



Volume 46

Winter Newsletter

March 2016

Lowell Historical Society Program

Article by Eileen Loucraft

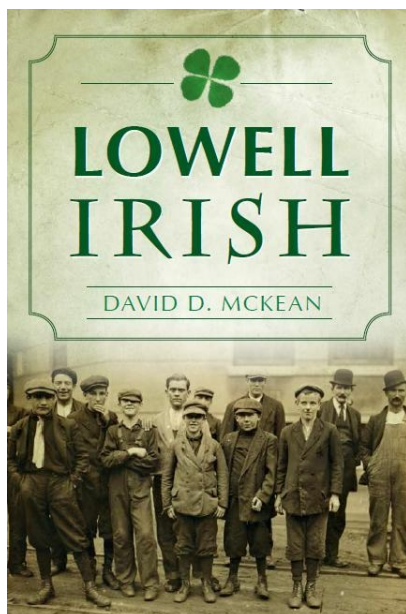
Lowell Irish Book Signing & St. Patrick Church History Tour Conducted by Dave McKean

On Saturday, April 9th at 1:00 Dave McKean will give a talk on his new book *Lowell Irish* at St. Patrick Church, 282 Suffolk St., Lowell, MA. Presentation will also include a tour of St. Patrick Church and a book signing.

Built in 1854, St. Patrick Church has been an icon in the city's landscape and history. Recently renovated, it once again shows the original colors and designs as witnessed by our ancestors. Join us for a tour of the church and share some stories from Dave McKean's recent publication, *Lowell Irish*.

For the past twenty years, David McKean has been a member of the Lowell Irish Cultural Committee. He is also the historian and archivist at St. Patrick Parish. David previously published *From Erin to Acre: A Photo History of Lowell's Early Irish* in 1998 and *The Cross and the Shamrock: The Art and History of Saint Patrick Cemetery* in 1997.

Lowell Irish books are available for purchase and signing, with proceeds going to St. Patrick School and St. Patrick Church restoration fund. Light refreshments will be served.



Annual Meeting & Program

Article by Lew Karabatsos

"Grave Tales: Lowell Cemetery's Nineteenth-Century Mill Girls Barilla Adeline Taylor and Louisa Maria Wells" by Dr. Bridget M. Marshall

Time: Saturday, June 4, 1:30 -3:00 p.m.

Location: Talbot Chapel of the Lowell Cemetery,
Lawrence Street, Lowell, MA

Please join us for our annual business meeting, followed by a lecture by Dr. Bridget M. Marshall, Associate Professor of English at the University of Massachusetts Lowell. Dr. Marshall teaches courses on Gothic novels, nineteenth-century American literature, witchcraft trials, and disability in literature. She is the author of *The Transatlantic Gothic Novel and the Law, 1790 – 1860* (Ashgate 2011), and co-editor of *Transnational Gothic: Literary and Social Exchanges in the Long Nineteenth Century* (Ashgate 2013). She is currently working on a book manuscript with the working title *Industrial Gothic: Nineteenth-Century Mill Girls as Subjects and Writers*.



Louisa Wells' Monument

Mill girl Louisa Wells' will stated that all money left in her estate was to be used for a monument on her grave. Relatives contested the will and it took twenty years uphold Louisa's will. Upon settlement, the original modest sum in her estate had become significantly larger and provided for a spectacular monument.

Image and Information provided by Catherine L. Goodwin in her book *Mourning Glory, The Story of Lowell Cemetery*. (Revised Edition)

ASSOCIATION FOR GRAVESTONE STUDIES (AGS)

Article by Kim Zunino

Chapter Meeting at Lowell Cemetery May 15, 2016
10AM – Tour of Lowell Cemetery
1-4 PM – AGS Programs at Talbot Chapel

The Lowell Historical Society is pleased to partner with the Northeast New England Chapter of the Association for Gravestone Studies (AGS) to hold an AGS Chapter Meeting at Lowell Cemetery on May 15, 2016. There will be a morning tour of the historic Lowell Cemetery at 10am and afternoon presentations on related topics held in the Talbot Chapel, built in 1885, on the grounds of the cemetery from 1pm to 4pm. This meeting is FREE and open to the public. Light refreshments will be served. This event will also exhibit a fantastic collection of cemetery related artifacts held by the Lowell Historical Society, including a set of 19th century gravestone carving tools donated to the Society by the Colmer family.

