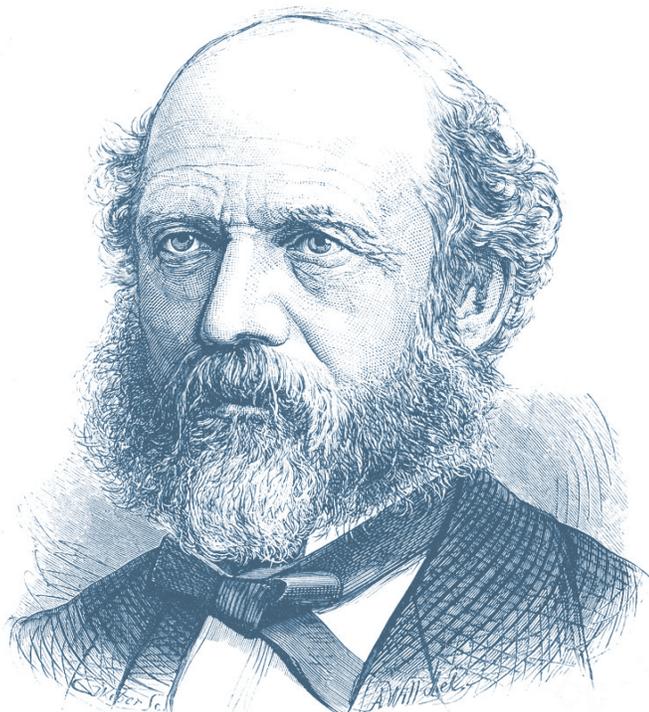


Lewis Henry Morgan & THE PUNDIT CLUB

by Richard Reisem

Part Four

Carved at the top of the Lewis Henry Morgan sandstone mausoleum in Section F of Mount Hope Cemetery are the Latin words: “Non hic sumus.” Translated, it reads: “We are not here.” What a misnomer! Morgan was the ultimate cosmopolitan man, belonging to all time and to all places. He is eternally present. He was one of the greatest men that Rochester, New York has produced. In the 19th century, he was our city’s preeminent intellectual. And now, on his 200th birthday, he remains famous as a scientist, philosopher, and humanist.



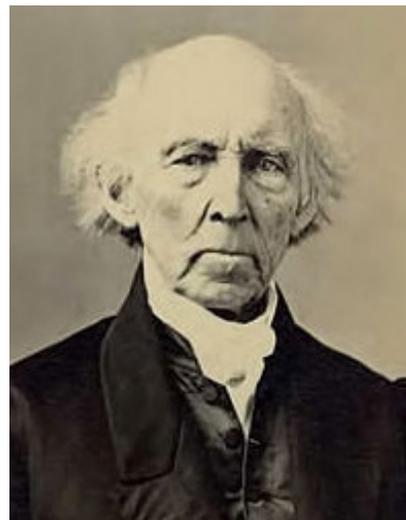
Lewis Henry Morgan, founder of the Pundit Club

In the Winter, Spring, and Summer 2018 issues of the *Epitaph*, Rose O’Keefe wrote three parts of the life and significant accomplishments of Lewis Henry Morgan. In this issue, we follow Morgan’s efforts in organizing and leading a literary society called the Pundit Club.



Non Hic Sumus! is Latin that translates to “We Are Not Here!”
Photo by Josef Johns

In 1854, a group of learned Rochester male friends, who met intermittently to share scholarly papers they had written, decided to form a literary club for the interchange of ideas through essays and discussions. There was no other such club around, so they just called it “The Club”. The wives of these savants, however, adopted a practice of facetiously calling these “meetings of the pundits” with a touch of skepticism and tongue-in-cheek. So it became commonplace to refer to the society as the Pundit Club. Club members chose to accept the name as an implied compliment, even though they were mostly a group of serious, unassuming thinkers.



University of Rochester Professor Chester Dewey, who organized the first meeting of the Pundit Club with Lewis Henry Morgan.

The first meeting was held July 13,

1854, having been organized by Lewis Henry Morgan and Professor Chester Dewey. The club adopted a Latin motto, “Si quid veri inveneris, profer”, which translates to “If you have discovered anything new, present it.”



University of Rochester President Martin B. Anderson, who became the first president of the Pundit Club.

