Marrin Monument

St. Mary's Roman Catholic Cemetery, Winnipeg

The Marrin Family marker is a stunning example of Christian and natural symbolism – presented in a dazzling display of design and craftsmanship. Only the name Marrin, at the base of the monument, advises of the family heritage, which in fact is enumerated by at least 18 in-ground stones arrayed around the marker – starting with Father Philip A. (1847-1917) and Mother Amelia (1845-1931).

A closer look at the monument, which mostly appears as a typical Latin Cross, reveals hints of a different tradition – the Celtic Cross. The curved indents at the crossings, and the projecting knobs at those points, both suggest a more Irish sensibility (see opposite page) involving a cross enclosed in a circle. The other decorative aspect apparent on this remarkable granite stone involves the amazing floral presentations, carried out in remarkable detail – the fern fronds at the upper areas (conveying humility, frankness and sincerity) and the writhing forms of the daisies at the base of the cross (suggesting innocence). The cross also bears the letters IHS at the crossing, the Greek abbreviation for the name Jesus.

A second cross-topped monument at St. Mary's, just on the opposite side of the main path from the Marrin stone, marks the gravesite of the Bawlf Family, whose patriarch Nicholas (1849-1914) was a mainstay of the city's early grain trade. The elaborate Bawlf monument, carried out in red granite, holds a distinctly different cross – in this case the Pointed Cross or the Cross of Suffering, with the angled ends of the arms designed as reminders of Jesus' anguish.

Victorian Funerary Traditions
THE CELTIC CROSS

Since the time of the Roman Emperor Constantine (ruled 306-337 AD), who accepted Christianity and is said to have popularized the use of the cross as the primary symbol of that faith, the cross has undergone a profound exploration of form and detail as it has come to express the multitude of Christian beliefs and traditions. At a basic level, two distinct versions of the cross can be seen to define the two major strains of Christianity – Catholic and Protestant. In the Catholic faith, be it Roman, Ukrainian or otherwise, the cross—in this case called a crucifix—is displayed with Christ's crucified body attached to remind viewers of His sacrifice. The empty cross, without the body, is more often associated with Protestant faith, and is a reminder of Christ's resurrection from the dead. There are dozens of cross types used in cemeteries, all having evolved from three types: the Latin Cross, which looks like a lower case letter t; the Greek Cross, which looks like the mathematical sign for addition; and the Celtic Cross, which consists of a circle connecting the four arms of the cross.

The Celtic Cross is pagan in origin, predating Christianity by a number of centuries, but its two constituent parts were readily adaptable to the new faith. The pagan form featured a cross shape—representing male reproduction—enclosed within a circle, representing female reproductive power. As the Celts in what is now Ireland, Scotland, Wales and England began to convert to Christianity in the 5th century AD, at the behest of St. Patrick, the shapes were adjusted, so that the cross shape got larger and the circle smaller. The Celtic Cross is one of the most effervescent of forms in a cemetery—and given its Celtic roots it typically marks those of Irish or Scottish ancestry—its tall, slender form topped with the cross and nimbus, and also often writhing with the kind of intricate tracery and symbolism associated with Celtic culture. Besides the Celtic Cross, Irish gravemarker designs sometimes feature the traditional knotwork that was renowned in biblical illuminations like the 9th-century *Book of Kells*. The example featured here, from St. John's Anglican Cathedral Cemetery in Winnipeg, suggests the power and delight inherent in the form.

Ross Stone

Brookside Cemetery, Winnipeg

The gravemarker for Charlotte Ross is one of six impressive red-granite shafts in a northern section of Brookside Cemetery. All clearly mark a person or family of significance, but the Ross stone, laid about with in-ground markers for many family members, is exceptional – the resting place for Manitoba's first female physician.

Dr. Ross's life was unconventional from the beginning and almost to the end. Born in Darlington England in 1843, Charlotte and her family emigrated to Canada in 1848, settling in Huron County, Upper Canada. When Charlotte was seven years old, both her mother and her younger brother died within three weeks of each other due to diphtheria. An excellent student, Charlotte was encouraged to study medicine by the family physician Dr. Hales Hington. She married Donald Ross, a Canadian Pacific Railway employee, at the age of 18. With the understanding that her husband's work on the railway out west would mean that her family would have little access to medical care, she decided to enroll at the Women's Medical College of Philadelphia in 1870, as no Canadian medical college was open to women at that time. Although she was qualified to practice medicine she was, like all other female doctors of the time, not allowed to practice. Undeterred by this apparently insurmountable obstacle, she defied the establishment and got on with her life's work. She started her career in Montreal and eventually joined her husband in Whitemouth, Manitoba, where she worked, tirelessly, for 30 years, all the while without a license.

Dr. Ross's life in eastern Manitoba was a barely controlled whirlwind. She undertook typical doctorly duties, doing so via train, car, canoe, wagon, sleigh, or on foot. She also tended to the hundreds of men in the area working on railway crews and in timber camps, many of whom invariably suffered grisly injuries, and some of whom required amputations. Any and all medical procedures were carried out by the indomitable Dr. Ross. She was known to have steely nerves and a sharp mind—she was nicknamed Iron Rose—but she was also remembered for her big heart. After delivering babies at families' homes, Ross would often clean the new parents' house and cook meals, just to ensure that an exhausted mother could enjoy a few day's rest. Dr. Ross's obituary, which appeared in the February 22, 1916 edition of the *Winnipeg Free Press*, concluded that while she was a "woman of extraordinary intellect and powers of endurance [she had succumbed] at her present age [due] to excessive labours in the pioneer days of this province." That may have been true, but she still lived a full and vibrant 73 years.

