Sweet Auburn

Fall / Winter 2003

Newsletter of the Friends of Mount Auburn Cemetery

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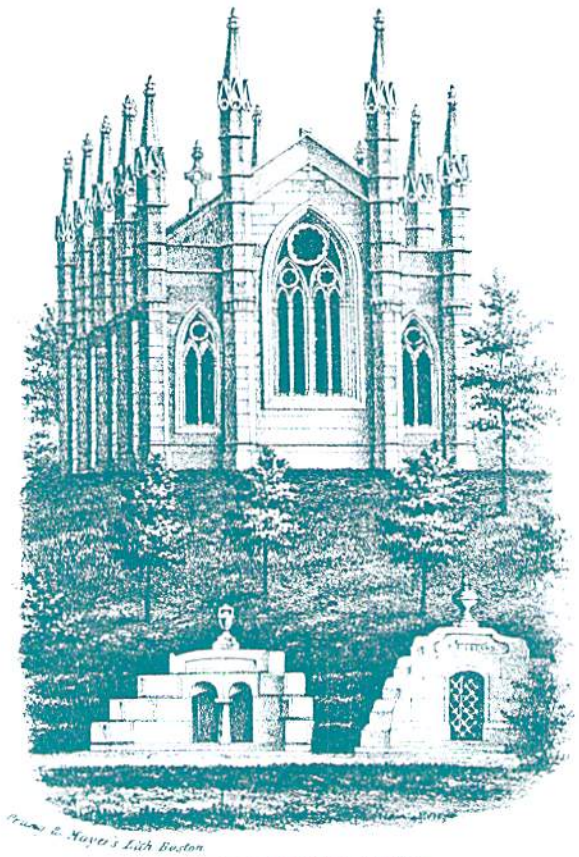
"Brilliancy and Harmony of Color" Stained Glass for the Chapel

"Their work in brilliancy and harmony of colour equals the best specimens of the antique," wrote D. R. Hay of Edinburgh in February 1845 recommending the firm of Ballantine and Allan to Cemetery Trustee Dr. Jacob Bigelow. This article describes how Dr. Bigelow ordered the magnificent stained glass windows of the building we know today as Bigelow Chapel.

In October 1844 the Trustees of the Cemetery voted to erect a chapel of fine hammered Quincy granite at a cost not to exceed $25,000. The building would serve as a place for funeral services and as a depository for appropriate works of art. To supplement limited available funds, an appeal was made to "public spirited individuals" and contributions of nearly $7,000 were raised. Trustee Dr. Jacob Bigelow, physician and Harvard professor, had proposed the winning design for the chapel selected in an architectural competition. His proposal incorporated the use of stained glass windows in the romantic Gothic tradition. The artistry and technology to produce such windows were not available in the United States. Indeed only in the early 1800s had a revival of interest in the Gothic style spurred the development of firms in England and Scotland capable of creating stained glass for domestic and church use.

Dr. Bigelow sought the advice D. R. Hay of Edinburgh, an influential decorative painter and author, noted for his writings on beauty, proportion and color theory. Hay was quick to recommend his intimate friends Ballantine and Allan (sometimes spelled Allen). He wrote to Bigelow that they had been selected "by the Royal Commission of the Fine Arts to furnish the painted glass for the principal portions of the new Houses of Parliament." These gentlemen are thus placed at the head of their profession.



VIEW FROM THE LAWN.

This illustration from 1860 shows the dramatic appearance of the Chapel to visitors entering the Cemetery. The intricate tracery of the windows dominates and embellishes of the north face of the building.

