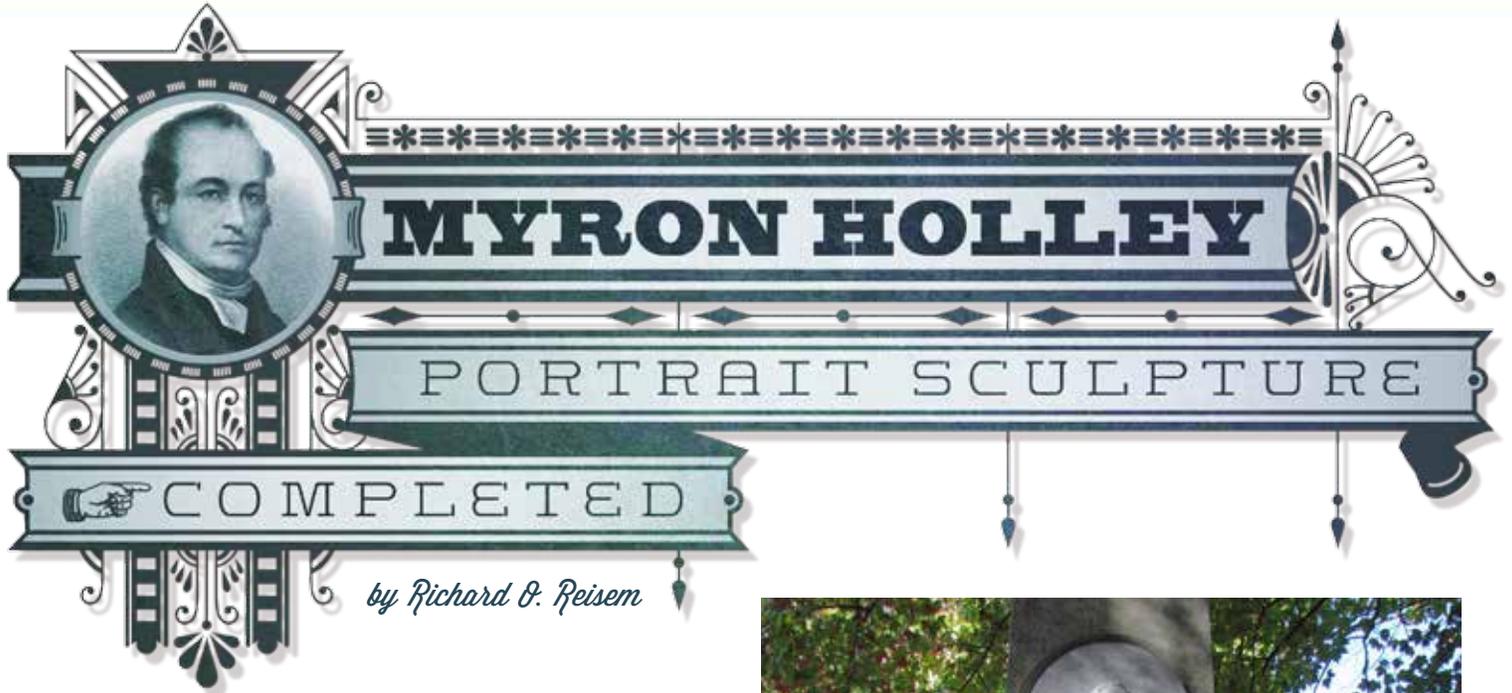


EPITAPH

The Friends of Mount Hope Cemetery

VOLUME 37 • No. 4 • FALL 2017



by Richard O. Reisem

When I wrote a biography of Myron Holley that was published by the Friends of Mount Hope Cemetery in 2013, I asked the Friends board of trustees to reserve profits from the sale of the book and apply that money to commission a new portrait medallion of Myron Holley to replace the deteriorated bas relief sculpture attached to Holley's obelisk in Section G.



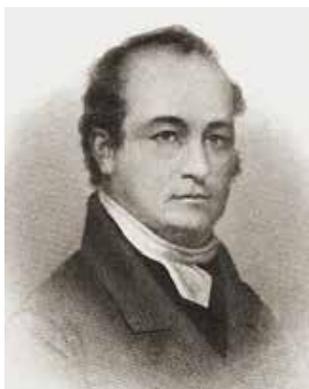
The deteriorated portrait stone medallion.