Charlotte Ross (at left) with her father, step-mother and children, ca. 1890. (Archives of Manitoba)

I Remember

ARCHAIC DEFINITIONS OF DISEASE AND DEATH

Dr. Charlotte Ross would have been conversant with medical dictionaries of the late 19th century, and their strange words and descriptions of diseases and causes of death, including the following abbreviated catalogue. It is often these terms that will appear in newspaper obituaries of the day.

Agony. Severe pain or extreme suffering; old term for the period just before death occurs, this was thought to be a time of extreme pain

Apoplexy. A disease produced by congestion or rupture of the vessels of the brain, and causing a sudden arrest of sense and motion, the person lying as if asleep, respiration and the heart's action continuing

Aglutition. Inability to swallow, frequently found on death certificates

Brain Fever. Inflammation of the brain, as in encephalitis or meningitis

Bright's Disease. Inflammation of the kidneys, in its acute form called nephritis

Catarrh. Inflammation of the mucous membrane which causes profuse running of the eyes and nose

Dropsy. A preternatural swelling of the whole body, or some part of it, occasioned by a collection of watery humour; distinguished by different names, according to the part affected, or a collection of water under the skin; the ascites, or a collection of water in the belly

Erysiphelas. St. Anthony's Fire; a skin disease caused by strep infection which devastates the blood

Galloping Consumption. *Phthisis pulmonalis*, which rapidly runs through its course to a fatal termination

Hysteria. A nervous affection, occurring almost exclusively in women, in which the emotional and reflex excitability is exaggerated, and the will power correspondingly diminished, so that the patient loses control over the emotions, becomes the victim of imaginary sensations

Inflammation [of the]. A morbid condition of any part of the body, consisting in congestion of the blood vessels, with obstruction of the blood current, and growth of morbid tissue; it is manifested outwardly by redness and swelling, attended with heat and pain

Puerperal exhaustion. Death due to childbirth

Putrid Fever. Diphtheria

Quinsy. Pus-filled swelling (i.e. an abscess) in the soft palate around the tonsils, usually as a complication of tonsillitis; can be fatal because of septicaemia or obstruction of the breathing passages

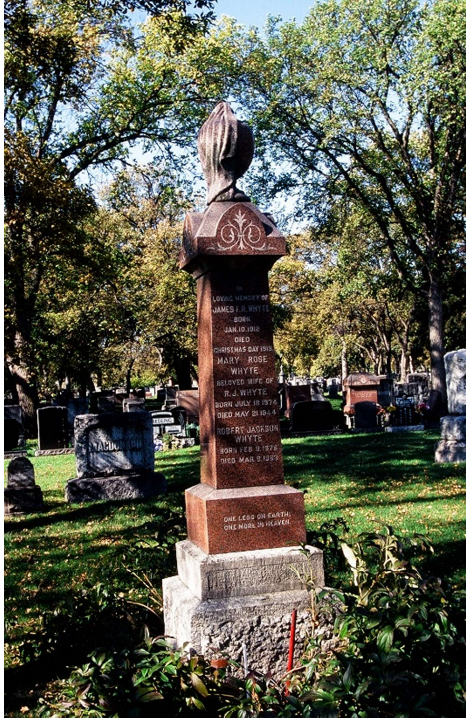
Scrofula. Tuberculosis of neck lymph glands; progresses slowly with abscesses and pustules; young person's disease

St. Vitus Dance. Cholera – primarily in children, a bacterial or organic degeneration, irregular or jerky, involuntary muscular movements

Swamp Sickness. Malaria, typhoid or encephalitis

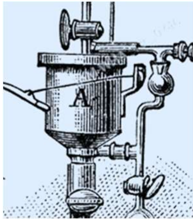
Whyte Stone

Elmwood Cemetery, Winnipeg



A handsome, but typical, granite shaft would not usually arouse much more interest than a passing appreciation of the draped urn motif atop the marker, and the incised plant motif in the top cresting. But adding a second more to the viewing would bring a viewer to the text underneath: "In Loving Memory of James F.R. Whyte, born Jan. 10, 1912, Died Christmas Day 1919." Poor James Whyte would not make it to his seventh birthday, and given the date of death in 1919 might have succumbed to the Spanish Flu that was cutting down the young at an astonishing rate. The marker includes in its base these words: "One less on earth. One more in heaven." And it also notes James's parents: Mary Rose (1874-1944) and Robert Jackson (1875-1963). The coincidence of their child's death on what should have been such a joyous occasion must have rocked the world of Mary and Robert Whyte. Surely they must have forever after looked on Christmas Day with dread and fear. And the Victorian era was a period ripe with fears and superstitions, especially as they attached to death and funerals. Many Victorians believed in death omens, such as seeing themselves in dreams, seeing an owl during the day, finding a single snowdrop in a garden, or seeing a sparrow land on a piano. It was believed that mirrors held special powers in relation to the spirit. When a member of a household passed away their body would be kept inside the home until burial, a tradition that came to be called the wake. Many Victorians believed that during this time it was necessary to cover all the mirrors in the home with heavy black cloth to prevent the spirit of the deceased from becoming trapped in a mirror. Clocks were believed to hold a special relationship to life and death. When someone passed away it was customary for the family to stop all the clocks in the household. This practice was believed to prevent anyone else in the family from experiencing a run of bad luck, and it was a symbolic act meant to represent the families in mourning. Clocks were usually reset after the deceased was buried. The superstitions surrounding Victorian death did not end once the body was removed from the home. Many Victorians believed that it was bad luck to cross paths with a funeral procession. If someone was traveling on a road and observed a procession headed toward them, they were expected to turn around and head the other way. In cases where this was not possible it was believed that tightly holding on to a button could ward off some of the negative effects of meeting the procession head on.

