

of the
Non-Catholic Cemetery in Rome



NEWSLETTER

A new Angel of Grief in Mississippi



The Williams monument at Vanclave, MS

William Wetmore Story's monument to his wife Emelyn is the most popular sculpture in the Cemetery. Since 1895, when Story completed it (see *Newsletters 17 and 19*), many copies of the 'Angel of Grief' have appeared in other cemeteries, most of them in the United States (see Wikipedia for a list). A few were carved, as Story's was, of Carrara marble in Italy; others, such as the Remillard monument in Canada (see *Newsletter 17*) were local productions in other materials.

The copy made most recently in Carrara marble now stands in a cemetery in Vanclave, Mississippi, USA. Calvin Williams, a construction manager, first spotted the *Angel of Grief* when visiting our cemetery in 1979 and fell in love with it. Years later he has commissioned a copy of the sculpture to form part of a larger, lavish family monument. The angel is in honour of his wife Carol (who is still alive).

The chequered history of the well-known copy at Stanford in California has unfortunately continued. Jane Lathrop Stanford commissioned it in Tuscany in 1900 as a memorial to her brother. The 1906 earthquake in San Francisco caused the collapse of the six columns that



The Stanford Angel after the 1906 earthquake

supported the canopy over the sculpture. The angel was then restored but not the canopy. Over the years it has suffered further damage which has been repaired. The latest incident was in August 2015 when its left forearm was broken off and removed. It is still missing.

Geselschap's astonishing memorial: a descendant contacts us

One of the most extraordinary memorials in the Cemetery is the bronze ledger dedicated to the memory of the German painter Friedrich Geselschap (1835-1898; Zone 1.13.20). A few years ago Samantha Matthews, author of a fascinating book about poets' graves, was visiting the Cemetery and left a note in the Visitors' Book calling the tomb 'one of the most elaborated allegories of life...I have ever seen'. In her article written for *Newsletter 25* she explained the iconography of the tomb in the context of Geselschap's sudden death in Rome.



Photo: N. Stanley-Price

Her article in the *Newsletter* has now led to our being contacted by a descendant of Geselschap. His great-grandfather married a sister of the painter. Moreover his family possesses a little booklet that commemorates his ancestor's tomb in Rome. The booklet (measuring 23.0 x16.5 cm) is entitled *Geselschaps Grab* [Geselschap's grave] and has five pages. They reproduce four photos of the bronze ledger before installation and a drawing of the complete monument. One photo carries the signature of 'R.Siemering' that appears also on the bronze slab.

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The drawing is inscribed "Geselschaps Grab auf d [em] prot.Kirchhof in Rom 15.5.1901" and is attributed to Flinsch. This must be Alexander Flinsch (1834-1912) who was a paper-maker and artist, known for his watercolours of landscapes. Both the sculptor Rudolf Siemering and the artist Flinsch were friends of



Geselschap and, accompanied by their wives, often used to visit him in Italy. Evidently Flinsch travelled to Rome to sketch the completed memorial. His drawing was then reproduced with the photos in a booklet as a keepsake for family and friends.

Our warm thanks to the family for allowing us to reproduce images from the booklet and to Samantha Matthews for her comments.

Nicholas Stanley-Price



WHO THEY WERE

Sarah Parker Remond and her family in Rome



Sarah Parker Remond (1826-1894) was born in Salem, Massachusetts, into a family of free African Americans. Her parents and siblings were all entrepreneurs and abolitionist activists. Remond herself soon joined such white American women as Susan B. Anthony and Abby Kelley on their extensive lecture tours during which these women spoke against slavery and campaigned for increased rights for women. In 1858 Remond left for England where she continued

speaking against race and gender discrimination. It was in London that she met the Italian politician, Giuseppe Mazzini, who wrote her letters of introduction when she decided to move to Italy in 1866.

Remond initially chose Florence, the then-capital of unified Italy, as her residence so that she could enroll in the Santa Maria Nuova hospital school to study medicine. She successfully completed her studies, graduating as an obstetrician in 1868. Her sister, Caroline Remond Putnam, often joined her in Florence, together with a friend, Christine "Kitty" Sargent. Putnam's son Edmund Quincy and his wife, Gertrude Agnes

"Gertie" Elliston, also spent time in Florence before they chose Rome as their permanent home.

In Rome, they ran a hotel, Palazzo Moroni, which was located next to St. Peter's Basilica, on 165 Borgo Vecchio (now 51 Via della Conciliazione). One of their guests in the 1880s was Frederick Douglass, the noted abolitionist, orator and social reformer (and former slave). He was on his way to Egypt with his second wife, Helen. In January 1887, Douglass had lunch with the Remond sisters as he was passing through Rome, and on his return in April he stayed at the Hotel Palazzo Moroni. By now Remond was married to an Italian from Sardinia, Lazzaro Pintor, and according to Douglass, Madame Remond Pintor lived at 6 Piazza Barberini. (The African American sculptor, Edmonia Lewis, also had premises in



Ettore Roesler Franz, *Piazza Barberini*, c.1885.
No.6 was in the building on the right.

