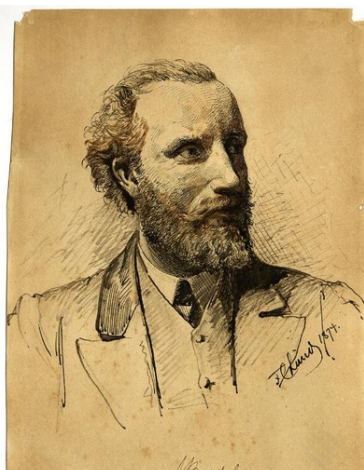


of the Non-Catholic Cemetery in Rome

NEWSLETTER



An unknown view by Niels Bredal of the New Cemetery in 1877

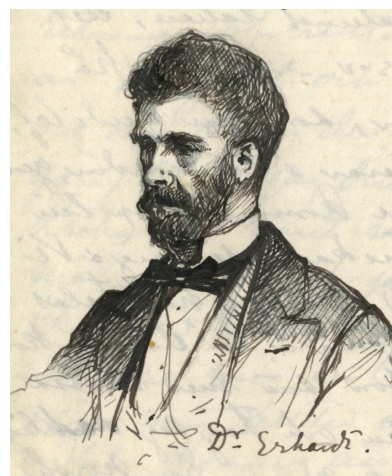


F.C. Lund, *Portrait of Niels Bredal*, 1874.
Signed and dated F. C. Lund 1874
(ex-Circolo Scandinavo, Rome)

The Danish artist Niels Andreas Bredal (1841-1888) was a popular figure in Rome where he lived for six years, from 1872 to 1878. In the many paintings that he produced there, he often used watercolour, a technique that was not then common in Denmark. Particularly interested in architecture, Bredal made numerous drawings and paintings of buildings and landscapes, in Rome but also in nearby towns such as Tivoli, Palestrina, Anticoli Corrado and Subiaco, and further afield at Sulmona and Ravello.

Well represented in museum collections, his work often

comes up at auction. One of his watercolours, under the title 'Part of the Cimitero Acattolico, Rome', attracted little interest at an auction in Aarhus in 2017. It is in fact a fascinating view that shows the progress of burial activity in the lower Zona Prima in the years 1876-77. It confirms what other paintings and photos show, with the most recent burials appearing as grassy mounds, each with a numbered wooden post to identify it. Within a year or two the mounds shown here had received stone monuments, either a flat ledger-stone, a vertical headstone or a cross



Albert Edelfeldt, *Sketch of Dr Erhardt*
in a letter of 29 May 1876
(Svenska litteratursällskapet i Finland)

(Latin, Celtic or Russian Orthodox) set on a stepped pedestal. How do we know this? In the centre-left of Bredal's painting there stand three slender stelae, side by side. These commemorate Anna Wedekind (d. March 1876) and her two infant children who pre-deceased her (see *Newsletter* no. 33). The three stelae (nowadays they are rearranged, one behind the other) allow us to identify this row of graves as today's Zone 1, row 8. By closely checking the Cemetery's burial inventory against the evidence on the ground, all the graves in this row shown by Bredal are identifiable.

The focus of his painting is the white, rectangular, 'box-grave' in the foreground. At its upper end there stands an inscribed stone block similar to those found on other Danish graves at this period. This one is the grave (Zone 1.8.56) of Ludvig Emanuel Herløw, a theology student known to Bredal. He died in March 1876 and was buried next to another Dane, Hans Schneekloth, who had died a month previously (Zone 1.8.57). One large monument that is not visible is the built tomb and sculpture of Maria Obolenskaya who had died in March 1873 (Zone 1.10.45). The location of her grave is behind the two rose-bushes that Bredal depicted on Herløw's grave. But her monument was not designed until 1876 and, when completed (before 1879; see *Newsletter* no. 46, 2), it was covered, unusually, by a prominent protective roof. Its absence in Bredal's watercolour tends to confirm that it was installed later than 1877.