Brief minutes of the meetings were almost always prepared, and here is an excerpt from that original meeting: “Early in the summer of 1854, it was thought advisable by several gentlemen of Rochester to form a Literary Club. After consultation it was agreed that letters should be addressed to a number

In 1854, Morgan, now 36 years old, became very active in the club for 27 years, during which time he presented 34 thoughtful and illuminating papers. Many of those essays were concerned with his lifelong anthropological work. His first one was titled “The Andes” on December 19, 1854. His last one was on May 11, 1880, titled “A Study of the Houses of the Indian Tribes with Suggestions for the Explorations of the Ruins in New Mexico, Arizona, the San Juan Region, Mexico, and Central America; Under the Auspices of the Archaeological Institute.” After 1880, Morgan’s failing health limited



Calvin Huson, Jr.

of gentlemen sufficient to organize the club, inviting them to meet at the home of Mr. Lewis H. Morgan on the evening of July 13, 1854, for that purpose. At this meeting the following gentlemen were present: President Martin B. Anderson, Calvin Huson, Jr., the Rev. Joshua H. McIlvaine, Lewis H. Morgan, John H. Raymond, and E. Peshine Smith. The meeting was organized by the appointment of Dr. Anderson as Chairman and Mr. Morgan as Secretary.”

Meetings of the club were normally held in members’ homes and were held in the early evening with a light supper provided by the host. Occasionally, the Club met at the Osburn House, a hotel at the corner of Broad Street and South Avenue. On one such occasion at the Osburn, the meeting was hosted by Professor Samuel Lattimore and the hotel meal was considered “a banquet of such extraordinary elegance as to deserve special mention.”



Martin Brewer Anderson gravestone is in Section O. He became the first president of the University of Rochester in 1853.

regular attendance at club meetings.

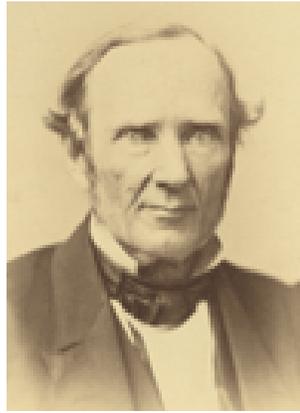
Next to Morgan, the next most important member of this illustrious 1854 group was Martin Brewer Anderson, who had recently become the first president of the University of Rochester. He was 39 years old, a graduate of Waterville College (now Colby College) and where, after graduation, he became a professor of rhetoric and English literature at Waterville College for seven years before being invited to the presidency of the UR.

The Reverend Dr. Joshua H. McIlvaine was pastor of the First Presbyterian Church in Rochester and one of Morgan’s closest friends. Dr. John H. Raymond was a professor at



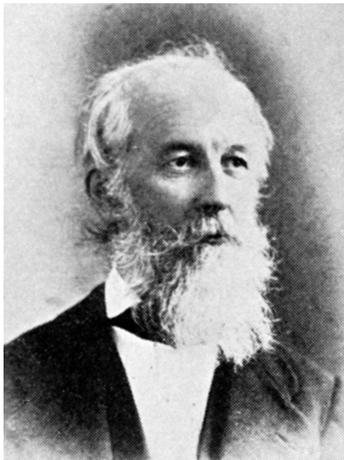
John H. Raymond

the University of Rochester. He was, however, soon after called to be president of Vassar College. E. Peshine Smith was a lawyer in Rochester. He had published a book on “Political Economy” and recently had lived in Japan for more than a year. When he first addressed the Pundit Club, he recounted his Japanese experiences with an unscripted address and discussion. Calvin Huson, Jr. was a graduate of Hobart College and studied law with William H. Seward in Auburn and became the District Attorney in Rochester.



Dr. Asahel Kendrick

These were the six Rochesterians who attended the first meeting of the club. An additional three gentlemen had



Erasmus Peshine Smith

been invited to attend, but couldn't. The three men, however, accepted membership in the club: Dr. Chester Dewey, the Honorable Harvey Humphrey, and Dr. Asahel C. Kendrick.

Dewey, being 70 years old at the time, was honored as the patriarch of the Club. He had been graduated from Williams College in 1806. (It is one of America's

oldest colleges, having been established in 1793.) He was subsequently principal of the Rochester Collegiate Institute and in 1850, when the University of Rochester was established, was appointed professor of chemistry and natural philosophy there.

The Hon. Harvey Humphrey was a prominent Rochester lawyer and was particularly noted for his scholarly translations of original Latin texts.

Dr. Asahel Kendrick had, for 18 years, been professor of Greek at Madison University (later called Colgate University) when he became part of the group that broke away to form the University of Rochester. He was appointed to the same position at the UR.