That first medallion was installed in 1844, when the obelisk was erected in Mount Hope Cemetery. At that time, members of the Liberty Party (which Myron Holley had founded) contributed their pennies to pay for a tall obelisk with portrait medallions of Myron Holley and his daughter, Sallie Holley,

(continued inside...)



The new portrait medallion in gray granite.
Photo by Ron Richardson.



Etching of Myron Holley used to create medallion sculpture.

both of whom are buried in the lot. On a beautiful, sunny day of June 13, 1844, more than 6,000 people, the largest crowd ever to gather in Mount Hope Cemetery, climbed that hill to the summit for the dedication of the Holley monument with its two stone medallions.

It is now 173 years since Myron

Holley's obelisk was erected at the top of Section G, one of the highest points in the cemetery. Last year, we sold enough books to pay for a new stone portrait, and we commissioned a granite portrait to be carved by a skilled Italian sculptor at Adams North Barre Granite Company in Websterville, Vermont. That artist worked from a portrait of Myron Holley (see photo) that we sent to the quarry. The stone medallion cost us \$1,972.

It was installed by Haskell Monument Works, Victor, New York, using scaffolding provided by Ellison Conservation, Canandaigua, NY. We are indebted to Dennis Del Conte of Haskell Monument Works for spearheading this project from inception to installation without any charge and to Peter Ellison for the gratis use of his scaffold, while he and his colleague Ron Koenig were working on cleaning the Civil War monument, the Weary Pilgrim sculpture, and the Ellwanger monument. Our wholehearted thanks go to Dennis, Peter, and Ron, whom I met while they were working diligently attaching the medallion to the obelisk with pins and epoxy.

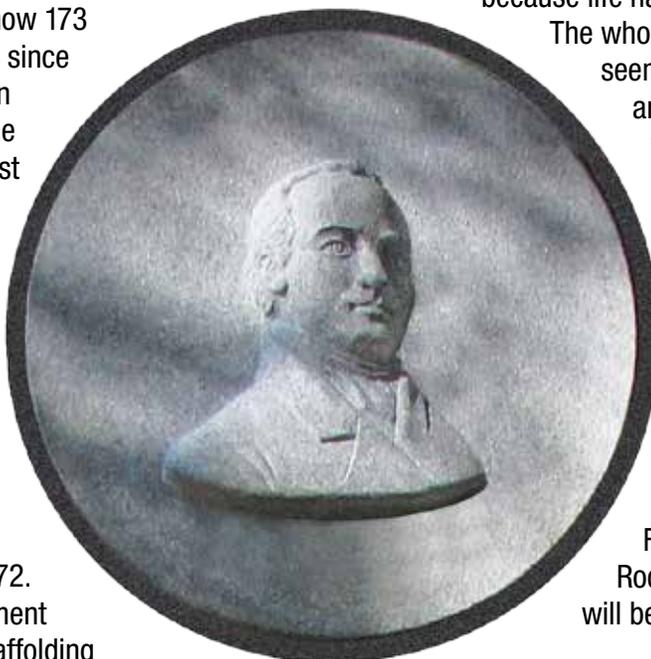
The original Myron Holley medallion was most likely carved of marble, which is porous and can deteriorate with many seasons of harsh weather and acid rain. The new medallion is gray granite, a much harder and more permanent material.

Myron Holley deserves the kind of attention that this medallion restoration represents. Despite his illustrious

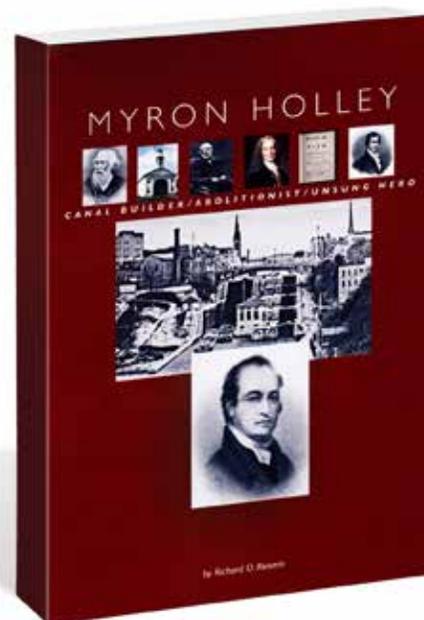
lineage, startling good looks (as you can see on his medallion), fine education, superior intelligence, consistent honesty, humanitarian views, leadership of the Erie Canal, founding of an influential political party, laudable speaking abilities, and passionate writing—despite these admirable qualities and accomplishments, Myron Holley had his legal career abruptly ended by a murder, was accused by evil forces of embezzlement, deprived of his property, became caught up in a notorious killing, and finally reduced to penury. As Mark Twain said, "Life is stranger than fiction, because life has no obligation to be probable."