Who was Herløw? He arrived in Rome in autumn 1875 as tutor to the children of Mary Westenholz, widow of the government minister Regnar Westenholz. The Danish artist Kristian Zahrtmann describes in his letters how the community of Danes in Rome celebrated Christmas in 1875 – Herløw was one of those taking part. Among the Westenholz children were a son Aage, whom Herløw was coaching for his matriculation, and three daughters, Ingeborg (later, the mother of Karen Blixen), Mohder and Mary Bess. Mary Bess's letters reveal the fate that befell Herløw, whom they all adored. He caught malaria but appeared to be recovering after being transferred to the German hospital on the Campidoglio. He had



View of the Protestant Cemetery, Rome, 1877. Watercolour on paper,
signed and dated N. Bredal. Rom 1877. 34 x 25 cm.
(private collection)

Continues on page 2 →

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plans for travelling to Greece. When Mrs Westenholz was confident that he was cured, she returned home, only to learn that Herløw died the day after she left Rome. His death may have been caused by the excessive doses of quinine administered to him by the German doctor Dr Wolfgang Erhardt. The doctor, whose practice was at Piazza di Spagna, 26, was suspected to have caused the deaths of other patients through a similar over-prescription.

Is Bredal's painting of Herløw's grave a commissioned work? Mary

Bess wrote that her mother felt guilty at having left Rome, believing Herløw to have recovered. She was comforted, however, by the effusive thanks of Herløw's mother and sister for making him so welcome in their household. There is no proof but possibly Mrs Westenholz, a very wealthy woman who knew Bredal while in Rome, commissioned him to make a painting of Herløw's simple grave as a gift to his bereaved family.

Steen Neergaard and Nicholas Stanley-Price



Joseph Gott's monument for Mary Garden: a new discovery

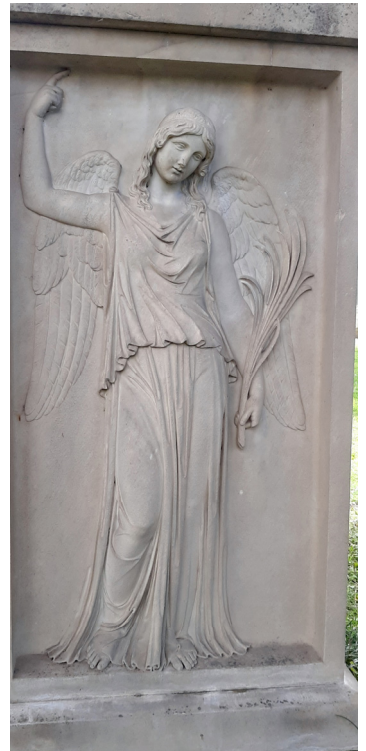
The young Scots girl Mary Garden died aged only 18 in 1834. Exceptionally, she was buried in the Old Cemetery which Pope Pius VII in 1822 had ordered to be closed to further burials. But an appeal to the Vatican by the Consular Agent John Freeborn proved successful. In contrast to the flat stone ledgers in use before the closure of the Old Cemetery, Mary Garden was commemorated by a monument standing more than 1.30m high.

Re-examining it while preparing the article about Tyra Kleen's painting (*Newsletter* no. 70) led to a surprising discovery: the signature on it of the English sculptor Joseph Gott (1785-1860). The simple pedestal tomb is surmounted by a stone urn. An inscription giving Mary Garden's date of death, age and father's name is on the south side facing the Pyramid. The East and West sides have bas-relief carvings of this-les (Scotland's national flower) and of a plant resembling a lily. One

him as possessing 'blameless Integrity & Worth' and 'Talent if not Genius'. One of his first tasks was to work with Joseph Severn to execute a headstone for John Keats. He was kept busy with commissions during the 1820s, producing work that ranged from portraits, historical groups and monuments to sculptures of children and animals. He is especially known today for his sculptures of dogs in various poses. But he has not previously been recognised as the sculptor of the refined bas-reliefs on the Garden monument.

