

West Hartford's FAIRVIEW CEMETERY

*A Beautiful Tract
of Seventy-one Acres*

On December 3, 1894 *The Hartford Courant* published a glowing report about the new cemetery in West Hartford named "Fairview." The town purchased the land, with rolling hills and a stream, from Charles M. Pond, who earlier that year had donated Elizabeth Park to the City of Hartford.

By the 1890s the number of available burial plots in West Hartford's two cemeteries were few. Only a new parcel would fill future needs. In 1893 the Burying Ground Committee, of William Hall (see #10), Edward Keeney, and Joseph Brace, recommended that the town purchase the Pond parcel for \$6,000. Keeney gave the town land for an access road leading from Farmington Avenue, picked the street name—Pleasant Street, and planted trees. The town hired Wolcott & Darby to produce a topographical map.

**JOSEPH ALEX McCLUNIE (1853-1919),
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT**

Joseph Alex McClunie, designer of Fairview Cemetery, was born into a family of landscape architects. His father, Thomas Brown McClunie, designed the Charles M. Pond estate, now Elizabeth Park. Joseph and brother Thomas were florists and large event decorators.

The committee asked that Fairview be designed in the "lawn plan," a style that uses large, open expanses of grass with scattered gravestones to give a more park-like look. McClunie created curving roadways to accentuate the picturesque nature of the site.



The original map shows a meadow, large shade trees, and proposed street cuts. Sections 1, 2, 3, and 11 were laid out in a "patchwork" pattern rather than in tightly

packed straight rows. The town appropriated \$2,000 for laying out the grounds.

EARLY CEMETARY OPERATIONS

The Burying Ground Committee lost no time in drafting by-laws, rules, and regulations for the new cemetery, adopted by the West Hartford Town Council October 3, 1893. Construction began laying out roadways and infrastructure for 790 plots. The committee voted in September 1898 to put \$100 into a permanent fund with interest used for maintenance. Maintenance was funded by both town appropriation and interest generated by deposits on burial plots.

By May, 1906 50 lots had been sold. For each lot sold, money was deposited into a bank account and a deed granting the buyer burial plot ownership was recorded on the town land records. Annually, money was withdrawn from each account for expenses. In 1924, the committee received \$196 from Mechanics Savings Bank drawn from deposits on 37 burial plots. The average annual withdrawal from each account was \$4.

New policies adopted in the 1920s included a vote against selling lots to out-of-town parties, except for those with direct ties to West Hartford.