The whole story of Myron Holley, seemingly not probable, becomes an important and fascinating tale in the biography book, *Myron Holley: Canal Builder/Abolitionist/Unsung Hero*.

You can purchase this astonishing book by going to www.fomh.org, open the Support menu, select Gift Shop, and order a copy. Or you can pick up a copy at the Landmark Society, 133 South Fitzhugh Street, in Corn Hill, Rochester. When you read it, you will be blown away.

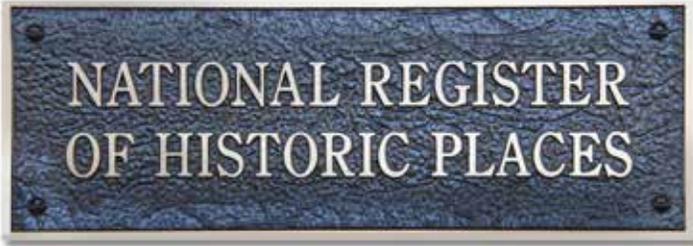


Myron Holley biography, 224 pages, available from fomh.org or the Landmark Society, 546-7029, www.landmark-society.org



Mount Hope Cemetery

Now Listed in the



by Richard Reisem

Back in 1972, when Rochester added Mount Hope/ Highland Preservation District to its list of city preservation sites, the city also applied and was granted listings in the New York State and National Registers of Historical Places. Those 1972 designations included a large part of Mount Hope Cemetery. But not quite all of it. When Rochester City Council decided on the boundaries of the preservation district, they removed the large flat area south of Grove Avenue, but retained a strip along Mount Hope Avenue all the way to Elmwood Avenue. The council's reason given for exempting this area, which included Ranges 1–10, was that if that area was included in the preservation district, it might negatively affect continuing sales of gravesites in that area, which were particularly numerous at the time. It should be remembered that preservation districts in New York State cities were a relatively new

thing in 1972, considering that the very first historic districts were established in New York City in 1965 and in Rochester in 1968.

It became increasingly evident over the decades that preservation district status did not have a deleterious effect on gravesite sales. In fact, it made the area more desirable for burials. In 2014, the city of Rochester commissioned Martha Lyon Landscape Architecture, LLC, in Northampton, Massachusetts, to prepare an application to include the entire cemetery as a separate entry in the National Register of Historic Places.

The Lyon firm prepared a thorough application consisting of more than 50 pages that was submitted first to the New York State Preservation Office, which unanimously voted in favor of the nomination and sent it on to the National Register of Historic Places, which is part of the National Park Service.

The National Park Service has now given its final review and approved the nomination, sending the decision to the Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places for listing in the register. This listing is primarily a matter of distinction and prestige, but it may also enhance the cemetery's position in applying for grants.



The entire cemetery is now listed as a separate entity in the National Register of Historic Places. Photo by Ron Richardson.



Scottish Souls Remembered in Mount Hope



On October 29, 2017, the Scottish Heritage Society staged a dedication ceremony commemorating the Scots buried in the Old Scottish Burial Plot in Mount Hope Cemetery. The Scottish Heritage Society has installed an engraved granite monument memorializing the 84 Scots buried in the plot. At the dedication event, attendees heard the stories of the emigration of Scots to America to build a life here and listened to the expressive sounds of Rochester Scottish Pipes & Drums.

The Old Scottish Burial Plot was completely filled with burials by 1888, in which year John L. Stewart, on behalf of the Scottish Heritage Society of Rochester, purchased the New Scottish Burial Plot in Range 3, Lot 212, which is located between Forest and Woodland avenues and Oak and Evergreen avenues.



The Old Scottish Burial Plot was purchased in 1856 by the Caledonia Society of Rochester, as the Scottish Heritage Society was called in those days. The plot is located in Section O, Lot 147, which is between Fourth and Fifth avenues on the south side of Indian Trail Avenue.

Following the ceremony, the assembled group crossed Mount Hope Avenue for a social hour and refreshments at the historic Elmwood Inn.



A poster announced a Dedication Ceremony in the Old Scottish Burial Plot.



A new granite monument commemorates 84 Scots buried in this Scottish plot.

