as that granted by the New York legislature was unconstitutional (*Gibbons* vs. *Ogden*, 9 *Wheaton*, 1). During the eleven years of his service with Gibbons, young Vanderbilt increased and broadened the business enormously. He had built seven more steamers for his employer, some for the New York-New Brunswick-Elizabeth ferries, others to ply a new line on the Delaware.

Vanderbilt had ambitions of his own; and in 1829, having accumulated a considerable nest-egg through his own and his wife's exertions, he resigned from Gibbons' employ in order to enter the steamboat business on his own. Much against the will of his wife, he disposed of "Bellona Hall" and moved her and the eight or nine children to New York City. His first ventures were on the Hudson River, where other concerns were already operating; he inaugurated rate wars with a characteristic zest for conflict. Here, in a competition for the trade between New York and Peekskill, he came into collision, in 1834, with Daniel Drew [*q.v.*]. The fare between the two points was finally cut to twelve and a half cents, and then Drew sold out to Vanderbilt. The latter now entered the Albany trade, where a more powerful corporation, the Hudson River Association, was functioning. He put two boats on the Albany run and began cutting rates again. In the end his opponents paid him a goodly sum for his agreement to withdraw from competition for ten years. He next established lines on Long Island Sound and on to Providence and Boston. Later he returned to the Hudson River. He is given credit for bringing about a great and rapid advance in the size, comfort, and elegance of steamboats. The "floating palaces" of the 1840's and 1850's would not suffer greatly by comparison with the boats of today in such waters; in many cases they were more luxurious, even if they lacked electric appliances and some other modern conveniences. Vanderbilt found pleasure in making his vessels stanch, fast, handsome, and comfortable. About 1846 he launched on the

Hudson perhaps the finest boat yet seen by New Yorkers; it was named for himself.

Before this time he was undoubtedly a millionaire. He was supposed to have passed the half million mark at the age of forty. But he and his family had so far failed to make any impression upon the exclusive New York society of that day. Cornelius himself was not a figure for the drawing-room or for a luncheon table of fastidious gentlemen. He was apt to be loud, rustic, and coarse in speech, his talk interlarded with profanity and slang of the wharves. He was a big, bumptious, ruthless, tobacco-chewing, hard-headed, hard-swearing, hard-fighting man, yet constructive, courageous, clear-sighted in business matters, broad-visioned for his day, and graced by a certain alluring frankness and faithfulness to a bargain. It is believed that a certain smoldering resentment because of the social cold shoulder turned to him, together with the persuasion of his wife, caused him to build a fine mansion on Staten Island and take his family back there in 1840. But he still wanted to pry open those closed doors on Manhattan, and in 1846, despite his wife's protests, he began building a town house on Washington Place. Scarcely was it ready when Mrs. Vanderbilt was committed to a private sanitarium for insanity, upon his delation, and perhaps because of her tearful yet stubborn refusal to move back to New York. She was released in the spring of 1847, after a few months' confinement, and went obediently to the new home in the city.

The gold rush opened new vistas to Vanderbilt, whom men were now calling "Commodore." Before the end of 1849, traffic to California was beginning to go via Panama, freight and passengers crossing the Isthmus on muleback. Vanderbilt conceived the idea of starting a line of his own via Nicaragua—through the San Juan River to Lake Nicaragua and perhaps thence by canal to the Pacific. At first he called this the American Atlantic & Pacific Ship Canal Company. A trip to England in 1850 in search of capital to finance the venture was fruitless, and he proceeded to develop the route himself. He procured from the Nicaraguan government a charter for himself in the name of the Accessory Transit Company (see *Senate Executive Document No. 68*, 34 Cong., 1 Sess., 1856). He then improved to some extent the channel of the San Juan River, built docks on the east and west coasts of Nicaragua and at Virgin Bay on Lake Nicaragua, and made a fine twelve-mile macadam road from the latter place to his west-coast port. Meanwhile, he was beginning the construction of a fleet of eight new steamers with which he

Vanderbilt

ran lines from New York, and later from New Orleans. His route was two days shorter than that via Panama; he greatly reduced the New York-San Francisco passenger fare and garnered most of the traffic.

He made money so rapidly that in 1853 he announced that he was going to take the first vacation of his life. He built a steam yacht, the *North Star*, sumptuously appointed, and with his entire family, even to sons-in-law and grandchildren, and with several invited guests, including the Rev. Dr. John Overton Choules as chaplain and chronicler, he embarked for a triumphal tour of Europe. Dr. Choules wrote a fulsome history of the voyage, full of unconscious humor, which was published as *The Cruise of the Steam Yacht North Star* (1854). Before going abroad, Vanderbilt resigned the presidency of the Accessory Transit Company, and committed its management to Charles Morgan and Cornelius K. Garrison [*qq.v.*] who, during his absence, manipulated the stock and secured control of the company; but by shrewd buying he won it back in a few months. However, William Walker [*q.v.*], the American filibuster who had seized control of the Nicaraguan government, allied himself with Morgan and Garrison, rescinded the Transit Company's charter on the ground that its terms had been disregarded, and issued a new charter to the rival group. Vanderbilt thereupon aided in bringing about Walker's downfall early in 1857. The doughty "Commodore," now sixty-three, but a harder fighter than ever, had to battle his way through other enemies in Wall Street and Central America, but he triumphed, and the Transit Company was his own again. Scarcely had he brushed aside the last opposition, however, when he approached the Pacific Mail Steamship Company, and the United States Mail Steamship Company, the great carriers via Panama, and offered to abandon the Nicaragua line if they would buy the *North Star* for some $400,000 and pay him $40,000 a month indemnity. They came to his figures reluctantly, but a year later, when he threatened to open the Transit line again, they increased his monthly stipend to $56,000 (*Congressional Globe*, June 9, 1858, 35 Cong., 1 Sess., pp. 2843–44). In the middle fifties he built three vessels, one of which, the *Vanderbilt*, was the largest and finest he had yet constructed, and entered into competition for the Atlantic trade with the Cunard Line and the Collins Line (see sketch of E. K. Collins), even offering to carry the mails to Havre for nothing. He found this an unprofitable venture, however, and at the beginning of the Civil War was glad to sell his Atlantic line

for $3,000,000, retaining only the *Vanderbilt*, which he fitted up as a warship and turned over to the government. It has been claimed that he intended only to make a loan of this vessel, but it was interpreted as a gift (Smith, *post*, p. 237). His connection with the expedition of Nathaniel P. Banks [*q.v.*] to New Orleans was less happy, for many of the vessels chartered by him under commission of the government proved unseaworthy. However, his name was expunged from the Senate resolution of censure (*Congressional Globe*, 37 Cong., 3 Sess., Jan. 29, 1863, and *Senate Report 75*, 1863, 37 Cong., 3 Sess.; Myers, *post*, II, 132–37).

Of Vanderbilt's thirteen children, one boy had died young and all of the nine daughters were living. His youngest and favorite child, George, born in 1839, was a soldier in the Civil War and died in 1866 from effects of exposure in the Corinth campaign. His second son, Cornelius Jeremiah, an epileptic, gambler, and ne'er-do-well, had been a great disappointment. The eldest son, William Henry [*q.v.*], he had regarded as being of little force, and had exiled to a farm on Staten Island, though later he became aware of his ability and at last gave him opportunity to use it. This was in connection with railroad enterprises, to which Vanderbilt turned from shipping as he neared seventy. He had begun buying New York & Harlem Railroad stock in 1862 when it was selling at a very low figure. In 1863 he induced the city council to give him permission to extend the line by street-car tracks to the Battery. The stock, which he had already driven up, rose greatly upon public announcement of the ordinance, and even more when Vanderbilt was elected president. Daniel Drew now plotted with members of the council to sell Harlem stock "short," rescind the ordinance, and buy the shares for delivery after the price had dropped to a certain figure. The plot was carried out, but the price dropped much less than was expected, for Vanderbilt bought every share that was offered, and presently it was discovered that the "short" traders had sold more shares than were in existence. The price rapidly rose, and when Vanderbilt forced a settlement, many of the plotters were ruined. He made William vice-president of the Harlem road, and thereafter his son was his first lieutenant.

He next turned his attention to the Harlem's competitor, the Hudson River Railroad, another rundown property. While buying control of the railroad, he sought authority from the legislature to combine the two. Undeterred by his former experience, Drew again plotted, this time with some of the legislators, to sell the stock "short," defeat the consolidation bill, hammer down the price, and make a "killing." The former story was repeated: the bill was lost; the price declined considerably but not enough; Vanderbilt, aided by other operators, bought every share offered; the "shorts" discovered that they had agreed to deliver far more shares than were in existence; the price rose greatly; and again Cornelius had revenge on those who had tried to break him. He bided his time on the consolidation of the roads, improving their equipment and service, as he did that of every property he owned, and presently had them on a paying basis. He next sought control of the New York Central Railroad, running from Albany to Buffalo. Its directors countered by forming an alliance with Drew's Hudson River boat line and sending through freight and passengers from Albany to New York by that route. But when the river froze in early winter and the steamboats were stopped, they sought to transfer traffic to the Hudson River road, only to discover that Vanderbilt was halting its trains on the east side of the river, a mile from Albany. Stock in the New York Central declined and Vanderbilt bought quantities of it, finally securing control in 1867. He promptly spent $2,000,000 of his own money in improving the line and buying new rolling stock. He united these two railroads by legislative act in 1869, as the New York Central & Hudson River Railroad, and in 1872 leased the Harlem Railroad to it. He increased the capital stock by $42,000,000 (which was a stock-watering operation of magnitude), but out of three inefficient roads he created a single line, giving uninterrupted service.

In 1868 he sought control of the Erie Railway, a rival line to Buffalo and Chicago. He pursued the same tactics as before, buying every share of stock offered. But this time Drew, Jay Gould, and James Fisk, Jr. [*qq.v.*], who were in control of Erie, outmaneuvered him, throwing 50,000 shares of fraudulent stock into the market, then fleeing to New Jersey to avoid prosecution and bribing the New Jersey legislature to legalize the stock issue. Vanderbilt lost millions by this *coup*, but the plotters had to compromise with him in order to return to New York with impunity, and his loss was greatly reduced. Upon the insistence of his son William that extension of their rail system to Chicago was advisable, in 1873 he bought control of the Lake Shore & Michigan Southern Railway, and two years before his death the Michigan Central Railroad and the Canada Southern Railway. Thus did he create one of the great American systems of transportation. In the last years of his life, his

fluence on national finance was stabilizing. hen the panic of 1873 was at its worst, he an- unced that the New York Central was paying millions of dividends as usual, and let con- cts for the building of the Grand Central rminal in New York City, with four tracks ding from it, giving employment to thousands men. He saw to it, however, that the city paid lf the cost of the viaduct and open-cut ap- aches to the station.

His first wife died in 1868, and on Aug. 21, 69, he married Frank Armstrong Crawford, young lady from Mobile, Ala., who survived n when he died on Jan. 4, 1877, after an illness about eight months. His fortune was esti- ted at more than $100,000,000, of which he about $90,000,000 to William and about $7,- ),000 to the latter's four sons; he expressed contempt for womankind by leaving less than 000,000 to be distributed among his own eight ughters (*New York Tribune*, Jan. 9, 1877). s wife received a half million in cash, the New rk home, and 2,000 shares of New York Cen- l stock. Vanderbilt bestowed no money phil- hropically until late in life, when he gave $1,- ),000 to Vanderbilt University (previously ntral University) at Nashville, Tenn., of which is regarded as the founder, and $50,000 to the urch of the Strangers in New York, of which friend, the Rev. Charles F. Deems [*q.v.*], was tor.

W. A. Croffut, *The Vanderbilts and the Story of ir Fortune* (1886), apparently the source of most the legends; A. D. H. Smith, *Commodore Vander- . An Epic of American Achievement* (1927), an un- umented popularization; James Parton, *Famous ericans of Recent Times* (1867); Meade Minni- ode, *Certain Rich Men* (1927); "Cornelius Vander- " in *Hunt's Merchants' Mag. and Commercial Rev.*, 1865; "The Vanderbilt Memorial," in *Nation*, Nov. 1800, a critical contemporary appraisal; B. J. Hen- k, "The Vanderbilt Fortune," in *McClure's Mag.*, . 1908, a good article; E. H. Mott, *Between the an and the Lakes. The Story of Erie* (1899); Gus- us Myers, *Hist. of the Great American Fortunes* 10), vol. II, biased but documented and valuable; O. Scroggs, *Filibusters and Financiers* (1916); n Moody, *The Railroad Builders* (1919); Allan Nev- *The Emergence of Modern America* (1927); F. C. ks, *High Finance in the Sixties* (1929); Matthew phson, *The Robber Barons* (1934); J. J. Clute, *als of Staten Island* (1877); records of the Mo- an Church at New Dorp, Staten Island; scrapbook lippings on the Cornelius Vanderbilt will, 1877–78, Y. Pub. Lib.; Frank Armstrong (Crawford) Van- ilt and R. L. Crawford, *Laurus Crawfurdiana. norials of the Crawford Family* (privately printed, ), valuable for second marriage; obituaries in *N. Tribune, N. Y. Times*, Jan. 5, 1877.] A. F. H.

**NDERBILT, CORNELIUS** (Nov. 27, 3–Sept. 12, 1899), financier, philanthropist, of William Henry [*q.v.*] and Maria Louisa issam) Vanderbilt, and grandson of Cor- us Vanderbilt [*q.v.*], the founder of the for-



tune, was born on a farm near New Dorp, Staten Island, N. Y. William Kissam and George Washington Vanderbilt [*qq.v.*] were younger brothers. He first attended the village common school near his home and later private schools in New York City. At the age of sixteen he took a clerkship in the Shoe and Leather Bank. When he left that place four years later to go into the banking house of Kissam Brothers, it is said that he was receiving $50 a month and was living within his income (*New York Times*, Sept. 13, 1899). He had by this time become a favorite of his grandfather, who insisted, however, that he must work his way upward. When he was about twenty-four he was taken by the elder Cornelius into the service of the New York & Harlem Railroad as assistant treasurer. A little later he became treasurer and held that place until 1880, when he was elected vice-president; from 1886 until his death he was president of the road. He was frequently praised by his grandfather for his thoroughness and reliability, and received from him a special legacy of $5,000,000. In 1883 his father resigned his presidencies of the several Vanderbilt railroads, and, under the new arrangement specified by him, Cornelius was elected chairman of the board of directors of the New York Central & Hudson River and Michigan Central Railroads, and president of the Canada Southern Railway. Upon the death of his father in 1885, Cornelius became the head of the Vanderbilt family, and—although the fortune was not held in common—the chief director of its investments. These were profitable, though conservative.

He was the hardest worker of the family. He built a palatial home on Fifth Avenue, and a mansion, "The Breakers," at Newport, R. I., but he had little or no time for society. He was often at his desk in the Grand Central Station Building before any clerk arrived in the morning. A director in many corporations, he took his duties seriously, attending meetings and scanning reports from every corporation minutely. His philanthropic and other activities outside his business were enormous. He was a trustee of the College of Physicians and Surgeons, which his father so greatly aided, and he and his three brothers united in adding the Vanderbilt Clinic to it, while their sister, Mrs. William D. Sloane, gave it a maternity hospital. Vanderbilt was trustee or executive chairman of several other hospitals in New York, a trustee of Columbia University (1891–99), of the General Theological Seminary, and of the new Cathedral of St. John the Divine, one of the board of managers of the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society

of the Protestant Episcopal Church, and for the last twelve years of his life chairman of the executive committee of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Among his gifts to the Metropolitan was Rosa Bonheur's famous painting, "The Horse Fair," in 1887. He founded the Railroad Branch of the Y. M. C. A. and gave it a handsome clubhouse in New York. He was a warden of St. Bartholomew's Church and contributed generously for ground and buildings for a new parish house. In a single day he often attended meetings at three or four of these institutions. Such strenuous activity undoubtedly shortened his life. His four sons were all students at Yale, and in memory of William Henry, the eldest, who died while a junior there, he presented to the University in 1893 a dormitory then regarded as large and costly. His gifts to Yale are said to have reached a total of $1,500,000. Vanderbilt suffered a slight stroke of paralysis in 1896, and thereupon resigned many of his official posts. He died in New York City of cerebral hemorrhage in 1899. On Feb. 4, 1867, he had married Alice Claypoole Gwynne, daughter of the late Abram E. Gwynne of Cincinnati (*New York Tribune*, Feb. 7, 1867). She survived him, as did three sons, Cornelius, Alfred Gwynne, (lost on the *Lusitania*, 1915), and Reginald; and two daughters, Gertrude, who married Harry Payne Whitney and became a well-known sculptress, and Gladys, who married Count Laszio Szechenyi.

[Seth Low, "Cornelius Vanderbilt," *Columbia Univ. Quart.*, Dec. 1899, pp. 39–43; J. G. Wilson, in *N. Y. Geneal. & Biog. Record*, Oct. 1899, pp. 197–99; F. L. Ford, "The Vanderbilts and the Vanderbilt Millions," *Munsey's Magazine*, Jan. 1900; *Who's Who in America*, 1899–1900; obituaries in *N. Y. Tribune*, *N. Y. Times*, Sept. 13, 1899. See also bibliographies of the other Vanderbilts.] A. F. H.

**VANDERBILT, GEORGE WASHINGTON** (Nov. 14, 1862–Mar. 6, 1914), capitalist, agriculturist, pioneer in forestry, the youngest son of William Henry [*q.v.*] and Maria Louisa (Kissam) Vanderbilt, was born near New Dorp, Staten Island, N. Y. He was educated mostly by private tutors, and spent much of his youth in touring the world with them. He was shy and studious, caring little for finance, though he succeeded in increasing his own fortune materially during his lifetime. He fell in love with the mountains of western North Carolina, and in 1889 began buying land south and southwest of Asheville, eventually acquiring 130,000 acres, it is said, including Mount Pisgah (5,749 feet), one of the most beautiful peaks in the Appalachians. Here he planned the finest country home in America. He had studied architecture, forestry, and landscape gardening in preparation for it. He worked with the architect, Richard Morris Hunt [*q.v.*], on the plans, and superintended the construction of the building, the final cost of which was reported as $3,000,000. He spent millions more in improving the estate, which he named "Biltmore." Frederick Law Olmsted [*q.v.*] was the landscape gardener. Until the death of his widowed mother in 1896, he lived with her in her New York home. That mansion then reverted to him, but he promptly went to live in his North Carolina château. He married on June 2, 1898, Edith Stuyvesant Dresser of Newport, R. I., who proved a congenial helpmate in all his plans.

He became a scientific farmer and stockbreeder, as well as one of the pioneers in scientific forestry in America. His sales of pedigreed hogs came to be events of importance. One of his Jersey cows broke all records for milk production, and the milk and ice cream from his dairies, sold over a wide area of country, were the finest obtainable. It was said after his death: "The stimulus afforded by his example towards improved agricultural methods in the South is beyond all estimate" (*American Forestry*, June 1914, p. 425). He founded and conducted the Biltmore Nursery, which specialized in trees and plants of the Appalachian region, and at the time of his death was doing a handsome business. He built many miles of roads and trails through his great forest area, making it almost as accessible as a park. Gifford Pinchot was his first superintendent of forests, passing from that place to the head of the United States Division of Forestry in 1898. Vanderbilt founded the Biltmore School of Forestry on his estate, where large numbers of young men received training. He planned and built the model village of Biltmore as a center for the employees on his property. He bought another home in Washington, but spent most of his time in his Carolina mountains, overseeing his numerous operations, studying trees, birds, and animals, or doing research in his large library, which was especially rich in works on nature. He spoke eight languages and had a reading acquaintance with others. Among other benefactions, he built in 1888 and presented to the New York Free Circulating Library (later New York Public Library) its Jackson Square Branch, and gave to Columbia University the ground on which the Teachers College was built. He also built a private museum in New York City, filled it with objects of art which he had collected all over the world, and presented it to the American Fine Arts Society. He offered to sell the major portion of his forest land to the United States for a forest reserve, but the offer

was not accepted until after his death, when the government bought a large tract from Mrs. Vanderbilt. He died in Washington, D. C., after an operation for appendicitis. Besides his widow, he left a daughter, Cornelia Stuyvesant.

[O. W. Price, "George W. Vanderbilt, Pioneer in Forestry," *American Forestry*, June 1914; D. A. Willey, "Forest Conservation at Biltmore," *American Homes and Gardens*, July 1909; B. M. Trebor, "Into the Azure of the Blue Ridge," *Travel*, Apr. 1911; Gifford Pinchot, *Biltmore Forest . . . An Account of its Treatment, and the Results of the First Year's Work* (1893); "Biltmore Forest," *Harper's Weekly*, July 28, 1900; *Who's Who in America*, 1912–13; obituaries in *N. Y. Times*, *N. Y. Tribune*, *Sun* (N. Y.), Mar. 7, 1914.] A. F. H.

**VANDERBILT, WILLIAM HENRY** (May 8, 1821–Dec. 8, 1885), financier, railroad operator, son of Cornelius Vanderbilt, 1794–1877 [*q.v.*] and Sophia (Johnson) Vanderbilt, was born at New Brunswick, N. J., where his mother operated a hotel while his father was master of a ferry-boat running thence to New York City. When he was eight years old, his parents removed to New York, and he attended grammar school. He was not physically strong during boyhood and adolescence, a weakness with which his able-bodied and dynamic father could not sympathize. At seventeen he was put to work in a ship-chandler's shop, but about a year later he became a clerk in the banking house of Drew, Robinson & Company, of which one of the partners was Daniel Drew [*q.v.*]. At the age of nineteen William offended his father, now well-nigh a millionaire, by marrying Maria Louisa Kissam, a young woman of refinement and good family, but the daughter of an impecunious Brooklyn clergyman. Cornelius himself had married at nineteen, but he thought it folly for one so weak and footless as William to do the same. William's health declined within a year after his marriage, and, believing that he would never amount to much in business or finance, the father bought a seventy-acre farm for him at New Dorp, Staten Island, and sent him and his wife to it to make their own way. William quietly accepted the situation, and proceeded to make the farm a paying venture. There were born his eight children, four sons and four daughters, all of whom later lived in Fifth Avenue mansions. He increased the size of his farm to 350 acres and handled it so well that its profits rose.

During the depression of 1857 the Staten Island Railroad, a line thirteen miles long, became insolvent, and William soon afterward asked his father's influence in having him appointed receiver. The father, though still doubtful of William's ability, acquiesced, and to his surprise the latter succeeded in rehabilitating the road. He was therefore a railroad executive before his father went into that business. When Cornelius acquired control of the New York & Harlem Railroad, he made William vice-president (1864) and gave him a home on Fifth Avenue; and thus, when he was forty-three years old, the son's ability belatedly received parental recognition. The contemptuous ignoring and suppression of it for two-thirds of his lifetime, however, was a bitter drop in his cup; it gave him a somewhat dour exterior, and instilled cynicism into his nature. Soon after receiving the Harlem office, he was also made vice-president of the Hudson River Railroad, the second line acquired by his father. Even though he began to take an efficient hand in railroad affairs, showing great ability in management, in improving track and equipment, in regulating rates and conciliating labor, he was never permitted to become a full executive until his father's failing hand relinquished the reins in the last few months of his life. Then, with less than nine years of life left to him, he rapidly began to expand his activities.

One of his first problems was a contest over his father's will, brought jointly by a scapegrace brother, Cornelius Jeremiah, who had been cut off with $200,000, and two of his eight sisters, who had received only from $300,000 to $500,000 apiece. The bulk of the estate was left to William. The decision of the surrogate in his favor in March 1879 was followed by a secret compromise (*New York Tribune*, Apr. 8, 9, 1879). It was reported that William in settlement had given each of the eight sisters another half million in bonds, and had pacified Cornelius Jeremiah by guaranteeing to him the income from a million dollars.

It was at his insistence that his father had bought control of the Lake Shore & Michigan Southern Railway and the Michigan Central Railroad, and acquired considerable stock in the Canada Southern Railway. William now welded the last-named line into the New York Central network, combining it with the Michigan Central, and became president of all the affiliated corporations. Within three years he had bought control of the Chicago & North-Western Railway and a large interest in the Cleveland, Columbus, Cincinnati & Indianapolis Railway, which paved the way for the later entry of the Vanderbilt lines into Cincinnati and St. Louis. Controlling interest in the rival New York, Chicago & St. Louis Railway (Nickel Plate), opened in 1882, was acquired after that date by the Lake Shore & Michigan Southern. The former road was forced into the hands of receivers in 1885, sold at foreclosure in 1887, and reorganized by the Vanderbilt interests. In 1885 the New York,

West Shore & Buffalo Railway (West Shore), paralleling the line of the New York Central & Hudson River, was leased by Vanderbilt at the instance of J. Pierpont Morgan [*q.v.*]. When the New York Central trainmen and laborers refused to take part in the great railroad strike of 1877, despite a cut in their wages, Vanderbilt distributed $100,000 among them as reward for their loyalty (*New York Tribune,* Aug. 1, 1877). Like his father, he was constructive. He not only greatly improved the railroad lines under his domination, but enormously increased his own fortune.

Following the report on rate discrimination made in 1879 by the committee headed by A. Barton Hepburn [*q.v.*], Vanderbilt, recognizing the unpopularity of unified control, turned over to J. Pierpont Morgan 250,000 shares of his railroad stock for sale in Europe, in order to avoid depressing the American market (*New York Tribune,* Nov. 21, 27, 1879). The sale, which greatly increased the prestige of Morgan and relieved Vanderbilt, also brought much foreign capital into American business. For several years Vanderbilt was a large shareholder and a director of the Western Union Telegraph Company; but in March 1881 he resigned his directorate and sold most of his holdings in the company (*Ibid.,* Mar. 27, 1881). Probably warned by failing health, he resigned all his railroad presidencies in May 1883. Thereafter, he ordered, Vanderbilts should be chairmen of the boards of directors, and the presidents be practical, working executives of somewhat less power. His two older sons, Cornelius and William Kissam [*qq.v.*] were thereupon elected board chairmen of the various Vanderbilt lines.

Soon after his father's death, Vanderbilt erected a mansion on Fifth Avenue which was the talk of the nation, and acquired a gallery of paintings, not to mention sculpture and other items, which was declared to be the finest private collection then in existence. Nevertheless, he remained temperate and simple in personal habits to the end. His sons and daughters were all brought up in the same tradition. He was fond of horses and driving, as his father had been, and was often seen on suburban roads handling the reins of a pair of fast trotters. He was the owner of several racing horses. He made many benefactions during his lifetime. He gave $450,000 all told to Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tenn., $50,000 to St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church, and, in 1884, $500,000 for new buildings to the College of Physicians and Surgeons. When the Khedive of Egypt presented an ancient obelisk to the United States, Vanderbilt paid the expense of *c.* $100,000 for removing it f Egypt and setting it in Central Park, New Y (*New York Tribune,* July 21, 1880). In he insisted upon returning to Mrs. Ulysse Grant the deeds to certain real-estate parcels husband's swords, medals, works of art, and from foreign governments, all forced by the eral upon Vanderbilt in pledge for a loa $150,000 which he was unable to repay.