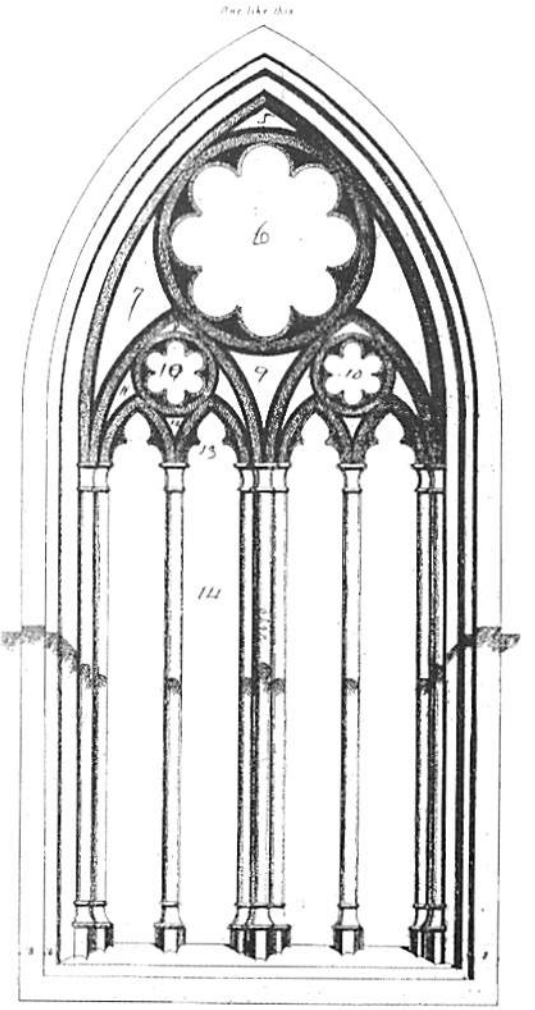
We are fortunate to have in the Cemetery's archives several original letters and transcripts documenting how this trans-Atlantic process of ordering the glass was conducted.

Ballantine and Allan responded to Bigelow in April 1845, expressing their enthusiasm for the commission:

> Our experience in Glass Painting has been considerable. We have studied carefully the best specimens of the antique, in this country and on the Continent, and feel confident, that we can now produce windows, equally durable & brilliant, with the best of those specimens, and more in accordance with the principles of harmony in form and colour.
>
> Our designs and specimens, for the windows of the New House of Lords, at Westminster, have been approved of by the Royal Commission on the Fine Arts, and we are anxious to extend our reputation still further. We have therefore prepared the following estimates, at the lowest remunerating rates, and should feel exceedingly delighted, to have the honour, and the advantages, through your means, of sending a specimen of our Art to your interesting country. . . .
>
> Should you entrust the work to our care, we should guarantee that all the coloured glass should be of the very finest quality and that the workmanship should be equal of any other in Ancient or Modern painted Glass. The panels could be forwarded together with plans and written instructions, such as would enable any common glazier to put them in . . .
>
> Should you resolve upon employing us, it would insure correctness if you would forward pasteboard or paper shapes, the exact daylight size of the various compartments. These templates or shapes must be numbered, and your lithograph drawings numbered to correspond. . . .

Bigelow sent lithographic designs of the window shapes and Ballantine and Allan returned their suggestions for designs to fill them. Bigelow reviewed their proposals and described the alternatives he preferred in a letter dated June 14, 1845. He requested that they immediately start to make the two large windows and said that he would send the requested "paper patterns by the steamer *Cambria*, rolled up in a tin box, care of Harnden & Co., Liverpool." The cast iron window frames had already constructed for the chapel and Bigelow carefully described the details. He requested:

> In the Nave window [north window] you will fill the large perpendicular lights and all the smaller lights of the upper compartments, exactly as they now stand in your designs. But



Lithograph design for the north window (circa 1844).

> the great circular space in this window I wish filled, not with the resurrection piece in your design, but with an allegorical representation of Death, of which I send you a design, in the roll, copied mainly from Thorvaldsen's bas relief of Night, representing a winged sleeping female and two infants. It is the most beautiful & appropriate thing I have seen.
>
> In the Rose window you will substitute in the center a design which is also enclosed in the roll, and which is allegorical of Immortality. It is copied from the two cherubs in Raphael's Madonna del Sisto, who are here represented as gazing upward into a light or glory, which proceeds from an invisible source. Raphael's picture is at Dresden. Some parts of it, especially the cherubs wings, are highly colored. If you have good copies in Edinburgh, please to imitate them, paying all attention to keep the expression of the faces.
>
> Allow me to suggest an "opinion" that the representation of Death in the northern window should be executed in cold or sombre

