

APPENDIX F

Cemeteries

BURLINGTON CEMETERIES FOR THE FRENCH CANADIAN CATHOLICS

MOUNT ST. JOSEPH CEMETERY

As Catholics came to settle in the Burlington area, an early need arose for a sacred burial ground. In previous historical writings about the Catholic Church in this area, very little has been mentioned about church cemeteries.

Dating from 1763, when Burlington was chartered as a town, the public burial ground was limited to two acres on Colchester Avenue, now part of Green Mount Cemetery. Its crowded condition and irregular plan brought about the establishment of a second burial ground called Elmwood Cemetery; this cemetery was used after 1794, but it was not laid out in an organized plan until 1813. A listing in 1942 of the monuments at Elmwood does not reveal obviously Catholic families.

The first mention of a cemetery for the French Canadians was made by Fr. Amable Petithomme when he wrote to his superior, Fr. Coudrin, on July 28, 1835, saying that he had begun a little cemetery. We do not know the exact location but believe it was in the general area of St. Joseph and Mt. Calvary Cemeteries. While Fr. Petithomme was in Burlington he recorded 11 burials from June 1834 to October 1835, but reported that these were in "Cimetiere Ste. Marie:'

The oldest established Catholic cemetery is Mount St. Joseph, situated on the north side of Archibald Street, extending from North Prospect Street to Hyde Street. The original land was obtained from Col. Archibald Hyde in November 1830 and was for six years the site of the first Catholic Church in Burlington. Adjoining lots were secured; these enlarged the original tract to its present size of about five acres. The lower tip of this property was conveyed to the City of Burlington in 1893 to extend Hyde Street beyond Archibald Street to Lower Road (Riverside Avenue). Prior to 1850, there were no records kept of burials in Mount St. Joseph Cemetery, except for the 11 burials mentioned previously in St. Mary Cemetery, presumably the same site as Fr. Petithomme served in the same church as Fr. O'Callaghan. This was the only cemetery for the Catholics of Burlington and the surrounding area. Charles E. Allen, in his 1904 Annual Report as a cemetery commissioner, estimated that during the period from 1831 to 1856 there were at least 5,000 burials. This number increased by another 4,162 from 1856 to 1904.

The first burial recorded for St. Joseph Parish in Mount

St. Joseph Cemetery is that of Rosalie Robert, daughter of Francois Xavier Robert and Zoe (Surprenant) on December 3, 1850, age one year and ten months.

During the year 1855, the cemetery was enclosed. The Canadian congregation contributed \$334.73 for the entire south portion which contained the main gate as well as the smaller gate facing their first St. Joseph Church. The northeast section of the fence was the charge of the Irish congregation which paid the sum of \$181.00 for its construction. On November 2, 1855, the two congregations gathered together with Bishop deGoesbriand, assisted by the priests from St. Mary Parish and the Oblate Fathers from St. Joseph Parish, for the solemn blessing of the cemetery intended for the burial of both the Irish and the French Canadian Catholics of Burlington. The western part of this tract was not blessed. The northernmost part of the section fronting on the main road (Riverside Avenue) was reserved by the bishop for the burial of infants dying without baptism and other persons who, for canonical reasons, would be excluded from the cemetery proper.

A few days later, the bishop held a meeting at which tentative regulations were discussed concerning the future use of the cemetery. In summary, a priest would designate the gravesites; as there would be no random selection by the parishioners. Those who already had enclosed family lots would be permitted to continue to use them. Upon the death of a member of a family possessing no lot, the family was permitted to enclose a gravesite with room for two additional graves. The enclosure was to be made immediately, however, so that subsequent burials could take place on an organized basis according to the overall plan. Strangers, and others who would not need a family lot, would be buried in the new part of the cemetery which would be marked off with stakes.

Even though the French Canadian Catholics continued their separate worship in their church where their mother-tongue was used, their burials continued in the one Catholic cemetery, Mount St. Joseph, until 1878.

The Winooski congregation of about 850 French Canadian Catholics was separated from St. Joseph Parish in May 1868, when St. Francis Xavier Parish was established. Their cemetery adjoining the church property was first used in June of that year; it would also serve the French Canadian Catholics from Colchester and Essex who were transferred to St. Francis Xavier Parish at the sametime.

MOUNT CALVARY CEMETERY

According to his journal, Fr. Cloarec, pastor of St. Joseph Parish, bought two lots of land to the west of the church on Archibald Street in 1878. The first was purchased from Henry Loomis on January 23 for the sum of \$500 and, two days later, the adjacent lot from Fr. Cardinal for \$650.

With the approval of Bishop deGoesbriand, these five acres of land were prepared for use as a cemetery for the parishioners of St. Joseph Church. The bishop also permitted the French Canadians of St. Joseph Parish, who already had lots in the old Mount St. Joseph Cemetery, to use these burial sites. However, all other parishioners could be interred in only the newly established Mount Calvary Cemetery.

