Winter 2014

FRIENDS *of the* Non-Catholic Cemetery in Rome

No. 29

N E W S L E T T E R

November commemorations in the sunshine

On the anniversary of Gramsci's death, 2014

Poster for *Le Pietre di Gramsci*

We were blessed with warm, sunny weather on All Souls' Day for our part in Roma Capitale's programme honouring "Places of Memory". Four young saxophonists from the Santa Cecilia music conservatory in Rome performed in the Parte Antica, with the now-cleaned Pyramid as an impressive backdrop. They played pieces by Beethoven, Satie and Vivaldi. There followed poetry readings by the actor Roberto Herlitzka that took place around the grave of Gianni Borgna (1947-2014; Zona 1.0.40). Borgna was the Comune di Roma's Assessore for Culture for 13 years under mayors Francesco Rutelli and Walter Veltroni. As one who loved the Cemetery, he had organised similar events while in office; so we are delighted to see them resume this year.

On the day before, All Saints' Day, there were showings in the Garden Room (see *Newsletter* 26) of Paolo Brogi and David Riondino's new film about Antonio Gramsci "*Le pietre di Gramsci*". The two days attracted hundreds of people to the Cemetery, many of them for the first time. Numerous other visitors, of course, were there to visit their family graves in commemoration. Rarely has the Cemetery been so full of flowers, whether those brought by families for their graves or those that have flourished in our grounds thanks to the unusual weather last summer (few very hot spells and more rain than usual). However….

Ups and downs in the Garden

.....the rains also encouraged mosquitoes to breed and the pest affecting our box hedges returned, despite being treated last year. The box-tree Pyralid moth (*Cydalima perspectalis*) is native to Eastern Asia but since 2007 has become a scourge of box species in Europe. Box hedges are traditional in Italian cemeteries and they line many of our paths. Fortunately our efforts to defeat the pest are showing signs of success.

Another pest that changed the look of the garden was the red palm weevil (see *Newsletter* 10). The two graceful palms in front of the chapel that had to be felled were drawn some 70 years ago by Carlo Dottarelli (1897-1959) (see p. 2). A number of his fine sketches of Roman buildings are in the Museo di Roma.

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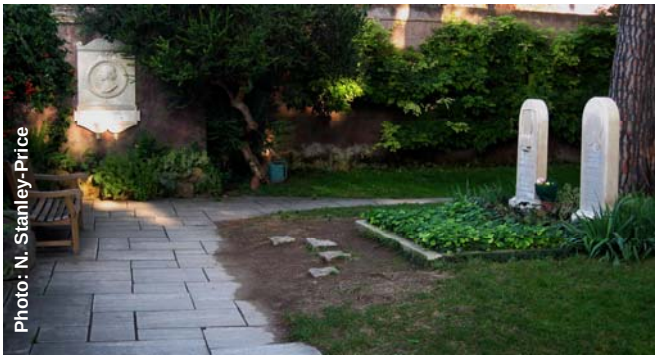
Carlo Dottarelli, *The Cemetery chapel*

One of the cypress trees at the grave of August Goethe is another casualty. Probably planted soon after his burial in 1830, it died suddenly last summer and had to be removed (at considerable cost to the Cemetery). As usual, we needed to secure permits from Rome's Environmental Protection Department and from the national Soprintendenza per i Beni Architettonici e Paesaggistici before removing a tree. With the help of the Friends and the gardeners from Il Trattore, we aim to keep the garden looking at its best.

Renovation around the graves of Keats and Severn

In September we improved the surroundings of John Keats's grave. It is the most visited grave in the Cemetery and the area in front of it had become eroded and unsightly. At our request the architects Roberto Einaudi and Fabiana Zeli designed a new high kerb to delimit the area of the two graves (project implemented by the firm TECRES s.r.l.). During the excavation work Franco Milito, a tree specialist, ensured that the roots of the nearby pines were not affected. This was a joint project with the Keats-Shelley Museum which shared the costs with us.



A tribute to Keats

One of Keats's fans who recently visited us was Ruth Workman, a teacher of literature. She carries on her shoulders her own tribute to the poet. To misquote Keats, a tattoo of beauty is a joy for ever.