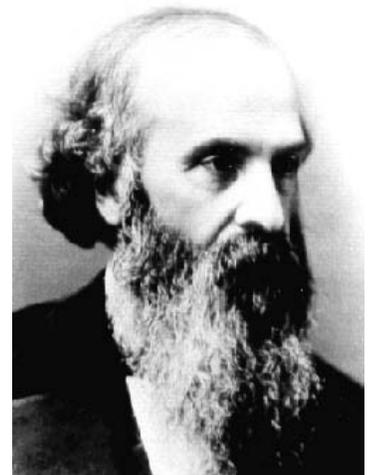
So, with these three individuals whose membership was accepted at the initial 1854 meeting, the Club consisted of nine members. The next meeting was held on November 7, 1854 at the home of Dr. Martin B. Anderson. Only four of the nine invited members attended, not a very auspicious beginning for the nascent club. Nonetheless, E. Peshine Smith read a paper on “The Gold Currency,” a subject for which he was amply qualified, having written a book, “Political Economy”. A sensible decision was made at the meeting that no special quorum was necessary to do business.



John Norton Pomeroy

The Club began to gain traction with its forthcoming meetings. By the end of the next year, 1855, membership increased with eight new members, giving the organization a total of 17 members. Among the new members were John N. Pomeroy, lawyer who wrote *Statutory and Constitutional Law* and *Criminal Law*; Dr. William

W. Ely, Chief of Medicine at Rochester City Hospital and collaborator with Lewis H. Morgan on his book on the American beaver; Edward Mott Moore, Sr., surgeon and father of Rochester's park system; Albert H. Mixer, chair of the UR Modern Language Department; and Sewall S. Cutting, professor of Rhetoric and History at the UR.



Dr. William Watson Ely

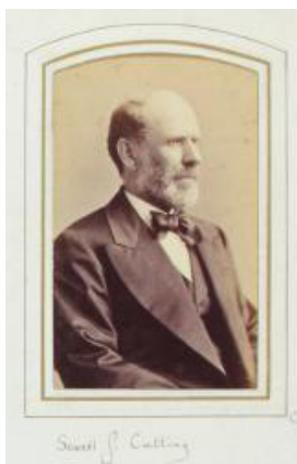
After the Chairman who led the meetings, the only other administrative officer of the Pundit Club was the Secretary, who, for the first 12 years, was Lewis Henry Morgan. He planned the programs, determined the dates and locations for meetings, and kept records for each program. It was



Edward Mott Moore Photo by Josef Johns

Morgan's enthusiasm, most members would agree, that kept up membership interest and devotion to the club. By 1911, there had been more than 700 essays presented on a particularly broad range of topics.

The casual nature of the club is noted by the fact that the organization never adopted bylaws or a constitution. The best way to find out anything about the club is to study the meeting records, which have been kept from the first meeting until the present day. They fill several large volumes. During those years when Morgan was Secretary, he recorded the usual minutes of such meetings, including a synopsis of the essay that was delivered, and a summary of the discussion. Sometimes the original essay itself, if available, was included. That level of thoroughness diminished over the years. Meeting records became restricted



Sewall S. Cutting

to the number and roster of attendees present, date and place of the meeting, name of the reader, title of his paper, and any resolutions passed. It was customary in the early years of the club to start discussions after the presentation with the person to the left of the presenter and proceed around the room in rotation with each member limited in their initial comments to five minutes. Further discussion was an open affair. Also it was customary to hold meetings on Tuesday evenings every two weeks.

The subjects discussed were not restricted. Over the years, they covered a remarkable list of topics from every field of literature, science, and art. Military, political, and social history were all well represented. Geographical explorations and personal travels were popular. The most prolific contributor of essays was University of Rochester President Martin B. Anderson. He delivered 37 different papers, including subjects like Origin and Dispersion of the Celtic Race, Trial by Jury, Serfdom, Arabic Metaphysics, Anglo-Saxon Institutions, The Catacombs, The English University System.

Lewis Henry Morgan was close behind Martin Anderson in the number of lectures he delivered. In his 34 essays, Morgan not only covered multiple areas of anthropology, iron mining, and railroads, but also such interesting subjects as the American beaver and its importance to American ecology. One of the papers read by Morgan on October 5, 1858, was on the "Origin and Results of The Club". Morgan was also the first organizer of the Rochester Historical Society in 1861.