Plot deposits

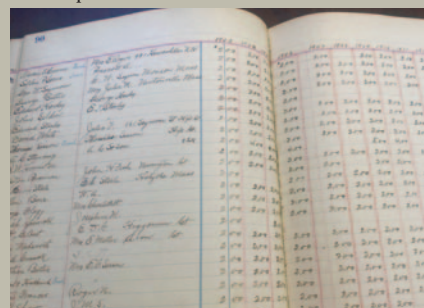
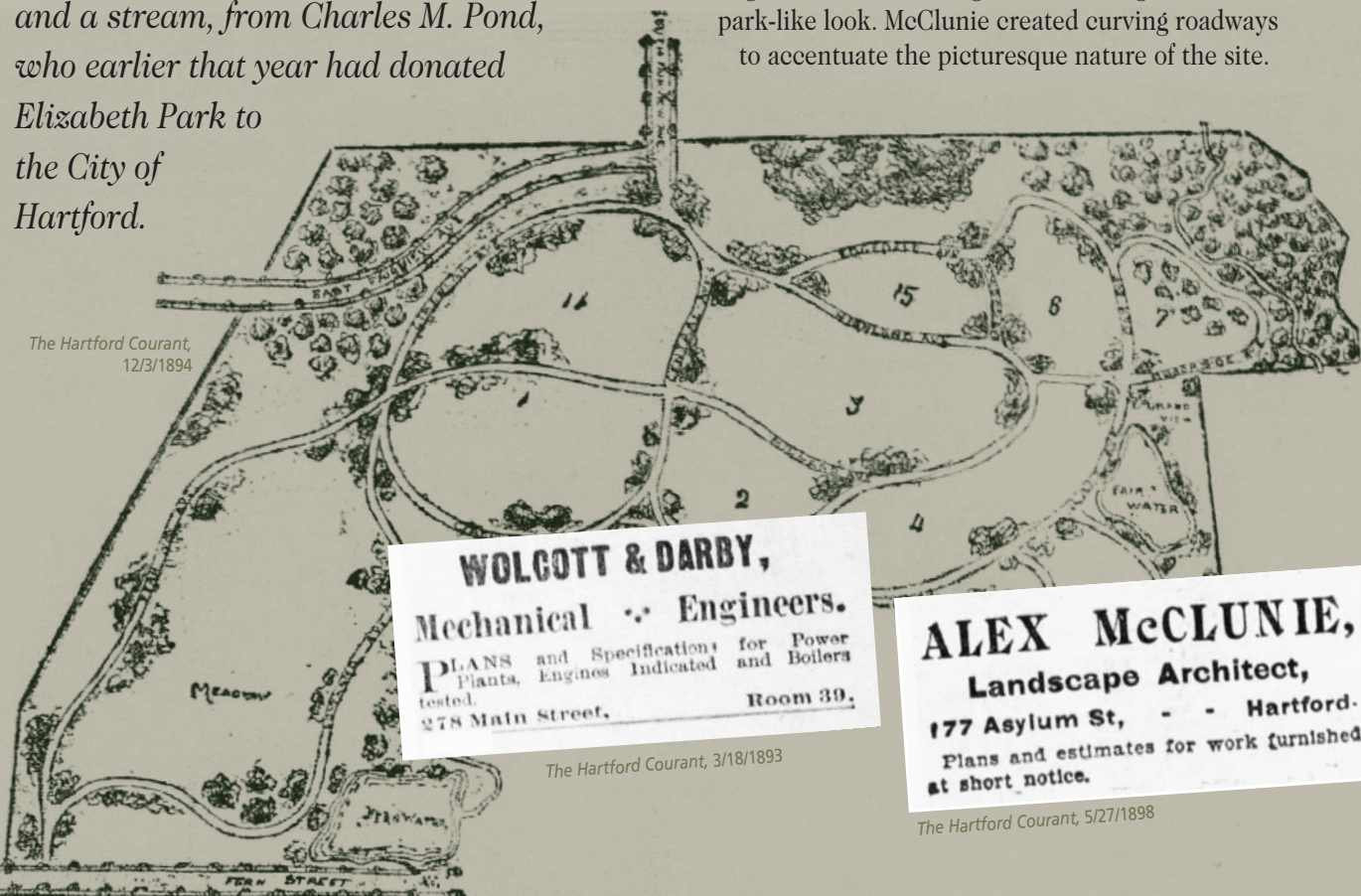


photo: West Hartford Cemetery Office

The Hartford Courant,
12/3/1894



**WOLCOTT & DARBY,
Mechanical Engineers.**
PLANS and Specifications for Power
Plants, Engines and Boilers
tested.
278 Main Street, Room 39.

The Hartford Courant, 3/18/1893

**ALEX McCLUNIE,
Landscape Architect,**
177 Asylum St. - - Hartford.
Plans and estimates for work furnished
at short notice.

The Hartford Courant, 5/27/1898



photo: West Hartford Cemetery Office

GRAVESTONE DESIGN FAMILY BURIAL PLOTS

In many cases, a family would purchase several contiguous lots—sometimes as many as a dozen. Large, specially designed ledgers recorded the buyer's information with the lot/section number and the land record citation. Each new burial was recorded on the plot's master page, sometimes spanning generations of the same family. A large gravestone with the family's last name would be placed on the plot and much smaller grave markers with individual names would be placed around it. Or, rather than having smaller stones, the name of each new person interred in the family plot would be added to the large central gravestone. There is only one family mausoleum in Fairview, the large red granite vault belonging to the Enders family.