W.B. Scott, *Shelley's grave in the new Protestant Cemetery at Rome*, 1873 (detail)

FOCUS ON THE PYRAMID OF CAIUS CESTIUS

The pyramid struck by lightning……

On several early photographs of the Cemetery, the pyramid appears to have no tip. The reason is that it had been recently restored; the white colour of the restored tip often did not show up in the grey photograph. But some painters emphasized it: for instance, William Bell Scott in his well-known oil (1873) of Shelley's grave (see photo). There had been previous restorations of the tip, e.g. in the 1740s. But this one was the first in the age of photography. So, in principle, if we knew when it was done, we could date photographs to before or after the restoration.

Fortunately, we do know. Charles Hemans was an English antiquarian who settled in Rome to study Roman archaeology and became a popular guide for visitors. In his book *Historic and Monumental Rome* (1874), he wrote: "In November, 1861, the apex of the mausoleum was struck by a thunderbolt, and knocked to the base with such a crash and stunning shock that a gardener, working in the adjacent cemetery, was thrown flat on his face. It has been restored in travertine, the light-grey colour of which is so different from the weather-stained marble that the contrast looks harsh, but will be subdued, no doubt, by Time's reconciling touches."

In fact, according to the *Cronaca di Roma* of 2 November 1861, it was on 29 October that a storm with a violent whirlwind caused extensive damage in Rome. One of the lightning flashes struck the summit of the pyramid, causing some pieces to fall. Elsewhere, roofs were damaged, trees uprooted (notably in the Villa Borghese) and people injured. In the Vatican almost all the panes of glass in Raphael's Loggia were smashed.

Gioacchino Altobelli, *The Pyramid of Caius Cestius*, 1860s

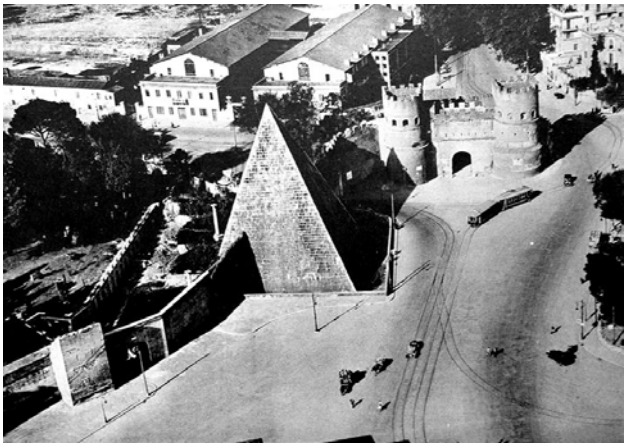
Consequently we can date Altobelli's classic view (see photo) to not earlier than November 1861. The same test can apply to other 19th C photos (or paintings) that show the pyramid.

…..and (almost) struck by bombs in 1944….

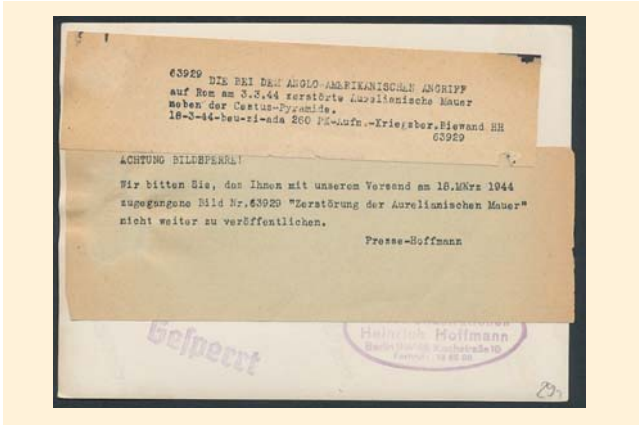
It was the Allies' bombing of March 1944 that created the breach in the Aurelian Wall between the Pyramid and the Porta San Paolo that is now a busy road (see *Newsletter* 28 and also my book about the Cemetery). But there have been other claims: that it dates from September 1943, when the advancing German forces fought the partisans at Porta San Paolo; or that it was made deliberately to allow trams to pass through the wall. So which version is correct?