It was believed that during the less than years of his sole power, William Henry Van bilt had nearly or quite doubled the fortune him by his father. When he died suddenl cerebral hemorrhage in New York in 188 was found that he had bequeathed $10,000 half outright and half in trust, to each o eight children, Cornelius, William K., Fred W., George W., Mrs. Elliott F. Shepherd, William D. Sloane, Mrs. W. Seward Webb Mrs. H. McK. Twombly; most of them ha ready been given mansions. To his eldest Cornelius, he gave $2,000,000 more, and 000,000 conditionally to the latter's eldest also named Cornelius. More than a million distributed among various missions, chur hospitals, the Y. M. C. A., the Metropolitan seum of Art, and Vanderbilt University. residue of the fortune was divided betwee two eldest sons, Cornelius and William K., ject to the payment of a $200,000 annuity t widow. To her also he left his home and ol of art; after her death these were to pass t son George. He had provided elsewhere f rebuilding of the little Moravian Church at Dorp, Staten Island, where his father and m er had been parishioners and where he an his brothers and sisters were christened; a the cemetery adjoining he had erected a nificent family mausoleum.

[W. A. Croffut, *The Vanderbilts and the St Their Fortune* (1886), with reprint of will; Earl (Edward Strahan), *Mr. Vanderbilt's House an lection* (4 vols., 1883–84); also article on the ho *American Architect and Building News,* May 21, I. K. Morris, *Morris's Memorial History of Island New York* (1898), vol. II; "The Van Family of New York," a scrapbook of clippings the *N. Y. Evening Post,* N. Y. Pub. Lib.; scra of clippings on the Cornelius Vanderbilt will, 78, N. Y. Pub. Lib.; obituaries in *N. Y. Herald, Tribune* (two pages), Dec. 9, 1885; *N. Y. Herald* 9, 1900, long article with family tree. See also tavus Myers, *History of the Great American Fo* (1910), vol. II; John Moody, *The Railroad B* (1919); Matthew Josephson, *The Robber* (1934); A. D. H. Smith, *Cornelius Vanderbilt* and other works cited in the bibliography of his f

A. I

**VANDERBILT, WILLIAM KIS** (Dec. 12, 1849–July 22, 1920), capitalist, s man, second son of William Henry [*q.v.* Maria Louisa (Kissam) Vanderbilt and g

:ed 1900-02, 1906; all, Baldwin. Cost: grounds and out- u Maisons-Lafitte, 42-46). The model rine Duer Mackay, d c. 1945; now a ie only remaining d. and Harbor Hill ng club.

:nce, "Rosecliff," Designed 1897; iarge. Attribution: Design influence: Hardouin Mansart,

ind alterations and ennsylvania Ave., nstructed 1902-03; dall, Moore. Cost: ve Offices wing, During Theodore White House was moved from the strained Federalist ons to the original , 1791-92). Office m the President's " west wing which rraces planned by ions are as follows: 1927 a third floor e House; in 1929 a of the Executive as constructed; in White House was ndations and steel ajor change in the s been the painting gilding of the trim Offices in the West manent.

, 7-11 E. 73rd St., nstructed 1901-03; all, Baldwin. Cost: Pesaro (Baldassare (Longhena, 1667) xtant, now divided

$2,368,714 for the building; $3,018,417, total. Design influence: United States Capitol. Extant. The entire building, including the dome, is built of white marble. The dome is the second largest of 4 such marble domes in the world, those of St. Peter's, Rome; the Taj Mahal, India; and the Minnesota Capitol, St. Paul. The building is placed in a 14-acre hilltop setting which dominates the city of Providence.

191-192. **Charles Dana Gibson Residence**, 127 E. 73rd St., New York, N.Y. Designed 1902; constructed 1902-03; White in charge. Attribution: Baldwin. Cost: $49,734. Built as the home of the creator of the "Gibson Girl," Charles Dana Gibson, a good friend of White's. Gutted and altered to accommodate offices, *c.* 1950. Extant, now the American Scandinavian Association.

193-195. **St. Bartholomew's Church, Porch**, Park Ave. and 51st St., New York, N.Y. Designed for Mrs. Cornelius Vanderbilt 1901; constructed 1901-03; White in charge. Attribution: Kendall, Baldwin. Cost: $133,996. Design influence: St. Gilles-du-Gard, France. The Romanesque porch by White is decorated by three prominent American sculptors. The north portal contains the work of Herbert Adams; the center portal contains sculpture by Daniel Chester French assisted by Andrew O'Connor, who carved the frieze; the south portal contains the work of Philip Martiny. The porch and doors are in memory of Cornelius Vanderbilt, Warden of St. Bartholomew's, presented by his wife and children. Extant: in 1918 the porch was removed from the church at Madison Ave. and 44th St. (shown in these plates) and rebuilt at the current location of the church on Park Ave. by Bertram G. Goodhue.

196-199. **New York Public Library, Branch Buildings.** Designed by McKim and Kendall beginning late 1901. Altogether 11 branch buildings, 8 of which are reproduced in the *Monograph*, were designed by the firm, all based on a basic plan.

St. Gabriel's Branch, 303 E. 36th St., New York, N.Y. Constructed 1906-08; cost, $81,541. Demolished(?).

Chatham Square Branch, 31 E. Broadway, New York, N.Y. Constructed 1902-03; cost, $72,314. Extant.

115th Street Branch, 203 W. 115th St., New York, N.Y. Constructed 1907-09; cost, $79,219. Extant.

125th Street Branch, 224 E. 125th St., New York, N.Y. Constructed 1903-04; cost, $68,078. Extant.

Thompkins Square Branch, 331 E. 10th St., New York, N.Y. Constructed 1903-05; cost, $75,141. Extant.

Wayne Andrews, The Vanderbilt Legend (NY, 1941)

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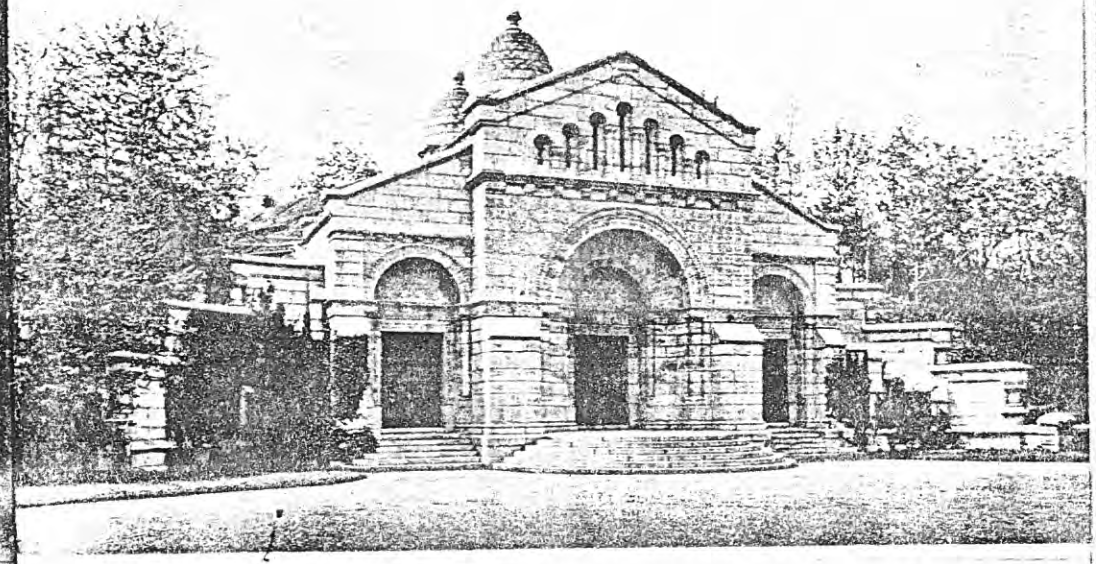

*Above:* THE VANDERBILT MAUSOLEUM. *Below:* THE CHÂTEAU OF CORNELIUS VANDERBILT II—1 WEST FIFTY-SEVENTH STREET

*(Photos Brown Brothers)*

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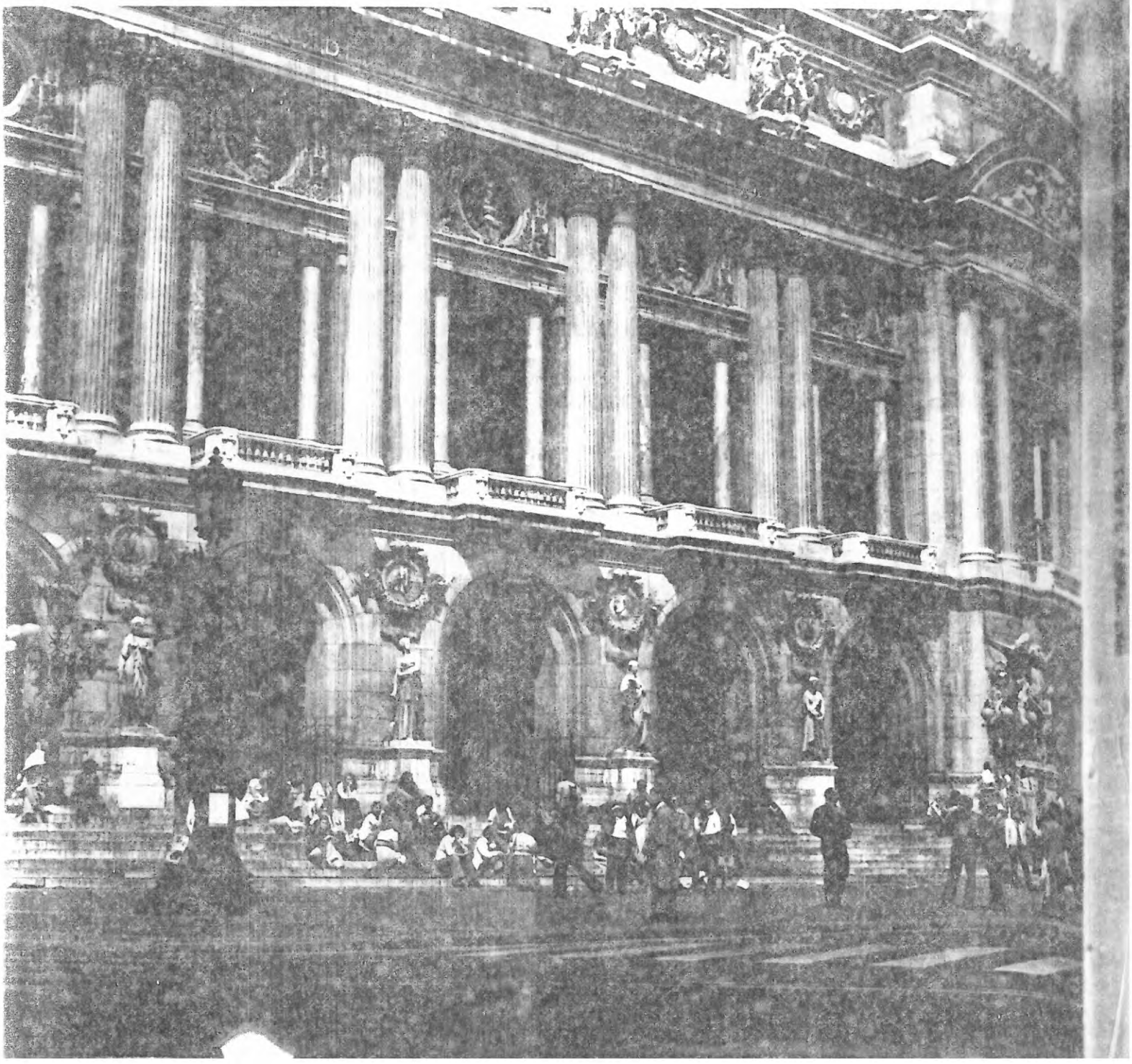
a semicircular apse bordered by six chapels, the whole being surmounted by an elongated dome flanked by four smaller domes. As the orientation of the church was to be toward the city, the choir, traditionally placed on the east, was shifted to the north.

Sacré-Cœur was finished by 1914, with dedication postponed until 1919. Although the completion of the church coincided with the emergence of the modern movement in architecture and a decline in fashion of historical eclecticism, Sacré-Cœur has maintained continuous popularity, attracting both religious and

79. The Paris Opéra.



80. Sacré-Coeur.

touristic pilgrims. Crowning one of the most conspicuous sites in the city with its distended bulbous domes and glistening white surface, the church makes no concessions to the existing character of Paris, yet through its very uniqueness it has become inextricably bound up with the image of the city.

# PARIS: A CENTURY OF CHANGE, 1878-1978

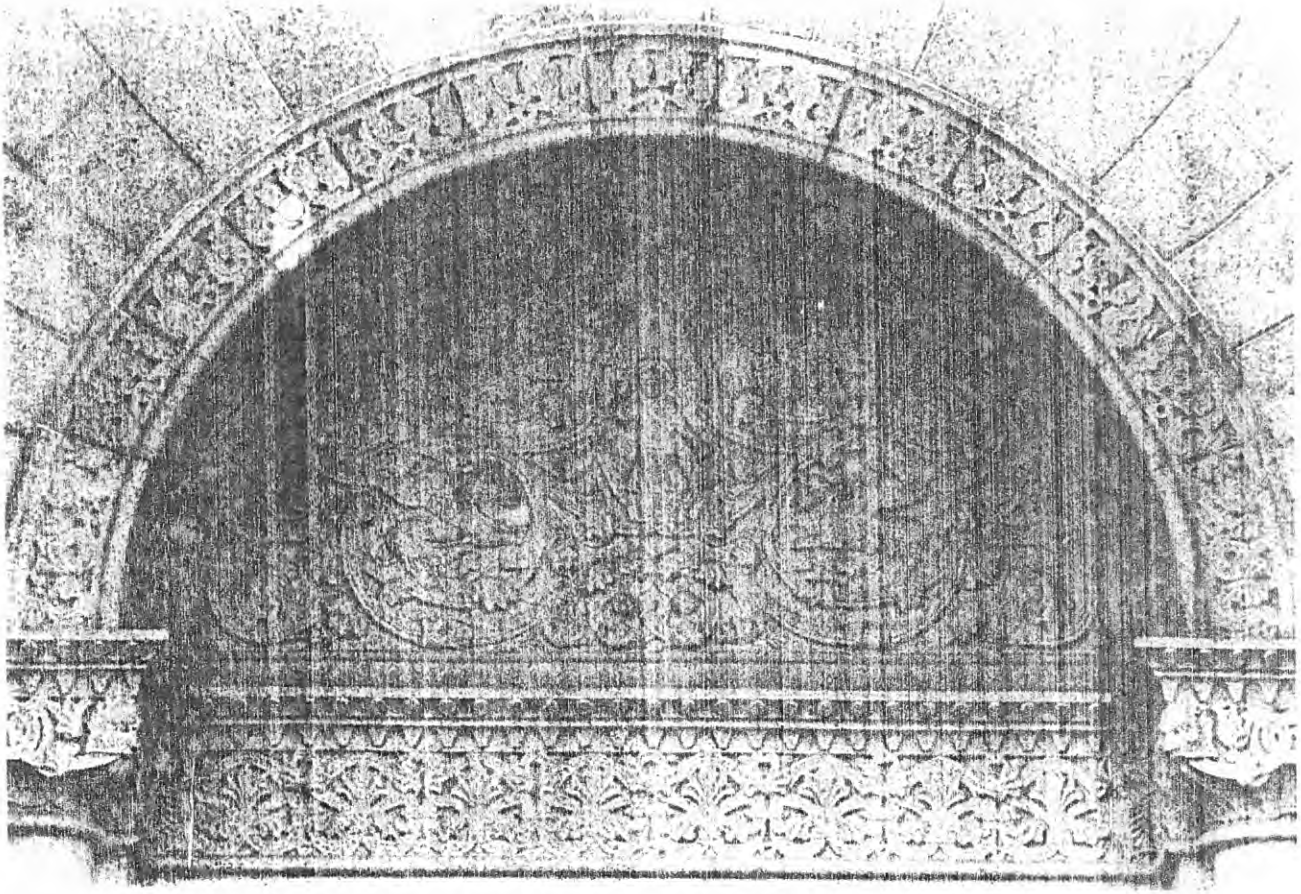
NORMA EVENSON

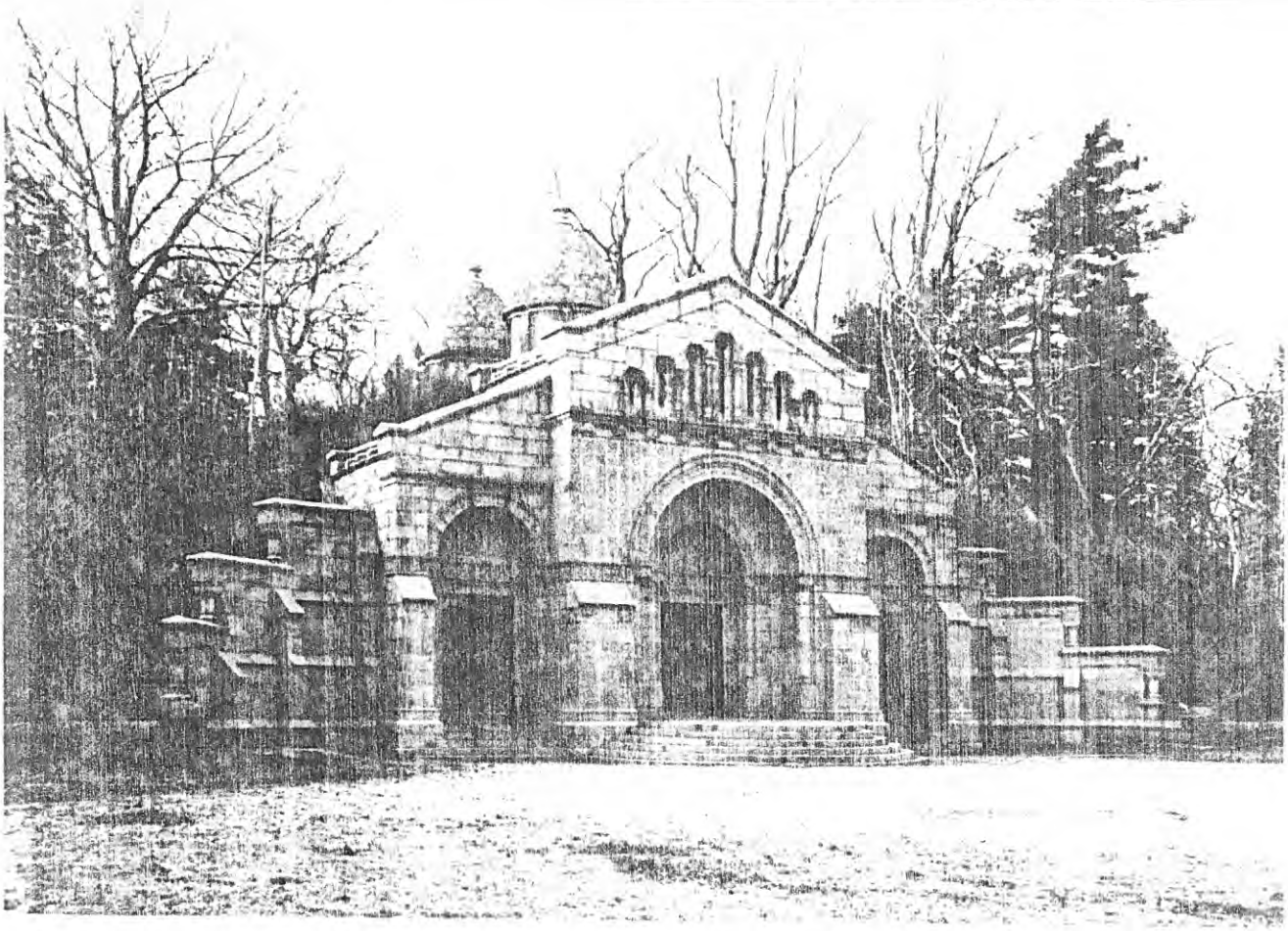
e 1840s had used the
sembled from a variety of systems. Although eclectic building may look traditional
our own eyes, it was recognized in its day as innovative and often shocked
nservative critics. Departures from classicism were bad enough, but many new
ildings seemed to have escaped clear stylistic classification altogether. To those
no advocated the development of a new architectural style, however, eclecticism
ovided a possible transition between revivalism and a completely nontraditional
rm of building. Some observers saw the formal and stylistic variety of
neteenth-century building as detrimental to the unity of Paris. The Académie des
eaux-Arts had protested, for example, when the Gothic-revival church of Sainte
lothilde was built. Surveying nineteenth-century building in 1889, the architect
ucien Magne noted that "some critics, of a morose disposition, are irritated not to
nd today the unity of style which characterized periods when art was confined in
uilds."[4] The modern age, he maintained, was an age of freedom and individualism,
nd, for contemporary design, originality was of prime importance. Eclectic
rchitecture was not to be analyzed in terms of "correctness," but rather with an eye
o the skill and inventiveness the architect had used to manipulate the design
lements.

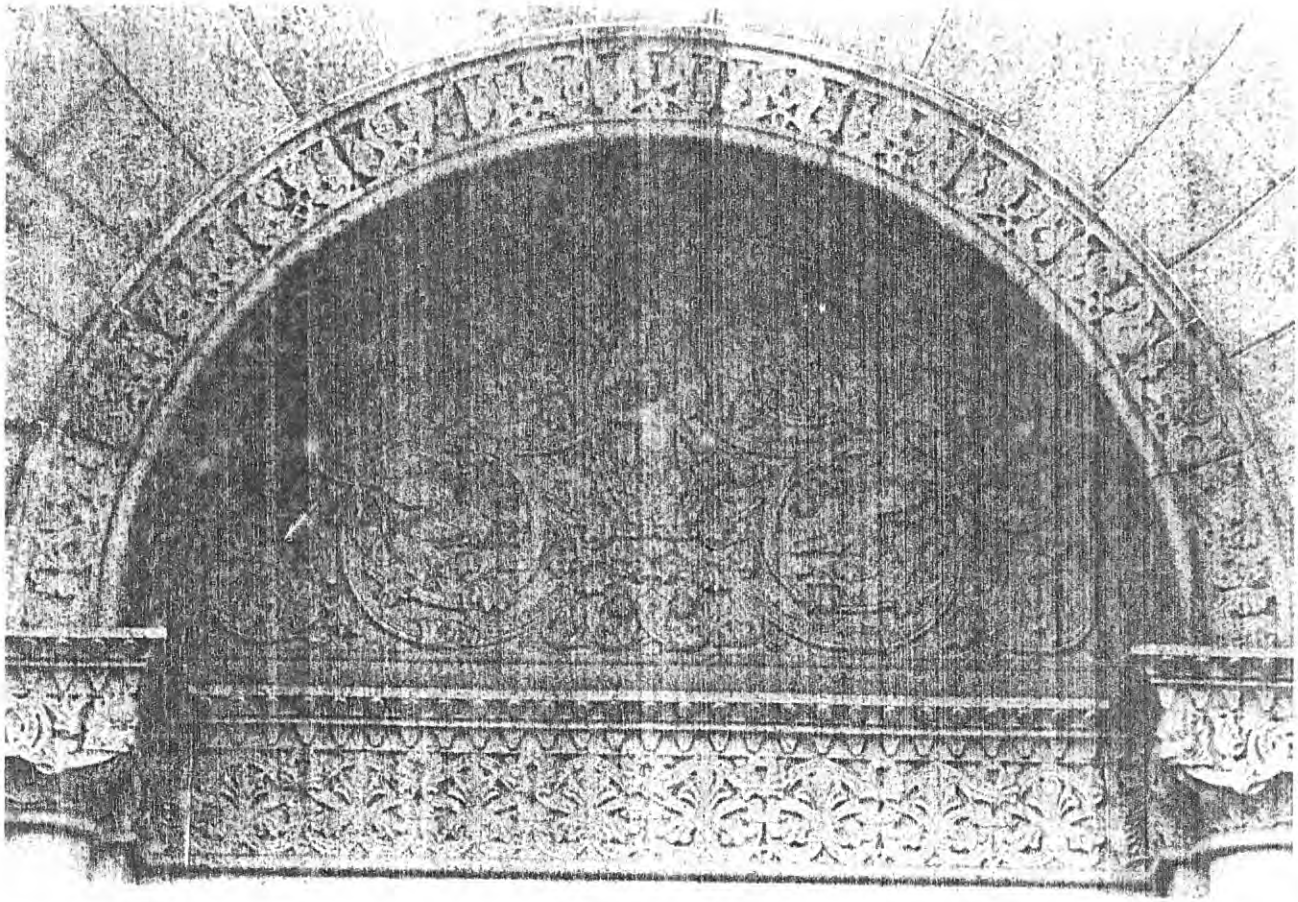
Typifying the eclectic approach to design was Charles Garnier's Opéra, begun in
861 and dedicated in 1875 (figure 79). Although in its classical detailing, elaborate
lecoration, and monumental scale the Opéra might well have been considered
neobaroque," it could not be easily related to existing styles. Upon viewing the
lans, the Empress Eugénie is reputed to have asked what style it was: Louis XIV,
Louis XV, Louis XVI? The architect replied, "It is Napoleon III."[5]

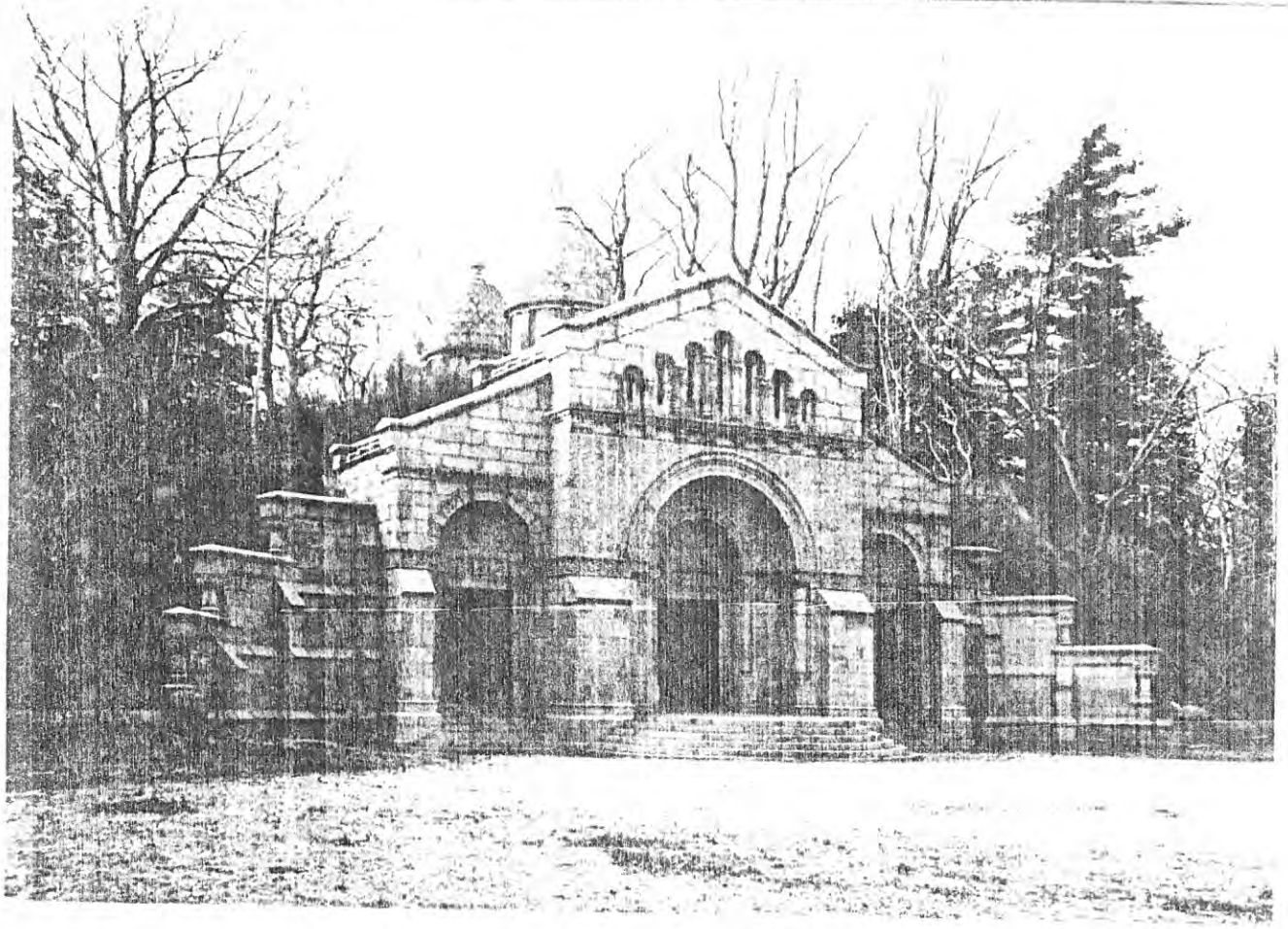
Although the Opéra embodied a mixture of design elements, the *partie* was
ssentially classical. A far more eccentric mélange would be found in another major
landmark, the Basilica of Sacré-Cœur. In 1870 the archbishop of Paris had expressed
a wish to build a church on the summit of Montmartre, and in 1873, following the
war and the Commune, the National Assembly voted support for the project as a
testimony of repentance and a symbol of hope. The design was selected through a
competition among seventy-eight entrants, most of whom provided designs
characterized by stylistic mixture. The winner, Paul Abadie, who had previously
been involved in the architectural restoration of the cathedrals of Angoulême and
Périgueux, called his design "Romano-Byzantine." (It had apparently received some
general inspiration from Saint Front and Saint Étienne in Périgueux, as well as from
Saint Mark's in Venice) (figure 80). In plan Sacré-Cœur involved a Greek cross, with

4. Lucien Magne, *L'architecture française du siècle* (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1889), p. 102.
5. Quoted in Henry Russel Hitchcock, *Architecture: Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1958), p. 138.