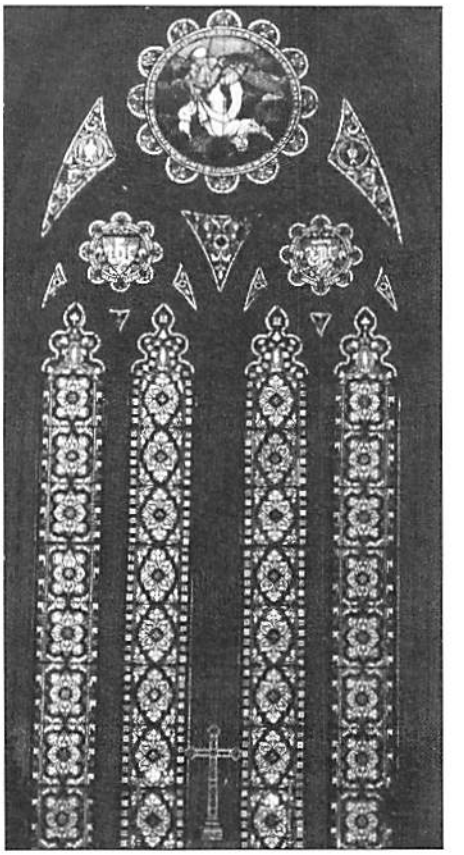
tints; that of Immortality which fronts the sun, should be in bright & dazzling colors. The field, or back ground I leave to be managed by your own judgement trusting that you will not introduce new objects, except variations of clouds, and dispose the light & shadows in an artistic manner. . . .

In the large roll which accompanies this, you will find paper patterns cut to the exact shape and size of the daylight panels, with a lithographic sketch numbered to correspond, You will also find the sketches of the great central designs already alluded to. We will pay you on delivery to our agent in London or Liverpool one hundred pounds sterling for the nave window, and one hundred & fifteen pounds for the rose window, if executed comfortably to the foregoing instructions, and delivered as aforesaid on or before the first day of March next.

With this exchange of letters and designs, the contract was made. Glass of a simple design was also ordered for the four aisle windows at 10 pounds each. Bigelow's choice of the images of "Night," a winged woman with poppies in her hair carrying the infants sleep and death, and of Raphael's cherubs was applauded by Ballantine and Allan in their return letter of July 2, 1845. They wrote that they knew these images and the "excellent taste shown in the selection of such subjects as well as in their adaptation to the purpose intended is fully appreciated by us." Thorvaldsen's relief (1815) of "Night" and the matching figure of "Morning" were very popular in the 19th century, reproduced in many forms, often as plaster plaques or engravings. Frances Lichten, author of *Decorative Art of Victoria's Era* (1950), comments that their presence in a home was signet of culture. Raphael's cherubs are well known to us today, gracing United States postage stamps as well as a myriad of calendars, cards and household goods.

James Ballantine, Poet and Artist

Although biographical information about Allan is scarce, James Ballantine was a notable figure in the artistic circles of Edinburgh. He was born there in 1808 and began his career as a house painter and decorator. It is thought that he studied art at Edinburgh's Trustee's Gallery and glass making in England. He founded his stained glass firm in 1837 and published *A Treatise on Painted Glass showing its Applicability to Every Style of Architecture* in 1845. In this work Ballantine discusses in detail his theories of harmony and color. He advises "When a running pattern of various tints of yellow winds its way through alternations of blue and ruby, the effect is peculiarly rich; . . . The line of light which should always surround such borders, adds much to their



North window, 2003. Bigelow's letter of June 1845 mentioned that the window frames as constructed differed from the lithograph design.

effect, relieving them from the dark of the stonework, and increasing their brilliancy and power." We can see this expressed in the tall lancet panels of the Chapel's north window today. Ballantine's friends included the pioneer photographers David Octavius Hill and Robert Adamson and artist David Roberts, known for his paintings of Egypt. Ballantine published a book about Roberts after his death in 1864. Ballantine is best known by some for his poetry and song lyrics; he was one of primary contributors to the popular *Whistle Binkie* poetry anthologies published in Scotland in the 1830-40s. His pieces such as *Ilka Blade o' Grass*, *Muckle-Mou'd Meg*, and *Castles in Air* appear in compilations of Scottish folk music today.