Several photographs show trams passing through an arch in the wall at this point. The one reproduced below shows tram tracks diverging at the Porta San Paolo, with the left-hand one heading for the arch. When was this photo taken? At its top left corner the fine Libera/De Renzi post office (1933-35) in Via Marmorata is not yet under construction. (On YouTube you can watch the visit of Mussolini to inaugurate it on 28 October 1935.) But the stretch

Destruction of Aurelian wall, Presse-Hoffmann photo, 1944



The pyramid and Porta San Paolo from the air, c.1932



Notes attached to the 1944 photo

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The pyramid after cleaning, 2014

of the Aurelian Wall that was demolished in 1888 has been rebuilt (see *Newsletter* 15). A plaque on the wall dates its reconstruction to 1931-32. So the photo was taken around 1932. In fact, pedestrians and trams – originally horse-drawn 'omnibuses' – had been passing through the arch in the wall for years.

It was the Allies' bombs, and not the German assault, that destroyed the arch and made a breach in the wall. "One bomb destroyed both tram tracks…[in the piazza], another the passage through the wall between Porta San Paolo and the pyramid, and others fell on the Non-Catholic Cemetery" (report dated 6 March 1944 and signed by the Questore of Rome, P. Caruso). A Hoffmann-Presse photo that came recently onto the art market in Germany confirms this. Two typewritten notes in German attached to the back (see photos, p.3) refer to the Aurelian Wall 'destroyed in an Anglo-American attack on 3.3.44' and ask that the photo not be published! This may be its first appearance in print.

These bombs caused what today would be called 'collateral damage' during raids that were aimed at hitting the rail system, power plants and German military stockpiles in the Ostiense district. The damage there was extensive, with numerous civilian casualties. Only by chance did this bomb fall between the two ancient monuments and not as a direct hit on one of them. But, as this photo and the one in *Newsletter* 28 show, pedestrians continued to follow their usual route through the wall even after it had been reduced to rubble.

…..and now it looks white again.

Thanks to funding from a Japanese businessman, Yuzo Yagi, the pyramid has been cleaned. (Mr Yagi made his fortune from importing Italian clothes to fashion stores in Japan.) The Soprintendenza Speciale per i Beni Archeologici di Roma allowed public tours of the pyramid to continue during the project. In future visitors will probably use the new access ramp in Via Persichetti (the breach in the wall described above).

Nicholas Stanley-Price

WHO THEY WERE…..

A Japanese diplomat in Rome in the 1870s

Headstone of Kawase Tarō

Rome was a prized diplomatic post for Kawase Masataka (1840-1919) but also a place of sadness for him and his wife Hideko. Here they had to bury their infant son Tarō and, a couple of years later in 1876, two other children – 'Cirow' (probably Ichiro) who lived for four months and Tae who survived only two weeks. Their graves have not attracted much attention, perhaps because our online database wrongly gave their nationality as China (Taiwan). In fact their father was an important figure in Japanese-Italian cultural relations after the restoration of the Meiji emperor in 1868 and the end of Japan's self-imposed isolation.

He was born the son of a Chōshū clansman in what is now Yamaguchi Prefecture in western Japan. Called at first Ishikawa Shingorō, he changed his name later to Ishikawa Kogorō and Kawase Masataka. Chōshū produced many leaders in the anti-shogunate movement of mid-19th century Japan, and Ishikawa was one of them while fighting for the Chōshū army in the 1860s. Following the Restoration in 1868, Japan made strenuous efforts to modernize itself by drawing upon Western experience in industry, agriculture, medicine and the law. In art too, despite its own rich traditions, the government felt that standards had declined and 'Western-style' painting should be introduced. Sculpture in particular needed an infusion of Western expertise and Italy was identified as the country that could best provide it. Its Minister in Tokyo, Conte Alessandro Fè D'Ostiani, organised a competition in Italy to select specialists. As a result, three of them arrived in 1876 to join the staff of the newly opened *Kobu Bijutsu* art school in Tokyo: Giovanni Vincenzo Cappelletti (architecture and drawing), Antonio Fontanesi (painting), and Vincenzo Ragusa (sculpture).