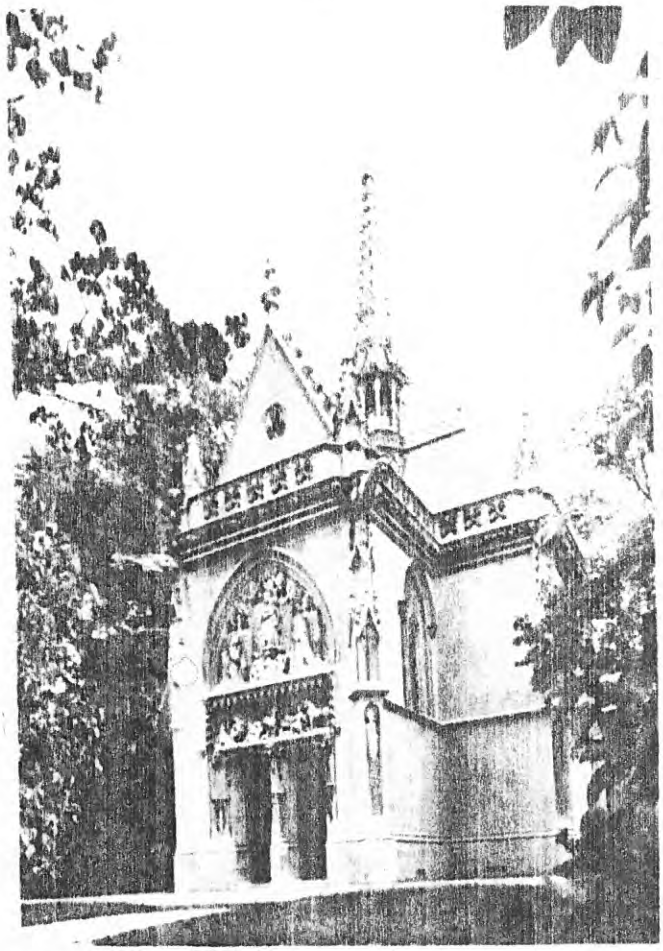




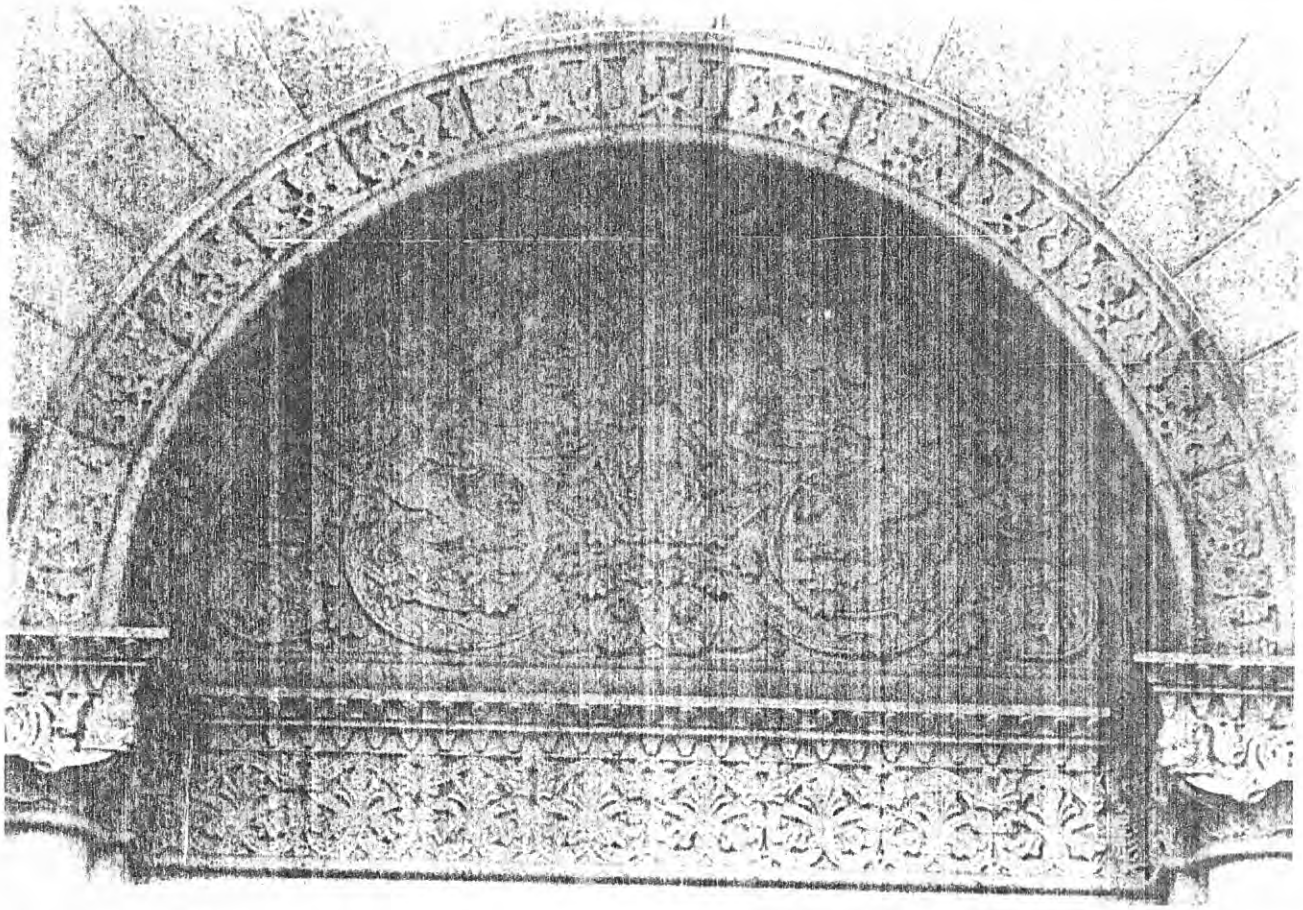
# The Story of
# The Woodlawn Cemetery

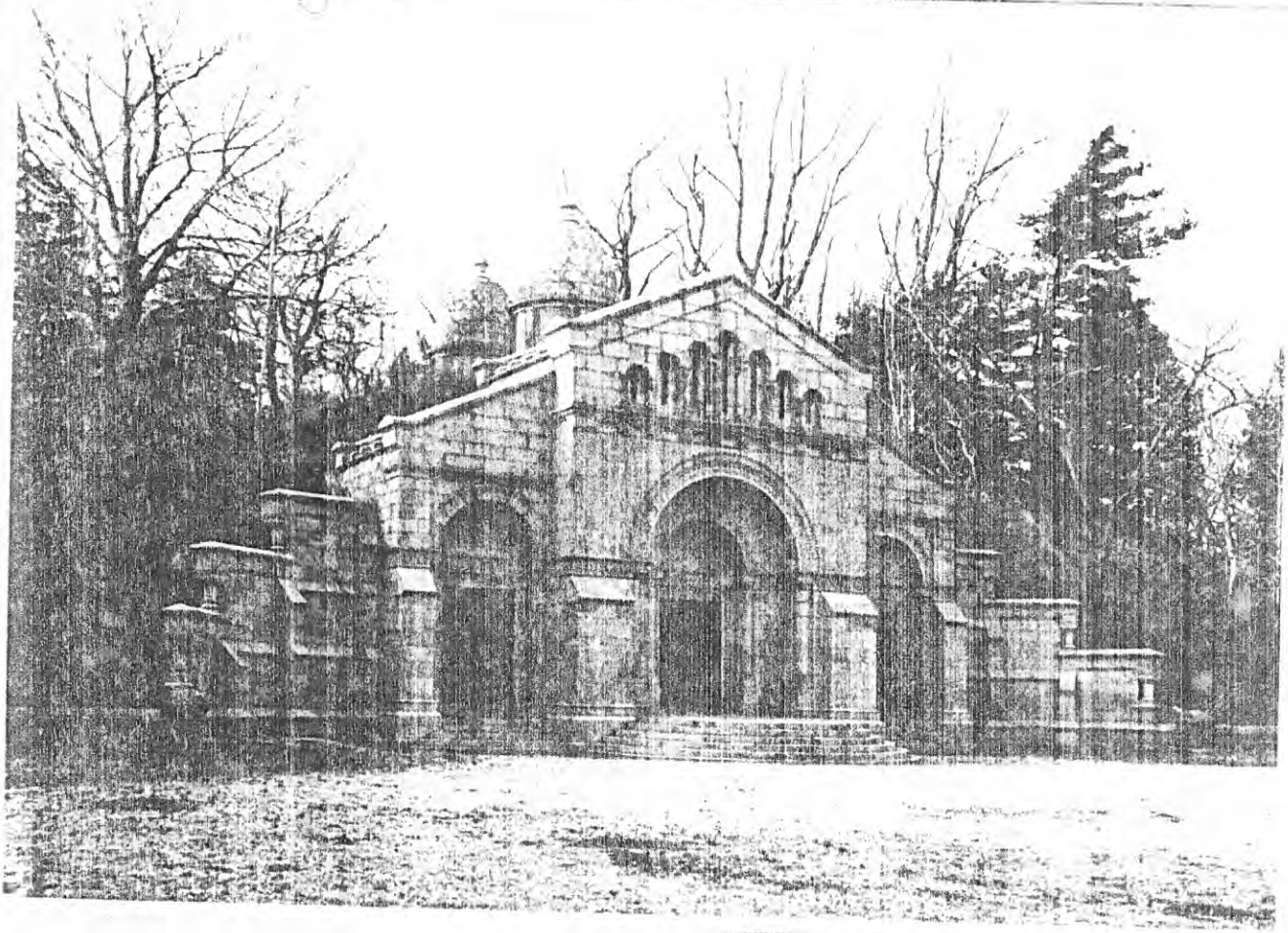
By Edward Streeter

THE WOODLAWN CEMETERY
Executive Office: 20 East 23rd Street
New York, New York 10010
Cemetery Office: Webster Avenue & 233rd Street
Bronx, New York 10470
Mausoleum Office: Jerome & Bainbridge Avenue
Bronx, New York 10470



*The O. H. P. Belmont Mausoleum, based on the famous Chapel of St. Hubert at the Chateau of Amboise in France. R. H. Hunt, Architect.*





LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

20 VESEY STREET, NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10007

566-7577

January 7, 1981

Richard Heath
319 Forest Hills Street
Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts 02130

Dear Mr. Heath:

Thank you for your recent letter offering your services. The staff of the Commission is undertaking research to document the Olmsted Mausoleum to aid the Commission in making a decision on whether to designate it a New York City Landmark. Our efforts will focus on the historical and architectural, and to a lesser extent, the landscape architecture features of the project. At this stage, we are not likely to want the in-depth documentation offered by the Olmsted archive, although if ultimately a historic structures report is prepared, it will probably be necessary. Unfortunately, given its budget constraints, the Commission does not have many funds to hire consultants.

I am enclosing a copy of the Ocean Parkway designation report, as well as our report on Eastern Parkway.

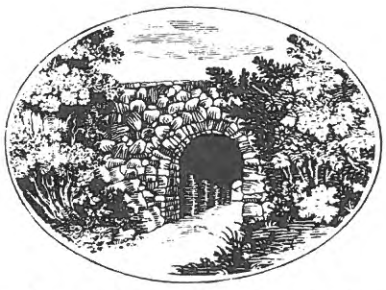
Sincerely yours,

Marjorie Pearson

Marjorie Pearson
Director of Research

MP/nb
Encl.

answer? of (cons)
to: M.P. for
[illegible]



# Franklin Park Coalition

Richard Heath
319 Forest Hills St., Jamaica Plain, Mass. 02130
522-7431

DECEMBER 10, 1980

MR KENT BARWICK, CHAIRMAN
LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION
20 VESEY ST.
NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10007

DEAR MR BARWICK:

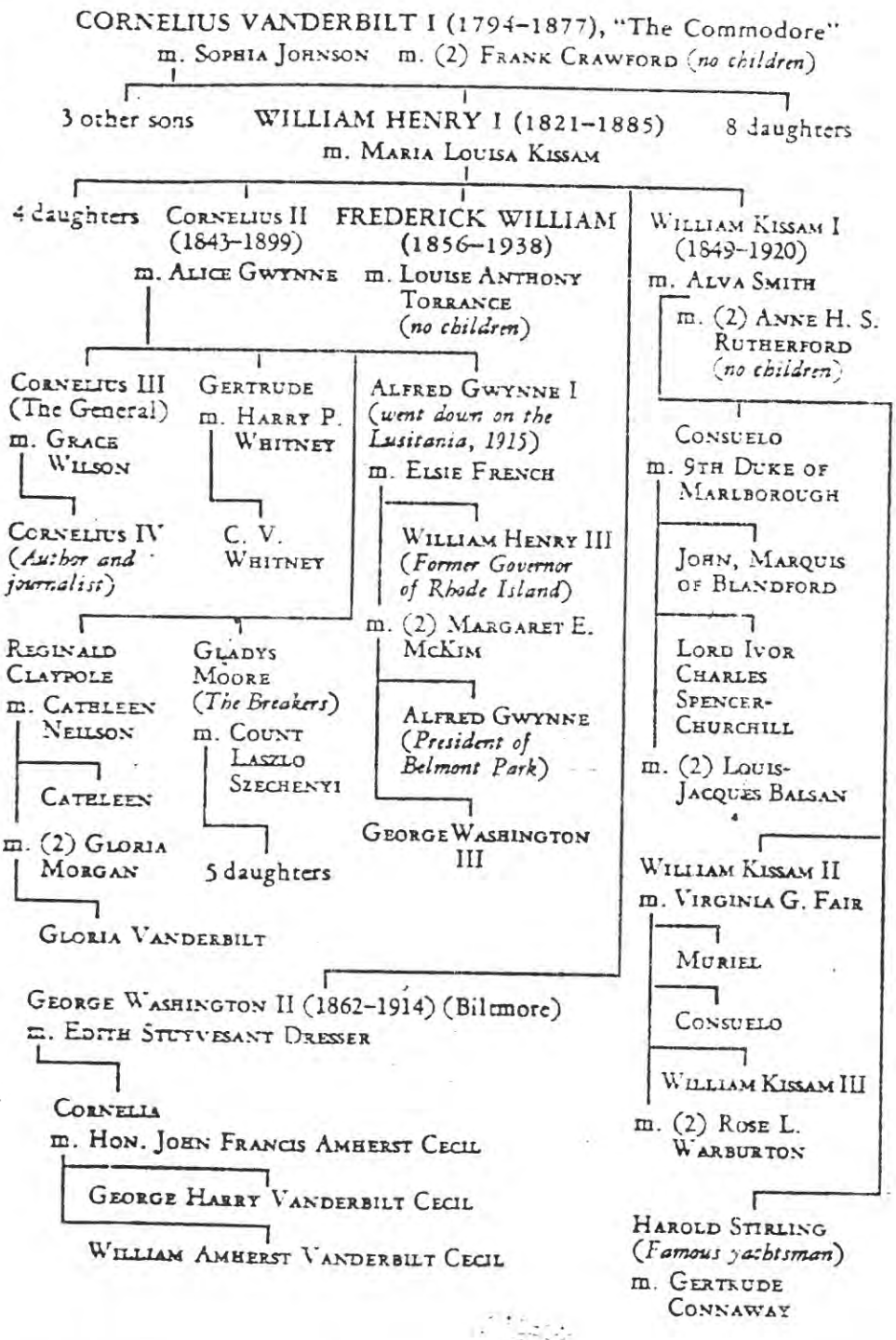
I AM TOLD THAT YOUR COMMISSION WILL BEGIN A STUDY REPORT OF THE VANDERBILT MAUSOLEUM AND GROUNDS. I WOULD LIKE TO SUGGEST THAT I BE HIRED TO DO THE NECESSARY RESEARCH IN THE PAPERS OF THE OLMSTED N.H.S. IN NEAR-BY BROOKLINE. THIS WOULD SAVE ONE OF YOUR STAFF MEMBERS THE TRIP AND WOULD CERTAINLY SAVE THE COMMISSION THE EXPENSE OF TRAVEL AND HOTEL. I CAN WORK HOURLY OR FLAT FEE. SINCE I KNOW THE SITE, I WOULD KNOW WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN MY RESEARCH WHICH I WILL FILE AS A REPORT TO YOU TOGETHER WITH COPIES OF PLANS (IF POSSIBLE).

SECONDLY, I WAS VERY INTERESTED IN THE RECENT N.Y. TIMES ARTICLE ON OCEAN PARKWAY IN BROOKLYN. WOULD IT BE POSSIBLE TO OBTAIN A COPY OF THE COMMISSION'S OCEAN PARKWAY REPORT?

RESPECTFULLY,
Richard Heath

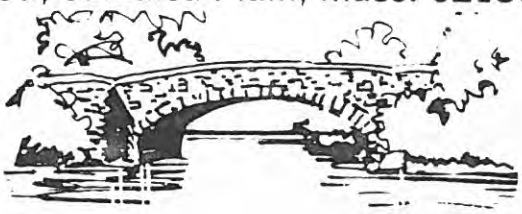
RECEIVED
DEC 16 1980
LANDMARKS PRESERVATION
COMMISSION

# THE VANDERBILT FAMILY TREE




(Based on Andrews, *Vanderbilt Legend*, p. 79)

RICHARD HEATH
319 Forest Hills St., Jamaica Plain, Mass. 02130 • 617-522-7431



SEPTEMBER 19, 1980

MR KENT BARWICK, CHAIRMAN
N.Y. LANDMARK PRESERVATION COMMISSION
305 BROADWAY
NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10007

DEAR MR BARWICK:

I UNDERSTAND FROM A GOOD FRIEND ON STATEN ISLAND THAT YOUR COMMISSION VISITED STATEN ISLAND TO CONSIDER CERTAIN SITES FOR LANDMARK DESIGNATION. I'VE BEEN TOLD THAT NOT ONLY IS THE VANDERBILT PLOT NOT INCLUDED BUT THAT THERE APPEARS TO BE OPPOSITION TO ITS NOMINATION. AMONG THE REASONS FOR THIS OPPOSITION IS THE DOUBT THAT F.L. OLMSTED'S ORIGINAL LANDSCAPE EXISTS INTACT.

I VISITED THE PLOT 2 YEARS AGO AND I WAS THOROUGHLY IMPRESSED BY THE LANDSCAPING OF THE PLOT'S LAND. FROM MY FIRST HAND KNOWLEDGE OF F.L. OLMSTED'S WORK, I CAN ASSURE YOU THAT OLMSTED'S PLAN IS INTACT AND - TO THE CREDIT OF THE TRUST WHICH ADMINISTERS THE TOMB AND THE MORAVIAN CHURCH - WELL MAINTAINED.

THREE CHARACTERISTIC OLMSTED TOUCHES CAN BE SEEN IN THE VANDERBILT PLOT (DESIGNED IN 1886): THE SLOWLY MEANDERING DRIVE, THE HIGH BERMS FLANKING THE DRIVE THICKLY PLANTED WITH SHRUBS AND NATIVE TREES AND THE CONTRAST BETWEEN THIS SHADY, QUIET DRIVE AND THE SUNLIT PLAZA WHICH SETS OFF THE TOMB ITSELF.

IT IS APPARENT TH F.L. OLMSTED CHOSE THE SITE BECAUSE THE TOMB IS SET WELL TO THE RIGHT AS ONE ENTERS IN TO THE PLAZA. THIS WAS DONE SO AS TO CONTINUE THE GREENSWARD UNTIL WELL INTO THE OPEN PLAZA. TALL TREES FLANK THE STONE WALL OPPOSITE THE DRIVE. WHAT YOU HAVE IS THE URGE TO CONTINUE INTO THE PLAZA RATHER THAN JUST STOPPING AT ITS EDGE IF THE TOMB WERE SET STRAIGHT ON. THIS IS A CLASSIC OLMSTED TOUCH IN ALL HIS SUBURBAN PLANS; ARCHITECTURE IS SUBORDINATE TO THE LAND.

THE BERMS FLANKING THE DRIVE ARE INTERESTING, I FOUND THEM FASCINATING BECAUSE IT'S A FAVORITE OLMSTED TECHNIQUE WHICH I ADMIRE. THE BERMS FIRST OF ALL SEPERATE THE PLOT FROM THE REST OF THE CEMETERY. CHANCES ARE THEY WERE ROCK LEDGES THROUGH AND AROUND WHICH OLMSTED CAREFULLY BUILT THE ENTRANCE DRIVE. RHODADENDRONS ARE PLANTED ON EITHER SIDE OF THE DRIVE A SHORT WAY UP THE EARTH MOUNDS AND THEN A THICK SCREEN OF OAKS AND CONIFERS BEGIN. THE RESULT IS A SHADY - BUT NOT GLOOMY - CONTEMPLATIVE APPROACH TO THE GRAVE OF A MUCH

RESPECTED MAN. THE STAND OF CONIFERS TO THE LEFT AS ONE APPROACHES THE PLAZA IS A HANDSOME ONE. YOU WILL NOTICE AS THE PLAZA IS NEARED ONE GETS GLIMPSES OF IT AS THE TREES AND SHRUBS ARE THINNED AT THE TOP OF THE DRIVE. VERY WELL PLANNED.

NEVER DOES THE GREAT, BOLD STONE TOMB OVERPOWER THE LAND OR INTIMIDATE THE VISITOR - ALTHOUGH IT DOES SURPRISE THE VISITOR AFTER THAT SHADY, QUIET WALK.

THE VANDERBILT PLOT UNQUESTIONABLY DESERVES TO BE A NEW YORK LANDMARK AND I HOPE THAT MYOPIC ADMINISTRATORS OF THE PLOT DO NOT IMPEDE THAT.

OLMSTED'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO STATEN ISLAND ARE THE BEST KEPT SECRETS IN NORTH AMERICA - UNFORTUNATELY. HIS HOUSE AT 4515 HYLAN BLVD. DEMANDS RECOGNITION AND REPAIR. SOME OF THE PLANTINGS ARE OLMSTED'S OWN AND GO BACK OVER 130 YEARS.

PLEASE ACCEPT THE VIEWS OF A STRANGER FROM OUT OF STATE. YOU MUST REMEMBER THAT F.L. OLMSTED IS OF NATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE AND HIS WORK OF NATIONAL CONCERN TO ALL OF US INVOLVED IN THE AMERICAN LANDSCAPE.