GRAVESTONE DESIGN

Local stoneyards and monument markers advertised in city directories in the 19th and early 20th centuries.

Companies like Hartford's McGovern Granite Company and the Beij & Williams Company could produce large, handsome gravestones, monuments, and benches from granite using steam and electric powered machine-cutting and polishing tools. Most of the stones in

Fairview Cemetery are of granite: a durable stone that can be polished or more recently, laser etched. But marble and brownstone are also seen.

Veterans' gravestones, provided at no charge by the U.S. Veteran's Administration for individuals who have been honorably discharged, are typically of two types: upright markers are often of white marble and flat markers are of bronze metal or stone.



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THANK YOU to the West Hartford Cemetery office staff for their assistance.

200 Whitman Avenue West Hartford, CT 06107 860-561-8136
westhartfordct.gov/town-departments/fairview-cemetery

To search for individual names with locations, visit CEMETERY FIND at cemeteryfind.com/PublicSearch/BurialSearchFind-a-Grave Website

FIND-A-GRAVE is a free online database. It contains over 15,250 records and gravestone images from Fairview Cemetery. Search by name to find a specific memorial page: findagrave.com/ Available as a phone app.

ARCHIVES

West Hartford Public Library, Local History Room, 20 South Main St,
West Hartford, CT westhartfordlibrary.org/research/local-history-2/

Noah Webster House and West Hartford Historical Society,
227 South Main St, West Hartford, CT noahwebsterhouse.org/

PUBLISHED WEST HARTFORD HISTORIES

Celebrate! West Hartford, An Illustrated History,
Miriam Butterworth, Ellsworth Grant, and Richard Woodworth, 2001.

*From Colonial Parish to Modern Suburb, A brief appreciation
of West Hartford*, Nelson R. Burr, Revised edition, 1982

Life in West Hartford, Tracey M. Wilson, 2018

West Hartford, William H. Hall, 1930

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West Hartford's FAIRVIEW CEMETERY