It was with Kawase that Ragusa, before leaving for Japan, signed his contract. In ten clauses it specifies the terms of his employment, including his salary of Yen 3,300 a year, payable monthly. In 1873 Kawase had been appointed Japanese Minister to Italy and Austria. His main role in Austria would have been to organize Japan's exhibit at the International Exposition held in Vienna that year, the first in which the Meiji government participated. There the Japanese garden – and Japan's exquisite handicrafts – amazed the thousands of visitors.

Kawase's satisfaction in arranging the Italian-Japanese cultural co-operation must have been offset by the personal tragedy of his children's deaths (there is no record of other children). A simple ledger commemorates the infants Ichiro and Tae (Zone 1.7.54; the cross there does not belong) but the firstborn, Tarō, has a headstone inscribed in Japanese and, on the reverse, in English (Zone 1.9.44). The *mon* or crest in the pediment is the popular Kiri (*paulownia*) one, and not a Kawase family crest.

From Rome Kawase returned to Tokyo as a senator and to a position in the Ministry of Justice. In 1884, however, he was named Minister to London, where he remained for nine years. Both he

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and his wife enjoyed great popularity while in England (he was the first president of the Japan Society), but he appears to have been less adept at diplomatic negotiations and was eventually recalled to Tokyo.

The unusual cultural exchange between Japan and Italy in the 1870s that Kawase promoted has had many tangible outcomes, some of them still visible today. For instance, the collection of plaster casts of European sculpture and architectural models that Ragusa and his colleagues brought to Japan are now housed in the Architecture Department of the University of Tokyo. In exchange, as it were, on his return home to Sicily in 1882 Ragusa brought back more than 4000 Japanese objects that he had acquired. These he eventually sold to the Luigi Pigorini National Museum of Prehistory and Ethnography here in Rome. It is a pity that there is still no published catalogue of them; for they form a valuable collection of Japanese art that dates from an era prior to that modernization that Ragusa himself had been employed to further.

Nicholas Stanley-Price, with thanks to Yamaguchi Eriko of Tsukuba University who, following a visit to the Cemetery in 2011, provided information about Kawase and his tomb in Tokyo.

Japanese dolls shown at the 1873 Vienna Exposition
(photo: University of Vienna)

"Daughter of a king": Hedwig Rosamunde Magnus

Paul Bülow, *Kaiser Wilhelm I*, 1879
(Deutsches Historisches Museum, Berlin)

The stone slab ordered by Maurice Magnus to mark the grave of his beloved mother, Hedwig Rosamunde Liebetrau Magnus, bears the inscription "Filia Regis" (daughter of a king) (Zone 3.2.11.3). Almost twenty years after Hedwig's death on 26 April 1912, her granddaughter Inga Möllerberg visited the Non-Catholic Cemetery in Rome and, presumably, provided the details of Hedwig's paternity that are preserved in the cemetery's records: Hedwig was the illegitimate daughter of Kaiser Friedrich Wilhelm I, father of Wilhelm II. Thus, according to this tradition, Hedwig was Kaiser Wilhelm II's half-sister.

In the introduction to Maurice Magnus' *Memoirs of the Foreign Legion* (published posthumously in 1924), D.H. Lawrence offers two possible candidates for Hedwig's father, one of whom is indeed Friedrich Wilhelm. The difficulty with this tradition is that Wilhelm II's father, although known as Friedrich Wilhelm when crown prince, ruled as Friedrich III. At the time of Hedwig's birth on 31 October 1845, he was just fourteen years old. Although perhaps old enough to father a child, his son and heir, Wilhelm II, was not born until 1859.

The other candidate that Lawrence mentions is the one that Norman Douglas, another British writer and one of Magnus' closest friends, accepts: Wilhelm I, father of Friedrich III and grandfather of Wilhelm II. In this scenario, Hedwig becomes Wilhelm II's aunt and her son the kaiser's cousin.