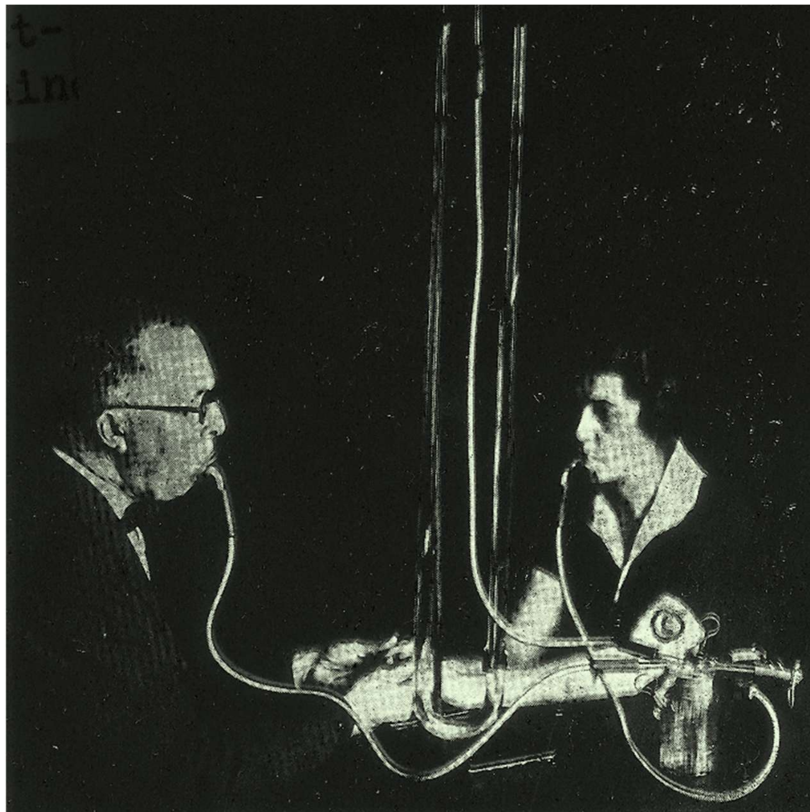
Another gravemarker in Elmwood Cemetery—a rare recumbent design (see Cockran entry page 20 for more information on this type)—reveals another sad coincidence – this for the Fraser Family. The marker is for Elizabeth Olive Mary Fraser, born on April 24th, 1885, and advises that she died January 29th, 1905, but that she was only "Laid to Rest on Her 20th Birthday, Easter Monday 1905." That's a hard coincidence for a family to have to deal with, year in and year out.



Victorian Funerary Inventions
IDIONECROPHONY DEVICES

Another burial site in Elmwood Cemetery holds Thomas Glendenning Hamilton, whose home and medical practice still stands just across the street from the cemetery, on Henderson Highway. Hamilton was a much-respected physician during his day (born in 1873 and dying in 1935), Fellow of the American College of Surgeons, President of the Manitoba Medical Association and Member of the Manitoba Legislature. But it was a more unusual personal pursuit—as a spiritualist—that we know him best today. For Dr. Hamilton is best known for his research and photographs, undertaken between 1918 and 1934, into ectoplasm, a dripping, lumpy, doughy substance that he theorized was the physical manifestation of the dead. A famous image from this work, at right, shows the medium Mary Marshall with ectoplasm escaping from her nose. Of course modern eyes will immediately see the tissue paper and cut-out heads from newspapers that form the discharge, but many people at the time were convinced of such a photograph's authenticity.

It is very likely that Dr. Hamilton was very aware of the latest "advances" in spiritual and psychic research at the time. For example – talking to the dead. Those who accept idionecrophany, the technical term for the belief, begin with the common religious tenet that the body has a soul or spirit, a non-physical aspect that possesses both some form of life and perception or consciousness. It is from this core that believers, especially in the first decades of the 20th century, undertook scores of experiments, and even devised machinery, to facilitate this work. One such device, below, was created in the United States in the 1920s – its success is unknown.



Alperstein Stone

Shaarey Zedek Jewish Cemetery, Winnipeg

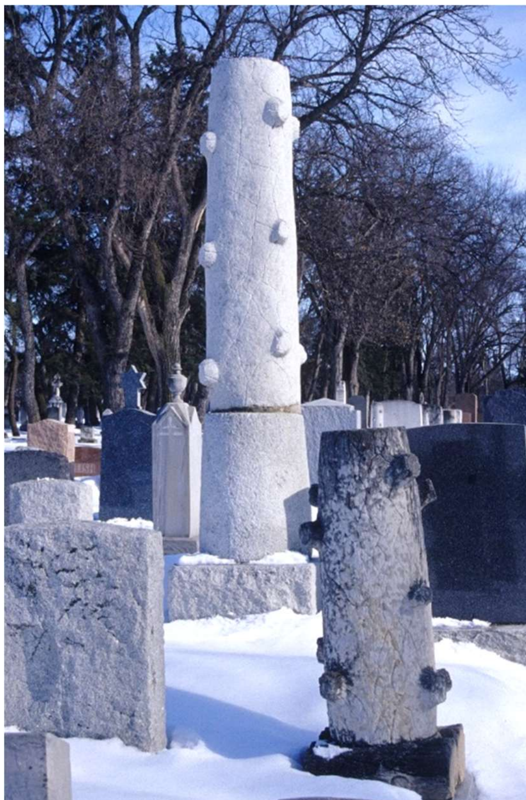
During the province's pioneer era, when death was ubiquitous, especially for children, and life expectancy even for adults was low—50 years in 1900—it is always astonishing to find a marker for an impressively aged individual – someone who made it into their 80s or even 90s. It is extremely rare of course to encounter a stone from this period that marks a centenarian.