Two Famous Sculptures Cleaned and Preserved

by Richard Reisem

By the second week of October 2017, two outstanding marble sculptures in Mount Hope Cemetery (the Weary Pilgrim in the Aaron Erickson plot and Saint John in the George Ellwanger plot) that had been exposed to decades of tree droppings, acid rain, vehicle exhaust, soot, fungus, and polluted air were spotlessly cleaned. The cleaning was no ordinary washing with soap and water. These were marble sculptures carved of rare Italian Carrera marble, which, like all marble, is porous, and therefore subject to lichen growth that when it dies leaves black deposits on the white marble. Sap and other tree droppings become glued to the marble. Polluted air carries dirt and chemicals that are deposited on the stone.

Cleaning marble cemetery monuments becomes a challenging and toilsome task. Not only are the stones stained and dirty. They are old. The Ellwanger monument of Saint John the Evangelist was carved in Rome and completed in 1874; the Erickson monument of a Weary Pilgrim in the Crusades, also carved in Rome, was completed in 1882. Both of them are well over a century old.

Not only are the sculptures old, they were carved by a world-renowned Italian sculptor, Nicola Cantalamessa-Papotti (1833–1910). He worked at the court of Naples, where, for King Ferdinand II, he created a number of major sculptural works. He was also a sculptor for Pope Pius IX. Cantalamessa-Papotti created sculptures for American clients as well. One was a memorial for U.S. President James A. Garfield. There are four of Papotti's sculptures in Rochester: two in Mount Hope Cemetery, one in Holy Sepulchre Cemetery, and one on permanent display in the Memorial Art Gallery.



The Weary Pilgrim sculpture before cleaning. Photo by Ron Richardson.



The Weary Pilgrim sculpture after cleaning. Photo by Ron Richardson.

The Weary Pilgrim sculpture, located near the top of Section G, depicts a traveler resting on his journey to the Holy Land in the Crusades, which were sanctioned by the Roman Catholic Church in the medieval period (1095–1410) and were campaigns to recover the Holy Land from Islamic rule. The Crusaders received plenary indulgences from the church. So the Weary Pilgrim becomes a symbol for forgiveness of sins. A close look at the sculpture reveals the clam shell worn on the left shoulder of the pilgrim's cloak. It was the icon of the Crusades.

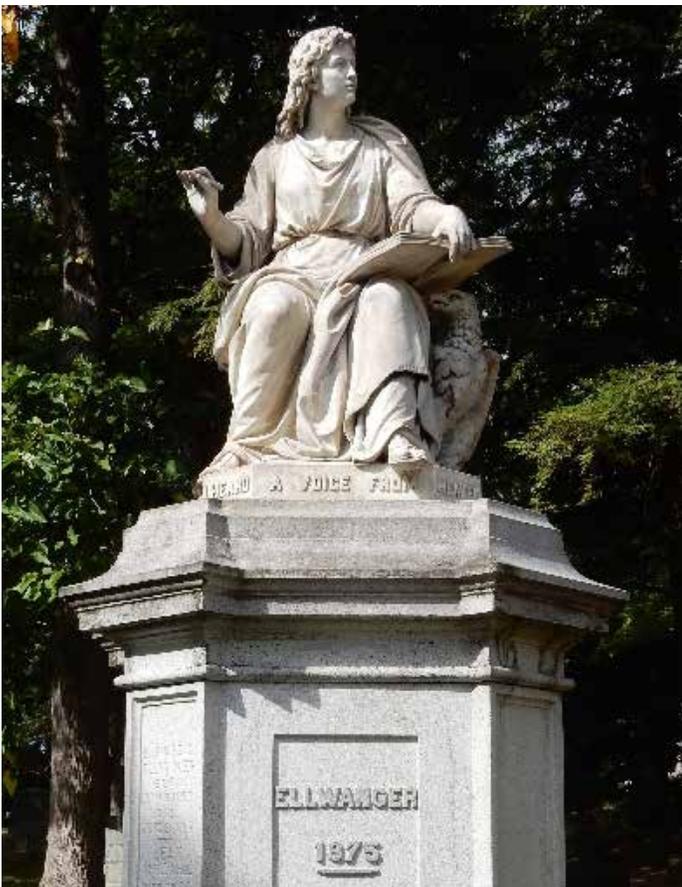
The 7-foot-high marble sculpture of the seated Saint John the Evangelist in Section V is depicted with the traditional eagle at his left side. St. John was banished to the island of Patmos in the Aegean Sea during a period of Christian persecution. It was on this island where St. John received revelations from God and wrote the book of Revelation. The inscription on the base of the statue reads, "I heard a voice

from Heaven..." The entire Biblical verse reads: "And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, 'Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them.'"