Cemetery records also preserve the information – again, presumably supplied by Möllerberg – that Hedwig lived at court for a time but left, quite possibly because her son did not get along with Wilhelm II. While no documentation has come to light to verify Hedwig's royal birth, there is ample circumstantial evidence, drawn from the life of Maurice Magnus.

Born in New York City on 7 November 1876, Magnus spent far more time abroad as a youth than one would expect of the son of a scientist and a housewife. In his mid-twenties, he set off for the Continent and, although he made regular visits to the United States, he remained an expatriate for the rest of his life. He lived for several years in Berlin and had an intimate knowledge of Europe's major cities.

Although often short of cash or in debt, Magnus had a private income. This enabled him, during the few months that he served in the French Foreign Legion, to keep an apartment in town, purchase better meals and hire another soldier to do his chores. Quite possibly he received funds from the Hohenzollern coffers, but these dried up as a result of the Great War.

Magnus had an insider's knowledge of the Hohenzollern dynasty. He knew of Wilhelm II's dislike for the sons of Albrecht of Prussia, his second cousins, and attributed it to their sexual preferences. Magnus denied pro-German sentiments on the part of the empress Alexandra, daughter of Alice of Hesse, citing animosity between the houses of Hesse and Hohenzollern. Furthermore, he made no objection to having his letters censored while a legionnaire, convinced that the censor would understand that they concerned only private family matters of no interest to the military. The comment is significant, for many officers and enlisted men regarded Magnus as a spy.

Most tellingly, however, is the fact that Magnus was exceedingly well-connected. A convert to Roman Catholicism, he spent time at the Benedictine monastery of Monte Cassino, where he had his own rooms and where he attended Holy Week services, open by special invitation only to dignitaries of church and state. Russian Grand Dukes and one or two crowned heads, Douglas relates, figured among Magnus' correspondents.

For a number of years, Magnus managed the career of Edward Gordon Craig whose involvement in the theatre spanned the practical – he worked as actor, director and designer – and the theoretical. In *Index to the Story of My Days*, Craig recalls that Magnus had a knack for insinuating himself with important personages and getting them to do his bidding. On one occasion, he begged Craig to permit him to bring the kaiser to Craig's studio. Although Craig declined, he had no doubt that Magnus would have been able to do so.

All in all, then, Magnus' life tends to confirm the family tradition: his mother, Hedwig, was indeed the daughter of a king.

Contributed by Louise E. Wright, author of *Maurice Magnus. A Biography* (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2007).
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A pioneer Canadian photographer in the catacombs: Charles Smeaton

Charles Smeaton in his Quebec studio

The new technique of photography was rapidly adopted in Rome from as early as 1840. By the 1860s many resident photographers were documenting the monuments and museum collections of Rome, and selling prints on the market. The same decade saw renewed interest in the catacombs, the labyrinthine underground cemeteries dating from the first centuries AD. Encouraged by the personal interest of Pope Pius IX, the archaeologist G.B.De Rossi explored them and published his dramatic discoveries. But the photographers in Rome held that it was impossible to use their technique underground.

It was a photographer from Canada who showed them how. Charles Smeaton grew up in Quebec but in 1866 had moved to London. While there he was invited by John Henry Parker to work with him in Rome. Parker was a publisher and bookshop owner in Oxford who spent the winters in Rome for his health. His passionate interest in history and architecture resulted eventually in a 13-volume series, *The History of Rome*, and in a collection of some 3,300 photographs of Rome's architecture. Not being skilled himself, he employed a number of Roman photographers, starting with Carlo Baldassare Simelli, to take photographs under his direction. But it was the newcomer, Smeaton, who solved the problem of photography in the catacombs.

Nadar, the pioneering French photographer, had used artificial light to record underground Paris, its sewers and its catacombs, as the city changed during Haussmann's urban renewal projects; and in 1865 a Scot, Charles Smyth, managed to take photos inside the Great Pyramid in Egypt. Smeaton must have followed these and other reports. The secret was magnesium wire. Once lit, it burned of its own accord, producing a light like daylight. As Smeaton wrote about entering a catacomb: "in addition to the usual supply of candles, I carried with me into those dismal dungeons coil upon coil of sunshine in the shape of Magnesium wire". Smeaton's catacomb photos – and other shots of above-ground buildings – are an important feature of Parker's *magnum opus*. There would have been more of them if he had not fallen ill in Rome and died there in 1868 aged only 30.