Lewis Henry Morgan died on December 17, 1881. A club meeting was called for December 21, 1881 at which the Rev. Dr. J. H. McIlvaine, one of the original members and a lifelong friend of Morgan, delivered a last tribute to Morgan's illustrious career, his enthusiastic zeal, and warm friendship. The meeting was held at Morgan's home in the Third Ward, the very place where the first meeting of the Pundit Club had occurred. (Incidentally, McIlvaine was a member of the Club for six years before he was promoted to president of Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island.)

Morgan's death was not, by any means, a deterrent to the progress of the Pundit Club. It continues to flourish with a steady stream of 17 to 24 members. About half of those members are employed by the University of Rochester. The other half are Rochester leaders, which have included a



*A newly cleaned and restored Morgan mausoleum greeted tour-goers at the first Pundit Club Tour on September 29, 2018.
Photo by Josef Johns*

president of Eastman Kodak Company, a superintendent of the Rochester City School District, and the president of Rochester Gas & Electric Corporation. In general, the Club seeks to attract the best minds in our community.

Today the Pundit Club meets about every two weeks during the academic year, taking the summer off. One

recent essay was titled, “William’s Ghosts, Shakespeare’s Paranormals”, which was delivered by the late Dean of the Eastman School of Music, Douglas Lowry in 2010.

Another recent lecture was called “Quarks and Gulons” by University of Rochester physics professor Adrian



Edward Mott Moore gravestone in Section G.

Melissanos. A club member is invited to deliver a paper as many as two times a year.

Over the years, the Club has invited guest speakers to address the select group. A few of the

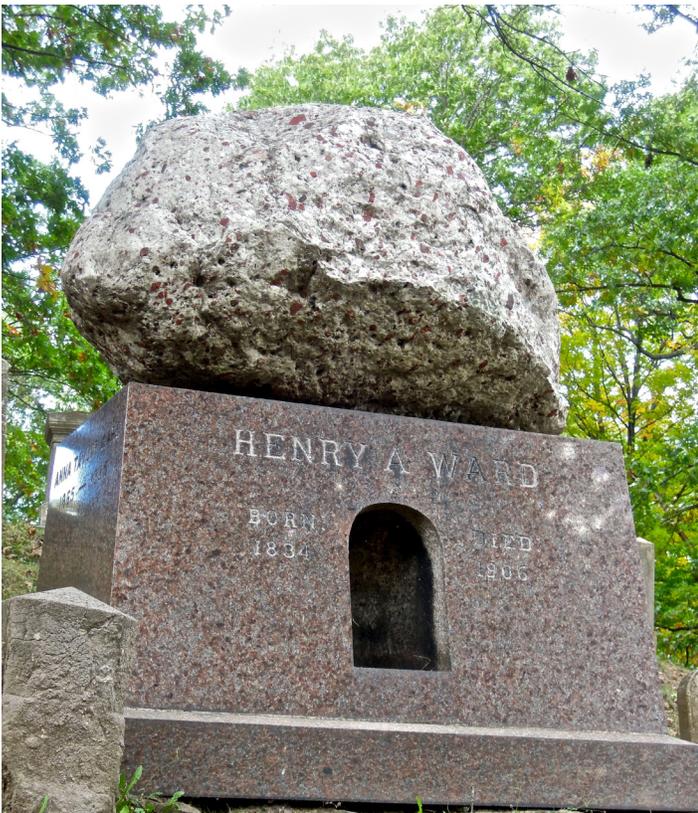
more prominent guest speakers included the landscape architect Frederick Olmsted, U.S. Secretary of State John Hay, former U.S. Postmaster General Wilson Bissel, and American explorer of Siberia George Kennan.

The Pundit Club with its evolving group of extraordinary people has been around for 164 years, and could very well continue for a long time. There is always a need for people to respond to the club's motto: "If you discover any truth, let it be known."

In this 200th year of Lewis Henry Morgan's birth and his founding of the Pundit Club 164 years ago, the Anthropology Department of the University of Rochester and the Friends of Mount Hope Cemetery decided to work together in creating a Pundit Club tour of the cemetery. The tour scripts were written by UR students Anna Remus, Naomi Ruetz, and Sam Schacht.

The walking tour starts at the mausoleum of Lewis Henry Morgan in Section F, proceeds along Indian Trail Avenue to Edward Mott Moore in Section G, stops at Henry A. Ward also in Section G, on to Martin B. Anderson in Section O, then Samuel A. Lattimore in Section L, and ends at William S. Ely in Section V. These six gravesites form a rough circle that is walkable; however, there are many more Pundit Club members scattered throughout the 193 acres of Mount Hope Cemetery.