MOST RESPECTFULLY,

RICHARD HEATH

Richard Heath

cc. MR ALEXANDER ALLPORT, DIRECTOR
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF OLMSTED PARKS
175 5TH AVE., N.Y., N.Y. 10010

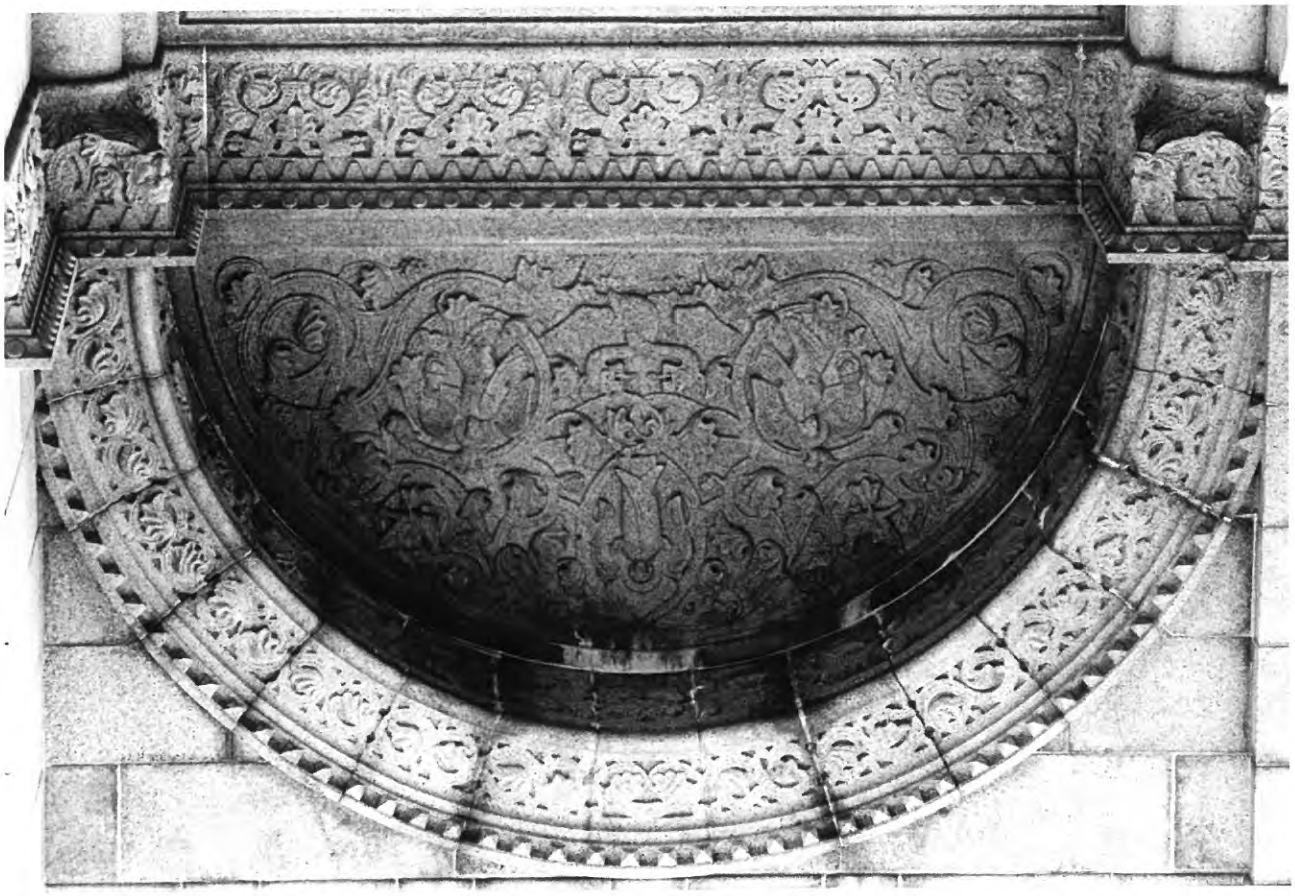
VANDERBILT MAUSOLEUM AND CEMETERY, Moravian Cemetery, Richmond Road and Altamont Street, New Dorp, Staten Island

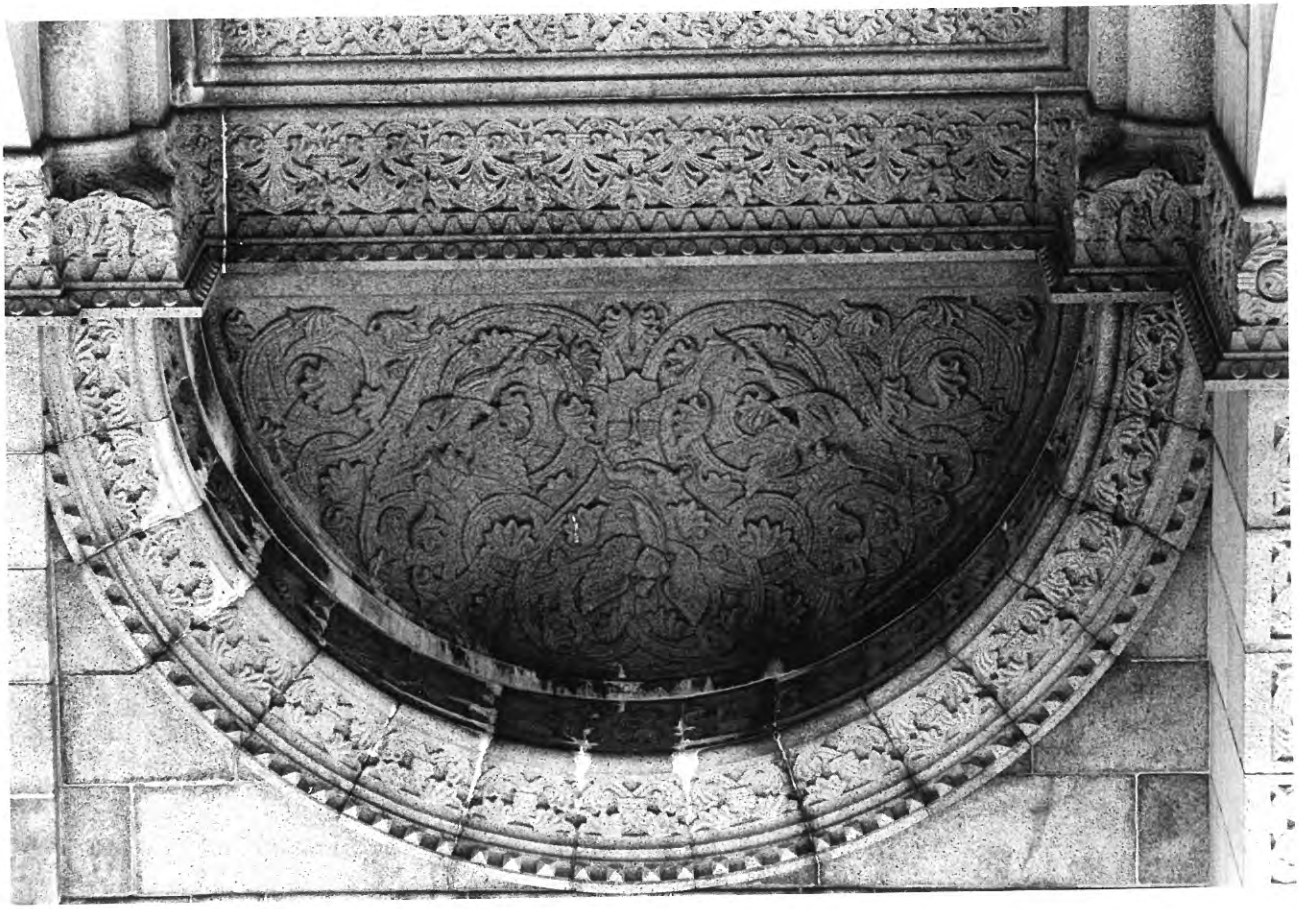
The Vanderbilt Mausoleum, located in the Vanderbilt Cemetery which itself is a part of the Moravian Cemetery, is one of the rare surviving works of architect Richard Morris Hunt in New York City. Commissioned by William Henry Vanderbilt (1821-1885), it was built between 1881 and 1889. Members of the Vanderbilt family had been associated with the New Dorp Moravian Church since its founding in 1742. Consequently, the desire of W.H. Vanderbilt to locate the family cemetery within the Moravian Cemetery is quite understandable. Hunt, the foremost American architect of his day and designer of several houses for members of the Vanderbilt clan, used a modified Romanesque Revival style to create a severe, yet imposing, family tomb, accented by the use of round arches and two small domes. A massive round-arched gate, echoing the design of the mausoleum, sets off the entrance to the Vanderbilt Cemetery. The landscaping of the cemetery was undertaken by Frederick Law Olmsted, America's most notable landscape architect, who collaborated with Hunt on other projects. Tombs and grave sites of other Vanderbilt family members are also in the cemetery.

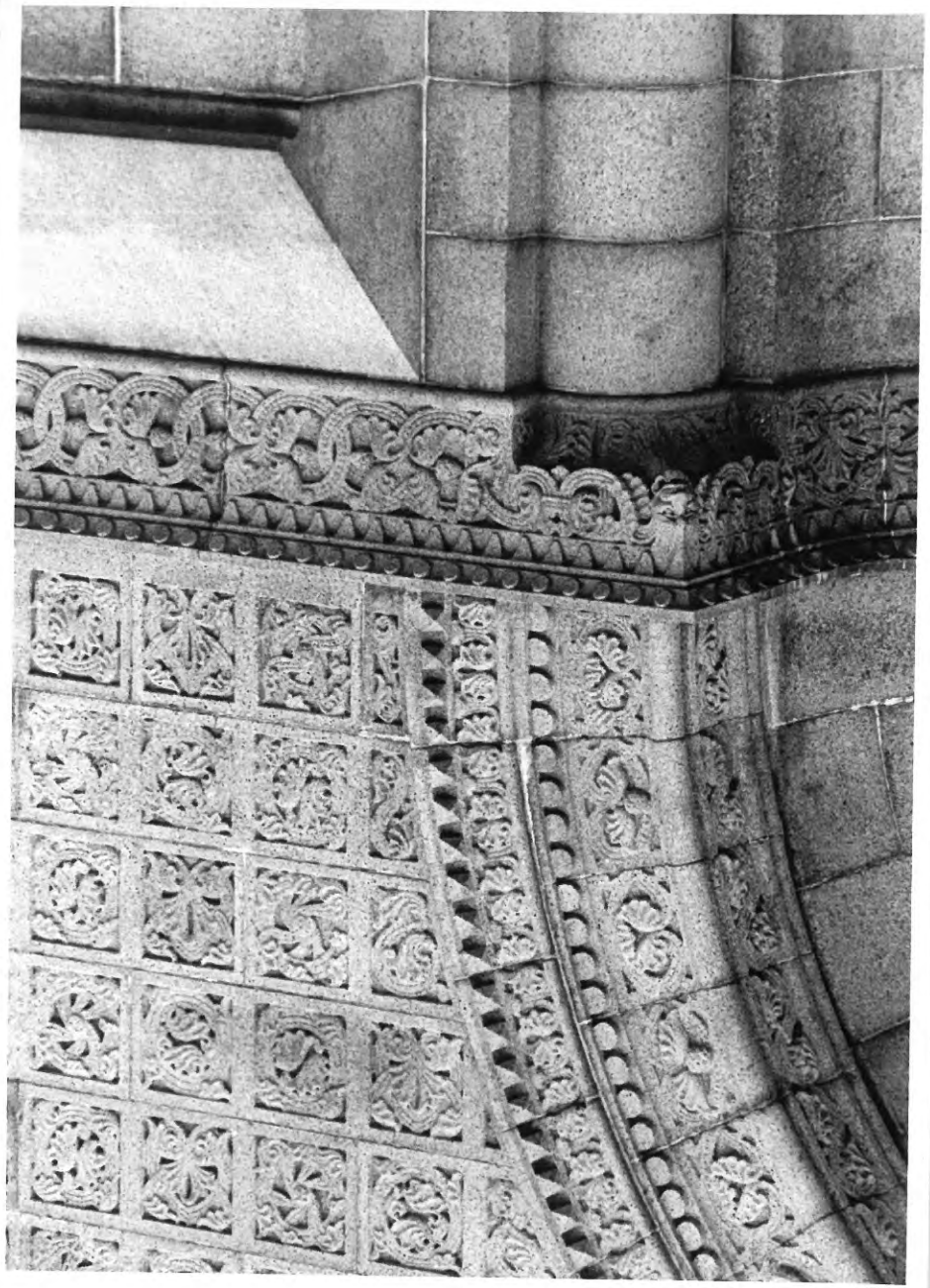
VANDERBILT MAUSOLEUM AND CEMETERY, Moravian Cemetery, Richmond Road and Altamont Street, New Dorp, Staten Island

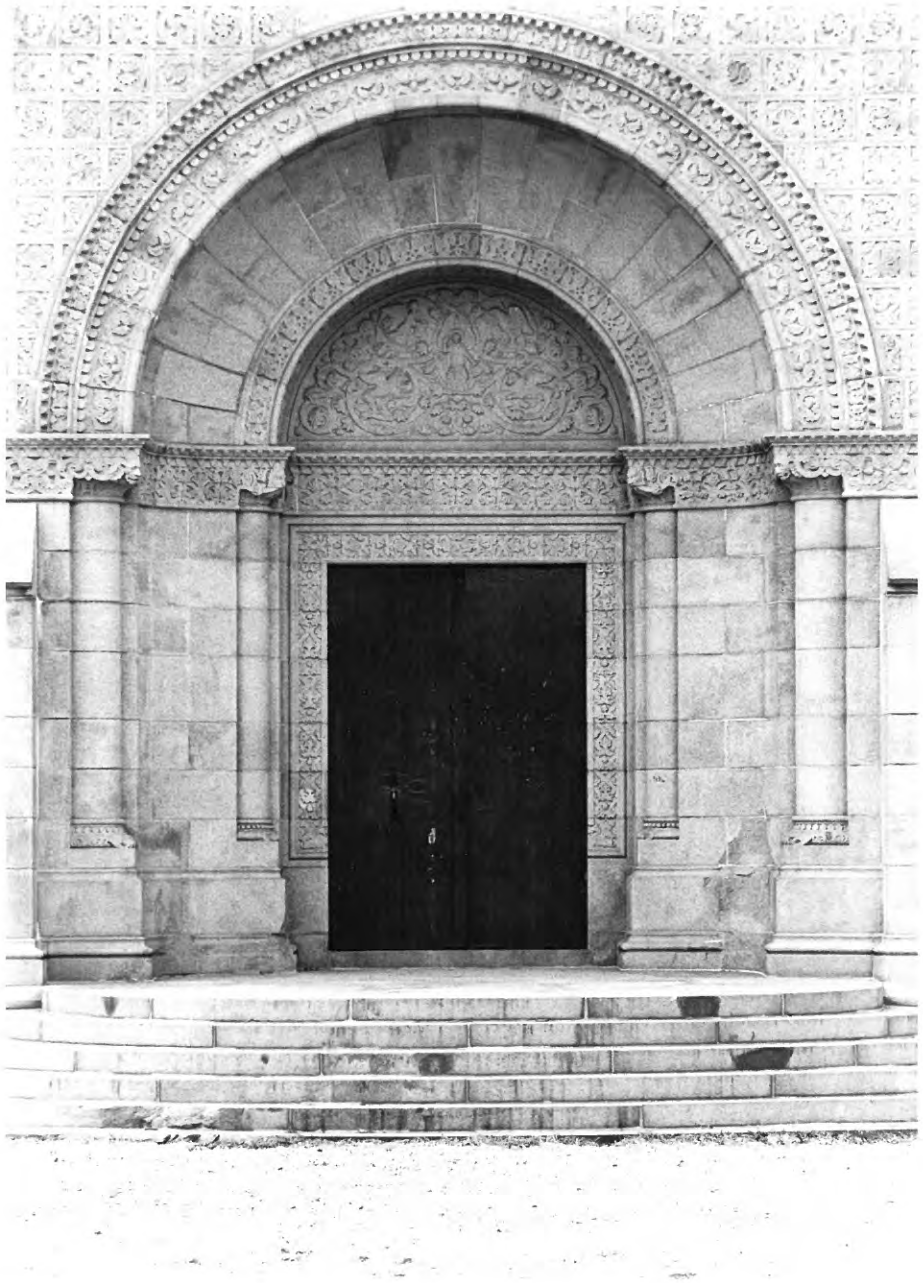
The Vanderbilt Mausoleum, located in the Vanderbilt Cemetery which itself is a part of the Moravian Cemetery, is one of the rare surviving works of architect Richard Morris Hunt in New York City. Commissioned by William Henry Vanderbilt (1821-1885), it was built between 1881 and 1889. Members of the Vanderbilt family had been associated with the New Dorp Moravian Church since its founding in 1742. Consequently, the desire of W.H. Vanderbilt to locate the family cemetery within the Moravian Cemetery is quite understandable. Hunt, the foremost American architect of his day and designer of several houses for members of the Vanderbilt clan, used a modified Romanesque Revival style to create a severe, yet imposing, family tomb, accented by the use of round arches and two small domes. A massive round-arched gate, echoing the design of the mausoleum, sets off the entrance to the Vanderbilt Cemetery. The landscaping of the cemetery was undertaken by Frederick Law Olmsted, America's most notable landscape architect, who collaborated with Hunt on other projects. Tombs and grave sites of other Vanderbilt family members are also in the cemetery.

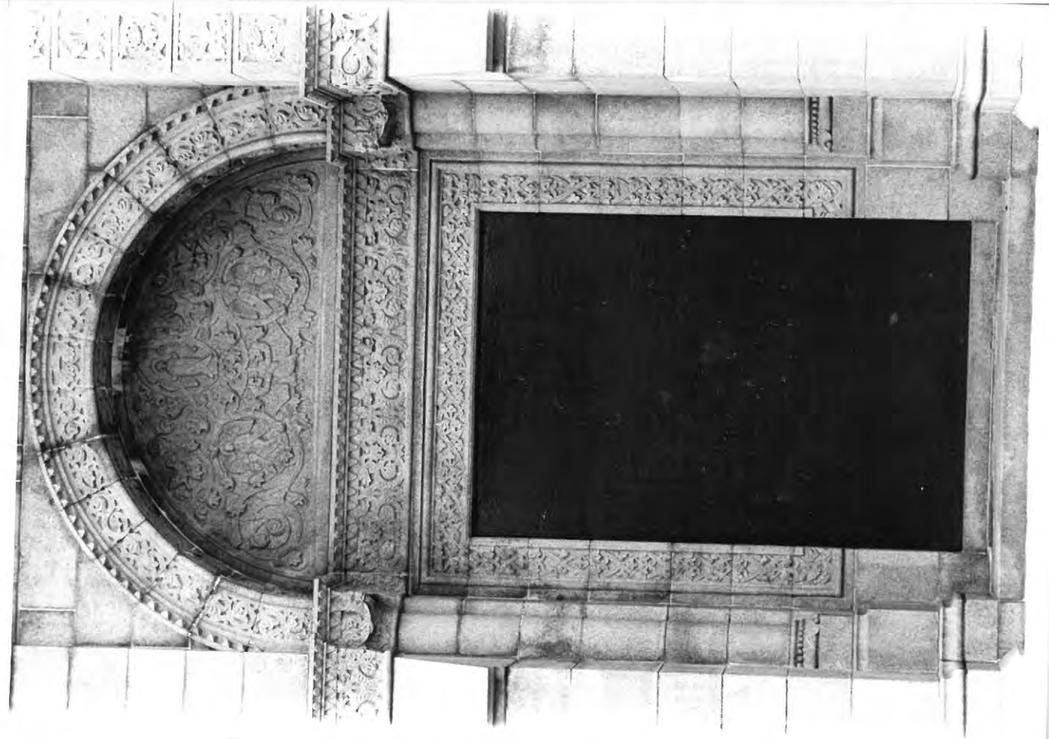
Staten Isl. Item 5
Sept 9, 1980
at Sailors Snug
Harbor.

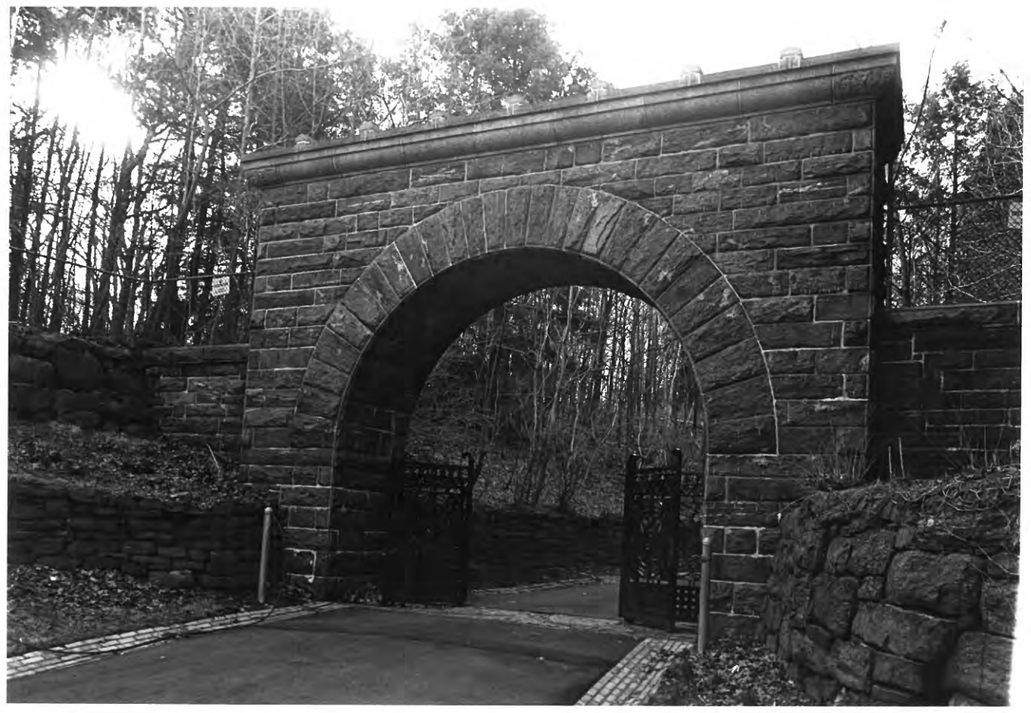


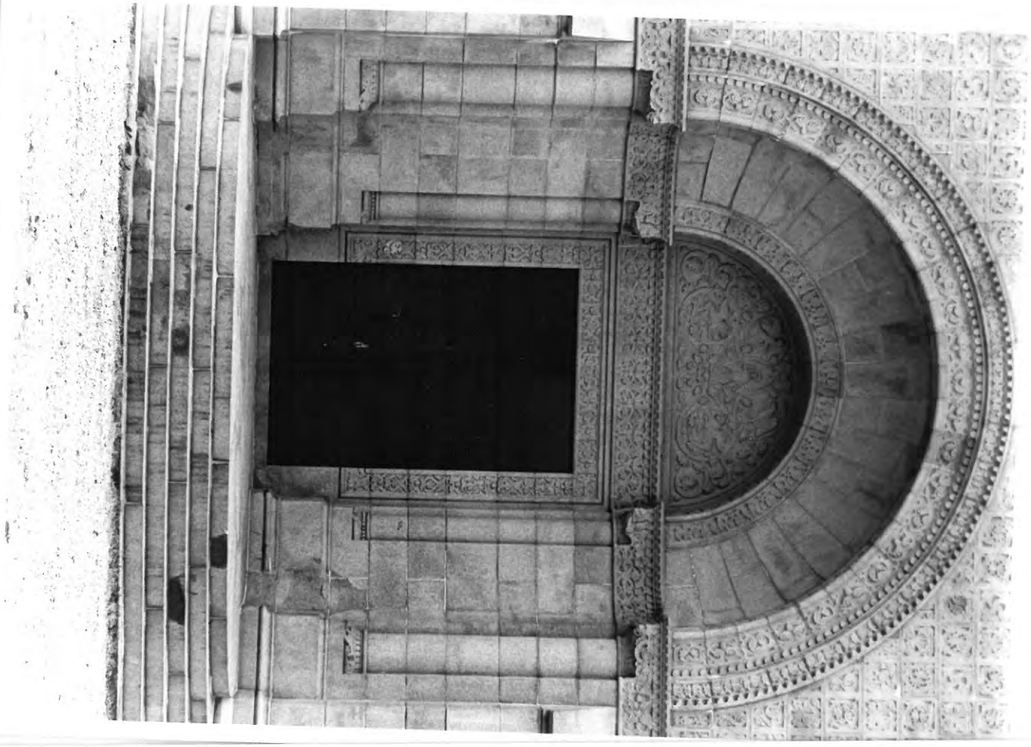


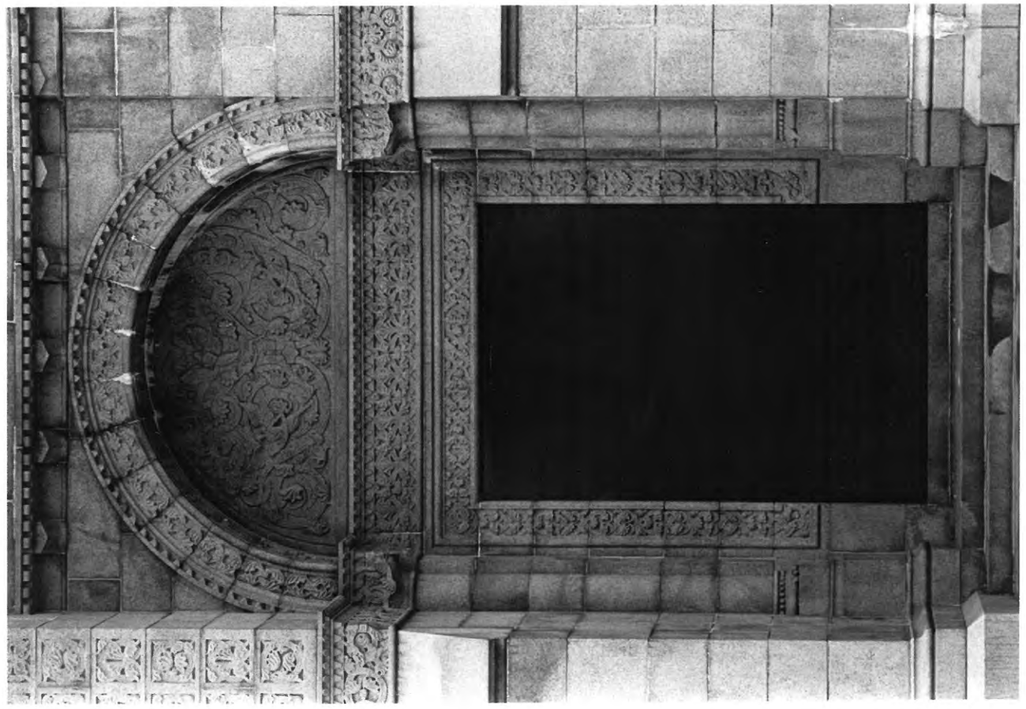


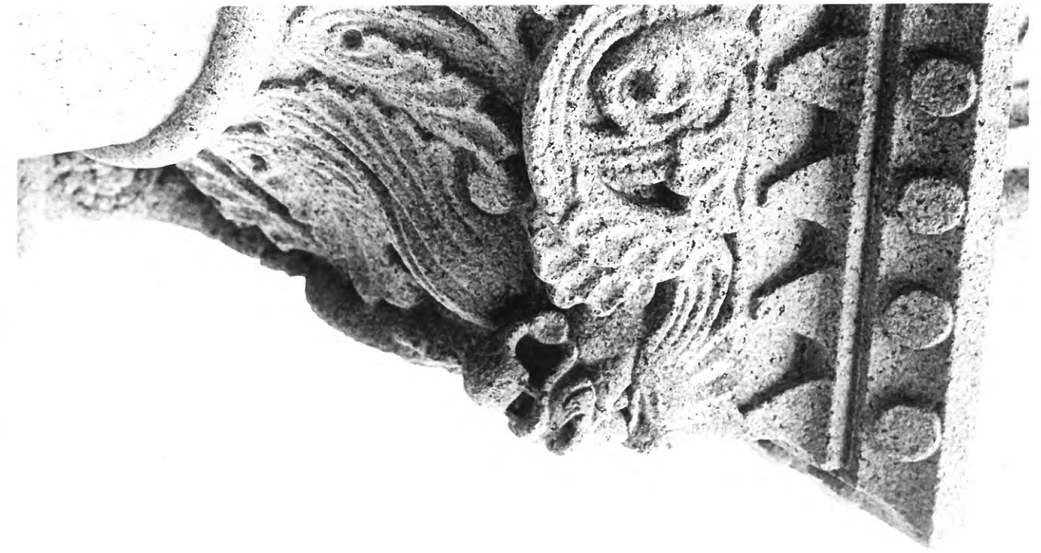












## THE VICTORIAN GARDEN CEMETERY

*George Kackley*

In the history of artistic conservation, the Victorian garden cemetery is sadly neglected. Those of us who are responsible for the care of nineteenth-century garden cemeteries are custodians of works of art more important than is generally recognized. Our nation's great city parks are extensions of these cemeteries, which were, in fact, our first public parks.