Santa Priscilla catacomb today

What we know of Smeaton, including his early life in Canada, was unearthed a few years ago by two Canadian scholars, Andrea Terry and John Osborne. But we also have a direct contact: Peter Smeaton, who is the great-greatgrandson of Charles' brother, visited the Cemetery in 2009. He reports that his ancestor was in fact born in Scotland and, aged four, immigrated with his parents to Quebec in 1842. He has also found what appears to be the only surviving letter he sent his family from Rome. In it he recounts at length his experience of working alone in the catacomb of Santa Priscilla, after the custodian failed to return to guide him out to the daylight: three hours alone with a diminishing supply of candles and magnesium wire, believing himself abandoned to his fate. As he wrote to his family, "[those] three hours, alone in the Catacombs, never can or will be effaced from my memory, until I have sunk into that untroubled sleep which lay upon those by whom I was then surrounded." Sadly, within a few months he himself was lying in the Protestant Cemetery (Zone 2.16.8).

Nicholas Stanley-Price

Smeaton's account of being left alone in the catacombs is at: http://www.smeaton.org/charlesSmeaton/

NEW LIGHT ON SOME MONUMENTS

From Bologna to Rome: the transfer of the Ceccarini monument

The Ceccarini tomb in the corner

The Ceccarini monument (Zone 3.2.11.17) has always seemed anomalous. It is indeed monumental, its scale more typical of Catholic cemeteries. It is the only such 'architectural' tomb in our Cemetery and it is located at the furthest possible point from the entrance gate. Was this location deliberately chosen as if to 'hide' its exceptional size?

It stands over the graves of Giovanni Ceccarini, born in Torrice near Frosinone in Lazio, and his American wife, Mary Boorman Wheeler. They divided their time between Rome and the little town of Riccione, near Rimini on the east coast; in both places he practised as a doctor. After his death in 1888, she devoted much of her considerable wealth to providing education and health facilities for Riccione where she is remembered as a generous benefactor (see *Newsletter* 14). She eventually died there in 1903.

The same tomb in the Certosa cemetery, Bologna

During restoration of the Ceccarini tomb in 2011, we re-discovered inscriptions at its base that revealed who had built the tomb: D.VENTURI & FIGLIO BOLOGNA 1890 and LUIGI BAZZANI ARCHITETTO. Its portrait bust of Giovanni Ceccarini is signed by Tito Tadolini, Roma 1891. He was the son of Adamo Tadolini who, of Bolognese origin, had settled in Rome as Canova's favourite pupil. The Venturi firm still operates today as monumental masons in Bologna; and Luigi Bazzani (1836-1927) was also born in Bologna. A marginal note in our burial records states that the large Ceccarini monument was transferred in 1907 from Bologna to Rome. How did this come about?

During his many years in the USA, Ceccarini had not only taken American citizenship but also embraced the Episcopalian (i.e. non-

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Catholic) church. It was some months after his death in Riccione that he was buried, in the Certosa municipal cemetery at Bologna. This may have been the nearest cemetery that would accept a non-Catholic. In her will of 1903, Maria Ceccarini asked that she be buried in her husband's tomb in Bologna, unless the place of her death made it too inconvenient to transport her body there. In that case, her executors should decide. When she died later that year, she was buried in the Protestant Cemetery in Rome.

Her main heir and executor was Ersilia Tonsini, orphaned as an infant in Riccione but brought up by Maria who considered her a daughter. It was Ersilia's husband, Giovanni Moretti, who in 1907 purchased six plots in our Cemetery for the erection of the monumental tomb. The plots were located in the furthest corner of the Zona Terza which had been in use for only a few years. The cemetery custodian probably insisted on this location for what would be an anomalously large construction.