The Lowell Cemetery was founded as a private, non-sectarian, non-profit cemetery corporation in 1840 and has served as a highly valued and utilized greenspace in the City of Lowell since its dedication in 1841. The Lowell Cemetery was chosen to be included on the National Register of Historic Places in May of 1998. The stories behind many of its beautiful monuments and tombs have been captured in the book *Mourning Glory*, written by the late Catherine Goodwin. Copies of this book can be picked up at the Lowell Cemetery office. The newly dedicated O.M. Whipple Columbarium & Garden of Remembrance has only added to the beauty of the burial grounds.



AGS is a 501(c)(3) non profit organization. Its mission is to foster appreciation of the cultural significance of gravestones and burial grounds through their study and preservation. The Northeast New England Chapter covers Northeast MA as well as New Hampshire, Vermont, and Maine.

Lion from James C. Ayer's Monument, in Lowell Cemetery.

Growing Up In Lowell XXII

John Graham

[In May 2013, Sylvia Contover interviewed John Graham as part of the Oral History Collection created as a joint project between the University of Massachusetts Lowell, and the Lowell National Historical Park. The following article represents a small segment of the information on John Graham as edited by Cliff Hoyt. The full text is on the website for the Center for Lowell History, University of Massachusetts (<http://library.uml.edu/clh>). It can be found under "Oral History" then "WORKING PEOPLE OF LOWELL".

My father was James Graham. He came to the Lowell area in 1905 from County Antrim in Ireland because a lot of people from his home in Ireland were located in Lowell at that time. Back in Ireland he was a blacksmith and he found work at Hanson's blacksmith shop in South Chelmsford but that didn't work out too well because my father didn't like putting shoes on horses. Father soon went to work for Locks and Canals, they only had two horses. Locks and Canals maintained the canals and everything affiliated with them. They had lots of blacksmith jobs that didn't have anything to do with horses. Father's work included making iron tools, sharpening drills and chisels, and welding to make larger iron things. He made some of the iron fences around entrances to the canal along the mills, the main offices of the mills and things like that. He also did iron work for Lowell Cemetery on Lawrence Street.

When father first worked for Locks and Canals, we lived in one of their tenements at the corner of Broadway and Dutton Street. The Locks and Canals owned a long row house that went up from Market Street towards the city hall, We had the corner house. The Locks and Canals was right across the street from us. My father had his blacksmith shop down in the back right along the canal. I lived there until I was around five and a half to six years old. Then we moved out to East Chelmsford out near Billerica. When we moved out there, Gorham Street was nothing but a dirt road. When I was thirteen, we moved to the last house in Lowell on Gorham Street. We lived there and mother and father died there.

We also had a twelve-acre farm out by Gorham St. When we were youngsters we had to go out in the field and work, weeding and hoeing, and weeding and hoeing, cutting the grass and making hay and all that stuff. The hay was for the cow and little calf father always had. He also had a couple of pigs in the summer, and about a hundred or more chickens.

I can remember one night, when our cow was going to have a calf. Mother woke me around one o'clock in the morning. She said that things just wasn't just right with the cow and she asked me to walk out to Billerica to get this man named George Connolly. I got up, dressed, and I walked the two miles up Gorham Street. No automobiles on the road, nothing, just these old style electric lights, you know, with a shade over them. It lit up. It would be spotty, you know? It'd light up, then you'd have a dark area, and then you know? I'd walk out there and nobody ever bothered me. I rapped on his door and I got him out of bed. I told Connolly the story with the cow having trouble with her calf. He got dressed we started back to my house in his Ford truck. I don't know what he did but he got the thing corrected and the cow gave birth to a little heifer or bull, I don't remember which.