### The Romantic Movement.

To appreciate these cemeteries, we must understand the mood of the nineteenth-century Romantic Movement. The Romantic Movement is best understood through familiarity with its major products: the poetry and novels of Wordsworth, Scott, Byron, Shelley, Keats, Bryant, Pushkin, Cooper, Poe, Hugo, Lermontov, Sand, and Melville (it is no accident that the first of these cemeteries got its name, Mount Auburn, from Wordsworth); paintings by Watteau, Blake, Turner, Delacroix, and the Hudson River school; the music of Rossini, Weber, Berlioz, Chopin, Verdi, Wagner, and Liszt; and the informal, natural-style gardens modeled after the English estate gardens.

The Victorian romantics valued the emotional experience. The art of the period displayed the domination of heart over head, of emotion and instinct and imagination over intellect and reason, of Dionysus over Appolo. In harmony with these values, landscape architects preferred the wild to the cultivated, the lush to the trimmed, the profuse to the sparse, the exuberant to the restrained, the mystic to the rational, and the "spooky" to the explicable. They loved the "ivy-covered ruins and cold moonlight." They were rapt by deserted cemeteries.

The romantics were fascinated by the past, searching for historical and mythic roots in fairy tales, folk dances, and other folklore. They glorified their heroes. The past was exotic, and the charm of the exotic brought Egyptian, Japanese, and other styles to the architecture and art of the period. Romantic taste was unbound; it was eclectic.

Victorian romanticism rejected urban civilization in favor of a "return to nature," glorifying the uncivilized landscape of Rousseau's "noble savage." Nature was acclaimed as the ultimate source of reason. The better romantic paintings are apt to be landscapes or seascapes featuring small human figures overwhelmed within stupendous or eerie natural settings. Romantics were prone to bathos, to meglomania, to the macabre, to "saccharine pornography." Almost all of these characteristics are found in America's Victorian garden cemeteries, of which Washington's Oak Hill, in the care of this writer, is a fine example.

### Oak Hill Cemetery.

Oak Hill Cemetery was established in 1849 as a gift of the national Capitol's major nineteenth-century philanthropist, William Wilson Corcoran. He later gave us the Corcoran Gallery, setting the pattern for privately built public art collections for the nation. Corcoran obviously intended his cemetery to be another kind of gallery, exhibiting the finest and latest in landscape architecture, in buildings, and in sculpture.

William Corcoran copied the ideas and profited from the experiences of the first of the Victorian garden cemeteries, the seminal Mount Auburn, built outside of Cambridge, Massachusetts, in 1831. An interesting example of the influence of Mount Auburn on Oak Hill concerns their fences. In the 1860's, the management of Oak Hill tried unsuccessfully to discover the origin of the magnificent cast-iron fence surrounding Oak Hill. One hundred and ten years later, the writer discovered that it is the same fence that enclosed Mount Auburn, designed by Jacob Biglow, the creator of Mount Auburn, and cast in Boston.

It has been supposed that Oak Hill's handsome gate piers and gates were brought from the Smithsonian Institution or from the Capitol grounds, but recent research uncovered in the Smithsonian archives the plans for Oak Hill's piers and gates. They are the work of James Renwich, architect of the Smithsonian "Castle." Renwich rebuilt Corcoran's mansion on Lafayette Square, and he later designed the original Corcoran Gallery. His versatility is proved by the antipodal church buildings he produced, from St. Patrick's Cathedral opposite Rockfeller Plaza to the chapel at Oak Hill.

Oak Hill's grounds and gatehouse were constructed by a latter-day l'Enfant, George Francis de la Roche. Circumstantial evidence suggests that both were designed by or at least strongly influenced by Andrew Jackson Downing, who had the commission to lay out the Smithsonian grounds. A search of Corcoran's papers should prove or

disprove this thesis and might also identify the artist responsible for the chapel windows.

Problems of Preservation.

Because we of the twentieth century have chosen to discredit the Victorians, and because we are confused by the similarity of the garden cemeteries of the nineteenth century to the memorial parks of the twentieth century, we tend to ignore the Victorian garden cemetery. When well designed, twentieth-century memorial parks do have some of the features of their nineteenth-century progenitors, the Victorian garden cemeteries. Both are major contributions of landscape architects. Both can be arboreta and beautiful parks, where the public can enjoy nature and be edified. Both display some fine sculpture and architecture. Those twentieth-century cemeteries which are designed as gardens are a clear continuation of some of the Victorian cemeteries. It is therefore something of a paradox that the survival of the Victorian garden cemetery is threatened because important *differences* between these two types of cemeteries are largely ignored. The Victorian masterpieces are being destroyed by attempts to treat them as though they were memorial parks.

In a very significant sense, the design of the twentieth-century memorial park is a direct result of the demands and needs of twentieth-century mechanization. When the industry that designed equipment for the care of golf courses needed new markets, new markets were created to satisfy the industry. Our twentieth-century memorial parks were planned to facilitate the use of the new lawnkeeping equipment. Their sites were chosen to suit the turf-keeping and automatic grave-digging machinery. The Victorians were not limited by these restrictions; they chose sites for their beauty and dramatic impact. Green-Wood in Brooklyn and Laurel Hill in Philadelphia, for examples, were built on promontories, high points of land and rock. Almost all of the graves in Oak Hill are on narrow terraces of steep hills. The verticality of this dramatic high-rise cemetery is pure romanticism. Its favorite monument is the tall obelisk. Its trees are tall and spectacular. These are sites on which most of the new lawnkeeping equipment is destructive. Mowers bruise and kill dogwood. They destroy moss and other groundcovers. Professional groundskeepers, souls sold to daemon grass, hate that most difficult weed, the violet. But violets provide a long-lasting greenness that rivals grass, and they join with the spring beauty, claytonia, to provide a gorgeous show that lasts for weeks. Vinca minor, which combines with daffodils to produce the nicest of all groundcovers, is featured in song in the description of a graveyard clearly influenced by the garden cemetery--the wild-west burial place of "My Darling Clemantine."

*In the graveyard, in the canyon,* (The dramatic site)
*Where the myrtle doth entwine,* (That's vinca minor)
*There grow roses and other posies*
*Fertilized by Clemantine.*

Groundskeeping experts are agreed that the most expensive plant to maintain per square yard is grass. On the theory that the more a bureaucrat spends, the more he is apt to be paid, managers of Victorian cemeteries have been eager to become captains of lawn maintenance crews with their array of foul-smelling, ear-splitting, destructive machinery. With the advent of power mowers, all the steep banks of Oak Hill were mowed, and much of this beautiful garden is now at the bottome of the Potomac. Victorian cemeteries displayed the novelty of closely clipped lawn only at the entrance gates; they had more sensible plantings elsewhere. When the writer put a stop to some of the ruthless mowing at Oak Hill, ferns, hosta, day-lilies, and spring bulbs, which had survived the decades of mutilation, reappeared. When they were allowed to mature, Oak Hill got a springtime reward: hillsides blue with scilla, polka-dotted carpets of crocuses, snow drops, wild tulips, Dutchman's breeches. When allowed to go to seed, these beauties spread and thickened. Against their greenery, the grasses are forlorn. But to many, the masses of ferns, hosta, and day-lilies that come back when the mowing stops are ragged and disorderly. Many mourn the loss of the crew-cut cemetery.

Grass is our twentieth-century fetish, and grass is destroying the Victorian cemetery. Grass brings erosion to hilly sites, the most deplorable consequence of which is the uprooting of our healthiest old white oaks after they lose the weight of the topsoil that anchors them. Grass does not like shade, so trees are sacrificed. The picturesque trees in Victorian cemeteries present other problems, and there has been a great pressure to remove them. Fallen limbs and fallen trees damage and destroy irreplaceable monuments. Maintenance of large trees is complex and expensive. And twentiety-century culture abhors funeral shade. (While Victorians could not bring themselves to speak of sex, they found death and its symbols fascinating. We are reticent where they were loquacious; we avoid their favorite subject and are glib about their taboo.)

Twentieth century culture has so conditioned us that many people will never appreciate the flamboyance, the disorder, the avoidance of symmetry, and the

extravagance of Victorian taste as expressed in nineteenth-century garden cemeteries. Others whose tastes are more catholic would like to see the Victorian cemeteries restored to reveal again the taste and exuberance of our forefathers, to renew the flair and the spirit of Victorian romanticism.

*George Kackley is superintendent of Oak Hill Cemetery in Washington, D.C.*

## VICTORIANS AT HOME IN THEIR CEMETERIES

*Barbara Rotundo*

In the first decades of the nineteenth century, Americans came to accept a new concept of the family. With the growth of cities, the church and community lost some of their influence on everyday life; instead, social and emotional ties were centered in the family. The Victorians glorified the role of mother and saw the home as the source of the finest moral conduct, a blessed haven from the wickedness of the competitive outside world. This new importance of the family was reflected in every aspect of nineteenth century life and, not surprising to readers of this bulletin, it was reflected also in the artifacts and rituals connected with death.

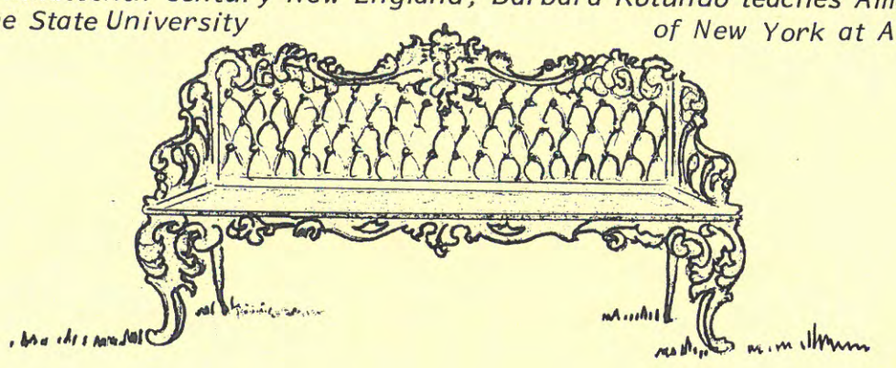
In Colonial America an individual death was a loss to the community, which shared the mourning and made room for the burial in the often crowded community burial ground. This emphasis on community loss was diminished with the advent of the large rural or garden cemetery, which developed in part as a response to the shift in thinking about the family.

Today, the nineteenth century garden cemetery is an oasis of green in an urban area, but in its beginning it was truly rural. The charter obtained from the Massachusetts legislature for America's first rural cemetery, Mount Auburn, across the river from Boston on the outskirts of Cambridge, stated that the purchasers of plots would own the land in perpetuity. This legal provision was a radical departure from the customary procedure used by church and community graveyards. Soon legislatures in all the eastern states were writing similar stipulations in charters, as towns and cities rushed to establish one of the popular, innovative rural cemeteries. With perpetual ownership, the family--or the patriarch of the family--could provide for the interment of all descendants without fear of removal later, or of the subsequent burial of strangers above the original graves of family members, long an accepted practice in both Europe and the New World.

Visitors to twentieth century cemeteries are accustomed to seeing open, manicured green lawns with an occasional garden, tree, or clump of shrubbery, and with marble or granite gravestones rising in rows or irregular patterns. Far different was the view of visitors one hundred or more years ago. At that time most of the family plots were surrounded by a fence or a hedge or retaining wall. The enclosure not only signaled that the land so marked was private property, but when the hedge grew tall enough, or the woodbine or climbing roses covered the fence, there was even a physical privacy for the family visiting its lot. Families often chose land in forested areas, where their lots were as darkly romantic and mysterious as their houses with their heavily draped windows, and their gardens in which they planted hanging evergreens, erected trellises, and trained vines up the sides of their summer houses (those charming gazebos that have all but disappeared). The isolation provided by their houses and gardens protected family life, preserving its privacy from the outside world. They treated their cemetery lots exactly as they treated their gardens, with trellises as well as fences. Often the cemetery had a large gazebo for a well or pump-house that served as a shelter in case of a summer shower. Garden nurseries developed a large variety of weeping trees, considered appropriate for cemetery planting. The same cast-iron furniture used in gardens was used in cemeteries: benches, chairs, tables, and urns filled with flowers. These secluded lots were outdoor sitting rooms where the family met to talk about the past and plan the future.

Victorians knew how to enjoy their cemeteries, making them popular goals for family outings in the country. These same outdoor sitting rooms, though usually without their handsome fences and furniture, are there for us to enjoy and study today, offering the visitor a unique view of nineteenth century family life.

*Specializing in nineteenth-century New England, Barbara Rotundo teaches American literature at the State University of New York at Albany.*



## ASHES TO ASHES, RUST TO RUST: The Mount Auburn Cemetery Fence Controversy

*Patricia Casler*

If any Cambridge property seemed secure from disfigurement, it was Mount Auburn Cemetery, America's first rural garden cemetery. Founded in 1831 by the Massachusetts Horticultural Society, it offered a romantic landscape alternative to the neglected, crowded urban burying grounds then prevalent. At the dedication of the cemetery, Judge Story warned the board of trustees that Mount Auburn was "...a sacred ...an eternal trust. It is consecrated ground. May it remain forever inviolate."

This mandate had been faithfully fulfilled by a long succession of trustees from Boston's most respected families. Thus, when demolition of Mount Auburn's 1844 perimeter cast iron fence began in early August of 1980, many onlookers assumed that the work was part of a restoration program. In fact, the fence was being replaced by vinyl-clad chain-link fencing.

Although the cemetery was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1975, no governmental constraints existed to prevent the trustees from demolishing the fence. Located along a busy and poorly controlled intersection, it had been periodically hit by cars, accelerating the deterioration already existing due to deferred maintenance. Facing increased operating costs and a shrinking endowment, the trustees voted to remove the fence and redesign the entrance gates.

Demolition was well under way when the Cambridge Historical Commission (CHC) learned of the action. Together with the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities (SPNEA), the Commission contacted cemetery officials and local preservationists in an attempt to halt demolition.

It soon became apparent that the public interest in the fence was not clearly understood by the trustees. The fence itself is an intricate combination of Egyptian emblems including winged globes, inverted lotus flowers and torches, and banded cylinders. Standing ten feet high and running 2,600 feet along Mount Auburn Street, it is a strong physical and visual boundary seen and appreciated by laymen, motorists, pedestrains, and joggers, as well as by scholars.

By the time public pressure and the threat of a lawsuit temporarily halted demolition, half of the fence had been demolished. A September 2 *Boston Globe* editorial listed the trustees by name and commented that "the extraordinary thing about the trustees' action is that, during the decade they have been pondering this problem, and despite the national standing of the facility they hold in trust, the cemetery's guardians have never sought help from the city; they have never applied for a federal grant, nor have they considered raising private funds or consulted the 1200-1500 proprietors who receive their annual report...It is high time they opened the door and called for help."

The trustees did open the door at their September 16 meeting, reviewing a proposal presented by SPNEA and CHC proposing interim stabilization of deteriorated portions of the fence, installation of bollards and a traffic signal, restoration of a sample stretch of the fence, and investigation of long-term fund raising for general restoration needs. The trustees agreed to undertake interim stabilization and take the other proposals under consideration.

In the short run, the fence has been saved from further demolition and a communications link established between the trustees and concerned preservationists. The more important questions, however, concern the long-term preservation of the cemetery. The fence is only the first impact of the financial problems faced by the trustees which will determine Mount Auburn's future. The trustees' initial solution to this problem has been reoriented, and they are more acutely aware of the value placed on the resource they manage.

From the *Boston Globe*, October 9, 1980

*Mt. Auburn Fence, Mt. Auburn Fence,*
*Brave barrier of consequence,*
*Your straight, symmetric, sculptured style*
*Is mecca for the fenceophile.*
*You spark in him a primal lust,*
*Bleeding flakes of foundry rust*
*From auto grilles you've bashed and slaughtered,*
*Which left you somewhat drawn and quartered.*
*And that, old friend, is the awkward nub--*
*Your deshabille; for us the rub*
*Is not your worthiness or grace;*
*You're too expensive to replace,*
*Or so we thought until your friends*
*Began to run our Trusteed ends.*
*By press, by mail, they came in waves*
*Uprooting votes, old friendships, graves,*
*Charging WASP benign neglect*
*Causes your bones to lie there, wrecked.*

*Reprise:*
*Old friend, accept this, we're contrite,*
*Somehow, some way, we'll set you right.*

*Francis W. Hatch, trustee*
*Mount Auburn Cemetery*

Response:

*O Mr. Hatch, O Mr. Hatch,*
*I have to answer with dispatch*
*Your Paean to Mount Auburn's fence.*
*For us it is some recompense,*
*Although one half is gone already,*
*To know the rest will soon be steady.*
*Rust and flake can be subdued,*
*Battered surfaces renewed.*
*Help with funding can be found*
*To fence with grace your ancient ground.*
*Mount Auburn's charm is more than trees,*
*Or lakes, or monuments, but these*
*Must all be well enclosed, we think.*
*Cast iron is better than chain link,*
*However smoothly clad with vinyl.*
*That choice, we trust, will not be final.*
*The fence's friends have come in hordes--*
*It's nice to know they can reach Boards.*

*We urge you to complete your mission*
*With the help of the Cambridge*
*Historical Commission.*

*Cynthia Zaitzevsky, President*
*Cambridge Historical Commission*

*Before her recent move to Chicago, Patricia Casler was Assistant Director of the Cambridge Historical Commission.*

## THE VANDERBILT CEMETERY AND MAUSOLEUM

*Nancy Goeschel*

In 1884, an aging and ailing William Henry Vanderbilt decided to create a private family cemetery. He had retired from business the previous year, having headed the vast railroad empire founded by his father, Commodore Cornelius Vanderbilt. The Commodore had died seven years earlier at the age of eighty-three and had been buried on his native Staten Island in the Moravian Cemetery at New Dorp. William H. at first thought to enlarge the Vanderbilt family plot within that cemetery, but the owners of the adjacent plots demanded such extortionate prices that he purchased, instead, fourteen acres just above the Moravian Cemetery, high on a hillside, commanding a panoramic view of New York Harbor's Lower Bay. He engaged the foremost landscape architect of the day, Frederick Law Olmsted, to design the grounds as a picturesque park. Richard Morris Hunt, at the time emerging as the favored architect of American millionaires, was selected to design a massive family mausoleum, which Vanderbilt wanted "roomy and solid and rich." In early December of 1885, Vanderbilt traveled to Staten Island to survey the work in progress. Only a week later, while at home in his recently completed Fifth Avenue mansion, he suffered a stroke and died. He was buried on Staten Island at a temporary gravesite, and it was not until several years had passed and the mausoleum was completed that he came to his final rest in the luxurious setting he had planned.

In selecting this site for the family tomb, Vanderbilt had probably been influenced by two circumstances--first, the family's Staten Island heritage, dating back to the early eighteenth century, and second, his desire for security. In 1878, the remains of the New York City merchant prince, A.T. Steward, had been stolen from a church graveyard and held for ransom, and Vanderbilt feared a similar desecration. While the vast majority of New York's wealthy residents were content with family plots within the city's large rural cemeteries, such as Green-Wood in Brooklyn and Woodlawn in the Bronx, Vanderbilt desired a site not publicly accessible. Originally, the Vanderbilt Cemetery and Mausoleum was guarded around the clock.

Although it is much smaller than the Romantic rural cemeteries which had become increasingly popular in nineteenth-century America from the 1930's on, the Vanderbilt Cemetery and Mausoleum belongs within that tradition. Olmsted and Hunt conceived a naturalistic park which for the most part conforms with the original topography of the site. A rather steep winding road leads up from the entrance gates to a relatively level area with gently sloping grassy lawns. Tree and shrub planting was in the picturesque English park manner which Olmstead favored. The single formal element in the design is the large terraced setting for the Mausoleum, which also serves as a vantage point for the splendid bay view. Since the mausoluem was restricted to family members with the Vanderbilt surname, married daughters and their husbands and offspring are buried at other sites within the cemetery, reached by curving paths.

Vanderbilt probably selected Hunt as architect on the evidence of the recently completed Fifth Avenue mansion of his son, William Kissam Vanderbilt. This house introduced the sumptuous Francois I chateau style to America and caused a popular as well as critical sensation. Hunt's first submitted plans for the mausoleum must have called for an elaborate structure indeed, for William H. fired off this reaction:

> You entirely misunderstand me; this will not answer at all. We are plain, quiet, unostentatious people and we don't want to be buried in anything as showy as that would be. The cost of it is a secondary matter and does not concern me...I don't object to appropriate carvings or even statuary, but it mustn't have any unnecessary fancy work on it.

Hunt's revised plan nevertheless called for a distinctly imposing building, a Romanesque Revival design executed in Quincy granite with limestone facings on the interior and elaborate wrought-iron gates. The church-like facade is composed of three round-arched portals punctuating two "superimposed" temple fronts. The crypt has two main bays surmounted by large domes on pendentives, lit by stone fish-scale roofed cupolas which project from the hillock, under which the crypt is buried. The "appropriate carvings" which Vanderbilt was willing to concede are executed in a very shallow relief and are simultaneously rich and subdued. Intricate floral moldings and column capitals surround the portals, and a diaper work of squares encloses foliate panels on the wall surface surrounding the center portal. The three tympana have acanthus leaf "peopled scrolls," more Byzantine than Romanesque in spirit. Although these depict subjects appropriate to a funerary context--Christ in Majesty, a butterfly-winged soul arising to heaven, a soul in heaven--the overall effect is more decorative than iconographic.

Vanderbilt's youngest son, George Washington Vanderbilt, oversaw the work after his father's death. By the time the cemetery and mausoleum were completed, in 1889, he had come to admire both Olmstead and Hunt, and he subsquently commissioned additional work from both, culminating in the Biltmore estate in Ashville, North Carolina, for which Olmstead planned the 6000 acre grounds and Hunt designed an enormous chateau.

The New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission is currently considering the Vanderbilt Cemetery and Mausoleum for Landmark status. While the Vanderbilt descendants recognize the architectural significance of their property, their representatives oppose official designation, fearing that such designation would attract the attention of not only lovers of architecture but of decidedly less sympathetic individuals. Although the cemetery is now surrounded by a high cyclone and barbed wire fence, vandals are a continuing problem, recalling the fears expressed by William H. Vanderbilt nearly a century earlier. Regardless of how the question of Landmark designation is resolved, the Vanderbilt Cemetery and Mausoleum remain$ one of America's most interesting and beautiful nineteenth-century private Romantic cemeteries.

*Nancy Goeschel is an architectural historian with the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission Research Department.*

## BOOK REVIEW

*A TIME TO MOURN: Expressions of Grief in Nineteenth Century America*
Edited by Martha V. Pike and Janice Gray Armstrong
Profusely illustrated in black and white, some color. 192 pages
Published by The Museums at Stony Brook, New York, with a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, 1980. Softcover $11.95 + $2.50 postage and handling.

*Review by Gina Santucci*

"Nineteenth century Americans mourned well." Thus begins *A Time to Mourn*, a sumptuous exhibition catalog* and an illuminating series of essays on the Victorian way of death. The book is divided into three sections. The first, "Customs and Change," investigates the socio-economic and cultural changes affecting Victorian attitudes toward death. The second, "The Cemetery and the Funeral," discusses "the rural cemetery as an institution of symbolic importance," using Green-Wood Cemetery in Brooklyn, New York, as a case study. The rural cemetery as a precursor of the public parks movement is also examined. The third section, "In Memoriam," introduces the vast material culture that flourished as a result of Victorian mourning practices. Fashion, portraiture, jewelry and related decorative arts are thoroughly examined. The essays are the work of seven authors, among them American studies professor David Stannard, historian Harvey Green, anthropologist Lawrence Taylor, and costume historian Barbara Dodd Hillerman.