The selection of Ballantine and Allan for the windows of the House of Lords in London in 1844 testified to the firm's excellence. Although these windows have been lost, the drawings for them are in the archives of the Houses of Parliament. Examples of Ballantine and Allan's work may be seen in Greyfriars Tolbooth and Highland Kirk and St. John's Church in Edinburgh. St. John's has one of the finest collections of stained glass in Scotland; most of the windows are the work of James Ballantine and his descendants. Ballantine's son

Alexander joined the firm and continued it after the death of his father in 1877. Alexander Ballantine became a partner of Gardiner in the 1880s and produced decades of stained glass found in churches, houses and public buildings. The Ballantine tradition continued with grandson James entering the business in about 1900. He continued the firm at the same 42 George Street address that Dr. Bigelow wrote to decades before.

The Chapel Windows

The stained glass ordered by Bigelow did arrive safely in Boston in the spring of 1846. The duties and freight bill added up to $254.65, and the accounting records of Mount Auburn show that a sum of $1,340.70 was paid on May 18, 1846 for the stained glass. During the summer, local workers S. G. Tower, Adams Hammond & Co. and Thomas Palmer were paid nearly $1,000 for expenses associated with installing the glass and finishing the interior of the chapel.

Although the Chapel was taken down and rebuilt in 1853-56, the windows were apparently removed, stored and reinstalled without mishap during the process. There is a mention in the Cemetery records that in March 1852 a storm destroyed the round pane of the north window and Bigelow was given full powers to have "the same replaced." Otherwise there are few references to the glass.

In 1899 the interior of the Chapel was entirely rebuilt to accommodate the installation of a lower level containing the crematory under the direction of architect Willard Sears. No changes appear to have been made to the large windows. Then in 1923-24 architects Allen and Collens redid the interior of the building reestablishing its Gothic Revival appearance. It appears that during this renovation the center of the south rose window that once featured Raphael's cherubs was replaced with patterned glass. Stained glass was also placed in the upper round windows in the clerestory.

In July 1845 Ballantine and Allan wrote to Bigelow that the "Glass we use is of the very best quality, and will resist for centuries all accidents of wind and hail." The glass has held its brilliant colors and resisted such accidents but it is now in need of extensive restoration. These windows are an important legacy, representing glass produced by one of the world's premier firms working soon after the rediscovery of the techniques of manufacturing medieval-style glass.

Mount Auburn staff Meg Winslow, Curator of Historic Collections, and Gus Fraser, Director of Preservation & Facilities Maintenance, are working with expert glass conservators to prepare treatment plans for the north window, where the glass is very cracked and bowed. The Friends of Mount Auburn Cemetery welcomes contributions for the conservation of these magnificent windows. – Janet Heywood

Annual Fund 2003-2004

Generations of careful stewards and prudent financial management have made Mount Auburn one of the most beautiful and beloved landscapes in the country, but our current preservation and interpretive programs depend on your continued generous support. Please give generously to the 2003-2004 Annual Fund to help us continue the excellence of our stewardship of this special place. Contributions may be made to the Friends of Mount Auburn Cemetery, 580 Mount Auburn Street, Cambridge, MA 02138.

Mount Auburn Forever

Whatever your interest in Mount Auburn – whether you love its history, horticulture, art and architecture or birds – you can make a gift to the Friends that will live forever, maintaining and enhancing the Cemetery's beauty and value for future generations. Through your will you can make a gift of cash, securities, or other assets. The following language may be used: "I bequest the sum of x dollars (or description of securities or property) to the Friends of Mount Auburn Cemetery, a federally tax-exempt Massachusetts charitable trust with offices at 580 Mount Auburn Street, Cambridge, MA 02138." Please contact us for additional information about how to include the Friends of Mount Auburn Cemetery in your will or estate plans.