But we find two such stones at Shaarey Zedek Cemetery in Winnipeg. The older of the two is for M. Alperstein (right), who died on July 14th, 1921, aged 108 years. That means he was born in about 1813 – when Napoleon was still causing mischief in Europe, including the now-famous Battle at Leipzig, where French forces were defeated by the alliance of Prussia, Russia and Austria. Mr. Alperstein's marker is quite plain – with the Hebrew followed by the English text, along with the Star of David and ivy leaves running across the top. The second stone is for Max Freedman (below), who died September 25th, 1946, aged 101 years. Mr. Freedman was thus born in 1845 – when the famous Franklin Expedition embarked for its ill-fated exploration of the Northwest Passage, and was just a youngster when the great nationalist revolutions of 1848 convulsed France, Italy and various German principalities.

For a meditation on old age, we can turn to the oldest extant medical book of China, or anywhere, the *Huang Ti Nei Ching Su Wen* (*The Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine*) written around 1,500 B.C. or 3,500 years ago. That treatise has this to say about old age and death: "When a man grows old his bones become dry and brittle like straw, his flesh sags and there is much air within his thorax, and pains within his stomach; there is an uncomfortable feeling within his heart, the nape of his neck and the top of his shoulders are contracted, his body burns with fever, his bones are stripped and laid bare of flesh and his eyes bulge and sag. When then the pulse of the liver can be seen but they can no longer recognize a seam, death will strike. The limit if a man's life can be perceived when a man can no longer overcome his diseases; then his time of death has arrived." Not much can really be added to this description 3,500 years later. It's possible to refine it with modern diagnoses of the elderly. Perhaps the dry bones are osteoporosis. Air in the thorax may be emphysema. The body burning with fever may be the result of urinary tract infections. It's possible that the uncomfortable feeling in the heart is angina. But the underlying sense, that the old succumb to a welter of afflictions, has not changed over the millennia. In our own day, when the greatly aged are more numerous than at any time before, it seems as if we all will attain that exalted status. In centuries past, however, when so many threats to life abounded—disease, accident, war, famine—those who reached their eighties, nineties and even into their hundreds, must have been remarkable to imagine; and something to behold.

I Remember
THE BODY AFTER DEATH

Living past the age of 100 years, as Messrs. Alperstein and Freedman did, undoubtedly brought the kinds of aches and pains that even a 70-year old would have found unfamiliar. And one can suppose that these aged gentlemen would have long contemplated the final breakdown of their own bodies at death. When death occurs, the body needs to be prepared and moved in a seemly and proper fashion from the place of demise to a funeral home. And it needs to be done quickly, because the body begins to decompose immediately. And it's not pretty: Upon the cessation of functioning of the main organs, body temperature drops and circulation stops. The skin pales, taking on a yellow-coloured, waxy appearance. Within an hour *livor mortis* or hypostatis sets in. The eyes become flat and blue patches begin to appear, especially at the extremities. The body is now blotchy. After five or six hours the blotches meld together but if pressed, the skin turns white. Ten to twelve hours after death, the blue colour remains even when the skin is pressed. In the meantime, body temperature continues to cool. After eight to 12 hours the outer body temperature has reached that of its surroundings. The centre of the body takes three times as long to cool. Next, the muscles relax, then stiffen. A state of *rigor mortis* has been achieved. This process starts in the face and spreads across the entire body. The body can stay this way for up to three days. The next stage is putrefaction. As it begins, the body heats as a result of metabolic activity of bacteria and decomposing organs. The skin, starting at the abdomen, turns green. As the body putrefies the face swells and is unrecognizable. A foul odour develops and bacteria in the intestines form gases that bloat the entire body. The skin turns black as tongue and eyes protrude. The intestines are pushed out of the body. Next the skin blisters, detaches and bursts; internal organs break open and liquefy and the body begins to leak from all orifices.

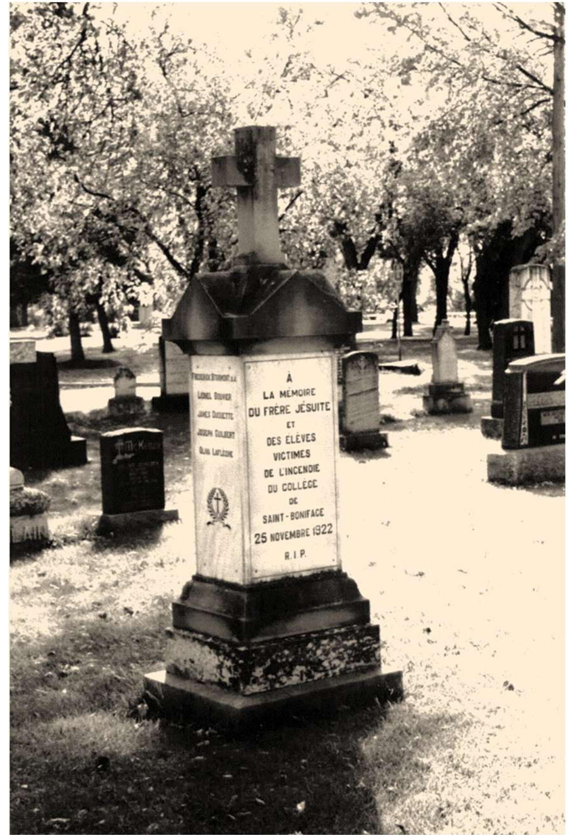


While Shaarey Zedek Cemetery contains the important stones of centenarians—M. Alperstein and Max Freedman—it also laments the loss of much younger people, and conveys that message via a familiar motif: the tree-stone. These impressive gravemarkers employ the broken or shorn tree as a symbol – to suggest a life cut short, or to remind viewers of the brevity of life. Unlike the exuberant and highly detailed tree-stones in Christian cemeteries (see Anderson Marker in Miami Cemetery, page 138) the tree-stones in Jewish graveyards, like these two in Shaarey Zedek—one tall, one short—are nearly always reduced to the basic qualities: a simple stump with the missing limbs suggested by close-cut stumps. They are certainly grand, but the shorn stumps convey ongoing pain.