Mother made her own butter from the milk of our cow. I can remember her making that when I was eleven or twelve years of age. She'd get the milk and put it in round dishes that had sharp edges. Leave the dishes stay there for two or three days at room temperature. Then she had a big spoon. She'd go around taking the cream off the top of the dishes and she'd put the cream in a jar. Then she'd put the cream in the refrigerator. She'd collect cream that a couple of times during the week. After collecting enough cream she'd put the cream in the churn and make butter.

We always had a piece of land up near the house for a garden. That was where a lot of the weeding and hoeing was needed. We grew beans, rhubarb, corn, potatoes, early potatoes, tomatoes, peppers, green peppers, squash, and cabbage. Us boys and girls had to sit in the kitchen around Mother's great big metal tub. We'd all sit and snap beans and throw them into the tub. Mother would put the beans into jars, seal 'em and cook them. The jars would then go down the cellar. I can remember one year we had a cellar full of potatoes, squash, and cabbage at one end of the cellar. At the other end there was over four hundred jars of green beans, yellow beans, stewed tomatoes, and chili sauce.

For a few years, starting when I was probably about fifteen years of age, we went very heavy on the garden in the summer. We put out 1500 tomato plants, 1500 cabbage plants, lots of corn and other produce. I made a lot of money in two years time selling those things. I use to spend each afternoon getting everything ready and putting the vegetables in bushel boxes. Then the next morning I would get up at 3:30 in the morning, hitch the horse to the wagon and go down to the South Common right along Thorndike Street. We'd sell tomatoes, cabbages, beans and everything we had in good supply. I'll never forget this one time I sold three boxes of tomatoes for a dollar a box. Three of them, sixty pounds of tomatoes were in each box. How foolish I was to take them down there. But this woman, she was Polish woman, she come from a street off of back Central Street. She paid me for three boxes of tomatoes

and she said, "I want you to deliver them to my house." She gave me a piece of paper with the number and the address and I went to the house. She lived on the third floor. I had to take them, one box at a time, sixty pounds on my shoulders, and go up, three flights, ooh! When I got up with the last one, she had this big container of moonshine and she poured me a glass over three quarters full and she said, here. But I was only fifteen years of age. I wouldn't take it.

I didn't drink moonshine or other alcohol. But I can remember a saloon, on Market Street, I can remember a barroom there. It had the swinging doors just like you see in old westerns and there was sawdust on the floor. I used to open the door when I was a kid, and I'd look in. You'd have a big jar of pickled eggs and another big plate of sandwiches made up. You could buy a five cent glass a beer and help yourself to sandwiches and eggs. There used to be quite a few barrooms years ago. The Irish were all heavy drinkers. I guess a lot of them got feeling pretty damn good, but they would always get home and get to bed without any difficulty.

During the prohibition period a lot of the Polish people were making moonshine, but they called it glass. Everybody knew where to go and get it? Even though it was illegal they didn't get in much trouble. They got arrested, released. They then come back and appeared before the judge. The judge would fine them and let them go. They'd go right back selling again. Not many ever went to jail. It was big business in those days and people worked out of there own homes.

I never used alcohol. As grew up, we were mostly at home all the time. My mother kept us busy around the place. We had chickens to feed. We had pigs to feed. Cows had to be fed hay and grain, and watered. When they were out in the field, we'd them on a chain so they didn't get loose. Because of the chain we'd have to pull the stake out of the ground to move the chain, and then push the stake back in the ground so they'd have new grass to eat. There was always something doing around there. Then during the summer you're out planting seeds and planting everything else. And then when this stuff started to grow, we had to cultivate it, and we had to hoe it and everything. We were always busy. We were not out hanging around streets. A lot of children living closer to the city had nothing to do. They were just hanging around in the streets. A lot of them were street wise. My brothers and I were not street wise.