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Piazza Barberini, as recorded in the 1888 edition of John Murray's authoritative guidebook to Rome.)

Douglass wrote to a friend, Amy Post, who had been active in the abolitionist movement in the United States and knew the Remond family well, saying that he had met the sisters of Charles Lenox Remond, one of the most influential activists in building bridges of transatlantic collaboration between anti-slavery advocates in the United States and Great Britain. To quote Douglass: "It was very pleasant to meet so far away from home these dear people. Like Charles they detest prejudice of color and say they would not live in the U. States, if you could or would give them America!" When Douglass wrote this, Remond's other sister, Maritcha, was also in Rome.

In addition to running their hotel, the Putnams organized interracial gatherings where Remond was present, as reported by the English sisters Anne and Matilda Lucas in their *Two Englishwomen in Rome, 1871-1900* (1938):

Rome, April 28, 1878. For Tuesday we had three invitations, only two of which we accepted. First we spent an hour with Mrs. Westmacott, and then went on to the P—s'. The music was first-rate, chiefly from professionals—Sgambati, Tosti, Pinelli—all well-known names here. The black aunt was there, elegantly dressed in lavender silk. [...] We enjoyed the P—s' party. We were introduced to Mrs. Lynn Linton, the authoress of "Joshua Davidson" and "Patricia Kemball."

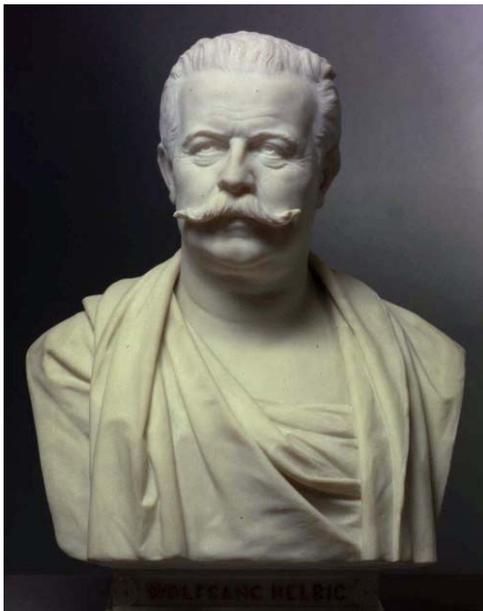
The most famous musicians, then, were performing at the Putnams' social events, which were attended by renowned writers of the time.

Sarah Remond never returned to the United States. She passed away in Rome on 13 December 1894 at 6:00 am at the Hospital of Sant'Antonio. The grave of "Sara Remond Pintor, Americana," is recorded in the cemetery's register as being in "the fifth row below the tomb of the poet Goethe" ("5 fila sotto la tomba del poeta Goethe") but was subsequently exhumed (see *Newsletter* 26). Close to her lay Remond's nephew's wife, Gertie, who died on 6 April 1901 (Zone V.9.24). Her funeral monument describes her as a woman with a kind soul and beautiful heart ("di anima gentile / di cuore bello"). Sarah Remond, her sisters, Gertie and her husband Edmund as well as Edmonia Lewis and Frederick Douglass all had rich lives that included experiencing complete freedom in a cosmopolitan Italy where they achieved black freedom and social integration. Thus, they were able to re-articulate their identities as progressive pioneers of African American success.

Contributed by Sirpa Salenius, author of *An abolitionist abroad. Sarah Parker Remond in cosmopolitan Europe.* University of Massachusetts Press, 2016.



Wolfgang Helbig, archaeologist and antique dealer



Johannes Hoffmann, Portrait of Wolfgang Helbig, 1891 (Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen)

Although in poor condition, the gravestones (Zone 2.11.3) record the Helbig family, one of the most visible families in the Rome of scholars, artists and musicians at the end of the 19th century. The German archaeologist Wolfgang Helbig was one of the most important German scholars of antiquity of his time and deputy director of the German Institute, while his wife, the Russian princess Nadezhda (Nadine) Schakhovskaja, was an excellent pianist, a pupil of Clara

extremely important were his studies of the Homeric world, relating monuments and objects of the Bronze and early Iron Age to the Homeric poems. He was on personal terms with Heinrich Schliemann, the discoverer of Troy.

His marriage in 1866 to the Princess Schakhovskaja gave him a certain financial independence and entry into the Roman and Russian nobility. Their house, the Casa Tarpeia, on the Capitoline hill was frequented by notable authors and musicians such as Liszt himself, Richard Wagner and Eduard Grieg. Helbig was not only a gifted and scrupulous scholar but a man of the world.