St. Boniface Fire Monument

St. Boniface Roman Catholic Cathedral Cemetery, Winnipeg

A terrible fire at St. Boniface College in November of 1922 claimed the lives of a serving brother and nine children – all of whose names are inscribed on a grand stone at St. Boniface Roman Catholic Cathedral Cemetery. Accounts of the day recorded that Oliva Laflèche escaped the inferno but returned to rescue friends and died, and that the youngest victims, Léopold Tremblay and John McGlynn, panicked and fled to the school tower and were never seen again.



At the inquest held shortly after the tragedy, a number of difficult observations were made public, which threw the fire into even greater horror. First, it was found that the college's fire safety practices were inadequate. The school did not do fire drills, nor did they have emergency evacuation plans in place. The building had been cited for faulty and illegal wiring that had never been corrected. A second finding noted that in the confusion nobody actually phoned the fire department. Instead, a staff member was sent on foot, without shoes, to the St. Boniface Fire Hall to retrieve the fire brigade. There was conflicting testimony about the length of time it took for firefighters to arrive on scene, although it appeared that they came as soon as they could after the messenger arrived. When they did arrive. the brigade was hampered by a lack of proper equipment. Weeks earlier their main ladder truck had been demolished in an accident A replacement engine's small ladders could not reach the college's higher floors and the vehicle did not come equipped with safety nets. Firemen had to learn on-scene how to work some of the engine's pumps. Another complaint focused on the city's infrastructure – the water mains were too small for such a large draw on the water supply, and at times there was no water pressure. A call went out from the fire hall to the city engineer to turn the water pressure to high but initially he refused saying only the fire chief himself was authorized to give that instruction. It took 55 minutes after that call for the pressure to be increased. Though some fire equipment and personnel were dispatched from Winnipeg to assist, in those all-important first few minutes at the scene the tiny St. Boniface fire department was outmanned. At times hoses were left unattended as the men ran to rescue screaming schoolchildren who were fleeing the building or jumping form its windows. As for a cause, it was ultimately found that careless smoking in the boys' washroom had started the blaze. Two masses were held for the victims. The first, a memorial requiem mass, was held on November 30th and drew 4,000 people to St. Boniface Cathedral, which had its facade draped in black fabric. The actual funeral mass was held on December 5th. A cortège went from the College to two local funeral homes and ended at the Cathedral. Only one of the bodies, that of 15-year-old William Taylor, could be positively identified, but his parents decided against a separate burial place. The remains of all ten victims were interred in one grave – marked by this memorial.

I Remember
DEATH BY FIRE

Death in a fire was shockingly common in the late 1800s and early 1900s. And the circumstances and details recounted in the following accounts are harrowing.

"On Tuesday week, a child four years of age was burnt to death at Gloucester. Its father and brother were off in the fields, and the mother had kindled a fire and gone out early in the morning to milk the cows. The poor woman was returning to the house when she met her little one running towards her enveloped in flames. She clasped it in her arms and carried it into the house; but it was too severely injured to admit of hopes being entertained of its recovery, and died the following evening." (From *The Nor'Wester*, August 14, 1860)

"In March 1874, James and another son, Arnold, were on the farm cutting logs in preparation for a new house for the family. During the night of April 3, 1874, the shanty took fire. Robert Stevenson managed to get out, but his sons perished. He was unable to rescue them. He hitched his horses to the sleigh and tumbled in. It was bitterly cold and his clothing was burned off him. He headed the team for the Boyne Settlement twelve miles away. At 7 AM the next morning he arrived at the James Campbell homestead. These people did their best to ease his suffering. He was taken to the Red River settlement, where he passed away on April 23, 1874." (*From The Rural Municipality of Dufferin*)

"Mr. E.W. Griffith of Riviere Salle, gives the following particulars concerning the sad death of Mrs. Robert Addison, who was burned to death on Monday, 21st, inst: In the forenoon of that day she had been out with her husband, who resides near Blythfield about 25 miles southwest of Winnipeg, while he was burning around his stacks. Observing that the fire was spreading in the direction of the house, Mrs. Addison started to return home in order to save the children from alarm. Her husband afterwards saw a woman at the house and thought she had arrived home safe, but as he was going home at noon he found about a quarter of a mile from the house the dead body of his wife, burned almost beyond recognition. Mr. Addison has lost all his hay and some twenty acres of wheat, or about half his crop." (From *Manitoba Free Press*, September 30, 1885)

"By 1906 Harry Payne was advertising his restaurant on Main Street selling groceries and confectionary and serving meals. In November 1907 tragedy took place. Mrs. Payne who was cleaning the shop in the evening upset a coal oil lamp off a shelf and the burning oils set her clothes on fire. She ran from the store fanning the flames and by the time the fire was extinguished she was so badly burned that despite the efforts of Dr. Gahan and friends she died the same night." (From *A Century of Living. Hartney*)

"1908 – A terrible tragedy occurred 18 miles northwest of Manitou when Mr. and Mrs. Edward Carey, six of their children, from 9 to 18, and Miss Mary Gillespie were burned to death in a house fire. Inferior coal oil was used to start a fire and was the cause of this great tragedy. Herbert Carey, 17, was the only survivor, having been in the barn doing chores." (From *In Rhythm With Our Roots. Manitou and Area*)

Left – the smouldering ruins of St. Boniface College, November 26, 1922. (Meyers Photo)

Eng Soon Chung Stone

Brookside Cemetery, Winnipeg

The use of distinct alphabets—for example Latin (for English, and with slight letter variations for French, German, Italian, and other European countries), Cyrillic (Russian, Ukrainian, Balkan territories) or Syllabics (used by Aboriginal Cree peoples, including Naskapi in Quebec, along with Eastern Cree, Woods Cree, Swampy Cree and Plains Cree, as well as Inuktitut in the eastern Arctic), are important means to preserve and even promote a culture in a cemetery. In Manitoba we can find all of these writing systems on our gravemarkers – a reminder of our interesting and varied origins.