The records in Bologna that confirm removal of the Ceccarini monument have now been traced by Mr Riccardo Angelini who, as President of the Rotary Club in Riccione, raised the funds for the restoration work of 2011. They state that all expenses of the operation would be borne by Giovanni Moretti; and that on 9 October 1907 the last pieces of Istrian marble from the tomb were transported to the station to go direct to Rome. We have also found a photo of the tomb in the Certosa cemetery before its removal (see p.6).

It seems that Ersilia, as the principal heir, decided to interpret Maria's will flexibly. The Ceccarinis spent more of the year in Rome than in Riccione. Giovanni had died in Riccione after the doctor had advised against spending the winter in Rome, while Maria died in August, a month that she always spent at the seaside. Although much further from Riccione, Ersilia must have felt that Rome, rather than Bologna, was the appropriate resting-place for her adoptive parents. As a result the 'Bolognese monument' was transferred to our Cemetery for the couple to lie together there.

The light that dies. Torches lit and extinguished in the Non-Catholic Cemetery in Rome

Since time began man has created a link between light and life. The ancient Egyptians maintained that the sun-king Ra was the creator of all that existed under the sky, and later the Greeks and Romans came up with similar beliefs that ultimately led to interesting iconographic depictions on the funerary monuments of Antiquity. On many Roman stelae there was sculpted the symbol of the torch, alluding to life that ended when the torch was extinguished, and to eternal life after death when it remained lit.

The abundance of similar representations that we find in European cemeteries from the end of the 18th C is probably due to Neoclassical artists being inspired by these Roman scenes, as was the spread of such iconographic models thanks to the compilation of catalogues of funerary art. The Non-Catholic Cemetery in Rome is no exception in this sense: the presence of torches recurs on the tombs, especially on those in the Old Cemetery which are the most classical in their design and the most influenced by Antiquity.

The tomb of Rosa Bathurst

The tomb of Bertie Mathew

The torches vary greatly, with some decorated with bands or flowers, or reduced to flames that emerge from the trumpets of Judgment Day, or adorning the sides of funerary urns. However, those of greater interest from a symbolic point of view are those being held by figures related to grief such as angels, inclining the torch downwards in allusion to death, or upwards in reference to eternal life.

One of the best examples is found on the tomb of the young Rosa Bathurst, carved by Richard Westmacott II in 1824 in imitation of a Roman altar (Zone V.13.17). In the scene carved on its north side, a angel meditates on the ephemeral nature of life while looking at an opium poppy and a butterfly, signifying the soul, and leaning on a torch being extinguished. The tomb of Bertie Bertie Mathew, a rich young Englishman who died in 1844, has a similar scene of an angel leaning on a torch with a small oil-lamp on a pedestal (Zone V.16.3). The tomb of the Irish girl Amelia Louise West of 1875 (Zone 2.11.12) has the same iconography but the message is more encouraging because the torch is still lit.

The tomb of Elisa Temple, torch-holder at right

At other times, inspired by Roman stelae, these angels form part of funeral processions as "psycho-pomps" who guide the soul towards eternal life. The most eloquent example is in the relief on the tomb of Lady Elisa Temple, designed by Gustav Eric Göthe in 1809 (in the Parte Antica). The deceased's family are on the left, mourning their loss, while to the right an angel leads the soul by the hand, the other hand holding an inverted torch. The same scene can be seen on later tombs such as that of Moritz August von St. George (Zone V.11.20), in which the angel, strangely, is female, and that of Karl von Pidoll which also shows a funeral procession (Zone 2.20.15). The Cemetery also has examples of unusual iconography showing two torches, one lit and the other extinguished, as on the tomb of Gulielmus Grote, carved in 1791, with two little cherubs taking the place of adult angels (in the Parte Antica).

As we can see, despite the differences in the representations, the symbolism of these torch-carriers remains the same, as does the value ascribed since Roman times to flames as the perfect symbol of the transience of life.