A GIFT OF GEM CARS. With the assistance of the Office of Mayor Michael Sullivan of Cambridge, Mount Auburn Cemetery has received a donation of 16 small electric vehicles from Global Electric Motors (GEM), a division of Daimler/Chrysler. These vehicles are able to negotiate our hills and turf with ease with minimal impact on the landscape. They fit perfectly with our on-going concern about environmental and noise pollution. The photo shows Security Supervisor William Torres patrolling in one of the GEM cars. Sept. 2003.

Mount Auburn Cemetery Named a National Historic Landmark

On May 27, 2003 Mount Auburn Cemetery was designated a National Historic Landmark by the Secretary of the Interior, recognizing its importance as one of the country's most significant designed landscapes. "We are delighted to have received this honor," said William Clendaniel, the Cemetery's President. "Mount Auburn, beloved by generations of Bostonians, has now been officially recognized for its importance to all Americans."

The criteria for becoming a National Historic Landmark, the nation's highest designation, are rigorous. The site must have "exceptional value or quality in illustrating or interpreting the heritage of the United States." Fewer than 2,500 sites and only two other cemeteries bear this national distinction.

When Mount Auburn was founded in 1831 as a non-profit, non-sectarian cemetery, it was the first large-scale designed landscape open to the public in North America. It was a new concept for America, and it transformed the practices of burial and commemoration of the dead throughout the country. The Cemetery's founders planned a landscape where horticulture, sculpture and architecture combined with the beauty of nature to create a place of comfort and inspiration. The concept was immediately successful, and Mount Auburn served as a model for cemeteries nationwide. In turn their popularity fostered the development of the nation's public parks.

Today, Mount Auburn continues its historical tradition of developing new space for burials and commemoration, combining the beauty of art and architecture with that of nature. The Cemetery's mission of preservation and service means that its heritage is protected while it continues to serve the needs of generations to come.

Mount Auburn comprises 175 acres located in Watertown and Cambridge. More than 93,000 people are buried here, including remarkable men and women who shaped and changed the world in which they lived. Many are nationally celebrated poets, authors, artists, scientists, reformers, and political and religious leaders such as Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Harriet Jacobs, Amy Lowell, Bernard Malamud, Winslow Homer, Charles Dana Gibson, Buckminster Fuller, Harold Edgerton, Julia Ward Howe, Charles Sumner, Phillips Brooks, and Mary Baker Eddy. Mount Auburn's collections of monuments and grave decorations illustrate the changing tastes and attitudes of nearly two centuries. The grounds encompass a world-renowned horticultural collection and provide a tranquil natural sanctuary in an urban setting well known to bird watchers.

Visit Mount Auburn Cemetery on the web at **www.mountauburn.org.**

The National Historic Landmark nomination for Mount Auburn is at **www.cr.nps.gov/nhl/designations /samples/ma/MtAuburnWeb.pdf.**

A lesson plan created about Mount Auburn Cemetery is at the Teaching with Historic Places web site at **www.cr.nps.gov.NR/twhp/wwwlps/ lessons/84mountauburn/84mountauburn.htm**

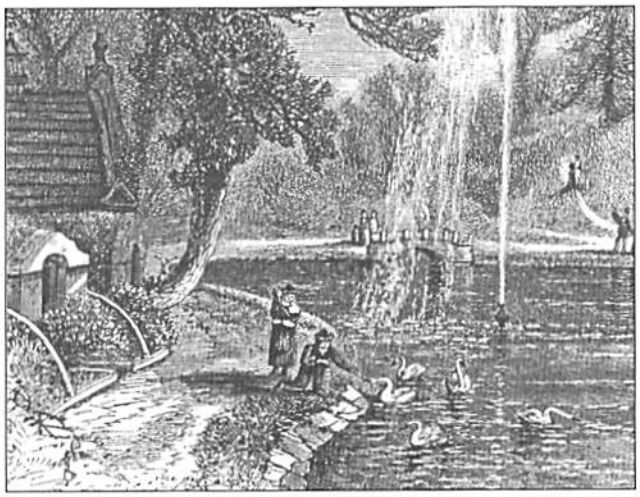
"View from Central Avenue" Engraving by James Smillie, from Mount Auburn Illustrated, *1847. The tall obelisk is a memorial erected by the Officers of the United States Exploring Expedition (1838-1842) to the memory of their departed comrades.*