Mary's parents came from two of the leading Glasgow families engaged in the West Indies trade: Francis Garden and Co. and Monteith, Bogle and Co. (her mother was Rebecca Monteith). On the death of their teenage daughter, they spared no expense in commissioning one of Rome's leading sculptors to produce a suitable memorial to her.

Nicholas Stanley-Price



The Garden monument, angel



The Garden monument, thistle with Gott's signature bottom right



The signature of Joseph Gott



The Garden monument, lily and thistle

of its flowers lies on the ground, another is falling (denoting a life cut short). On the North face an angel raises her right arm, pointing to heaven, a gesture that conventionally invokes God's authority; in her left hand she holds a palm-frond (a symbol of resurrection). Inscribed at the base of the West face is: J. GOTT. F.[†]

Joseph Gott was one of the most accomplished and productive of the English neo-Classical sculptors who settled in Rome. He had arrived with his young family in Rome in 1822, with a letter of introduction from Sir Thomas Lawrence to the sculptor Antonio Canova describing



J. Gott, *Greyhound with puppies*, Barber Institute of Fine Arts

NEWS FROM THE CEMETERY

The Cemetery's annual collaboration of more than ten years with the Fachschule für Steintechnik in Munich continued in 2024 with the participation of four apprentice stone-masons, funded under the EU's Erasmus+ programme and supervised by Martin Pulzer with Gianfranco Malorgio and Sara Toscan of SINOPE s.r.l.s. An important part of their work is always regular maintenance of recently restored tombs. In 2024 these included Story's *Angel of Grief* and the Cockburn (*Newsletter* no. 31) and Passarge (*Newsletter* no. 50) monuments. Other tombs benefitted from cleaning or from the repair of dislodged kerbstones and crosses. Two larger interventions involved the Cornelius and Arnold Corrodi tombs. The impressive sarcophagus-tomb (Zone 1.15.2) was designed by the German sculptor Georg Roemer for Bertha Cornelius (1834-1904), a musician and wife of the composer Peter Cornelius.

The monument to Arnold Corrodi is one of five tombs in the Cemetery of this artistic family of Swiss origin. The grave of the famous painter Salomon Corrodi (1810-1892) is distinguished by the beautiful mosaic-decorated cross that surmounts it (Zone 1.14.57). Downhill from his own grave lie the tombs of his two artist sons (Arnold



The tomb of Salomon Corrodi



The Cornelius sarcophagus after cleaning

who died young; 1843-1874, Zone 1.9.51) and Hermann (1844-1895; Zone 2.12.4). Both feature examples of the widely copied *Head of Christ* sculpture by Jean-Baptiste Auguste Clesinger (1814-1883) installed under protective canopies topped by a cross. The canopy sheltering Arnold's tomb was damaged in 1979 by a falling tree (it is now in the Lapidarium in the Zona Terza), leaving the bust more exposed to the elements. Treatment followed the usual procedures of application of a biocide, a chemical compress to remove the black patina, followed by a further biocide application.



Cleaning of the Clesinger bust

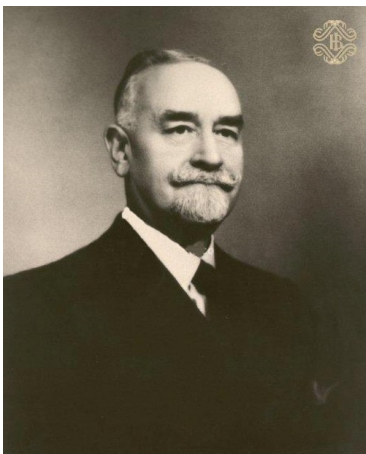


The tombs of Hermann Corrodi and Arnold Corrodi (in distance)



Damaged canopy in the Lapidarium

Niccolò Introna and the gold in the Banca d'Italia



Niccolò Introna

On September 20, 1943, a handful of Nazi officers entered Palazzo Koch, the elegant headquarters of the Bank of Italy in Via Nazionale in Rome. Among them was Lieutenant Colonel Herbert Kappler, commander of Hitler's SS security police in the city. The Germans demanded that the bank's Governor, Vincenzo Azzolini, hand over to them the 119 tons of gold held in its vaults.