On July 4th of that year the land was consecrated by Bishop deGoesbriand assisted by Fr. Cloarec, and Revs. Francois Clavier, pastor of Holy Rosary Church in Richmond; Joseph Brelivet, pastor of St. John the Baptist Church in Enosburg Falls; and Francois Yvinec, curate of St. Joseph Parish. The southwest section, next to the main fence and separated from the rest of the site by a wire fence, was not blessed or consecrated but was reserved for the burial of infants dying without receiving baptism and adults who, canonically, were not permitted a Christian burial.

The story of how this land was prepared for cemetery use was sketched in a remembrance published during the 1930's in a Burlington newspaper. An extract follows:

"It was on Thanksgiving Day, when more than 200 parishioners answered Father Cloarec's call to clear the land of brush and grade the half-dozen acres which from the casual observance (sic) appeared like a colossal job. But, encouraged by the good Father, men and boys with horses, plows, picks, shovels, saws and rakes went at their jobs with a will such as was never before or since witnessed. Among the most enthusiastic was a Mr. Forand, who, with his pair of fine dapple grays drawing a double plow, did yeoman service. Others prominent in the parish in those days and who joined in the work included the Cabanas, Varennes, Bacons, St. Pierres, Rousseaus, Menards, Lucks, Laurents, Saltuses, Langlois, Duhamels, Limoges, Parents, Beaupres, Ruels, Gosse/ins, Turcots, Robilliards, Lamoras (Lamoureux), Beausoleils, Nantells, and scores of others who labored assiduously from 7 o'clock in the morning until darkness set in.

It was a most wonderful sight to behold as the 200 or more men and boys knelt as the good Father gave them his blessing, followed by a loud chorus of hurrahs which closed the day's labor.

Wages were very meagre in those days, and the parish receipts were hardly sufficient to meet expenses. Hence the call for assistance in grading the new burial

grounds, which was responded to with loyalty, devotion and love on the part of all toward their devoted pastor:'

From its beginning in 1878, Mount Calvary Cemetery was supervised and managed by the pastors of St. Joseph Church, until an association was established in 1936. Fr. Cloarec started an account book in 1878 with the purchase of the land. It recorded the sale of lots and cemetery expenses until 1933 when it was ended shortly after the death of Fr. Proulx. A separate journal was kept to record the collection of the annual \$1.00 stipend for the cemetery care before the days of endowments or perpetual care agreements.

In the first year, 1878, three large family lots were sold to Joseph Gratton, Stephen Martel and Joseph Roberge, in that order. In addition, nine other regular lots were sold at \$2.00 each, and four small lots ("petites fesses") at \$1.00 each, during that first year. The first recorded burial was that of Elizabeth Chasse, four years of age, daughter of Moise Chasse and Juliette Valiere, August 2, 1878. By 1880 a "fosseyeur" (gravedigger) was employed. In 1884-85 it was Candide Leclair. Mr. St. Jacques is mentioned in this position starting in 1887, followed by Rene Lavoie who held this position until his death in 1902. Wages were based on the number of graves opened and on other duties.

Louis Gagnon, who succeeded Rene Lavoie, was the first caretaker provided with a regular weekly salary plus any extra help needed during the summer season. He was succeeded by Henry Lander in 1918 and by Joseph L. Deforg from 1928 through 1936.

MOUNT CALVARY ANNEX (POMEROY STREET)

After forty years, lots were no longer available in old Mount Calvary Cemetery and another cemetery was needed. An exchange was arranged with The Ladies of Nazareth for a large plot of land, consisting of about three acres located on the south side of Pomeroy Street across from the original cemetery. The Burlington firm of McIntosh & Crandall, Civil Engineers, was engaged in 1920 to draw up a plan for dividing the land into grave lots in an organized manner. The result was 90 lots consisting of 740 future grave sites. In the summer of 1921, this Mount Calvary Cemetery Annex was fenced in and seeded.

NEW MOUNT CALVARY CEMETERY (PLATTSBURG AVENUE)

The subject of expansion was addressed once again when, in 1935, the Valade Farm off North Avenue became available. Louis and Josephine Valade and their young family had come from Plattsburgh, NY, where Valade had worked as a blacksmith, to settle in Burlington in 1915.

Mrs. Valade died in August 1935 during negotiations for this land, and was laid to rest temporarily in the Luck family lot in the old cemetery.

One year later, on August 15, 1936, Louis Valade deeded a large parcel of his farmland to the diocese for the sum of \$6,500. This became known as the New Mount Calvary Cemetery. The property ran along the easterly line of Plattsburg Avenue for nearly a 1,040-foot frontage and had a depth of almost 600 feet, comprising more than fifteen acres.