Henry Cabot Lodge
1850-1924

United States Senator, Author. Born in Boston, Henry Cabot Lodge was the only son of Anna Cabot, the granddaughter of Federalist George Cabot, and John Ellerton Lodge, a wealthy merchant in the China trade. An energetic child, Henry grew up in Boston and spent his summers at his mother's family home in Nahant where he later lived as an adult. His father died suddenly in 1862 but Henry retained warm memories of him. His mother played an influential role throughout his life until her death in 1900. Henry attended Harvard University for both undergraduate and graduate studies, earning his B.A. in 1871, a law degree in 1874 and the first Ph.D. in political science ever to be awarded by Harvard in 1876. The day after his college graduation in 1871 he married Anna "Nannie" Cabot Davis, a distant relative of his mother. Although an average student who graduated in the middle of his class, Lodge early on considered an academic career. During his graduate work at Harvard he was an assistant editor of *The North American Review*. Lodge wrote several histories and biographies including the *Life and Letters of George Cabot* (1877), his great-grandfather. Other biographies and histories of American heroes followed: *Alexander Hamilton* (1882), *Daniel Webster* (1883) and *George Washington* (1889).

Lodge's writings often revealed his political leanings. His interest in history and politics were intermingled and eventually inspired his entrance into a political career. In 1878 he was elected to the Massachusetts House of Representatives. Lodge gained a reputation for eloquence, clarity and loyalty to the Republican Party. After actively participating in a number of Republican campaigns,

Henry Cabot Lodge



Auburn Lake in the early 1870s. The Lodge family tomb can be seen on the left between the curving trees.

Lodge was elected to the United States Congress, a position he held for six years from 1886 until 1892. As an outspoken Congressman, Lodge stirred up many debates. He strongly supported and pushed legislation involving civil service reform, the protective tariff and African American suffrage.

In 1893, Lodge was elected to the United States Senate. During his 30 years in the Senate he helped to draft a number of new laws including the Sherman Antitrust Act of 1890 and the landmark Pure Food and Drugs Act of 1906. Lodge was particularly interested and experienced in the field of international affairs. President Theodore Roosevelt trusted his judgement and relied on him as a friend and advisor. As a member of the Foreign Relations Committee, Lodge was involved in the Alaskan Boundary agreement and the Hay-Pauncefote Treaties that allowed U.S. construction and fortification of a Central American Canal.

Lodge is, however, best known for his opposition of Woodrow Wilson's League of Nations. At the end of World War I in 1919, Wilson proposed the League of Nations as a means to secure the independence of nations of all sizes and promote international peace. The League was one of Wilson's fourteen points and was adopted through the Treaty of Versailles. Lodge, a Republican internationalist, believed that American involvement in the League threatened U.S. sovereignty. He did not believe that the League would be effective, nor would Americans be willing to risk soldiers' lives for other nations' territorial boundaries. In addition, Lodge feared that a peace settlement made at the same time as the creation of the League of Nations would result in lighter indemnities on Germany. In March of 1919 Lodge, along with 36 Republican senators, signed and submitted a resolution to Congress objecting to American participation in the League of Nations. The U.S. Senate never ratified the Treaty of Versailles and the League of Nations. "Lodge's

action gained him at the time warm admiration and bitter resentment in about equal measure." *(DAB)* As a senator and politician, Lodge was considered to be a great intellect, but at times a ruthless one. He served in the U.S. Senate until 1924.

Lodge and his wife Nannie were the parents of a daughter and two sons. Tragically their son George Cabot Lodge, known as Bay, a promising poet, died at 35 in 1909. Lodge paid close attention to his grandchildren and particularly encouraged Bay's son Henry Cabot Lodge, Jr., his namesake, to follow his lead. Lodge is buried in the family tomb built by his mother on Oxalis Path next to Auburn Lake. This brownstone tomb is the resting place of three U.S. Senators: Henry Cabot Lodge; his great-grandfather George Cabot (1752-1823); and his grandson Henry Cabot Lodge, Jr. (1902-1985), who was indeed inspired by his grandfather.