*A Self-Guided Tour
of Notables & Memorials*



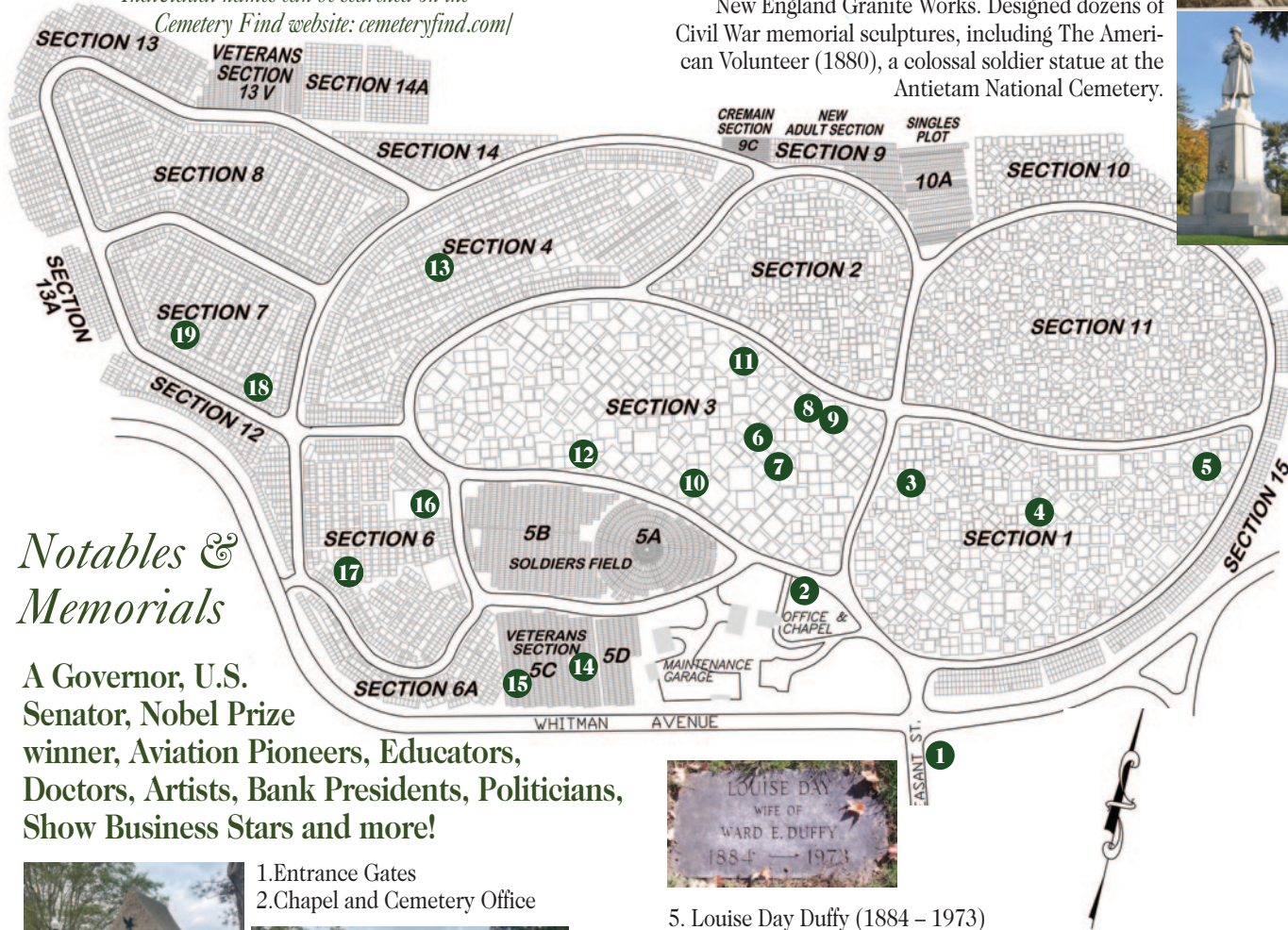
Mary M. Donohue,
West Hartford Town Historian



West Hartford's FAIRVIEW CEMETERY

The map is a general guide. For more detailed location information, use the Find-a-Grave website or contact the Fairview Cemetery office for detailed information.

Individual names can be searched on the Cemetery Find website: cemeteryfind.com/



Notables & Memorials

A Governor, U.S. Senator, Nobel Prize winner, Aviation Pioneers, Educators, Doctors, Artists, Bank Presidents, Politicians, Show Business Stars and more!



1. Entrance Gates
2. Chapel and Cemetery Office



11. John Ostrom Enders (1869 – 1988)
Dr. John Franklin Enders (1897 – 1985), Veteran
Section 3, Lot 110
John O. Enders: President, Hartford National Bank. Dr. John F. Enders: son of John O. Enders; virologist/ microbiologist called the “Father of Modern Vaccines”; received the 1954 Nobel Prize for Physiology or Medicine

as part of a 3-person team. A stone building ornamented with a Christian cross in the keystone surmounting the pediment. Heavy doors mark the entrance and stained-glass windows light the interior.

12. Dr. Nelson R. Burr (1905 – 1994)
Section 3, Lot 142
Appointed West Hartford’s first official town historian in 1986. Published *From Colonial Parish to Modern Suburb: A Brief Appreciation of West Hartford* (1976); wrote the text on the blue metal plaques at West Hartford historic sites.



13. Madeline McKernan (1930 – 2014),
Section 4, Lot 701SW
Educator for more than 60 years. Elected to the Board of Education in 1969; first woman chairman 1971 – 1973. Served on Town Council, 1985 – 1997; executive director of the West Hartford Bicentennial Committee in the 1970s.