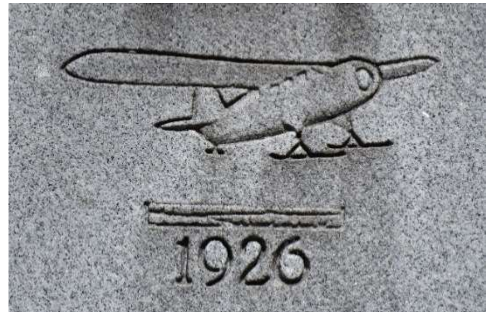
A major writing system not often seen on a historic Manitoba is the Chinese alphabet, more often called Chinese characters. Chinese characters constitute the oldest continuously used system of writing in the world, and are the basis of writing throughout East Asia. Chinese characters number in the tens of thousands, although most of them are minor graphic variants encountered only in historical texts. Unlike an alphabet, a character-based writing system associates each mark with a sound – hence the complexity of the written expression of the language.

A handsome marble stone in Winnipeg's Brookside Cemetery contains the familiar Christian Cross, but the written characters underneath are clearly Chinese, with a lesser English translation on the left-hand side: Eng Soon Chung, and the date March 17, 1932. There appears to be more to the stone that might have been broken off, so the date, and other aspects of the inscription are not known to us. One has to wonder how the inscription on this stone was carried out – by someone in the community or perhaps from a Vancouver operation, where there was a major Chinese population.

While not as populous as other groups, the Chinese community of Manitoba has fairly deep roots. For example, by 1884, Mr. Wah Hep was operating a laundry in Brandon. It is presumed that before 1884 Mr. Hep, like other Chinese immigrants, worked on the Canadian Pacific Railway and then travelled east in search of work in towns, villages and cities. In the 1901 census, Manitoba had a Chinese population of just 206—all male—30 of whom lived in the Brandon area. By the 1911 census the provincial number had more than quadrupled to 885, with most of these men working in laundries and restaurants. In terms of their spiritual lives, local Chinese men would have followed historical Chinese folk religions, as Buddhists or Taoists, which in the main are not organized with churches or clergy. Christianity had been introduced in China in the 7th century AD, but was only a minor faith group. The presence of the Christian cross on Mr. Eng Soon Chun's marker suggests a likely local convert to the faith, rather than a long-time follower.

Richardson Stone

St. John's Anglican Cathedral Cemetery, Winnipeg



Most of Manitoba's historic gravemarkers feature some symbolic feature, in the very form itself—the Christian Cross—or more often with figural or natural details – clasped hands, or a specific kind of flower for example, with the type of flower intended to describe an important characteristic of the interred. Occasionally another image may be used – a book (usually representing the Bible), a lamb, a column. But on only one gravesite so far in Manitoba have we discovered the image of an airplane. But the grand and elegant gravemarker for a major Manitoba historical figure contains just such an image – as a small but telling reference set, with the date 1926, just above the personal data.

James Armstrong Richardson was born in Ontario in 1885 and entered the family business in 1906, arriving in Winnipeg in 1912 to manage western operations. In 1919, he became President and General Manager of James Richardson & Sons. He was a major figure in North American business and financial activities, with just a few of his activities including as a member of the Winnipeg Grain Exchange, Toronto Board of Trade, Chicago Board of Trade and New York Produce Exchange, Director of the Canadian Bank of Commerce, President of the Pioneer Grain Company, and Director of the Great-West Life Assurance Company. In 1926 he helped found Western Canada Airways, a pioneer enterprise in northern flying, and in 1929 merged it with other operations into Canadian Airways Ltd. He died of a heart attack at his home in Winnipeg in 1939. James Richardson and Sons continues in operation as major grain trading firm.

One of Manitoba's most impressive floral arrangements attended the funeral of James A. Richardson (courtesy Archives of Manitoba) for a ceremony that was held in St. Augustine United Church in June of 1939. It is an ongoing irony that for all of the floral accoutrements seen here, it is not a flower that adorns Richardson's gravemarker; as noted – it's an airplane.

Bakowski Marker

Riverside Cemetery, Dauphin

This survey of historic Manitoba gravesites reveals the use of traditional marker materials – wood, stone (marble, slate, granite and its various cousins, gneiss, anorthoste, gabbro, basalt, syenite) and metal (cast iron, wrought iron and zinc). One material that has a requisite hardness, but lacks the durability of these materials is obviously absent from this catalogue, as it is in nearly all cemeteries – glass. But not completely absent.

A marker in Dauphin for Oscar Bakowski suggests one interesting and creative use of this material. Here, a concrete cross has been embedded while still forming up with broken shards of coloured glass. The approach even extends to the sides of the base of the marker. The effect is eye-catching. It is likely that it was the father of young Oscar (he died just short of his fifth birthday, in 1933) who devised the idea, and it's a fascinating one, suggesting shattered hopes and dreams.

Only a few other examples of the use of glass can be found in Manitoba cemeteries, with a notable example at Clanwilliam, where an exquisite coloured glass monument stands over an older gravestone.

I Remember
SHATTERED MINDS AND DESPERATE ENDS

Only because it features broken glass in its design, suggesting sharp and enduring pain, does the Bakowski marker at Dauphin connect to thoughts about unusual, even disturbing, causes of death. Newspapers reporting in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and especially those near the fringes of settlement, seemed preoccupied with grisly stories about the very edges of human behaviour – suicides and murders, and related all of them in vivid and gruesome detail. Today, when it is more likely to find euphemisms in the reportage of a suicide, it is shocking to encounter painful personal details in old suicide reports, as well as the occasional editorial judgement on morals. The terrible examples that follow, from newspapers in Dauphin and environs, are stark reminders that some of our forebears struggled with more than privation and cold in an unfamiliar and sometimes unforgiving land.