Contributed by María Victoria Álvarez Rodríguez, Università di Salamanca, Spain (mvalvarez@usal.es)

The editor comments: the author rightly points out that on the Grote (d.1791) and West (d.1875) tombs there are depicted lit torches, which usually signify eternal life. Since, before 1870, Protestants were not allowed to refer to eternal life in their tombs' epitaphs, a similar restriction probably applied to their iconography too. So we should not expect to see lit torches depicted on tombs dating to before 1870 – the Grote monument may have been sufficiently early not to have come to the attention of the authorities.

Not only restoration but maintenance too

The tomb of Nicola Mouravieff

The humid micro-climate and the atmospheric pollution around the Cemetery contribute to the deterioration of the stone monuments. But after we have had them cleaned by professional conservators, what is to prevent them soon turning black or green again? The answer is: maintenance.

In our joint projects with such partners as ICCROM, the Getty Conservation Institute and the Fachschule für Steintechnic in Munich, we now start by doing maintenance work on previously cleaned tombs. The Russian Centre for Science and Culture in Rome also believes in this approach: it has funded the conservator Cecilia Bernardini to do maintenance work on three Russian tombs that had been conserved in 2011 – those of the painter Karl Bruloff (Zone V.3.18), and of two former ambassadors to Italy, Anatole Kroupensky (and his wife; Zone 3.3.3.17), and Nicola Mouravieff (Zone 3.3.1.16). Our grateful thanks to the Centre for supporting our maintenance policy.

Edvard Munch's visit to Rome in 1927

Edvard Munch in 1921

In *Newsletter* 22 we reproduced the painting of his uncle's grave by Norway's famous painter, Edvard Munch. His uncle, P.A.Munch, had spent the years of 1859-1861 in Rome for historical research, during which he was one of the first non-Catholics allowed to consult the Vatican's archives. On a return visit to Rome two years later, the famous historian died suddenly of a heart attack, aged only 52. The relief on his tomb (Zona 2.19.15) is by the Norwegian sculptor Ole Fladager whom Munch had known well in Rome, and who himself is buried nearby (Zone 1.12.52). It is at Munch's tomb that the Norwegian community in Rome gathers every year on 17th May, their Constitution Day.

Edvard Munch, born the year that his uncle died, visited Rome twice. In 1899 he spent two months in Florence, staying in Fiesole. He had not been in good health but decided to make a short visit to Rome, of only three days, before returning to Paris. He found a moment to send a postcard of the Campidoglio to his aunt, telling her "I am happy that I got to see the city." His return visit in 1927 celebrated the success of his retrospective exhibition, recently opened in Berlin, and he spent a month in Rome. By chance, the Secretary at the Norwegian Embassy, Ole Vangensten, was an art historian and he became Munch's guide.

Grave of P.A. Munch

While walking around the city Munch did a number of sketches of life in the streets and cafes. On his return to Oslo, in an interview with the *Dagbladet* newspaper, he was asked:

"Did you paint while you were there?"
Munch shows us a large unfinished painting in astonishing blue, green and purple colours. It is the grave of P.A. Munch.

"Except for this, I only made some drawings."

Postcard sent from Rome by Edvard Munch (Munch Museum MM N 830)

While in Rome he had written to his aunt that he was painting P.A. Munch's grave. He described its location, adding: "The Protestant Cemetery is the most beautiful I have seen."

Nicholas Stanley-Price

Munch's visit in 1927 is the subject of a short video made in 2014 by Lasse Jacobsen, librarian at the Munch Museum in Oslo (http://youtu.be/nyp3ftTSRFk). My thanks to him for permissions and to Oddbjørn Sørmoen for an English translation of the commentary.

All previous Newsletters and an Index to nos.1-21 are online at http://cemeteryrome.it/press/newsletter.html

HOW TO BECOME A FRIEND

This Newsletter is made possible by the contributions of the Friends of the Cemetery.

The Friends also help fund the care of the trees in the cemetery and the restoration of tombs. Please can you help us by becoming a Friend? You can find a membership form at:

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THE NON-CATHOLIC CEMETERY IN ROME

via Caio Cestio, 6, 00153, Roma

Director: Amanda Thursfield

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(last entrance 4.30pm)
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(last entrance 12.30pm)

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