When, in 1885, the German government announced that German (or Latin) should be used exclusively for meetings and publications, Helbig saw the international character of the Institute being compromised. After hoping – in vain – to succeed Wilhelm Henzen as director, Helbig resigned his position on 1 October 1887 and broke off all connection to the Institute (later, the Archaeological Institute of Imperial Germany, and then the German Archaeological Institute). He rented for his family the Villa Lante on the Janiculum while continuing to work in archaeology. He became Archaeological Inspector for the commune of Corneto (Tarquinia), organising excavations and discovering many painted tombs in the Etruscan necropolis there. Together with his wife he made the Villa Lante an important literary and musical *salon* frequented by scholars, artists, musicians and aristocrats. Romain

Schumann and Franz Liszt. Nadine Helbig actively promoted philanthropic projects in Rome. She founded the 'Soccorso e Lavoro' clinic and then another for poor children in Via Emilio Morosini in Trastevere. Olga Signorelli described her as "one of the most remarkable personalities in Rome...known for her kindness and generosity."

Wolfgang Helbig was originally from Dresden, a man of supreme classical culture acquired during his studies in Göttingen and Bonn. He came to Rome in 1862 to work for the then Istituto di corrispondenza archeologica. During his long stay there (1862-1887), he became the authority in various fields of the study of antiquity: his work on Pompeian painting, Etruscology and Italian protohistory remains fundamental today. His book on the Italic peoples in the Val Padana (1879) was still considered by Paolo Orsi in 1930 as "the official consecration of the marriage of Italian prehistory and protohistory with Classical archaeology". Also



The Praeneste fibula

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Rolland, Rainer Maria Rilke and Gabriele d'Annunzio, amongst others, have described this welcoming *fin-de-siècle salon* on the Janiculum which for a time became almost the opposite pole to the German Institute.

From his villa Helbig also devoted himself to dealing in art objects. Particularly important was his partnership with the Danish industrialist Carl Jacobsen who was collecting material to create the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek. Thanks to Helbig, more than 900 archaeological objects reached Copenhagen, among them the Etrusco-Italic material that formed the nucleus of the section called "the Helbig Museet".

Critics of Helbig's role as an intermediary for European and Ameri-

can museums to acquire antiquities often forget that owning and trading in antiquities was not exclusive to Helbig but was the norm at the time. Even the famous affair of the Praeneste fibula (an ancient brooch discovered at Palestrina) is almost certainly in Helbig's favour: he has been accused of having faked its archaic Latin inscription – published by him in 1887 – but almost all Latin epigraphy experts now accept it as authentic.

Helbig died at his Villa Lante during World War I on 6 October 1915 and his wife seven years later in 1922. Also buried in their tomb are their children: Natalia, who died as an infant, and Demetrio (1873-1954), a general and a chemist, one of the pioneers of Italian aviation.

Contributed by Simo Örmä of the Finnish Institute in Rome



HOW OTHERS SEE THE CEMETERY

Augusto Jandolo (1873-1952) was a Roman poet, writer and antique-dealer. His fellow-Romanista, Marcello Piermattei, invited him to visit the Cemetery. It reminded Jandolo of an enclosed garden, the 'Hortus conclusus' found in monasteries and convents. To him it was a "greenhouse full of flowers under a gallery of pine and cypress trees".

"Everything is light-hearted, smiling, quiet; the blackbirds and spar-

rows strut unperturbed from one tree to another, chirping as they perch on the rails that surround the tombs. The graves are made on terraces, on a kind of half-slope that descends from the ancient walls to an enclosure wall with crenellations, I think built recently...The capers, the ivy, the wisteria cling to the trunks of the trees...it all makes a setting that is picturesque and, at times, I would say almost theatrical."

From *Le memorie di un antiquario*, Milano 1935.



News from the Cemetery: safer access



For less agile visitors or for those pushing wheelchairs or baby buggies, access to much of the Cemetery is relatively easy. You can do a leisurely circuit of the Parte Antica or walk as far as Gramsci's grave without encountering any steps.

Several signs warn our visitors about tree-roots, however. We have recently removed many smaller roots in the interests of safety. (Gian Pietro Cantiani, our tree consultant, identified roots that

were non-essential to the trees.) The area adjacent to Gramsci's grave looks better and is safer as a result. Another improvement has been the installation of handrails in two locations: on the steps leading to the chapel and on the steep central path of Zone 2. But do walk with care!



Manuel Chavez Chuquimango removing tree-roots

All previous Newsletters and an Index of contents are at www.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:

www.cemeteryrome.it

THE NON-CATHOLIC CEMETERY IN ROME

via Caio Cestio, 6, 00153, Roma

Director: Amanda Thursfield

OPENING HOURS

Monday to Saturday 9:00am - 5:00pm
(last entrance 4.30pm)

Sunday & Public Holidays: 9.00am -1.00pm
(last entrance 12.30pm)

Tel 06.5741900, Fax 06.5741320
mail@cemeteryrome.it

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Nicholas Stanley-Price, EDITOR
Anka Serbu, GRAPHIC DESIGN
Grafica Di Marcotullio, PRINTER
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Contact: nstanleyprice@tiscali.it
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