With such provenances relating to these sculptures and their creator, the Friends of Mount Hope Cemetery was especially careful in proceeding with restoration work. We found two conservators who follow the U.S. Department of the Interior conservation regulations assiduously, namely Ron Koenig of Building Arts and Conservation, Saline, Michigan and Peter Ellison of Ellison Conservation, Canandaigua, New York. Their work in the first weeks of October involved several applications of cleaning materials applied several days apart for maximum effectiveness.



The St. John sculpture before cleaning. Photo by Donald S. Hall



The St. John sculpture after cleaning. Photo by Donald S. Hall.

Both the Weary Pilgrim and Saint John received this three-step process, while Saint John required a fourth treatment to remove the especially tough stains from vehicular emissions, because the sculpture is located very close to busy Mount Hope Avenue. While Ron and Peter were working in the cemetery, they also accomplished scheduled maintenance cleaning of the Civil War bronze sculpture in Section BB.

Gazebo Restoration & Nearly Finished

The Moorish style gazebo at the north entrance to Mount Hope Cemetery was built in 1872 and has undergone several restorations, one back in 1980 and another in 2016–2017. This photo was taken on October 23, 2017 after the arabesque design had been painted on several of the roof panels. Remaining to be completed is the installation of a new finial and its large circular base. These will probably have been completed by the time you are reading this announcement.



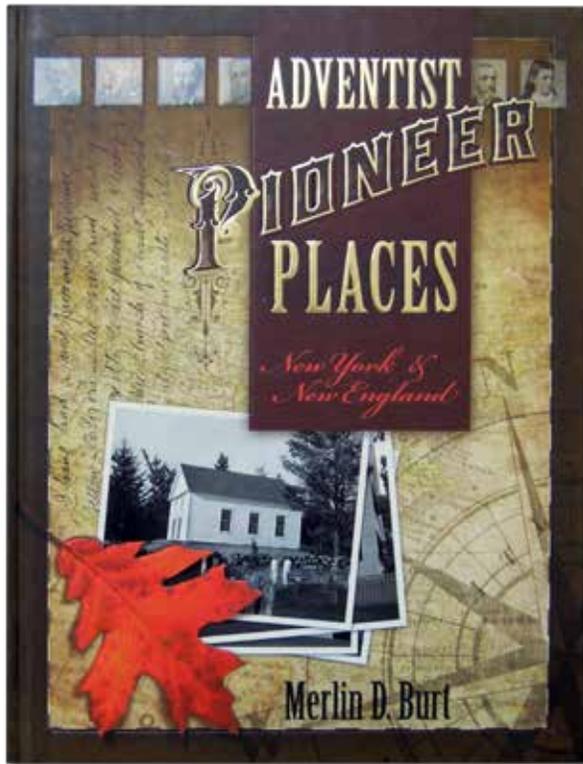
The 1872 gazebo restoration project is nearly completed. In this photo, it still awaits a new finial and its wooden base.





The Friends of Mt. Hope Cemetery
 P.O. Box 18713
 Rochester, NY 14618-0713

Non-Profit Org.
 U.S. Postage
 PAID
 Rochester, NY
 Permit No. 1037



On a beautiful day this last October, a busload of Seventh-day Adventist Church members from Tennessee visited Mount Hope Cemetery to visit and pay homage to pioneer Adventists buried in Mount Hope Cemetery. They had been touring Adventist pioneer places in New York and New England. The group visited the gravesites of eleven early Adventists in the cemetery, including the families of founders of the church. The Seventh-day Adventist Church is a Protestant Christian denomination distinguished by its observance of Saturday, the seventh day of the week in the Christian calendar, as Sabbath, and by its emphasis on the imminent Second Coming (advent) of Jesus Christ. The church was formally founded in 1863.



Published by the Friends of Mount Hope Cemetery, Rochester, NY 14620, a nonprofit member organization founded in 1980.

©2017 The Friends of Mount Hope Cemetery

Richard O. Reisem, Editor
 Ron Brancato, Graphic Design

Basic annual membership is \$20.

Call 585-461-3494 for a supporter application.



See our colorful and informative Web site:
www.fomh.org