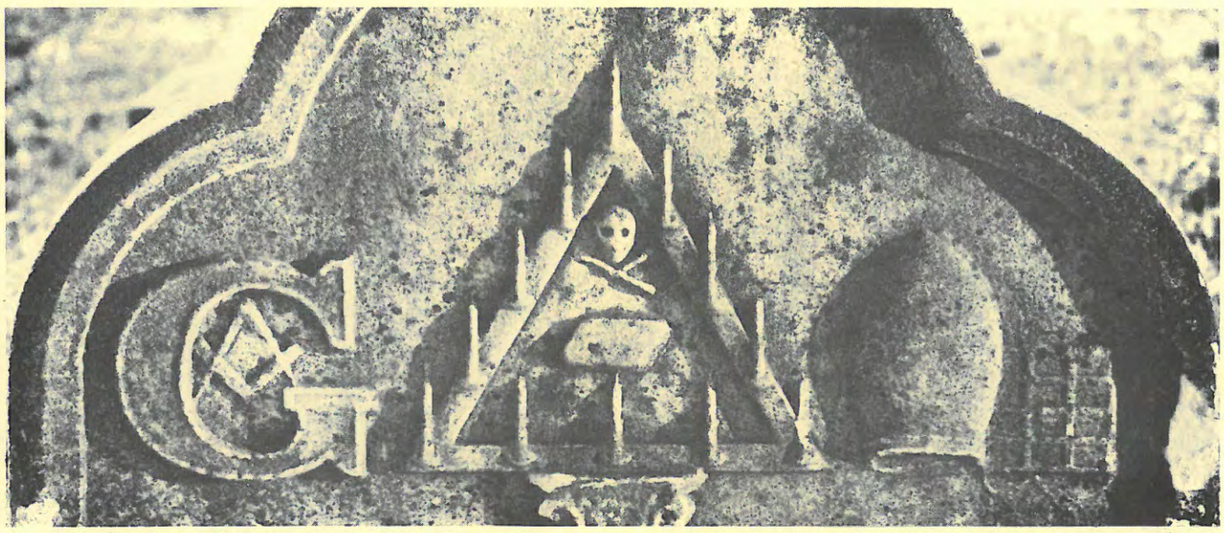
To mourn well may not mean to mourn wisely. It can be argued that the best way of coming to terms with grief is the twentieth-century way--to put it behind us quickly, to hurriedly shove it into a dark corner to be steadfastly ignored. Perhaps the Victorians had the healthier way. By creating a blanket of practices with rituals and objects to surround it, the natural process of healing and resolution of grief was allowed to take place in its own time, with the sanction of society. However little we choose to express our grief publicly in 1981, privately we may be as lavish and involved in our reactions to death as the Victorians were. To understand their perspective on this subject can be an edifying experience.

*A Time to Mourn* provides a solid background of information for anyone interested in Victorian attitudes toward death. What really distinguishes this book, however, is the quality, quantity and significance of its illustrations. Full color reproductions include Currier and Ives lithographs and mourning portraits by American naive painters. There are nineteenth century photographs of mourners and tombstones and a number of wonderful engravings of rural cemeteries produced in 1847 by James Smillie and Nehemiah Cleveland. All the mourning necessities and accessories that were displayed at the exhibition are handsomely illustrated and described in full. Included also is a selected reading list of eighteen widely available publications used in the preparation of the exhibition.

For those seeking a well written, well illustrated primer on the Victorian way of death, *A Time to Mourn* is an excellent place to start.

* Published for the exhibition of the same name which ran at The Museums at Stony Brook May 24 through November 16, 1980, and at The Brandywine River Museum, Chadds Ford, Pennsylvania, January 17 through May 17, 1980.

*Gina Santucci, guest editor of this issue of the* NEWSLETTER, *lives and works in New York City (see page 1).*



*Mystic symbols often seen on Masonic memorials. Maysville, Kentucky, 1895*

## VICTORIAN ERA MEMORIAL ART IN SMALL RURAL CEMETERIES

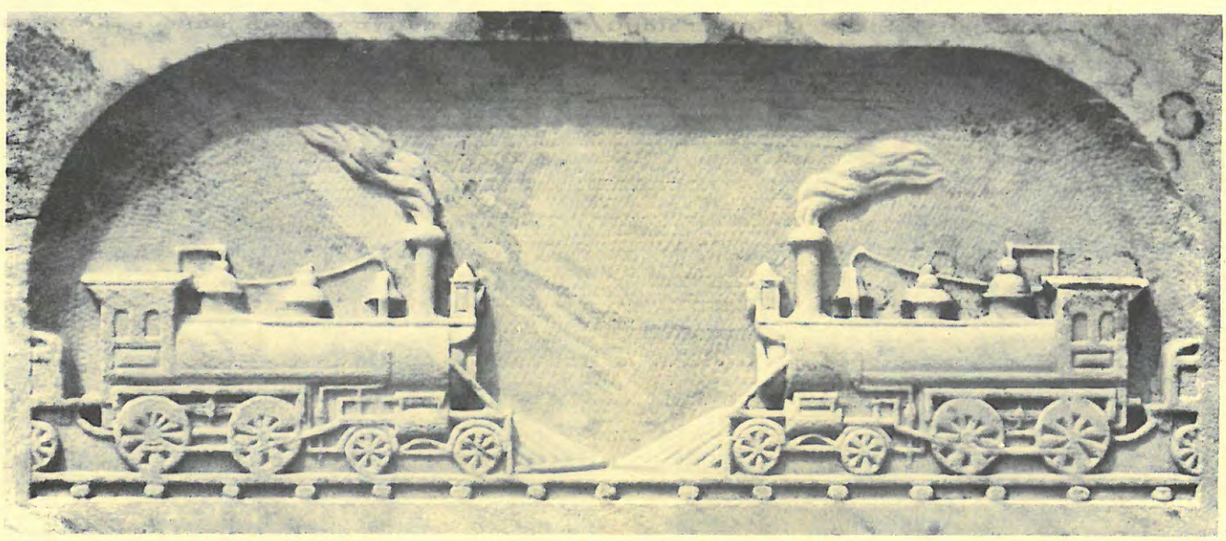
*Francis Y. Duval & Ivan B. Rigby*

The Victorian era memorial style is well represented outside the landscaped settings of urban cemeteries. While such expanses at Mount Auburn in Cambridge, Green-Wood and Woodlawn in New York City, Laurel Hill in Philadelphia, and other nineteenth century cemeteries in our large cities are justly famous for their impressive statuary, mausoleums, crypts, and chapels, many modest rural burial grounds offer a fine sampling of some of the simpler and more honest funeral art of the period.

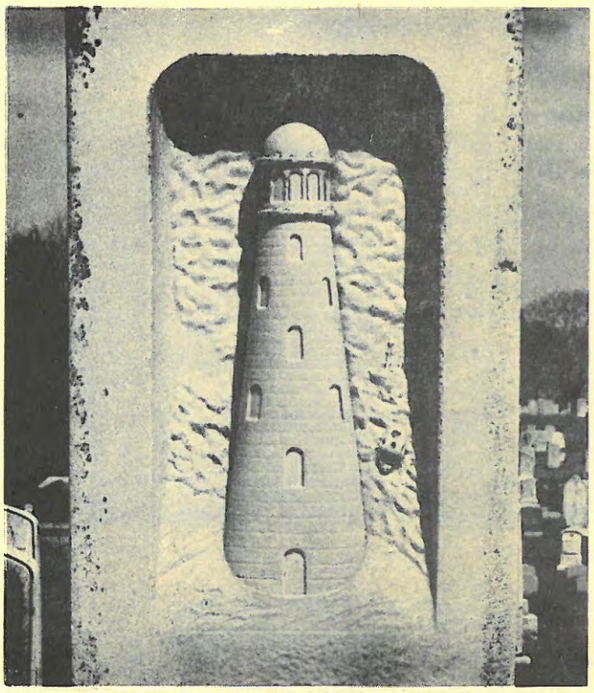
Nineteenth century cemeteries, both urban and rural, display seemingly endless rows of impersonal, lackluster marble tablets influenced by the period's antiseptic attitude toward death. And few of them escaped the memorial bombast of oversized oblisks and over-carved tombs that confirm the ostentatiousness of the wealthy who knew the price of everything and the value of nothing. On closer scrutiny, however, one is often rewarded by the discovery of inspired images, some similar in their simplicity and charm to those of the eighteenth century.

Nineteenth century memorials present configurations and sizes different from those of the preceding century. Most are carved of Vermont or Georgia marble rather than the slate and sandstone popular in the eighteenth century, although limestone, sandstone, granite and even metal are used occasionally, depending on locale. The alphabets are more elaborate, the epitaphs longer and often lachrymose. When used, the imagery consists of urns, willows, lambs, doves, roses, wreaths, sleeping babes, The Divine Hand, and other motifs of similar sentiment. Often depicted is professional status, cause of death, Masonic symbolism, as well as military emblems for those who fell during the Civil War.

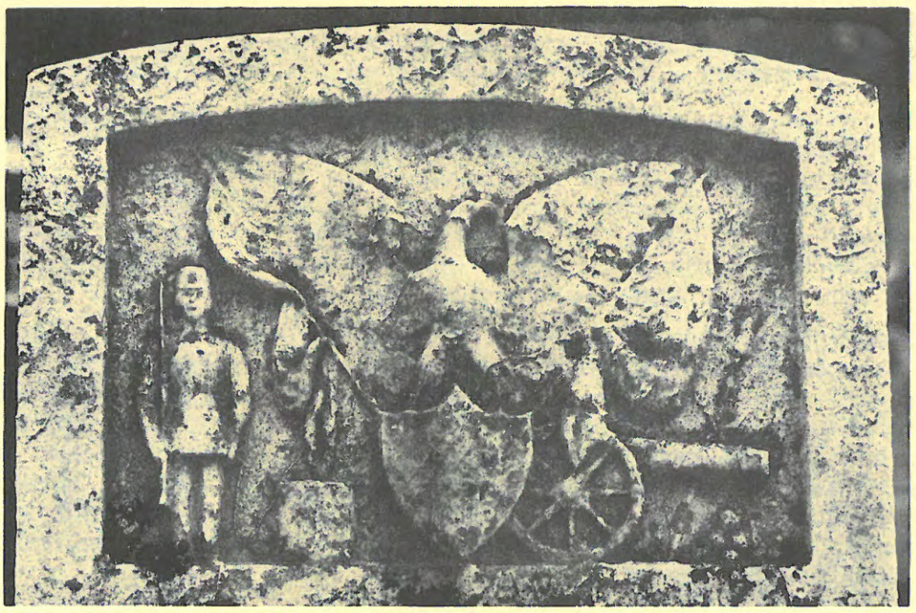
From our extensive photographic collection of Victorian cemetery art, we have selected for the *NEWSLETTER* photographs of seven unusual rather than typical memorial carvings of the period, which we hope will generate further interest in and study of this often misunderstood and unappreciated facet of the memorial art form.



*The split-second moment before the night-time collision that killed a young railroad engineer. Near Rural Retreat, Virginia, 1892*



*Left* A lighthouse, symbolic beacon of survival, erected to the memory of a seafaring family. Essex, Conn., 1880
*Right* A symbolic tankard and cups for partaking of the sacramental wind. Signed, "A. Cary." Barre, Mass., 1850.



Military emblems, with rare carving of sentry and field artillery piece, memorializing a Civil War hero. Brownsville, Ohio, 1864.

*Left* A superb, unscathed example of a reposing infant and symbolic, canopied shell. Kutztown, Penn., 1891.
*Right* A rare mortar and pestle motif symbolizing the occupation of the deceased, a physician. Lebanon, Conn., 1851.

## MANHATTAN'S RURAL CEMETERY

*Jay Shockley*

Manhattan has its own "rural" Victorian cemetery--Trinity Cemetery--located between Amsterdam Avenue and Riverside Drive from 153rd to 155th Streets. Under the auspices of Trinity Church in lower Manhattan, the creation of Trinity Cemetery came out of practical necessity in the early nineteenth century. Lower Manhattan had suffered a number of epidemics, and there was concern that a link existed between places of burial and disease. As a result, an 1832 ordinance forbidding burials south of Canal Street closed the graveyards of both Trinity Church and St. Paul's Chapel. To establish a cemetery away from the city, Trinity Church agreed to purchase part of Green-Wood cemetery, founded in 1838 in Brooklyn, but this agreement was withdrawn, possibly due to the distance. In 1842, Trinity Church purchased its own land, a hilly twenty-three acre tract of farmland along the Hudson River in the area then known as Charmanville. This tract, which adjoined the farm of John James Audubon, was the site of a redoubt that had been constructed by the American Army in 1776 and defended under George Washington in the Battle of Washington Heights.

The first burial in the new Trinity Cemetery took place in 1843, and in 1844, the cemetery was advertised as open to all denominations. In time, Trinity Cemetery became the favored resting place of different classes of New Yorkers, including many prominent families of New York society. Among the better known who are buried there are John Jay Audubon, John Jacob Astor, Mme. Eliza Jumel, and Clement Clarke Moore. It became a popular visiting place, and regularly scheduled coaches and steamboats conveyed visitors to the site.

In 1868, Broadway was extended northward, bisecting the cemetery, and in 1871, the highly esteemed architectural firm, Calvert Vaux, Frederick C. Withers, and Company, was hired to construct a Gothic Revival suspension bridge to link the two halves. The English-born Vaux had worked with Frederick Law Olmsted, the foremost landscape architect of the period, in designing Central and Prospect Parks. For Trinity Cemetery, working with a number of partners including George K. Radford, also an English-born architect and engineer, Vaux was responsible for the landscaping of the grounds, in 1881; for designing a decorative stone and iron fence-wall and gates, most of which were built from 1872 to 1875; and for the design of a gate lodge, built in 1882-83

The twentieth century has brought a few changes. The suspension bridge was removed in 1911. In 1912-14, the Gothic Revival Chapel (now Church) of the Intercession was constructed by Cram, Goodhue, and Ferguson, the foremost twentieth century Gothic Revival architects in the United States, who also designed Manhattan's Church of St. John the Divine. And a modern, functioning mausoleum building was added in the early 1970's. With the above exceptions, the appearance of Trinity Cemetery today is much as it was in the nineteenth century. The eastern half is mostly flat, with a small hill to the south side and curvilinear looping roads. This section contains the Church, gate lodge, the small gravestones of the parish ground, and a number of prominent mausoleums set around the hill. The western division is characterized by a hill sloping steeply from the river and a road snaking back and forth to create a series of terraces. Mausoleums are set into the earth lining the road, and monuments are regularly spaced in between.

Although Trinity Cemetery is on a small and compact site, it displays most of the features of the traditional rural cemetery: the hill site with river views, curved paths and roads, the arboretum aspect, and the pattern of social stratification. And, with its surrounding fence-wall and gates, its monuments, sculpture, gravestones, and mausoleums in a wide variety of styles, its fine iron fencing and curbstones around the plots, and a number of surviving cast-iron seats and urns, Trinity Cemetery is also a veritable treasure-trove of Victoriana.

*Jay Shockley is a member of the Survey Department of the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission, specializing in the preservation of historic landscapes.*

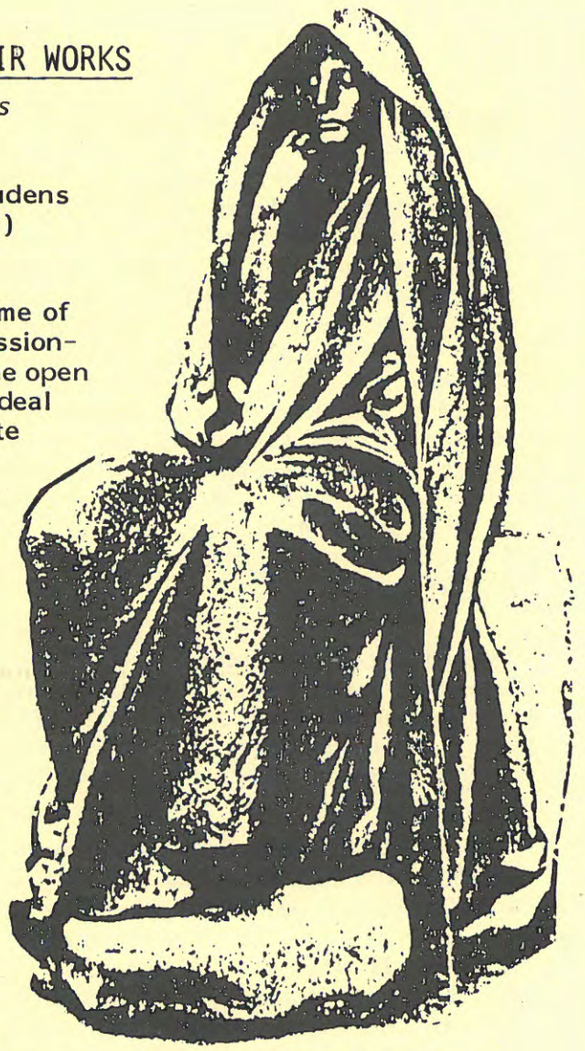
*Editor's note: For earlier* NEWSLETTER *references to Trinity Cemetery, see volume 4, number 3, summer, 1980, page 6, and volume 5, number 1, winter, 1980/81, page 10.*

## STONECUTTERS AND THEIR WORKS

*Ninth of a Series*

### THREE NINETEENTH CENTURY SCULPTORS: Thomas Crawford (1814-1857), Augustus Saint-Gaudens (1848-1907), and Daniel Chester French (1850-1931)

*by Dorothy L. Cogswell*



In the latter part of the nineteenth century some of America's most distinguished sculptors were commissioned to design and execute sepulchral monuments. The open landscaped areas of the Victorian cemetery formed ideal backgrounds for the shift in fashion from gray slate markers to finely carved white marble statues.

Among the gifted sculptors using the Neoclassic style, derived from study in Rome, was Thomas Crawford. Although he is remembered primarily for his bronze equestrian statue of George Washington for Capitol Square in Richmond , Virginia, and for his huge figure of "Freedom" for the dome of the United States Capitol in Washington, cemetery monuments were important and lucrative commissions for Crawford.

Another important nineteenth century sculptor whose work includes fine sepulchral monuments is Augustus Saint-Gaudens. The epitome of sorrow is seen in his brooding "Grief," shown on this page. It was commissioned by Henry Adams for his wife in 1886 and dedicated in 1891 in the Rock Creek Cemetery, Washington, D.C. As a universal concept for the personal funeral monument, it embodies in its flowing bronze drapery the majesty of Michelangelo, and in the shadowed face of Grief, the mystery of eternity. Saint-Gaudens' skill developed at an early age from cameo cutting to advanced study in Europe, where the French influence for bronze was stronger than the Italian one for marble. A particularly American strength is realized in Saint-Gaudens' rugged standing figure of Lincoln, 1886, for Lincoln Park, Chicago, and in the sculpture of the stern Deacon Samuel Chapin, 1887, known as "The Puritan," now standing near the library of the Museum Quadrangle in Springfield, Massachusetts. Very moving, both in sentiment and design, is his bronze memorial for Robert Gould Shaw and his black regiment (1884-1897). This large work in low relief standing on Boston Common, across from the State House, has been in the news recently because of the high cost of its needed restoration. In 1964, Saint-Gaudens' studio and home, "Aspet," in Cornish, New Hampshire, was designated a National Historic site and is maintained as a memorial.

For pure sentiment and sheer beauty, perhaps the outstanding monument of the Victorian era was designed by Daniel Chester French. This monument was initiated by a will written by another sculptor, Martin Milmore (1844-1883). Milmore (with his brother, Joseph) had executed "The American Sphinx" in 1872 for Mount Auburn Cemetery in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and French conceived for Martin Milmore's memorial the idea of the Angel of Death moving in to stay the hand of the young sculptor finishing his sphinx. Although French's sculpture is a relief panel, he modeled the figures of the Angel and sculptor almost in the round, but showed the profile of the sphinx in very low relief. The plaster model of the work was sent to Paris to be cast in bronze. It was exhibited there in the Salon de Champs Elysees of 1892, where it won a medal. In 1893 it was displayed at the World's Columbian Exposition, again to great acclaim. After four casts were made, the original bronze was placed in the Forest Hills Cemetery, Jamaica Plains, Massachusetts. French is remembered for many works, from his early 1875 Minuteman of Concord, Massachusetts, to the great Lincoln Memorial in Washington. He was elected to membership in the National Academy of Design in 1901 and was made a chevalier of the French Legion of Honor in 1910. Today his home and studio, "Chesterwood," can be seen in Stockbridge, Massachusetts, where five hundred casts and models of his work are available for study.

*Dorothy Cogswell is Professor Emeritus of Art History, Mount Holyoke College, South Hadley, Massachusetts.*

*Editor's note: AGS members who attended the 1979 conference in Newport, Rhode Island, saw examples of Saint-Gaudens' work in the Victorian cemetery adjoining the Common Burying Ground.*

## SOME REFERENCES OF INTEREST
### to Students of Nineteenth Century Gravestones and Cemeteries

A three-page annotated bibliography of landscape design and planting references for American rural cemeteries, by landscape architect C. Michael Hubartt. The books, articles and essays were all published in America between 1839 and 1902. In his introduction to the bibliography, Mr. Hubartt writes:

> The rural cemetery was probably the most influential man-made landscape of the nineteenth century in America. An expression of the Romantic tradition, these planned landscapes combined nature and art to evoke a sense of natural beauty and contemplative solitude. The progressively evolved designs of these rural cemeteries may be classified "wooded," "garden" and "lawn."

Most of the references are available Columbia University's Avery Architectural Library. Photostats of some of them may be obtained from the compiler, 20 Vesey Street, New York City 10007. The bibliography is available at the same address, or from AGS Publications, American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, MA 01609.

Books

*Inventing the American Way of Death, 1830-1920*, a 287 page book by James J. Farrell published by Temple University Press, Philadelphia, 1980. This history traces the ways in which middle-class Victorians rejected the harshness of the Puritan way of death and describes their attempt to assuage their fears by making death natural, beautiful, and, finally, inconspicuous. The author analyzes the influence of scientific naturalism and religious liberalism on changes in funeral practices.

*A Time to Mourn: Expressions of Grief in Nineteenth Century America*, edited by Martha V. Pike and Janice Gray Armstrong. This book is reviewed on page 8.

*The Victorian Celebration of Death*, by James Stevens Curl, published by David & Charles, Newton Abbot, 1972. (Curl's most recent book, the widely acclaimed *A Celebration of Death*, published by Charles Scribner's Sons, 1980, will be reviewed in a forthcoming *NEWSLETTER*.)

*Souls in Stone: European Graveyard Sculpture*, by Anne de Brunhoff; 96 pages of photographs published by Alfred A. Knopf. (Reviewed by David Watters in the *NEWSLETTER*, Volume 4, Number 2, Spring 1980, page 15.)

*Victorian Cemetery Art*, by Edmund V. Gillon, Jr.; 173 pages of photographs published by Dover Publications, 1972.

Articles

"At rest in Mount Auburn," a four-page illustrated article by Shirley Moskow, published in *Garden* magazine, November/December 1978.

"Stone Cemetery Sculpture: A Survival Crisis," a three-page illustrated article by Edward Bryant published in *19th Century* magazine, Volume 5, Number 4, 1979.

"The Rural Cemetery," a four-page illustrated article by Naomi R. Remes, curator of American decorative arts at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, published in *19th Century* magazine, Volume 6, Number 2, 1980.

"The Rural Cemetery Movement" by Barbara Rotundo, a ten-page article published in the *Essex Institute Historical Collection*, Essex Institute, Salem, Massachusetts.

Victorian cemetery preservation organizations (For its exchange mailing list, the *NEWSLETTER* would like to have the names and addresses of other such organizations.)

The Friends of Mt. Hope Cemetery, 791 Mt. Hope Avenue, Rochester, New York. A $15 membership fee (or ten hours of volunteer service) includes a newsletter.

The Friends of Laurel Hill Cemetery, 3822 Ridge Avenue, Philadelphia. The $15 membership includes a newsletter and guided cemetery tours.

## CONSERVATION

*Lance Mayer Responds*

The spring issue of the *NEWSLETTER* (Volume 5, Number 2, Page 5) asked for reader comment on an article, "Preserving Early Sandstone Markers," by Robert T. Silliman. In this article, Mr. Silliman describes a procedure which involves cleaning and sealing the surfaces of sandstone gravemarkers. Lance Mayer, Associate Curator for the Cincinnati Art Museum and AGS Vice-president for Conservation, in a response to the *NEWSLETTER*, expresses serious concern that the *NEWSLETTER*, by publishing the article without editorial comment, "publicized a method which will almost certainly not work and which may, in fact, do harm to the gravestones."

Protecting sandstone and similar materials, Mr. Mayer writes, is a problem which has vexed scientists and conservators for decades. When dealing with a problem

of this complexity, it is not, he points out, better to do something than nothing. Too often the unproved, experimental procedure accelerates decay, the ill effects showing up years or even decades later. He cites the experience of the British Commonwealth War Graves Commission, which found, after treating half a million headstones with surface sealers over a period of thirty years, that the stones which had been treated were generally in worse condition than those which had not.

Mr. Mayer takes issue also with the cleaning procedure described in the article, noting that it is directly opposed to recommendations in conservation literature. He explains that the chemicals used to clean the stone could attack the calcareous binder in sandstone as it is known to do in marble. The procedure for allowing the chemicals to soak into the stone and then applying steam would probably drive the chemical substances into the stone's interior, where they might produce destructive salts which would be very difficult to remove.

But Mayer's most serious reservation comes back to the use of a surface sealer, which, he tells us, often intensifies deterioration instead of affording protection. "This is because water and salts can be concentrated behind the hardened surface if their exit is blocked [by the sealer], eventually causing large pieces of crust to become undercut and ultimately detached." Moreover, he cautions, some epoxy sealers form a white chalky surface or turn yellow upon long exposure to sunlight, and, more serious, some epoxy sealers actually *increase* the stone's reactivity to carbon dioxide and sulfur dioxide gases, common air pollutants.

Mr. Mayer emphasizes that the procedure described in the article is *not* endorsed by AGS. Sympathizing with Silliman and others who are eager to protect early gravemarkers, he urges those in charge of the care of old cemeteries, "impatient as they may be with the slow pace of conservation research," to direct their energies toward expediting proper research projects which involve the guidance of professional stone conservators, rather than toward isolated experimentation. He concludes: "It has been the primary purpose of the Conservation Committee of AGS to help facilitate such information-sharing by inviting recognized specialists to speak at AGS meetings, by reviewing conservation publications in the AGS *NEWSLETTER*, and by publishing a basic article in *MARKERS*, which contains an extensive annotated reading list."

*The full six-page text of Lance Mayer's response includes a wealth of detailed, fully documented information on stone conservation. It is available, free of charge, from*

*AGS Publications*
*c/o American Antiquarian Society*
*Worcester, Massachusetts 01609*

*Address questions to Mr. Mayer at 47 Elm Street, Stonington, Connecticut 06378.*

**MARKERS**, *the 182-page journal of the Association for Gravestone Studies, may be ordered from the AGS Publications address above for $15. It contains fifteen excellent articles on a wide variety of gravestone-related subjects. Besides Lance Mayer's divinitive article, "The Care of Old Cemeteries and Gravestones," we recommend to those interested in saving gravemarkers, "Protective Custody: The Museum's Responsiblity for Gravestones," by Robert P. Emlen, and "Recording Cemetery Data," by Joanne Baker, Daniel Farber, and Anne Giesecke.*

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NEWSLETTER

October 6, 1978

Mr. Robert Miraldi
Staten Island Advance
950 Fingerboard Road
Staten Island, NewwYork 10305

Dear Mr. Miraldi

Thank you very much for the extremely interesting articles on the Vanderbilt Mansoleum. Since we are currently examining Olmsted's work in New York City with an eye to the designations of scenic landmarks, they are especially timely. I was unaware of his involvement with the project.

