

For Forgotten Graveyard On North Avenue Passed Daily By The Living

Private Jewish Burial Ground On North Avenue Near Pennsylvania Avenue Has Been There 121 Years. Even Neighbors Scarcely Realize Its Existence Or Know Its Interesting History—Recently Inherited By Miss Eleanor S. Cohen.

By EMILY EMERSON LANTZ.

The Garden Of Sleep.

*On the grass of the cliff, at the edge of the sleep,
 God planted a garden, a garden of sleep!
 'Neath the blue of the sky—in the green of the corn—
 It is there that the regal red poppies are born.
 Brief days of desire and long dreams of delight,
 They are mine when my poppyland cometh in sight.
 O! Heart of my heart! where the poppies are born,
 I am waiting for thee in the hush of the corn.
 O! Heart of my heart! where the poppies are born,
 I am waiting, am waiting for thee, in the hush of the corn.
 In my garden of sleep, where red poppies are spread,
 I wait for the living, alone with the dead!
 For a throne in exile stands guard o'er the sleep.
 At whose feet are many graves of dear women asleep!
 Did they love as I love, when they lived by the sea?
 Did they wait as I wait for the days that may be?
 O! Life of my life! on the cliffs by the sea,
 By the graves in the grass, I am waiting for thee!
 O! Life of my life! on the cliffs by the sea,
 By the graves in the grass I am waiting, am waiting for thee.
 —Clement Scott.*

TO start off on a bright April day in quest of unknown graves was curious enough, but to look for them in the teeming heart of Baltimore city with no outward nor visible indication of their whereabouts was more curious still.

It was the Sunday Editor who inspired the adventure. He was reading in a historical quarterly magazine regarding the achievements of an ancient worthy, one Solomon Etting, a Jew, born in York, Pa., but for 60 years an honored resident of Baltimore; a man contemporary with and closely associated in civic affairs with Charles Carroll of Carrollton; William Patterson, father of the brilliant Betsy Patterson who married Jerome Bonaparte; a man who was President of the First Branch of the City Council and consorted with Charles Ridgely of Hampton; with Robert Oliver, once owner of Greenmount Cemetery; with Luke Tiernan and Isaac McKim, and whose name survives in Etting

street, which he probably was instrumental in laying out.

Solomon Etting married, about 1791, Rachel Gratz, a daughter of Bernard Gratz. The chronicle stated that about the beginning of the nineteenth century this family "began to use as a family burial ground a small plot of land on the north side of North avenue about 60 yards east of Pennsylvania avenue. Most of the Ettings of Baltimore, numbers of their relatives and a few other Jews of Baltimore are buried here."

"I wonder if that graveyard is still in existence?" mused the man of letters. "I have passed that block a thousand times and never noticed anything indicative of a cemetery."

The listener wondered also and determined to ascertain. So next morning he sallied forth into the sunlit streets, noisy with clanging trolley cars and cheerful with children hurrying to school.

On North avenue just east of Pennsylvania a break in the block's continuity of residences and shops was marked by a narrow section of brick wall, in the center of which was a closed gateway. It afforded entrance to what seemed to be a much larger open space beyond than the narrow wall indicated.

Uncommunicative Stone.

Unobtrusive, it might have been passed and repassed without attracting attention. Cold reserve seemed indicated in every brick. There was apparently no one in attendance to give the desired information, but there were houses overlooking the wall-guarded space and shops in the vicinity.

In one of the latter a pleasant-faced matron sat mending some garment. "A Jewish burial ground in this vicinity?" she echoed, in answer to a question. "Why, that must be the graveyard we see from our back windows. Yes, it is a cemetery all right, but I did not know it was Jewish."

The proprietor of the store, who had been talking over a telephone, came to her aid. "Of course, it is the old Jewish graveyard," he said, "but that is about all I know about it. I guess it has been there 150 years, but the persons who know most about it are Mr. and Mrs. Samuel H. Klingel, who were the caretakers of the place for many years. They have recently moved away. I don't know the number, but somewhere on Gilmor street, near Laurens street and beyond the railroad tunnel."

Laurens street and the railroad tunnel were undiscovered country to the seeker after graves, but hope seemed to lie in following a Gilmor street car, the route of which might naturally be expected to lie along that thoroughfare.

A couple of neighborly women chatting sociably on a doorstep invited questions by their friendly faces, and by rare good luck the husband of one of them was discovered to be painting the

Klingel residence. "A cottage house setting back in a garden and my husband's scaffolding, with him painting there, will guide you." Such exact information in a world of vague uncertainties seemed too good to be true. But it all turned out as prophesied—Laurens street, the tunnel, the home with its cheery bit of garden and green grass, with the painter adding action to the stage setting, and Mr. and Mrs. Klingel at home supervising improvements.

Tended Graveyard 15 Years.

Yes, they had held the gate keys of the old Jewish burying ground for 15 years. Recently the flurry in real estate had resulted in the house they had occupied adjoining the graveyard changing hands.

"We were the caretakers during the life of the late Miss Etting, who died not long ago," said Mrs. Klingel. "Now Miss Eleanor S. Cohen has inherited the property. We liked Miss Etting very much, and, living as we did adjoining the little private cemetery, we were able not only to take good care of the grass and graves and shrubbery, but to guard the place from molestation as well."

"The narrow bit of wall fronting on North avenue gives little indication of the large square space behind it in which are 24 graves. There are no monuments nor any inscriptions, only tombstones to mark the graves."

First Burial 1799.

"The first burial recorded," interrupted Mr. Klingel, "is that of a child, who died in 1799, and the next that of Bernard Gratz, whose stone is marked 1801. The most recent burial was that of a Miss Etting, who died in July, 1877—not the Miss Etting who employed us—she said I would never have to dig her grave, since when she died she would be buried in Pennsylvania. But under her administration we cut the grass regularly, fertilized the ground and cleared away snow and ice from the pavement in winter. After we ceased to be in charge a colored man looked after the place for awhile, but so far as we know, there is no one in charge at present."

"It was a tangle of weeds and grass the last time I saw it," said his wife. "For grass gets rank very quickly unless frequently cut." Miss Etting was constantly solicited to sell the ground, which now possesses high commercial value, but I think the burial ground is endowed and am under the impression that there is provision by will for a caretaker, or for its being taken care of. There is a Flower of Paradise tree, I think they call it, in the grounds that has long flowering blossoms that stayed on the trees far into the summer, and a maple tree on the North avenue side and a wide driveway encircles the graves. It seemed like leaving home to leave the graveyard when we came away."

"The Gratz-Etting names occurs on most of the gravestones. One grave is that of a Jewish rabbi from Westphalia, said to be the first rabbi who came to America. I do not know—it is only what I always heard. The greatest

number of graves are those of maiden ladies, most of whom lived to unusual ages—72, 75 and 80 years." Her thought seemed to drift back to these graves of "dear women asleep." "I often read and reread the names on the stones, and we gave Miss Cohen a list of them when we resigned the care of the burial ground, but I do not recall them now."

Thanking the friendly couple for their courtesy, the visitor went her way, but thoughts of the long-forgotten dead, lying so close to the unthinking living multitude whose footfalls echoed unceasingly about their graves, followed her like a breath from unseen flowers. Sweet women, happy women, brilliant women many of them must have been. The words of the old song came back to her:

"Did they love, as I love,
 When they lived by the sea?
 Did they wait, as I wait,
 For the days that may be?"