"Galician Woman Commits Suicide. A Galician woman, the wife of Wm. Krukowski, hanged herself sometime last Friday afternoon, at the settlement 15 miles north of here in the Duck Mountains. She left home Friday afternoon and as she failed to return a search party found the body hanging to the limb of a tree on Saturday stone dead. It is claimed by Galicians that the unfortunate woman was of a dissatisfied disposition and wanted money in order to return to the old country and as this had been refused, led up to the desperate act being committed. Another reason assigned for the deed is the fact that her daughter is about to marry a man whom she was displeased with. However, the girl still clings in her love and on Sunday expects to change her name to that Mrs. Wm. Huska. Krukowski's wife was about 50 years of age and leaves a family of five, three girls and two sons, the youngest being five years of age. A party from town who was at the settlement on Saturday says there was a tremendous commotion . . . when the body was found. A great argument immediately took place as to where the body should be buried; one faction being strictly opposed to burial in the cemetery and it was some hours before the situation became tranquil enough to have the dangling corpse removed from the tree." (From *Dauphin Herald*, June 16, 1906)

"Old Dowie, the deluded fanatic, has at last gone mad and his earthly life will soon be at and end. It is sad to see a brilliant mind go to waste for the want of a proper balance wheel." This report was followed by this one: "Brakeman J.F. Wilson died on Christmas night at the hospital. About six o'clock in the evening, he was discovered in an insensible condition on Main Street near Faustine Avenue. He was at once taken to his home and afterwards to the hospital, where he died at 2 o'clock that night. The deceased leaves a widow to mourn his great loss." (From *Dauphin Herald*, December 28, 1906)

"Former Dauphinite Attempts Suicide. Thos. Dempsey, who was at one time a citizen of this town, but latterly of Roblin, is in a precarious condition at Brandon Asylum from a self-inflicted wound in the throat with a small pen knife. Dempsey has lately been in the furniture business at Roblin and had been acting queer for some time. Last week at that place he tried to shoot himself and was promptly placed in care of constable Williamson. It is believed the man was insane, and he was being taken to Portage la Prairie last Saturday for safety. After leaving Dauphin the prisoner made an attempt to jump from the train, and at Gladstone he succeeded in cutting his throat so badly that for a time he was hovering between life and death." The *Herald* report of April 9, 1908 advised that "Thos. Dempsey, the man who went out of his head a short time ago, and while being taken to Portage la Prairie cut his throat with a pen knife, died in the Brandon asylum Friday." (Front Page of *Dauphin Herald*, March 12, 1908)

"Sad Case of Suicide. Thos. Harkness of Alton, Ontario, aged 47, was found dead recently on the road between Caledon and Erin with his throat cut. Deceased had recently returned from Manitoba. Lying near the body was an open jackknife, besmirched with blood and an empty laudanum bottle with the label of a Brandon Manitoba druggist. Deceased was financially embarrassed owing to an unfortunate speculation in Manitoba land and is supposed to have been suffering from temporary aberration of the mind." (From *Russell Chronicle*, November 16, 1893)

Russell Stone

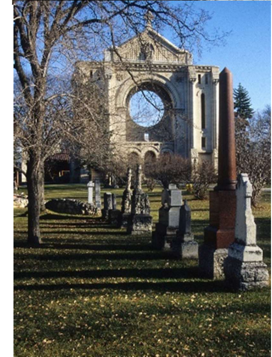
Elmwood Cemetery, Winnipeg

In Winnipeg's Elmwood Cemetery, which is a stereotypical Victorian graveyard, replete with lush and dramatic trees, and full of Victorian-era gravemarkers, with their effusive forms, exuberant lettering and sentimental thoughts, there stands a dramatically different stone. Stepped and stripped of decorative flourishes, it is clearly of a different design sensibility. And when one discovers that it is the marker for J.H.G. Russell, one of Winnipeg's most renowned architects of the early 20th century, it all makes sense. For this is a real statement stone, in the Art Deco style, to define a modern, sophisticated and forward-looking approach to life – and death. The stone only contains the name Russell, and it is only from records that we know that Mr. Russell was born in 1862 and died in 1946. The stone likewise is mute about the other great monuments of the man – like the Presbyterian (now United) churches for Augustine, Westminster and Knox, or office towers, schools and grand homes of the wealthy.

Buildings connect us to our community's past, and many of the designs of Manitoba architects working around the turn of the 20th century have been recognized as important examples of prevailing tastes and sensibilities. The architects who designed the hundreds of buildings that formed the province's architectural landscape were a mixed crew of real talent, some of mediocre ability, and the odd scoundrel. Few are buried here because many of Manitoba's architects from the pioneering period moved on after the boom times of the early 1900s, and after most of the necessary buildings were completed. Nevertheless, several notable architects did remain until their deaths, and their gravesites reveal some of the characteristics and vicissitudes which attend any death – even those who might have designed their final resting place.

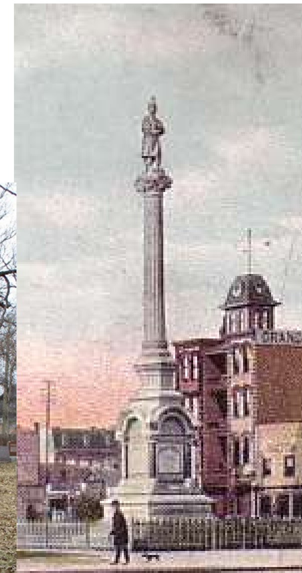
J.H.G. Russell's Knox United Church, Winnipeg, 1914-17.