As we got older I remember us having a radio for entertainment. Years ago, they sold all of these parts for radios in the Five and Dime. They sold boards to make a box, and a cover, and a bottom. They sold a black front for the radio. Then you could buy the tubes in the Five and Dime. You could buy the sockets and you could buy these bars of metal for the circuits you know. Some of them were bent, some were straight. Somebody my brother knew down at the Tremont and Suffolk Mill made one but wanted to make a bigger one. So my brother was working down there and bought the old one

and brought it home. The radio came with ear phones but we all wanted to listen. We used to get a bowl and we'd put the earphones over a bowl. The bowl would amplify the sound so two or three people could hear it. Then we moved on. When we were living over on Gorham Street, the family bought a brand new radio that had a speaker. That was a big improvement. Amos and Andy was on and a few other stories.

We also had a phonograph. There was a whole cabinet, with the record player on the top. You had to crank it to wind up the spring which in turn made the record go round. Then you opened these doors in the front, and that let the sound come out. And underneath you'd open two doors and your records all stood up there, you know, underneath. I remember having Al Jolson singing. Of course they'd have Irish songs, you know, stuff by John McCormick, great Irish tenor. I had some of his records.

The first car in the family was owned by me brother, the oldest brother. Back then you had to crank it to start. It took two people to get it started, One sitting inside, and one cranking it. Then when I bought my first car, it was a Model T Ford. It had a starter, but you could also crank it also. If it wouldn't start, you could get out and crank. The car was a one seat, they called it a coop. My father never did buy a car, he kept his the horse and buggy. He said, "You can't say "get up and ho," you know, meaning to start and stop. He says, "These new automobiles he says, "you can't talk to them." So he says, "I don't want them." No, father never was interested in automobiles.

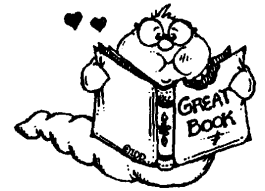
I met my wife on a blind date going to go to the beach. At the time she was working in Cherry and Webb's and I went down to the store to wait for her to come out of work before starting to the beach. We got married in 1937 when I was 27. We only had four children. I started a little late in life. When I was young, a lot of people were married between the ages of eighteen and twenty years of age. I got married when I was 27. Probably a lot of people had two and three children by that, by that time. I started a little late in life.

I left high school I think it was the third year. I didn't finish. I went to work for O. P. Beal as a plumber's helper. I stayed with it for a year and a half. Then I went to work on the B&M railroad. While working for the railroad, I went to night school up there at what was then the Lowell Textile School. I took two years of D.C. electricity. Two years of A.C. electricity. Two years of Math. I was taking two years of radio when World War II broke out. I didn't have to go to war because the the railroad had me deferred, and deferred, and deferred. I worked for the railroad for about forty six and a half years. I became the foreman of the signal repair shop out in Billerica. All the signals that failed were sent into the shop to be repaired. The work mostly called for Electrical and electronic mechanical repairs.

FROM THE BOOKSHELF

by Pauline M. Golec

Long overdue in this column is consideration of *Mill Power: the Origin and Impact of Lowell National Historical Park* written by Paul Marion.



Paul was born in Lowell, graduated from University of Massachusetts Lowell, and served as an administrator of the Lowell Historic Preservation Commission and as executive director of community and cultural affairs at UML.

The author sets the context of the park's history within the history of Lowell, the nation's first planned industrial city. The first chapter details the beginnings of this great cotton cloth producing city on the Merrimack River. The city served as a magnet for Yankee farm girls who worked in the mills and for the notables who came to visit and observe. The Civil War and its impact on Lowell and the start of a never ending Lowell immigrant story also merit pages in this chapter which ends with a description of Lowell's decline.