It is my understanding that an appointment to visit the Mansoleum is being arranged with the Staten Island Borough President. The articles will, indeed, provide useful background material.

Sincerely,

Gail T. Gillet

GTG:lg

Staten Island Advance
Park tracts being added to several residential areas
Sunday Advance
New gains for Island communities
City Hall is blueprinting more schools for borough

# Staten Island Advance

950 FINGERBOARD ROAD · STATEN ISLAND, NEW YORK 10305 · (212) YUKON 1-1234

Sept. 27, 1978

Kent Barwick
Landmarks Preservation
Commission
305 Broadway
New York, N.Y.

Dear sir:

It is my understanding that the Borough President of Staten Island is interesting in seeking some sort of landmark status for the Vandxerbilt Mausoleum.

I thought that perhaps these recent articles might be of some background use.

Sincerely,

Robert Miraldi

RECEIVED
SEP 29 1978
LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

made appt. hour.

Jan. 10, 1981
Dear Ms Pearson: Thank you for your note re: Vanderbilt Mausoleum + my offer to help with research at the Olmsted office. I am not so anxious to make money as I am to expedite your work, so I completely understand your financial restraints. I want very much to be kept informed on your research work when it's completed. The covers the Mausoleum and grounds are landmarked. We better. But please understand that Olmsted's landscaping is equally important to Hunt's tomb. I will keep in touch with the above through 5. I. friends.
many thanks for the Ocean + Eastern Parkways Reports too. These are very well done.
I appreciate the work of the Commission on preserving New York + national treasures.
Richard Heath.

# Vanderbilt tomb undergoing facelift

By ROBERT MIRALDI

The Vanderbilt Mausoleum, the giant hillside tomb in New Dorp, is undergoing its first major facelift in 15 years.

The granite tomb which holds the bodies of 25 members of the Vanderbilt family has fallen into disrepair in recent years and a Manhattan bank that oversees its upkeep has decided to undertake some major repairs.

A spokesman for the bank, Morgan Guaranty, said officials decided last spring that "it was time for major work" on the tomb, which was built in 1886 for an estimated $1 million.

The spokesman, Richard Bartels, said the work on the exterior of the tomb would "entail a good amount of money," but he declined to specify how much.

A trust established by the founder of the family fortune, Cornelius Vanderbilt, presently earns about $8,000 a year. The trust's yearly earnings, however, are only partly used in recent years the only expenses have been for minor gardening and cleanup work.

"Some surplus has built up over the years," Bartels said, "and we'll use that surplus to pay for the current work."

The work will include cement repairs on the face of the 45-foot-high Romanesque style tomb; repairs to a stone wall which surrounds a plateau in front of the tomb; resurfacing of the roads which used to carry carriages through the 14-acre property; cleaning of dirt-covered waterways adjacent to the tomb, and the patching of breaks in the chain-link fence which encloses the heavily wooded property.

Bartels said a contractor has been hired to do the repair work, but that the contractor said his work had been hampered a bit by the steady stream of tourists who still trek through the property, especially on weekends.

"Sometimes they come in groups of 20 or 30," Bartels said.

The tomb property has been officially closed to the public since 1967 when an entrance gate fell on a woman from Eltingville, killing her. The front gate was then padlocked but holes in the surrounding fence have continually sprouted.

In September the Advance published a three-part profile of the tomb, the 14-acre property and their history. At that time there were six gaping holes in the fence and a reporter watched a continual stream of tourists enter the property and marvel at the tomb.

Soon after the articles appeared, Borough President Gaeta nominated the New Dorp property as a New York City Landmark. The Landmark Preservation Commission is arranging a tour of the property and is considering the nomination.

The last major repair work on the tomb was in 1963 when similar stone work and fence repairs were done. Since that time, however, vandals have persisted in attempting to wreck the tomb's facade. Each weekend hundreds of beer bottles are smashed against it.

Last winter, with the aid of a raging bonfire, vandals succeeded in chipping granite from steps in front of the tomb and from the top of mausoleum, just a few feet from the 15-foot towers that used to be covered with stained glass — until vandals forced the bank to brick up the towers.

Bartels said it would probably be impossible to restore the chipped granite. He expects the repair work would be completed before the start of winter.

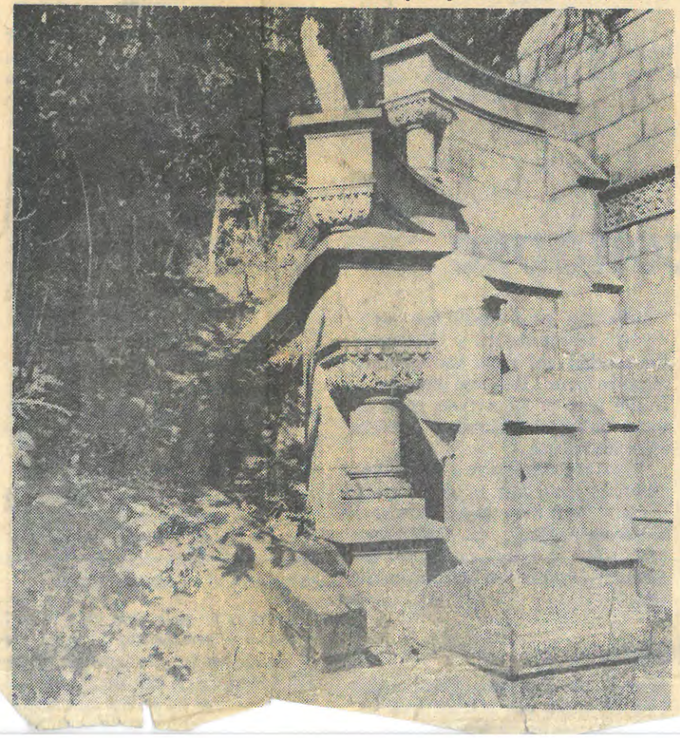
What the repair work will not include is any major gardening effort. In the 1920s, when the Vanderbilt family fortunes were at their peak and the family had sprawling mansions throughout the nation, there were five gardeners to manicure the property.

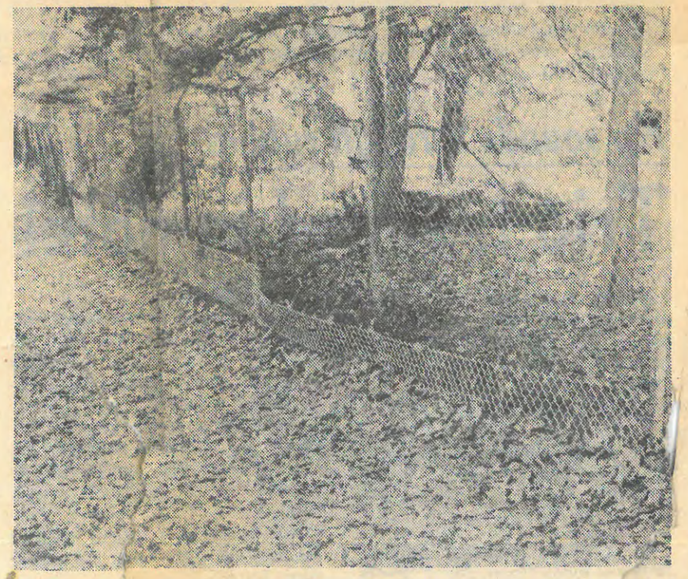
Now, however, especially on the sides of the tomb, weeds and various shrubs have strangled some of the beautiful flowering trees which landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted had planted. The blooming trees were to frame the tomb and complement the design of architect Richard Morris Hunt.

Some of the trees have died and toppled and remain on the ground. In a back portion of the property for example, Olmsted had planted privet hedges to shrub off family burial plots. But weeds have intruded on the privet hedge and like many parts of the once resplendent mausoleum property, the hedges need trimming and cleaning.

As for the stone repairs to the mausoleum, Bartels said: "That work should last 20 or 30 years."

**The Vanderbilt Mausoleum in New Dorp is getting a facelift — the first in 15 years.** S.I. Advance Photo by Frank J. Johns





*At left, waterways alongside the facade of the tomb have been cleared of debris and dirt. Above, new fencing has closed some gaping holes surrounding the mausoleum's 14 acres. At right, a roadway on the back portion of the*

by Robert Parsons

# William H. Vanderbilt, 79, Dead; Former Governor of Rhode Island

By WILLIAM G. BLAIR

William Henry Vanderbilt, a former Governor of Rhode Island who was a great-great-grandson of Commodore Cornelius Vanderbilt, the 19th century railroad magnate, died Tuesday night at his home in South Williamstown, Mass. He was 79 years old.

Mr. Vanderbilt, a Republican, served in the State Senate from 1928 to 1934. He was Governor from 1938 to 1940, but he was unsuccessful in his effort to win a second term.

Mr. Vanderbilt's home, a working farm that he had bought as a retreat while serving as Governor, became his permanent residence in the 1950's.

Three years ago he added to his farming activities the role of store owner when he bought the Five Corners grocery and Exxon station, a Greek revival building in South Williamstown that dated from 1830. He purchased the country store after he heard that a fast-food chain wanted to buy it.

It was also in the 1970's that Mr. Vanderbilt set up a nonprofit corporation called the South Forty Corporation to help rehabilitate prisoners at the Green Haven Correctional Facility, a maximum security prison near Beacon, N. Y.

### A Term Used by Farmers

For farmers, the term "South Forty" referred to acreage that they got around to last but which, with proper care, might prove as productive as the rest of the land. From that rural allusion came the name and purpose of the South Forty Corporation.

Mr. Vanderbilt was born Nov. 24, 1901, in New York City, the son of Alfred Gwynne Vanderbilt, who went down with the Lusitania in World War I, and the late Mrs. Paul Fitz Simons of Newport, R. I. He was educated at St. George's Preparatory School in Middletown, R. I., the Evans School in Arizona and Princeton University.

In World War I he was appointed a midshipman in the Naval Reserve at the age of 15, making him one of the youngest Americans to serve in that war. After the

The New York Times / Alan Decker

**William H. Vanderbilt**

**This rare photograph inside the Vanderbilt tomb shows the semi-circular 20-foot wide chapel that is in the rear of the hillside burial vault. During funerals, the chapel would be covered with thousands of flowers.**

the arched stone entrance to the grounds falls off its hinges and topples

...hereafter in Staten Island Hospital.

The Vanderbilts had to act.

By 1967, only one direct descendant of the Commodore remained on Staten Island. The others were dispersed all over the East. Many were beset by income tax problems, some had merely overspent during the Golden Years. As from the beginning, internal fueds continued to plague the Vanderbilt family.

The tomb and its grounds had fallen into disrepair. Gone were the five gardeners. Vandals persisted in breaking the stained-glass tower windows, ripping holes in the fence surrounding the property, and attempting to chip off brass from the entrance doors.

The family had but one choice: Brick up the domes on top; put massive steel doors over the brass front gates and padlock the huge arched entrance. And that's the way it stands today, closed to visitors, tourists, and the curious. Some of the Vanderbilts find that a despicable, pitiable situation, but they are reluctant to act, fearful of further damage to their precious tomb.

Perhaps 1978 is little different from 1884, however. Consider the fear of the Vanderbilts then.

After his death and elaborate funeral, William Henry's body was placed in a tomb beneath the small wooden United Bretheran Church which fronts Richmond Rd. in New Dorp, adjacent to Moravian Cemetery. The family was awaiting completion of its mausoleum on a hill behind the church.

Six Pinkerton detectives were keeping a 24-hour vigil over the body because the Vanderbilt family feared body snatchers would hold William Henry's corpse for ransom. After all, he was worth $200 million, earning $28,000 a day when he died.

On Dec. 3, 1886, the giant mausoleum was finally completed; the precious stones from Italy, France and the Holy Land were in place, and the catacombs had been readied for the man who conceived and planned the mausoleum.

With utmost secrecy the cedar casket was withdrawn from its vault and carried up the steep, half-mile, winding

vestibule and walked 10 feet to the next set of gates, this one leading finally to the chapel and catacombs. The second gate is composed of two 10-inch thick limestone slabs. It is 9 feet high, but even when the sons opened it, still another huge brass gate had to be opened, hard as steel and sunk deep into the stone masonry.

Once in the chapel, the sons could see clearly, with light streaming in from the 58-foot lantern towers above. A 20-foot wide semi-circular chapel was before them.

On the tomb's sides, 48 feet apart, were nine catacombs, each with space for eight Vanderbilts, all of when would have to have kept the Vanderbilt name to qualify for burial there. Even the Commodore's daughters (except the crippled Frances who did not marry) could not be placed in the tomb.

The casket was laid next to the catacomb, but would not be finally entombed for 24 days, when the widow, Maria Louise, daughters Emily Sloane and Margaret Shepard, and son George would again enter the chapel which on

the tomb's front gate. They gav
the limestone gates in front of t
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they tried to sneak off the groun

Police speculated the burgla
looking for the legendary jew
were supposed to be buried wit
the Vanderbilts, possibly Louis
ony Torrance Vanderbilt who
posed to have had $1 million in je

Legends about the Vanderbil
abounded for years; about the
Commodore, the benevolent
Henry, the fueding, social-s
clans of the 1920 and '30s, with t
ulous mansions, jewels and ar
servants.

But the "era of elegance" is
the Vanderbilts today. One bo
says now is "the twilight of s
for the family. The family n
controls or owns the rails or its
mansions.

What remains, however, is t
derbilt Mausoleum, the house
overlooking New York Harbor, h
hill in central Staten Island.

**(Tomorrow: Olmsted wo
magic)**

# The Vanderbilt Mausoleum

# 2 designers combine their genius to remold a hillside

(From Page 1)

health, designed Central Park, the jewel of New York City's park system, where he sought to create a respite for urban-weary New Yorkers. Natural scenery, he once said, "exercises, tranquilizes and enlivens the mind."

By the end of his career, at the turn of the century after 40 years of work, Olmsted had enlivened thousands of minds. Probably no man who was at work in 1850 has work that remains as evident today as Olmsted's. .

He designed 80 public parks, 10 institutions, 14 college campuses, 16 suburban communities and thousands of acres of private estates, including three on Staten Island.

He was responsible for Morningside and Riverside Parks in Manhattan, the Boston Park system, the grounds of Niagara Falls, the campuses of Stanford and Berkeley universities in California, the grounds of the Capitol in Washington, D.C., Fairmount Park in Philadelphia and South Park in Chicago.

In the 1960s, ecology movements spawned a rediscovery of Olmsted, who turned a profession into an art and whose work remains today, although overgrown and despoiled, much like the Vanderbilt Mausoleum. His biographers are many. But the story of his work at Vanderbilt's tomb has never been told. Unpublished letters annd books and interviews point to its beginning in 1874.

Olmsted, as a young man with a receding hairline, sought to begin a career as a scientific farmer. By chance he met a Staten Island couple while on vacation in Connecticut. Dr. Samuel Akerly, he was told, was selling his farm in the Woods of Arden in Eltingville.

Olmsted bought the 130-acre property with a magnificent view to the Atlantic Ocean, but with dingy and dirty grounds, "as dirty and disorderly as the bucolic person could desire," his son would write.

Olmsted moved a barn and all its belongings behind a knoll, brought a road in so that it approached the house in a graceful curve, tufted the borders of a pond and planted water plants on its edge and shielded it from all contamination.

"Thus," his son said, "with a few strokes and at small expense he transformed the place ... into a gentleman's house. This was his first attempt of the sort and it was as successful as anything he ever did."

Olmsted had less success with farm-

**Frederick Law Olmsted, who designed the grounds around the mausoleum.**

S.I. Advance Photo by Patricia Mufti

slavery. Then he would begin his landscape architecture work on Central Park.

Vanderbilt, of course, took over his father's railroad business, turning a $9 million inheritance into $200 million. Before he died in 1885, however, William Henry, a kind and loving father, turned over the family's considerable Staten Island holdings to his 23-year-old son, George Washington Vanderbilt.

The holdings included the 350-acre Miller Field estate, much of what is now Stapleton, and a large tract behind the old Moravian Cemetery where William Henry, his father Commodore Cornelius, and his early Dutch ancestors were buried.

On that New Dorp property would be built the huge granite family mausoleum with enough room for 72 Vanderbilt family members. The commodore had other relatives directly descended from the progenitor, the commodore.

Who else but Frederick Law Olmsted could best team up with Richard Morris Hunt, the brilliant architect, to design the family's heralded burial spot?

Son George made the arrangements and Olmsted went to work. He conferred with Hunt, with whom he had other dealings, on a gateway entrance to Central Park. Some scholars say the two men did not like each other, but others disagree. They apparently worked well together on the mausoleum.

Hunt was designing the hillside tomb, but he needed Olmsted to make it effective.

At the tomb today all that is visible is a 43-foot-high, 59-foot-wide facade — surrounded by trees, shrubs and weeds — and the two 13-foot towers that protrude from the top of the tomb.

When in 1884 the huge granite blocks that make up the tomb were laid into the base of the hill overlooking New Dorp, only the back part of the tomb, which is about 60 feet deep, was buried. Thus, Olmsted had to produce a hillside grave to give the desired effect.

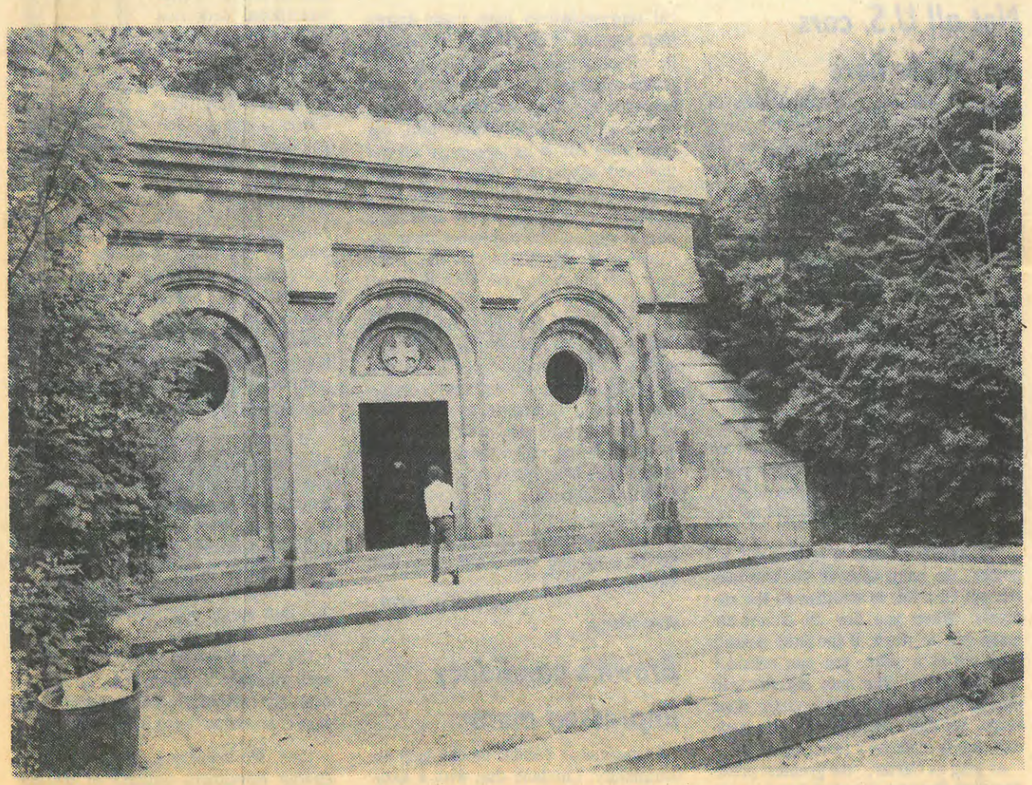
At the age of 63, laboring late into the night, Olmsted sat at his desk in his Brookline, Mass., home and poured over topographical maps of the area. Every foot of the property was mapped. He knew exactly what trees and shrubs were there. But he struggled with how to bring out the massiveness of the tomb, how to surround it gracefully without detracting from its appearance.

The problem, in part, was that the 22 acres were composed of rolling hills. The front and right side of the tomb slope down steeply towards the rest of the cemetery. In the rear, after sloping down to a meadow and eventually two ponds, the hill climbs quickly to the east and reaches another summitt before plunging back again toward Hourglass Pond.

The hill in front of the tomb was so steep that Olmsted wondered how horse-drawn carriages would ever be able to carry heavy caskets up it. Here his genius came into play.

In August 1886 he wrote a long letter to George Vanderbilt, explaining — and asking approval — for his ideas. They would correspond often on the mausoleum and other work Olmsted was doing for the family.

It would not be until 1899, when Maria Louise Kissam Vanderbilt, wife of William Henry, and George's mother, died,



**A visitor strides toward the Sloane Mausoleum, which is behind the Vanderbilt tomb. A Vanderbilt daughter married William Douglas Sloane and that family's burial place is on property adjacent to the Vanderbilts.**

S.I. Advance Photo by Frank J. Johns

the cobblestone roadway, cut deeply into the hill, would be visible, surrounded by what Olmsted called "an arch of foliage" — hedges, ferns, evergreen shrubs, sumac, indigo and strawberry bushes, all chosen and planted by Olmsted.

The road curves to the right "in a gentle sweep" and the climb continues, not a steep climb because Olmsted had the roadway dug into the earth so that the climb would be gradual, one foot for every 14 feet the carriage advances. Workers had to remove 40,000 cubic yards of fill at a cost of $12,000 to produce what Olmsted sought.

The fill from the road was then banked on each side and heavily planted to create Olmsted's desired "screen of foliage," dogwood, elm, sweetgum, pine, red oak, hemlock and gray birch trees. The adjacent Moravian Cemetery, 10 feet away, would be completely blocked out of view.

that make the tomb a botanist's delight.

As Maria Louise's seven children stepped onto the grass-covered, flat-as-a-tennis-court terrace, they saw ivy climbing the walls of a tomb framed by the purple-flowering Emperor's tree, along with Russian olive, apple, copper beech and maple trees.

Little did the family realize that Olmsted had remolded almost every inch of the turf on which they stood, planting more than 50 different types of trees and shrubs and utilizing more than 600,000 cubic feet of earth to reshape the hills.

To ensure the growth of his tree saplings, Olmsted had a 500-gallon water tower and a windmill perched on a hill nearby. The windmill would be capable of pumping 8 cubic feet of water a day from the nearby ponds. The windmill and tower were torn down in 1968.

Although Olmsted had done his work well, as usual, he was apparently filled

To the end of his life Olmsted was filled with anxiety. He had left the Vanderbilts a green, private, lush burial site overlooking New York Harbor, one which would accommodate Maria Louise Vanderbilt and 49 relatives. What he wasn't sure about was if his legacy was such that landscape architecture would continue as an art form, an art he created.

Olmsted would no doubt be disappointed at the state of the Vanderbilt Mausoleum today.

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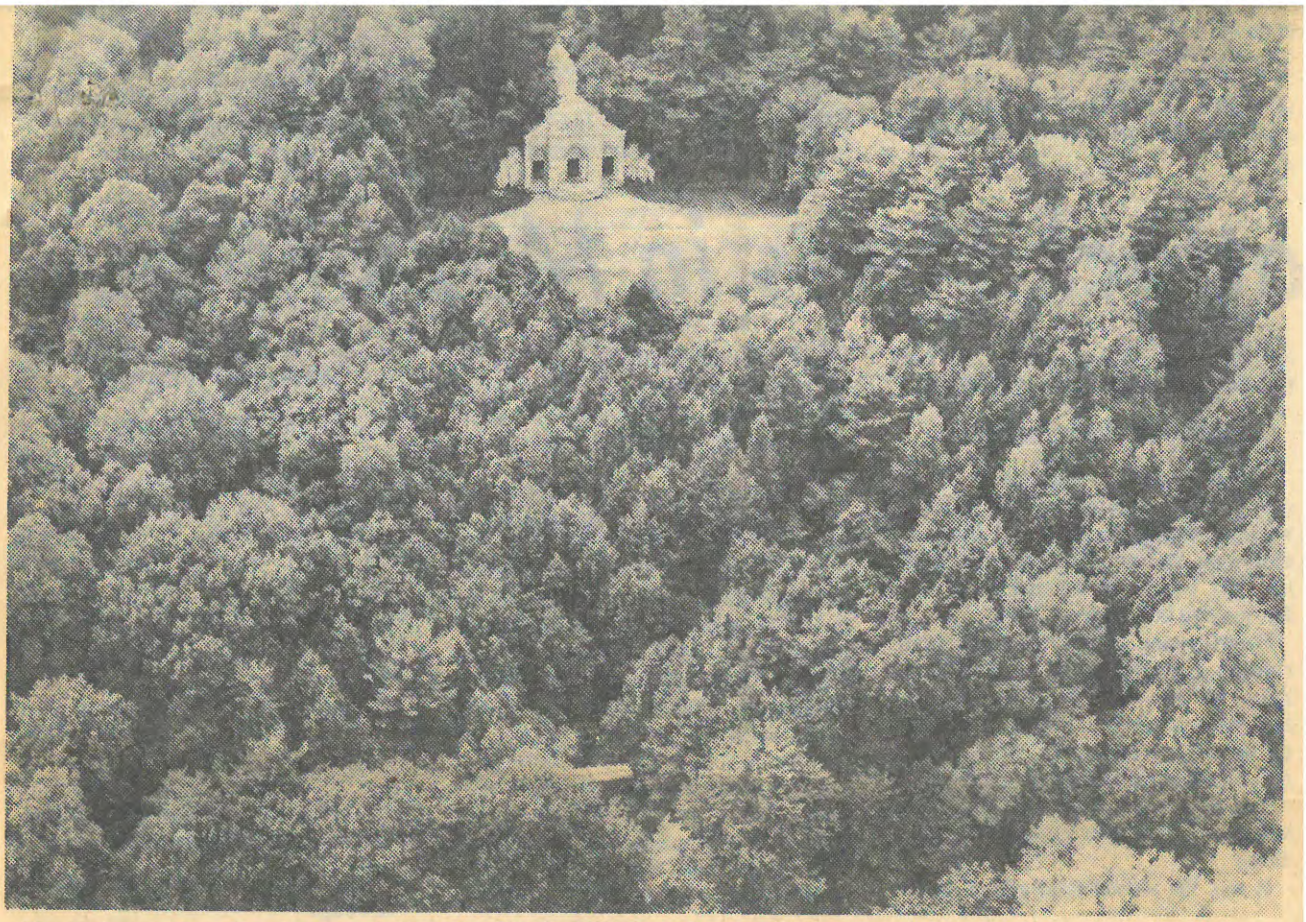
**(Tomorrow: Can the mausoleum be restored?)**



**Ninety-two years after its completion, the Vanderbilt Mausoleum still juts out of the landscape, high on a hill in New Dorp.**

# The Vanderbilt Mausoleum

# *2 designers work together to fashion a hillside tomb*

**(Second of three articles)**

**By ROBERT MIRALDI**

Frederick Law Olmsted, the landscape architect, once called the view from the Vanderbilt Mausoleum "one of the great sights of the world." He knew the view well. Many times in the 1840s, when he had a farm in Eltingville, he would ride by horse up to the tiny ridge overlooking Moravian Cemetery in New Dorp.