I Remember
ARCHITECTS AND THEIR MONUMENTS



The gravesites for Joseph Sénécal, Samuel Hooper and Charles Wheeler—three major figures in Manitoba's architectural history—are located in Winnipeg cemeteries. Although they toiled for years to create imposing churches, bank towers, mansions and schools across Manitoba, did they leave the design of their single last architectural detail, their gravemarkers, to others? Do their tombstones convey the power and dignity of the talent buried there? The array of images here connects their gravemarkers to a key building or structure.

Joseph Sénécal (1841-1917, images at right), the designer of the old St. Boniface Cathedral, is memorialized by an admirable stone in St. Boniface Roman Catholic Cathedral Cemetery, a fitting complement to the building in whose shadow his grave lies. Samuel Hooper (1851-1911), Manitoba's first Provincial Architect, and thus responsible for many important provincial buildings, besides those from an earlier private career, is buried at St. John's Anglican Cathedral Cemetery with an elegant sarcophagus-type marker (below right). It is interesting to note that in his early career, Hooper was a partner with David Ede in a grave memorial business, and assisted in the design of the Volunteers Monument, in front of the old Winnipeg City Hall (seen here). The monument was a major landmark honouring the Canadian soldiers who fought in the North-West Rebellion of 1885. The stone of Charles Wheeler (left), a flamboyant designer of fine Victorian churches (like All Saints Anglican seen here), houses including Dalnavert, and many other buildings, is more pedestrian than his personality might have suggested, but is still an impressive red granite compound. Wheeler's stone, in Old St, James Anglican Church Cemetery notes his dates as 1838-1917.



War Memorial

Hillside Cemetery, Portage la Prairie

Manitobans are generally familiar with the affecting World War I military cemeteries holding the graves of hundreds of thousands of lost soldiers in France and Belgium. They also will often solemnly consider the many nearly identical soft grey tablets standing row on row in large cemeteries like Brookside in Winnipeg, or in Brandon or Portage la Prairie. We will also recognize the affecting war memorials that grace our communities outside of cemeteries—about 200 in Manitoba—which are typically the sites of ceremonies on Remembrance Day, held every year on November 11th, the anniversary of the end of World War I. These later memorial structures have their roots in ancient history, but also in the construction of monuments after the so-called Great War. Enormous monuments, architectural in scale, were intended both to convey the enormity of the collective loss, and to provide a slate upon which to carve the name of every soldier whose body had never been found or could not be identified and therefore had no headstone. The most famous of these are probably the Menin Gate at Ypres, Belgium, with its more than 55,000 names, and the Thiepval Memorial at the Somme, France, commemorating over 72,000 lost. Canada's Vimy Ridge Monument names 11,285 soldiers who disappeared in the mud of France. As noted, in Manitoba and elsewhere, our war memorials are typically separated from cemeteries, even cemeteries that contain "Fields of Honour" that hold the graves of military personnel. This is presumably for three reasons – many soldiers buried in "Fields of Honour" did not die in combat (military officials during World War I decided not to repatriate bodies of men who died overseas); the crowds that attended ceremonies that typically focused on war memorials could not be accommodated in cemeteries; and of course people wanted these memorials to be visible at all times, as public objects of honour and respect. Military cemeteries in Canada do have their own memorial structures (see opposite page), but in only one Manitoba cemetery do we find an actual war memorial – at Portage la Prairie's Hillside Cemetery.

The Portage la Prairie monument is a fascinating piece of work. Carried out in Manitoba limestone, the affecting carvings that are set on each of the four sides are not the typical abstracted columns, or arches. They show, as suggested in this detail, combat, with wrecked buildings, explosions, rifles, tanks, and men going about the business or war.

FIELDS OF HONOUR

Most of the dead of World War I are buried overseas, near the sites of battlefields, and usually enhanced with great and noble monuments, like Canada's Vimy Ridge Memorial. But the military victims of World War I did not all perish overseas, and large military areas were set aside in certain community cemeteries for their burial. In Manitoba, war-time interments might have been for soldiers who were killed in training, or for injured men who were sent home to die. Later burials might be for those who succumbed to war-related causes after the end of the conflict: of wounds, of the effect of poison gas, or of suicide brought on by what was once called shell shock. But looking at the dates on many of the stones we can also recognize veterans who lived to a ripe old age, and chose to receive a soldier's burial along with their comrades (you can find the occasional tell-tale light-grey military stone in community cemeteries, a reminder that any member of the military is entitled to this final honour). The Commonwealth War Grave Commission oversaw the development of these burial sites. A key aspect is the standard headstone—a light-coloured limestone with national emblems (the maple leaf in Canada), regimental badge and personal information—and the alignment of the stones that reinforces the numbers of the lost, as well as their enduring camaraderie. There are two additional accoutrements in certain of these military cemeteries – those with more than 40 graves generally feature a Cross of Sacrifice as a focal point. Designed by Sir Reginald Blomfield, the monument is a grey granite cross with a bronze sword embedded on the front face. Brandon and Winnipeg's Brookside Cemetery have a Cross of Sacrifice. Military cemeteries with more than a thousand headstones also have a Stone of Remembrance. The only such marker in North America is at Brookside. These major monuments were designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens, who developed major war memorials for the War Graves Commission. The Stone of Remembrance is devoid of religious symbolism, recalling an ancient tomb or perhaps an altar.

Above, the 1918 view of the Soldiers' Plot in Brookside Cemetery, the flagpole marking the current site of the Cross of Sacrifice. (Archives of Manitoba) Left, the Stone of Remembrance at Brookside, with these words carved into the stone – IN HONOURED MEMORY OF THE SAILORS, SOLDIERS AND AIRMEN OF THE COMMONWEALTH WHO LIE BURIED IN CANADA.