

Crown Hill Cemetery

(The first public account of Crown Hill Cemetery as it appeared in the
Indiana State Sentinel, October 22, 1863.)

The public will be gratified to learn that the arrangements for a rural cemetery in this vicinity are completed, and that, from its suitable distance from the city, the convenient access to it on a gravel way without any railroad crossing, and the appropriate features of the grounds, with the crowning beauty of including the most conspicuous elevation in this region, we may feel assured that, in the hands of the citizens who have engaged in the enterprise, Crown Hill Cemetery will, in its future, rank favorably with the lovely cities of the dead, which are so pleasantly attractive in other parts of the country.

The distinct principles on which the association is founded are, that no individual speculation or emolument is to result from its action, but that all the proceeds are forever dedicated to the improvement and perpetual care of the grounds through all future time, the only other use ever to be allowed of any surplus funds of the corporation being to aid the poor of the city of Indianapolis.

The sympathies and cordial co-operation of the public will be promptly enlisted in the success of this needed enterprise, based upon such enlarged and unselfish principles; and the attention of citizens in other parts of the State will be excited by the permanency and safety of this retired resting place for the departed, which in small cemeteries, near our growing towns, can not be fully secured.

Thirty of our citizens, whose names are here given, have united for the object in a corporation under the laws of the State, with articles of association on record, which all who desire are requested to inspect.

The corporators are: James Blake, Calvin Fletcher, Sr., James M. Ray, Wm. H. Morrison, Thomas H. Sharpe, W. O. Rockwood, Wm. S. Hubbard, A. E. Vinton, Theo. P. Haughey, Stoughton A. Fletcher, Jr., John C. New, Nicholas McCarty, Jesse D. Carmichael, Charles N. Todd, Wm. Sheets, John M. Kitchen, Robert Browning, Addison L. Roache, George Tousey, Ovid Butler, J. H. Vajen, E. B. Martindale, Herman Lieber, Wm. Wallace, Daniel Yandes, John M. Lord, J. A. Crossland, Thomas A. Morris, John Love and John Armstrong.

The Board of Managers consists of Thomas [A.] Morris, James Blake, Nicholas McCarty, John C. New, T. P. Haughey, Stoughton A. Fletcher, Jr.s, and James M. Ray.

OFFICERS

James M. Ray, President.
Theo. P. Haughey, Secretary.
S. A. Fletcher, Jr., Treasurer.
Superintendent, Frederick Chislett

The services of the managers and officers are entirely gratuitous, except the Superintendent, who is from Allegheny City [Allegheny Cemetery, Pittsburgh, Pa.], and will enter upon his duties, and can be seen at the grounds, after Monday next, the 26th October, instant.

The body of corporators is self-perpetuating by the election, by the surviving or remaining members, from the owners of lots in the Cemetery, of persons to fill any vacancies in the membership, occurring by death or otherwise.

The corporation has purchased two hundred and forty-two acres of land, at the cost of nearly \$50,000, two miles north of Indianapolis, embracing the Williams' Hill, near the Michigan road, distinguished since the settlement of the country as the highest and most attractive elevation around us, with the beautifully rolling grounds east and south. This location was selected after the personal inspection of John Chislett, Esq., the successful Superintendent of the Allegheny Cemetery, which is such an ornament to the city of Pittsburgh; and the propriety of the choice is confirmed by his son, John Chislett, Jr., who is now engaged in laying out the cemetery, and who assures the corporators that the peculiar fitness of the grounds admits of such varied and appropriate improvements and adornment as to enable them to make Crown Hill the first object of interest to the citizens of the capital of our noble State, and to all its visitors.

The funds for the purchase and wants of the cemetery have been cheerfully advanced by one of our able citizens, Stoughton A. Fletcher, Esq., who will receive one half of the income, as it is realized, until he is reimbursed; the sections as laid out for plats being entirely free from any lien, and the title thereto to purchasers clear and perfect in fee simple.

The approaches will be, for interment purposes, on the Westfield gravel road, directly north from Illinois street, to the Eastern avenue of [the] cemetery, which is one hundred feet wide; and for returning and for visitors, on the Michigan avenue.

The corporators trust that this selection will be approved by their fellow citizens, whose generous co-operation is solicited to secure, that the sad scattering of the dust of fore-fathers, which in the enlargement of other cities, has been disturbed in their tombs, after two hundred years of burial, may not befall the remains of those who are now among the living here, or who are dear to those among the buried.

“There where swells the fair blue above,
 And spreads the rich green sward beneath,
 We set apart for those we love
 A fit abode in gentle death;
 That not, as with the saddened gloom
 Of cloistered cell, and time-worn towers,
 We’d link the memories of the tomb—
 But with the sunshine and the flowers.”

It is not designed to open the grounds for disposal and use until next spring, when they will be suitably dedicated, unless it be to favor an application already made, for a suitable and honored part for the patriot soldiers, whose remains shall rest in this vicinity. The experience of those who have managed some of the best cemeteries in our country, and the consideration of what is needed in the preparation of the grounds and avenues, and making safe enclosures, forbid the opening of the cemetery, either for interment or removals, until all can be in proper readiness. In other instances, it is stated, that those who have urged hurried locations of plats have sometimes abandoned them and chosen others, when these elections could afterwards be made, with a better appreciation of the localities and the scenery.

The choice of plats will be open to all, without preference to any, except for the remains of the gallant men of the army and navy of the Union, and sections, of such size as may be desired, will be laid out for disposal to any associations or religious societies, without reference to sect, wishing to procure grounds for the interment of their members.

It is designed, in the rural and quiet retreat selected, to provide as well for single interments as for those who would follow the example of Abraham when “he purchased the field of Ephron, and the trees that were thereon, and the cave of Macpelah, which was at the end of the field, for a burying place” for his dead and his near descendents. And, therefore, plats will be laid out of great variety in size and form, as the natural features of the ground so readily admit.

In every movement in this needed and voluntary enterprise it is the desire of the incorporators to acquire the approval and liberal cooperation of their fellow citizens, that the generations to crowd this city of our love may, in all future time, gratefully and surely trace the undisturbed resting places of their predecessors, whose dust shall have “returned to the dust as it was, and their spirits to God who gave them.”