A delay then ensued as members of the German high command (Kappler, Goering and others) competed with each other to profit from the seizure of the gold. The Bank's

directors attempted to conceal part of the bullion but resistance proved futile, and in December the gold was shipped by train to Milan and then to Fortezza, near Bressanone, in German-controlled territory. In due course, 63 tons of it were transported to the safes of the Deutsche Bank in Germany, and another eight tons to the German Foreign Ministry for the personal use of the Minister, von Ribbentrop.

The principal figure in the Banca d'Italia who opposed handing over the gold was its deputy director-general, Niccolò Introna. Born in Bari, Introna (1868-1955) was a devout Waldensian and a leading figure in the Chiesa Valdese community at Via IV Novembre in Rome. He served frequently as its deputy at the annual Synod of the Waldensian Church at Torre Pellice. In 1928 he was appointed deputy director-general of the Banca d'Italia and seemed destined for the top position. But he was unpopular. Counting against him were his evident lack of sympathy for Fascism, his active role in the Waldensian church, and his fight against financial corruption which brought him into conflict with his superior, Azzolini. A common solution for removing 'difficult' characters by making them a parliamentary deputy or senator was ruled out in the case of a Protestant.

Introna's leading role in opposing the gold seizure has been properly recognised in *L'oro e la patria. Storia di Niccolò Introna, eroe dimenticato* (Mondadori, 2024). Its author, Federico Fubini, a senior journalist at the *Corriere della Sera*, studied some 80,000 documents in Introna's archive. For some 20 years Introna had been taking home paperwork from the Bank. The documentation discloses the reality of its operations during this period, including Mussolini's demands, issued from his self-proclaimed Republic of Salò, for Azzolini in Rome to transfer to him huge sums of State funds, as if he were still head of state. With the arrival of the Allies in June 1944 and the liberation of Rome, Introna, as the only non-compromised person in the previous regime, was named Special Commissioner of the Bank. Azzolini was arrested and charged with having surrendered the Bank's gold reserves. Introna's joining the Bank as a civil party in the trial of Azzolini (who was convicted but later acquitted) brought him further unpopularity, as did his opposition to proposals that would limit the future independence of the Italian banking sector. Briefly director-general of the Bank, he was passed over for appointment as its Governor and given an honorary position until he retired in 1951. He is buried with his wife, Jenny Capponi, in a family grave at Zona V.10.5.

And the gold? Introna, as head of the bank following the arrest of Azzolini, took delivery of the 23 tons of gold remaining at Fortezza that was recovered by the Allies on 17 May 17, 1945. It returned to headquarters on Via Nazionale early the following year.

Nicholas Stanley-Price



MORE NEWS FROM THE CEMETERY

Swedish National Tomb restored

In June the Ambassador of Sweden to Italy, H.E. Jan Björklund, and current President of the Assembly of Ambassadors, inaugurated the newly cleaned Swedish National Tomb in the Zona Vecchia.

Evening visit to the Cemetery

On 3 July the Cemetery was specially opened for guided tours as part of the Felicità programme of Roma Capitale for discovering its rich heritage. Former Director Amanda Thursfield, Patrizia Coppola and Mario Ferrante shared their knowledge of the Cemetery with three groups of pre-booked visitors.



Patrik Ullman, Bishop Hans Stiglund, H.E. Jan Björklund, and Yvonne Mazurek at the ceremony

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

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Director: Yvonne Mazurek

OPENING HOURS

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

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

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NEWSLETTER of the Friends of the Non-Catholic Cemetery in Rome

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