The tour was first presented on Saturday, September 29, 2018, with UR Anthropology Department chair, Dr. Robert Foster, leading the group. Each of the tour stops had an FOMH tour guide presenting the story of the person buried there. The presenters were Sally Millick, Joanne Mitchell, Dennis Carr, Tony Filer, and Chris Grooms. It was a thoroughly successful and interesting tour that will be presented in future tour seasons of the Friends of Mount Hope.



Henry Augustus Ward gravestone in Section G.



Photo Walkers Explore Mount Hope Cemetery

by Richard Reisem



Photo by Ron Richardson

On Saturday, September 15, 2018, from 11:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., 26 members of the Western New York Photo Walkers Club aimed their cameras at striking sites in Mount Hope Cemetery, Rochester, NY. The tour/photo shoot was sponsored by Rowe Photo Store and Tamron Camera Lenses, which provided special lenses for the participants to try out on this tour.

The tour leader was Ron Richardson, who produced about half of the photographs (some of them with a drone camera) for the new book, *Buried Treasures in Mount Hope Cemetery*, published by the Friends of Mount Hope Cemetery. The book was released in April 2018. Ron, who taught photography at Rochester Institute of Technology, provided suggestions of photogenic places in the cemetery, one hour exploring the north section of the cemetery and one-and-a-half hours in the south section.

After the excursion in the cemetery, the group gathered at the Rowe Photo store, 1737 Mount Hope Avenue, for refreshments and more talk about camera lenses with the Tamron representative and Rowe Photo staff. A special gift at the reception was a copy of the new *Buried Treasures* book for each of the participants. The books were signed by Richard Reisem, author, and Ron Richardson, photographer. There were a few extra copies left over after the signing, so if you would like to acquire a signed copy of this impressive new book, you could buy one at Rowe Photo, 1737 Mt. Hope Avenue.





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Beautiful Mount Hope Cemetery

A recent survey of America's most beautiful cemeteries was conducted by *The Active Times* travel magazine. Here are the results:

1. Bonaventure, Savannah;
2. Arlington National, Virginia;
3. Green-Wood, Brooklyn;
4. Saint Louis, New Orleans;
5. Mt. Auburn, Boston;
6. Mountain View, Oakland;
7. Granary Burying Ground, Boston;
8. Crown Hill, Indianapolis;
9. Laurel Hill, Philadelphia;
10. Cave Hill, Louisville;
11. Hollywood Forever, Hollywood;
12. Graceland, Chicago;
13. Golden Gate, San Bruno, CA;
- 14. Mount Hope, Rochester, NY;**
15. Fort Rosecrans, San Diego.

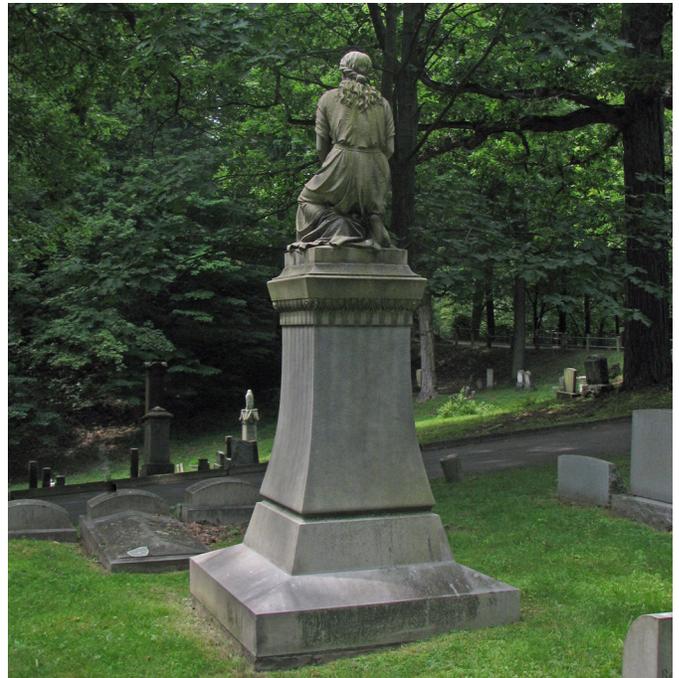


Photo by Ron Richardson



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