14. War Dead Memorial, 1972
Section 5C, Veterans Section
Designed to honor the town’s war dead. Composed of a tall pentagonal shaft topped by an eternal flame set on a star-shaped base in a reflecting pool. Emblems of the five services are incised into the shaft. Commissioned from the Bejj, Williams and Zito Co. at a cost of \$6,500.

15. William Arthur Purtell (1897 – 1978),
Veteran
Section 5C, Lot 520
A 15-year-old high school dropout was co-founder of Holo-Krome Screw Co. in 1929. The first U. S. Senator elected from West Hartford (1953-1959).



photo: Find-A-Grave

photo: Find-A-Grave



3. Captain Ephraim Buel Root (1837 – 1924), Veteran
Thought to be the first man from West Hartford to enlist in the Civil War. Served as a captain of Company D from West Hartford, the 22nd Regiment, CT Volunteers.

4. Carl Henry Conrads (1839 – 1920), Veteran
German born sculptor and Civil War veteran. Moved to Hartford in 1866 to work for James G. Batterson at New England Granite Works. Designed dozens of Civil War memorial sculptures, including The American Volunteer (1880), a colossal soldier statue at the Antietam National Cemetery.



photo: Find-A-Grave



photo: National Park Service

6. Louis Windslow Slocum, Sr. (1883 – 1941)
Section 3, Lot 14
Member of the West Hartford Assessment Commission; son of Hartford City Treasurer Charles Slocum. Residential contractor who built over 300 upscale homes in West Hartford.



7. William Samuel Lines (1837 – 1911)
Section 3, Lot 63
Served as selectman and chairman of the town school board. Moved to West Hartford in the 1890s from New York City. *The Hartford Courant* describes this monument of Barre, Vermont granite as an “artistic memorial.” Designed and executed by the Presbrey-Coykendall Company in 1912. The boulder measures 8 x 6 ft and weighs 15 tons. Twelve horses were required to haul it to the cemetery where it was rolled into place. The one-ton angel is life-size. Memory is represented by the drooping lilies.



8. Ira Hobart Spencer (1873 – 1928)
Section 3, Lot 66
Spencer family plot
Founder of Spencer Turbine Co. in Elmwood. A talented inventor with about 100 patents. Large Classical-style family monument rests on a knoll giving it monumental presence.



9. Frank McHugh (1898 – 1981)
Dorothy Spencer McHugh (1905 – 1999)
Section 3, Lot 66
Spencer family plot
A thoroughly showbiz couple, Frank McHugh met Dorothy Spencer, a stage actress and daughter of Ira Spencer, in Hartford. McHugh starred in dozens of movies as a character actor and did USO tours for the troops during WWII.

photo: Find-A-Grave

10. William H. Hall (1845 – 1934)
Section 3, Lot 79
Teacher, principal, and superintendent in West Hartford’s public schools. First principal of West Hartford High School. Hall High School is named for him. Published the first modern history of West Hartford in 1930.

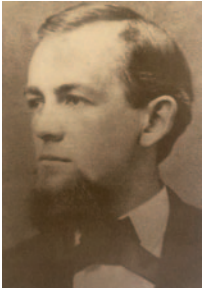


photo: Noah Webster House



5. Louise Day Duffy (1884 – 1973)
Ward Duffy (1891 – 1961), Veteran
Section 1, Lot 204
Louise Duffy: Smith College graduate and organizer of the West Hartford League of Women Voters; chair of the State Child Welfare Assoc.; and served on the Board of Education, 1938 – 1948. Duffy School was named after her in 1952. Ward Duffy: reporter and editor of *The Hartford Times* newspaper, 1921 – 1960.