-- Amanda Yost

Sources: *Dictionary of American Biography; Encyclopedia of World Biography;* Garraty, John A., *Henry Cabot Lodge: A Biography*, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1953; Lodge, Henry Cabot, *Early Memories*, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1913; Widenor, William C., *Henry Cabot Lodge and the Search for an American Foreign Policy*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1980.

Amanda Yost, Interpretive Programs Department Assistant, is a graduate of Tufts University.

An Invitation to Join The Friends of Mount Auburn Cemetery

Please enroll me as a member:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, ZIP: _____

❑ *Check enclosed payable to Friends of Mount Auburn.*

❑ *Please charge $* _____ *to my credit card.*

Credit Card # _____

Expiration Date: _____ ❑ *Mastercard* ❑ *Visa*

Signature: _____

___ Senior / Student $20
___ Individual $30
___ Supporter/Household $50 - 99
___ Contributor $100 - 249
___ Donor $250 - 499
___ Patron $500 - 999
___ 1831 Benefactor $1,000 and above

The Friends of Mount Auburn Cemetery is a 501 (c) (3) charitable trust promoting the appreciation and preservation of the cultural, historic and natural resources of America's first garden cemetery.
If you would like this to be a gift membership, please enclose your name and address so that we may notify the recipient.

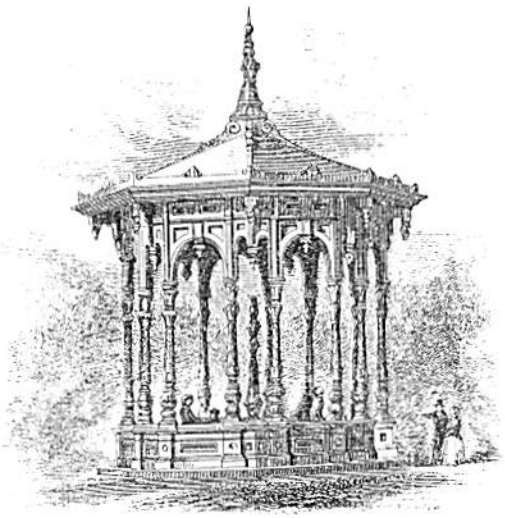
Friends of Mount Auburn Cemetery
580 Mount Auburn Street Cambridge, MA 02138
Tel 617-547-7105 E-mail friends@mountauburn.org

Well-house for Visitors

In the 1850s a visit to Mount Auburn Cemetery was one of the "indispensables to a stranger sojourning in or near Boston, and few places present, within an equal space, either to citizens or strangers, a more varied combination of elements to attract attention and awaken thought," or so Hammatt Billings wrote in *The Boston Almanac for the Year 1857*. One accommodation made for the visitor was a fresh supply of water. In the summer of 1852 at the July meeting of the Cemetery Trustees, Boston merchant Mace Tisdale offered a plan for a well and a pump to be constructed near the Entrance Gate.

The small but elaborate structure was designed by Boston architect Theodore Voelckers and consisted of a well and a pump, with a drain, and a stone platform, covered by a wooden octagonal building with seats inside. The cost of the building was about $3,000. Critic Hammatt Billings wrote in *The Boston Almanac* that perhaps it presented "rather too much the appearance of a garden summer-house to be strictly in keeping with its position in a cemetery." For the next forty years, however, the Well-house offered comfort for visitors as they paused at the Entrance area.

When the Administration Building and Story Chapel were built in 1896-98, the Well-house was moved to the opposite side of the grounds near what was then a south entrance off Coolidge Avenue. Eventually the structure was removed after this south entrance was closed in the 1920s. The photograph on the back page beneath the mailing panel shows another view of this Well-house.



"Near the gateway, to the left on entering, is the Pump-House, a pavilion designed for rest and to refresh the visitor with a draught of cold water, all edibles being strictly forbidden by the rules." Illustration and caption from The Boston Almanac for the Year 1857.

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FRIENDS OF
MOUNT AUBURN CEMETERY

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This 1860s image shows visitors at the Well-house and Entrance Gate. Photo by Warren of Cambridgeport.