There he would peer down to the sailing ships in New York Harbor and to the farm of his friend, William Henry Vanderbilt, who lived at the foot of New Dorp Lane in a huge mansion called the "White House."

In 1871, after leaving Staten Island for 12 years, Olmsted would enjoy the view again, this time while directing a sanitary commission that was looking to find the causes of malaria and related diseases on Staten Island.

And then, in 1885, Olmsted would be asked to return again to that little ridge in New Dorp. America's richest family — the Vanderbilts — would turn to America's premier landscape architect — Frederick Law Olmsted — and ask him to design the grounds to their 22-acre family mausoleum on Staten Island.

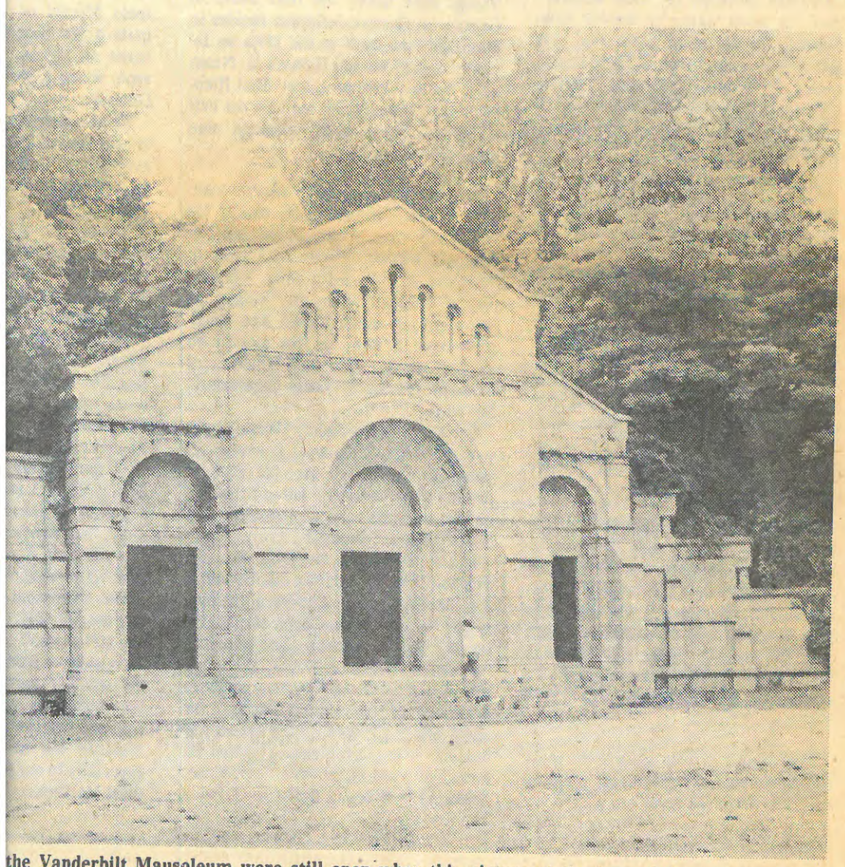
Olmsted would accept. He never could refuse a friend's request. And anyway, there was a special place in his heart, first for Staten Island, where he accidentally began his landscape career, but especially for New York City.

It was Olmsted who in 1860, amid much controversy and at the cost of his

(Continued on Page 8)

# The Vanderbilt Mausoleum

## enius and money combine and a magnificent tomb res



the Vanderbilt Mausoleum were still open when this picture at the turn of the century was re have come to the mausoleum for a summer picnic. S.I. Advance Photos by Robert Parsons

(From Page 1)

tune and a legend, and his shy son, William Henry, wanted exquisite gardens and grounds surrounding a monstrous gloomy mausoleum that would be the largest private tomb in America. The nation's wealthiest family wanted the nation's most magnificent burial place.

And they wanted it on Staten Island where in the 1650s Jan Aersten Van der Bilt first settled; where the Commodore was born and got his start with a $100 sailing vessel; and where William Henry tilled the soil until he proved his mettle to his stubborn father and was allowed to take over the family fortunes.

Money was no object and that is why the Vanderbilts:

¶Carefully chose a 22-acre tract of lushly wooded land north of the century-old Moravian Cemetery (and today surrounded on two sides by High Rock Park Conservation Center).

¶Had the tomb built with a 43-foot carved granite exterior and a huge chapel-like interior with catacombs for 72 Vanderbilt corpses.

¶Had two 13-foot lantern-like domes, with brass-enclosed stained-glass windows, protruding high above the tomb's roof, creating the look of a Moorish temple.

¶Hired Richard Morris Hunt, the most important American architect of the late 19th century to design a Romanesque-style, burglar-proof structure.

¶Chose Frederick Law Olmsted, genius landscape architect from Staten Island who would remold the hills of New Dorp and paint a picture with trees and shrubs, a picture that goes unmatched today, 92 years after the tomb's completion.

Neither the Commodore nor William Henry lived to see their dream mausoleum completed. It was not until the early years of the 20th century that the plantings chosen by Olmsted would surround the 5-foot thick granite walls and give the effect of a hillside tomb that he and Hunt desired.

But with that, and other landscaping completed, the tomb would be all that was hoped for, and until 1967 it would be a major tourist attraction on Staten Island. After 1884 — the burial year for William Henry — the gates would open 16 times for spectacular burials for controversial, famous — and rich — Vanderbilts. Twenty-five persons are buried here today; the last one in 1974.

Then, on June 11, 1967, on a sunny day near dusk, the splendor that was the Vanderbilt Mausoleum would take a turn for the worse. A 15-foot gate under the arched stone entrance to the grounds falls off its hinges and topples onto Patricia Kirschhock of Grant City. It takes 14 men to lift the gate off the 24-year-old woman who dies shortly thereafter in Staten Island Hospital.

The Vanderbilts had to act.

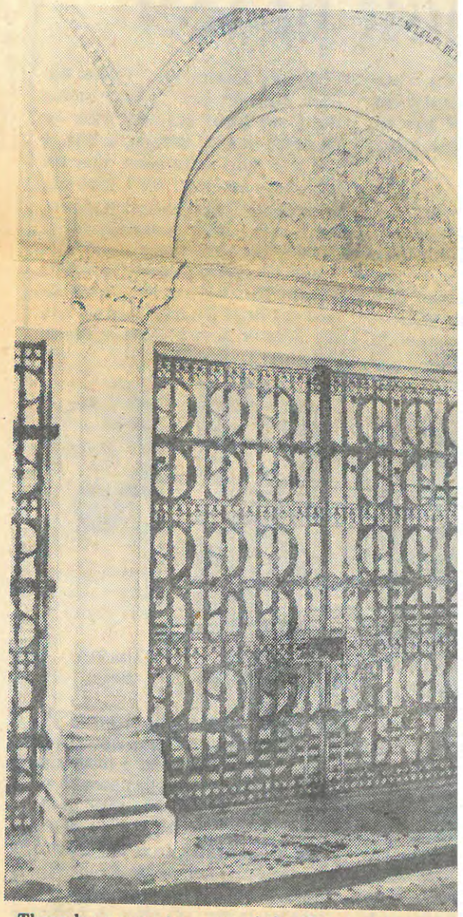
By 1967, only one direct descendant of the Commodore remained on Staten Island. The others were dispersed all over the East. Many were beset by income tax problems, some had merely overspent during the Golden Years. As from the beginning, internal fueds continued to plague the Vanderbilt family.

The tomb and its grounds had fallen into disrepair. Gone were the five gardeners. Vandals persisted in breaking the stained-glass tower windows, ripping holes in the fence surrounding the property, and attempting to chip off brass from the entrance doors.

The family had but one choice: Brick up the domes on top; put massive steel doors over the brass front gates and padlock the huge arched entrance. And that's the way it stands today, closed to visitors, tourists, and the curious. Some of the Vanderbilts find that a despicable, pitiable situation, but they are reluctant to act, fearful of further damage to their precious tomb.

Perhaps 1978 is little different from 1884, however. Consider the fear of the Vanderbilts then.

After his death and elaborate funeral, William Henry's body was placed in a tomb beneath the small wooden United Bretheran Church which fronts Rich-



These bronze grates, part of the 16 tons of bronze w eight catacombs like this one with room for 72 ca Vanderbilts have kept the rule: Only persons with t can be entombed there.

to William Henry's wishes, he made the facade huge, but simple, with modest sculptures carved in the granite. Above the three front doorways are carved emblems which signifiy the writers of the four gospels with a figure of Christ in the center.

In front of the doorways is a semi-circular platform, 18 feet in dameter, level with the tomb's vestibule. When the sons climbed the six steps to the platform they could see out to New York Harbor and Sandy Hook, N.J.

With casket in hand, the sons opened the gate, cast in one piece with all its ponderous bars and graceful scroll work, weighing 900 pounds.

The brothers entered the 51-foot wide vestibule and walked 10 feet to the next set of gates, this one leading finally to the chapel and catacombs. The second gate is composed of two 10-inch thick limestone slabs. It is 9 feet high, but even when the sons opened it, still another huge brass gate had to be opened, hard as steel and sunk deep into the stone masonry.

Once in the chapel, the sons could see clearly, with light streaming in from the 58-foot lantern towers above. A 20-foot wide semi-circular chapel was before them.

On the tomb's sides, 48 feet apart, were nine catacombs, each with space for eight Vanderbilts, all of when would have to have kept the Vanderbilt name to qualify for burial there. Even the Commodore's daughters (except the crippled Frances who did not marry) could not be placed in the tomb.

The casket was laid next to the catacomb, but would not be finally entombed for 24 days, when the widow, Maria Louise, daughters Emily Sloane and Margaret Shepard, and son George would again enter the chapel which on Dec. 27 would

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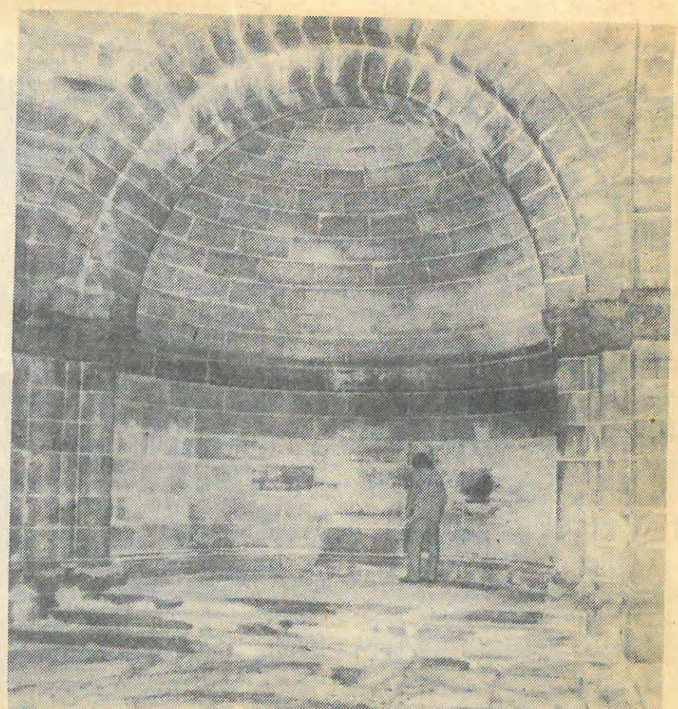
Legends abo abounded for Commodore, Henry, the fu clans of the 192 ulous mansions servants.

But the "era the Vanderbilts says now is "th for the family. controls or owns mansions.

What remains derbilt Mausole overlooking New hill in central Sta

(Tomorrow: magic)



This rare photograph inside the Vanderbilt tomb shows the semi-circular 20-foot wide chapel that is in the rear of the hillside burial vault. During funerals, the chapel would be covered with thousands of flowers.

# The Vanderbilt Mausoleum

## *Tomb is closed to the public, but it still attracts many visitors*

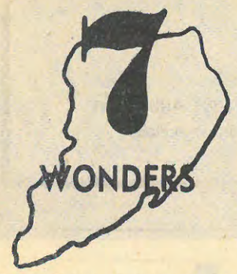
(From Page 1)

great-great-grandfather, Commodore Cornelius Vanderbilt, began the family fortune in the mid-1800s, would like to see the tomb gates swing open as they did when he was a youth; he'd like to see the cement removed from the towers above the tomb, and he'd like to see the stained-glass windows specially made in England put back in.

Vanderbilt has what he calls the "not particularly enviable position" of being the oldest surviving direct descendant of the commodore (there are 800 survivors). The family's treasures and heirlooms have been passed down to him. Unofficially, he acts as the family spokesman.

"I think it is a good idea," Vanderbilt said about suggestions that the tomb be restored and opened again to the public. "I understand it is in a state of disrepair today." He understands correctly.

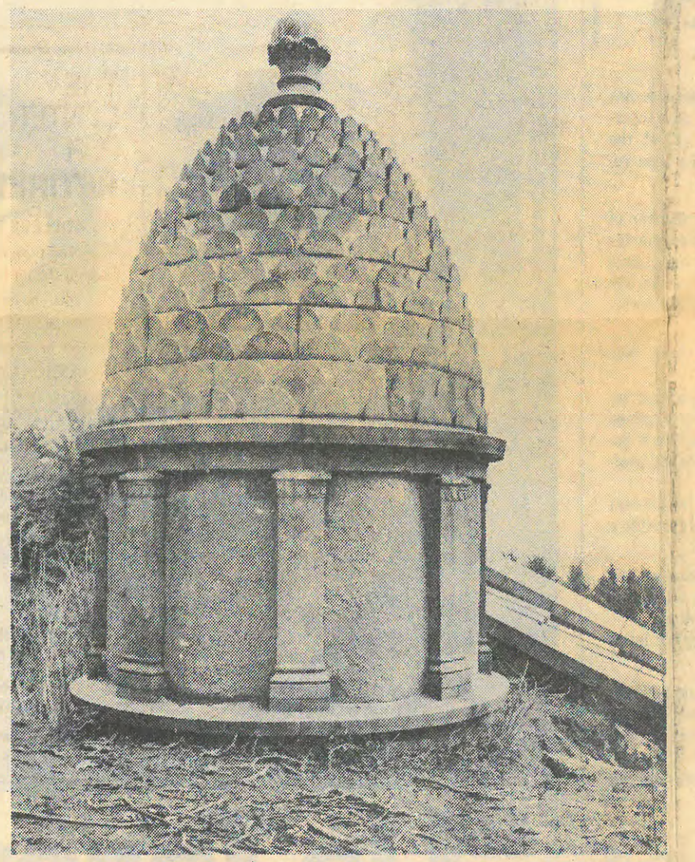
The tomb, in which 25 Vanderbilts are




buried with room for 47 more, has remained essentially intact since its completion in 1886. But two football-sized chunks have been chipped off the front steps and from a pedestal on the roof. Vandals, setting bonfires at night, apparently have been able to crack the Quincy granite exterior, something the Vanderbilts didn't think possible in 1886.

But for some weeds creeping through cracks in the tomb's walls, the facade is in excellent condition. The granite has weathered thousands of beer bottles thrown against its walls over the decades. Broken glass lies strewn in the area today.

The tomb's interior is untouched, however, and rarely entered, in fact. The last funeral was in 1974 when Cornelius Vanderbilt IV, an author who shocked some family members because he actually worked, died.



**In 1970, a Manhattan bank, which now takes care of the mausoleum property, had to cement up this tower. It once had stained glass windows framed by brass.**

S.I. Advance Photo by Robert Parsons

tion, enter to inspect the property it now oversees. Commodore Vanderbilt had left $40,000 in a trust fund for perpetual upkeep of the property. The trust now earns $8,000 a year, barely enough for a part-time gardener to clean up the beer bottles.

Ever since a 15-foot gate fell off its hinges at the entrance to the property in 1967, killing a 24-year-old Grant City woman, the bank has taken an active part in caring for the tomb.

The bank now spends an average of $2,100 a year for maintenence. Big expenses came in 1963, when a general

cure the tomb, the bank had steel doors placed over the brass front gates. And in a move that crushed some longtime admirers of the site, the bank felt forced to cement over the stained-glass towers above the tomb. Light no longer streams into the chapel.

"I wanted to cry when the bank did that," one family member said.

The bank's part-time gardeners do little more than pick up debris and cut grass on the grounds' 14 acres — a far cry from the Depression and war years when five gardeners kept the grass on the terrace before the tomb perfectly manicured.

by landscaper Olmsted, are badly in need of trimming and pruning.

Perhaps the sorriest loss for the tomb is the view from its front steps, now blocked by a row of hemlock and Norway spruce trees. Visitors no longer can see to Miller Field in New Dorp or to the Atlantic Ocean.

Despite the problems of the tomb and its grounds today, it is still a tourist attraction and recreation area. Over the past years, joggers, hikers, naturalists, Frisbee and football players sunbathers, musicians and lovers have been enjoying and, indeed, marveling at the beauty of the quiet burial site.

The mausoleum grounds are officially closed to the public, but gaping holes in the surrounding fence make it as public as it ever has been. Only neglect and vandals mar its overall appearance.

Numerous persons connected with the Vanderbilts and interviewed by the Advance have expressed interest in having the tomb opened again to the public. Such a move would be in keeping with Vanderbilt tradition. Here's what has happened to other famous Vanderbilt properties:

**Biltmore Gardens and Estates:** George Washington Vanderbilt, grandson of the commodore, disliked the family's Newport, R.I., social swirl. So, in 1890 he bought 2,000 acres of property in Asheville, N.C.

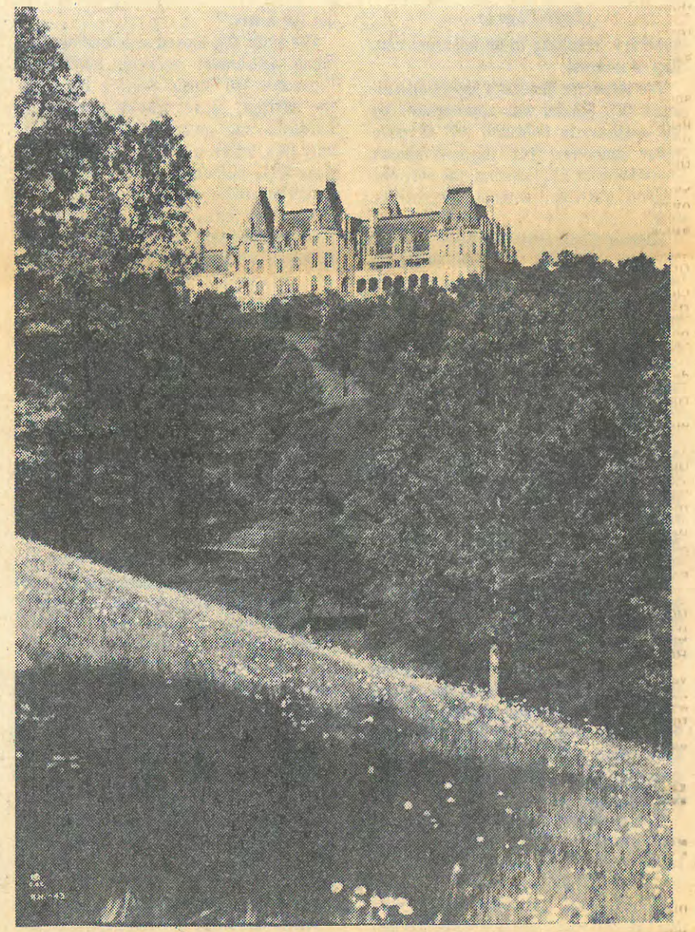
He had Hunt build a 250-room chateau, the largest, most beautiful country place in America. And Olmsted designed an extensive arboretum and garden that would become a model of forest management.

In 1930 the property was opened to the public and today is a working farm and a public museum. The woodland is part of Pistah National Forest.

**The Breakers Mansion:** Designed in 1895 by Hunt for Cornelius Vanderbilt, George's brother, this manston resembles a 16th century northern Italian palace with 70 rooms. It overlooks the Atlantic Ocean in Newport, R.I.

In 1948 the family turned the mansion over to the Preservation Society of Newport. Last year 302,781 tourists visited the house. Newport garden clubs take care of the grounds. The society receives no public funds but exists on fees charged tourists.

**Marble House:** In 1888 William Kis-



**The same architect and landscaper who collaborated on the Vanderbilt Mausoluem also did this 250-room French chateau in Asheville, N.C., the former home of George Washington Vanderbilt.**

Newport Preservation Society and last year it drew 115,631 tourists.

**Hyde Park:** This classical Renaissance mansion was the spring-fall residence of Frederick William Vanderbilt, the fourth brother, and was built in 1899. In 1940, Frederick's niece attempted to sell the house and its 200 acres, but President Franklin D. Roosevelt persuaded her to give it to the federal gov-

ish-Moroccan design mansion was built by William Kissam Vanderbilt, whose father owned Marble House. It is now a public museum and planetarium on 43 acres of lush garden property. The property is administered by Suffolk County.

The pattern then is clear. The elegant Vanderbilt properties have all been opened to the public, with restrictions and for fees. But they are open and they have been restored.

# The Vanderbilt Mausoleum

# Tomb is closed to the public, but it still attracts many visitors

By ROBERT MIRALDI

Donald McTernan is the curator of the rambling, 200-acre mansion in Hyde Park, N.Y., that in the 1920s housed multi-millionaire Frederick William Vanderbilt and his wife, Louise Anthony Torrance, who with the Hudson River as a backdrop would sit and admire her jewel collection.

Knowing that Frederick and his wife are entombed in the Vanderbilt Mausoleum in New Dorp, McTernan traveled last year to Staten Island to see the famed tomb about which he had heard so much.

"I was simply appalled," McTernan recalled. "I couldn't believe my eyes."

McTernan's eyes saw dozens of youths 40 feet above the ground, sitting on the tomb's roof, drinking beer, sunning themselves. He saw debris — beer cans, broken bottles, paper bags — and gaping holes in the fence surrounding the thickly wooded, 14-acre property where 50 Vanderbilts are buried.

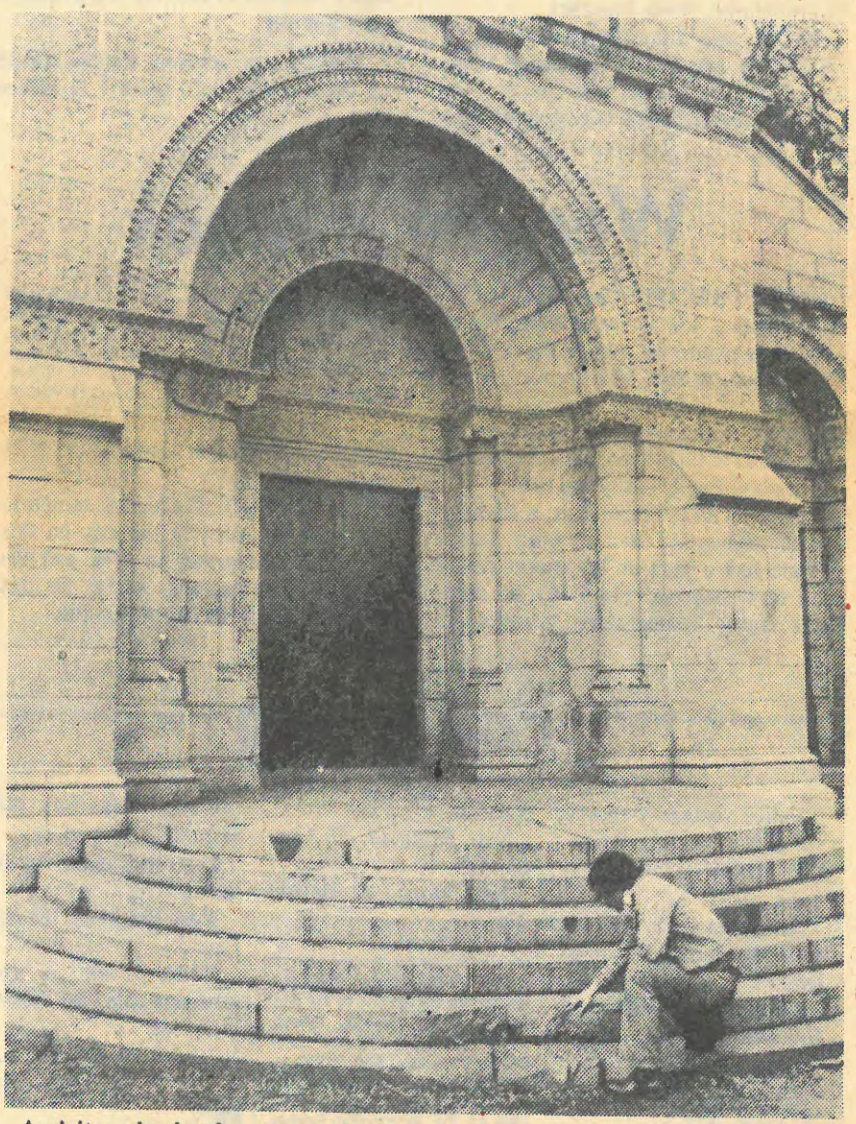
"It was ludicrous," McTernan said.

Ludicrous, indeed, that what might be the largest private burial plot in America — with a tomb designed by one of America's premier architects, with grounds planned by the most famous landscaper in the nation's history, with a rich and fascinating history — should be overgrown with weeds, covered with debris, its destiny controlled by vandals and closed to the public.

That is the state of the Vanderbilt Mausoleum today, 92 years after Frederick Law Olmsted selected his trees and Richard Morris Hunt ordered the granite facade chiseled.

William Henry Vanderbilt, 77, whose

(Continued on Page 8)



A visitor checks the steps of the Vanderbilt Mausoluem, which have been chipped by vandals who burned bonfires on the tomb's steps and then chipped the Quincy granite exterior.

S.I. Advance Photo by Robert Parsons