16. Frederick Brant Rentschler (1887 – 1956), Veteran
Section 6, Lot A2
Founder of Wright Aeronautical Corp and United Aircraft Corp. (later United Technologies). Proponent of the air-cooled airplane engine and jet engines. Pratt & Whitney Stadium at Rentschler Field (2015) commemorates the original 1931 airfield named after him and his estate is Renbrook School.

photo: Find-A-Grave



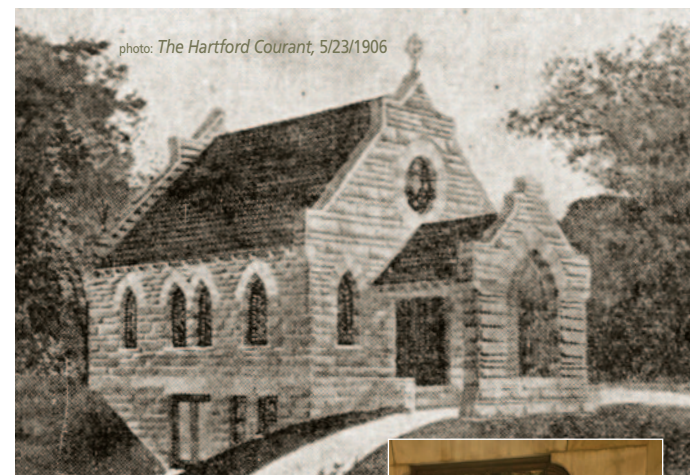
17. Robert Augustine Hurley (1895 – 1968), Veteran
Section 6, Lot 381
Governor of Connecticut (1941 – 1943), first Catholic to be elected governor; supporter of Franklin Roosevelt and the New Deal. Introduced programs to help workers and the unemployed; helped extend electrical service to rural areas. Secured “Connecticut’s Compact for Victory” that pledged “All of the industrial might and resources of Connecticut, the full production capacities of our plants, the skills and energies of our workers” to the war effort.

photo: Kaman.com



18. Charles Huron Kaman (1919 – 2011)
Roberta Hallock Kaman (1935 – 2010)
Section 7, Lot 280
Charles Kaman: founded the Kaman Corp. in his parents’ garage in 1945. Built his company into a forerunner in aviation production; in 1966 founded Ovation Guitar Company. Inducted into the National Inventors Hall of Fame. Founded, with Roberta, the Fideleo Guide Dog Foundation that provides trained service dogs to the visually impaired.

19. Dr. Richard Edwin Dunne, Sr. (1894 – 1946)
Dorothy Burns Dunne (1898 – 1974)
Section 7, Lot 414
Edwin Dunne: Son of an immigrant Irish Catholic family, graduated from Harvard Medical School in 1919. A highly skilled surgeon at St. Francis Hospital. Dorothy Burns Dunne: daughter of Irish-born Dominick Burns, Hartford merchant and bank founder. Parents of authors Dominick Dunne and John Dunne; grandparents to actor/director Griffin Dunne.



CHAPEL AND VAULT

Dedicated on Oct. 29, 1906, the handsome chapel and receiving vault is an architectural landmark. Built from course-laid stone from Canaan, Connecticut’s marble quarries, the gable-roofed chapel measures 24 x 30 feet. Designed for practical as well as spiritual purpose, the chapel is no longer in use but lower floor serves as an office. The basement receiving vault was equipped to hold 30 bodies when it was too cold to dig graves. The chapel could be used for funeral services and caskets could be moved into chapel by a hydraulic elevator.



The chapel has the hallmarks of the Gothic Revival style in its lancet windows, colorful stained glass, and heavy bronze doors. On the interior, the stained birch wood of the gabled ceiling contrasts with the white marble walls and tile floor. Simple but beautiful stained-glass rose windows in the end walls illuminate the sanctuary. A massive stone fireplace was intended to warm the building during services.

According to the *Hartford Courant*, the need for the building was discussed in the spring of 1894 after a severe winter. The committee met in William Lines’ house (see #7). The building committee hired the Kearney Construction Co. from Canaan, CT. Little is known about this company. One source says it was replaced by the New England Line Co. and work was overseen by A.V.A. Felton, a Canaan resident. The committee’s minutes listing each expense survive and state that Kearney Construction was paid \$7,455; the cost of architectural services as \$10.00. The name of the architect for this sophisticated chapel design was not recorded and remains a mystery.