Valade retained his house and barns with a piece of land at the northern end of the cemetery. He resided there until his death in November 1937 at the age of seventy-nine. Mr. and Mrs. Valade were then laid to rest together in a large family lot in the new cemetery which was once their farmland. Even though the New Mount Calvary Cemetery has been in use since 1936, there is sufficient space today for another 35 years at the present rate of burials. A special lot has been reserved in this cemetery for the deposit of ashes, since we have now entered an era when cremations are not uncommon.

This cemetery is well designed and landscaped and on the avenue side is enclosed by a high iron fence with heavy gateways of native redstone. Unlike the earlier cemeteries, this one has not been solemnly consecrated but each grave is blessed at the time of its use.

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At the time this third cemetery was added to St. Joseph Parish, it became evident that the pastor needed relief in management and supervision. In November 1936, Fr. Parisseau along with Eugene A. Luck, Arthur R. St. Pierre and Victor A. Bergeron, drew up Articles of Association to organize the Mount Calvary Cemetery Association, Inc. It was created as a permanent organization for the sole purpose of aiding in the management, care and embellishment of the Mount Calvary Cemeteries in Burlington. Although its title rests with the Roman Catholic Diocese of Burlington, the cemetery is expressly used for the burial purposes of St. Joseph Parish.



Mount Calvary Cemetery Association, Trustees during Parish 125th Anniversary Celebration

After the retirement of Joseph Deforge as caretaker, the new association hired Joseph L. Myers as cemetery superintendent in 1937. After his death in 1958, his son Bernard Myers succeeded him for about a year, and was in turn succeeded by his brother, Harvey, who came back to live in the old caretaker's house at 253 Archibald Street where he resides today. The brick portion of this house was the 1850 St. Joseph Rectory. At this point in time, 1987, the Myers family have faithfully served the parish for 50 years in the care and management of the Mount Calvary Cemeteries. In 1938, under Joseph Myers, a new cemetery indexing card system was established for all interments. It supplemented the original cemetery map, which showed lot ownership but not necessarily all interments.



Old St. Joseph Rectory, presently Residence of Mount Calvary Cemeteries Caretaker

This cemetery plan of 1906 shows Lots 855 and 856 as owned by St. Joseph Church. These are the lots thought to have been the site of the 1835 chapel. Six Breton priests are buried there. Fr. Yvinec's burial was the first, May 31, 1892 "in a chapel." Fr. J.M. Duglue was buried there in 1897, Fr. J.M. Coathuel in 1902, Fr. Jean Louis Marie Cam in 1903, Fr. Jerome Gelot in 1904 and Fr. Jean Gelot in 1907. These burials filled the two lots.

The cemetery account book for November 7, 1900 (the year the 1850 church was disassembled) shows an entry to the effect that \$396 was received to fix the cemetery and that \$159.69 was spent for this purpose. In 1902, an entry indicates that \$100 was received from Fr. Duglue for the priests' lot. This sum must have come from Fr. Duglue's estate. These entries encourage the speculation that the old chapel was taken down at about the same time as the 1850 church and that the marble monument was erected to mark the graves of the priests already buried there.

The names of the priests are inscribed on the four sides of the large marble base, surmounted by a large marble cross. There are simple prayers in French, English, Latin and Breton. The Breton words are "Pedit evidon" (Pray for him). The monument stands in the northeast section of the cemetery.



Monument to Six Breton Priests

Elsewhere in this cemetery is the Marion family lot where Msgr. Edmund Marion, former pastor of St. Anthony Church in Burlington, is buried beside his parents. Near the center of this cemetery there is a special area for the Ladies of Nazareth, the Daughters of the Heart of Mary. This area became filled and five of the Sisters were

buried in a special area in the New Mount Calvary Cemetery on Plattsburg Avenue.

In 1898, while Rene Lavoie, caretaker, and his family were occupying the old former rectory at St. Joseph on the Hill, Theophile Gravel and his wife, Sophronie Giguere, came to live with them temporarily while locating a permanent home. They came from Beauport, in Canada. Their two sons, Francois and Albert, had preceded them to Vermont and were married at St. Joseph Church in a double wedding on June 20, 1893. Francois married Ermeline Lavoie, daughter of Rene and Delina (Bouchard) Lavoie, and Albert married Eva Latulippe, daughter of Etienne and Marie (Lamothe) Latulippe. Thus it came about that Theophile Gravel lodged with the parents of his son's wife in the old rectory. This is typical of the way the French Canadians helped each other to become established in the United States.

Later, in 1903, Theophile's daughter, Anna Gravel, married Alexandre Verret at St. Joseph Church and the parish gained the future membership of their five children - Cyril, Elizabeth, John, Vivienne and Albert. Alex is well remembered in the parish for his contributions and services. He came to Vermont from Ancienne Lorette, Province of Quebec.

Albert and Eva Gravel enriched the parish with ten children, four of whom are still in the parish - Marie and Margaret Gravel, Della Dubrule, and Clarke Gravel, the attorney and former probate judge.

**TO LIVE IN HEARTS WE LEAVE BEHIND
IS NOT TO DIE**