A big portion of the book details the fascinating history of the development of Lowell National Historical Park. The many questions that were posed - urban park or national park, economic engine or cultural pillar, historical center or industrial showcase - are compellingly presented. Initial struggles, big and small deals, and the resolution of practical and philosophical issues are all here. We meet, and in many cases remember, the educators, the visionary Dr. Patrick Mogan, the long line of politicians from Rep. Brad Morse to Sen. Paul Tsongas, and dedicated community activists, all of whose efforts resulted in the enactment of the law in 1978 whereby Lowell National Historical Park was born. The exploration of the vital "what and who came next" in the park's history makes for interesting reading.

The book also examines former and current agencies and partnerships critical to the support of the park's themes and mission. The Lowell Historic Preservation Commission's power to award money for preservation work resulted in handsome historically restored buildings in downtown Lowell as is apparent in some of the book's images. Highlighted also are the Tsongas Industrial History Center and the Lowell Folk Festival (two of my favorites).

Paul Marion's book is rich in photos, well-researched and documented. So many passages are literally a joy to read and remind us that Paul, passionate Lowell activist, is also a poet.

Mill Power: the Origin and Impact of Lowell National Historical Park may be purchased at LNHP bookstores.

LHS Corporate Memberships

The Lowell Historical Society proudly acknowledge our 2015 Corporate members who demonstrated their organization's commitment to the preservation of Lowell's past and the dissemination of information to keep Lowell's heritage alive in the future. The following organizations have made this commitment:

Blue Taleh Restaurant
CARSTAR Atlantic Collision Ctr.
Dr. Evan Coravos, DMD
Enterprise Bank & Trust Co.
Fred C. Church Insurance
Fuse Bistro
Jeanne D'Arc Credit Union
Lowell Five Cent Savings Bank
Lowell Sun Charities, Inc
Morse-Bayliss Funeral Home
Washington Savings Bank
Watermark

We would like to add the listing of your company here in the future.

LOWELL CEMETERY CELEBRATES 175TH ANNIVERSARY

BY LEW KARABATSOS

The Lowell Cemetery (on Lawrence Street) was dedicated 175 years ago on June 20, 1841 as a private, non-sectarian, non-profit cemetery. It was modeled after Mt. Auburn Cemetery in Cambridge, which was organized a few years earlier as the first garden cemetery in America. These new cemeteries emphasized the physical beauty of the surroundings and created a restful sanctuary for those contemplating the departed, which was in sharp contrast to earlier burial grounds, crowded and unorganized, sometimes dispassionate and severe.

Designed by eminent surveyor, George P. Worcester, the Lowell Cemetery was chosen for its natural setting of hillocks and trees. Worcester incorporated onto the landscape curved roads and paths under a planned canopy of oaks, beeches and ashes. As the Cemetery grew, local citizens memorialized their dead with elaborate carvings of stone, and the grounds became a depository of cemetery art. Many of these stones are designed by local artists to be studied and admired. Some are carved by internationally famous sculptors.

Majestic gateways and a recently dedicated architecturally significant columbarium have added greatly to the beauty of the site, now comprising 85 acres. A visit to the Cemetery today and an examination of the stones and tombs all evoke memories of Lowell's past and the lives of some of its most prominent citizens who played key roles in the development of their city, state and nation.

In recognition of its 175th Anniversary, the Lowell Cemetery is hosting the Monuments, Memorials and Memories: Images of the Lowell Cemetery Art Exhibition, a juried event to be held on Saturday, June 18, 2016, at the Lowell Cemetery, Lawrence Street, Lowell, MA, 11:00 a.m.- 3:00 p.m. The Cemetery has invited artists from all over the region to submit up to three (3) pieces -- focused on themes specific to the Cemetery -- for consideration between May 1 and May 20, 2016. "Over the past 175 years, artists have been inspired by the Cemetery and its beauty," said Lewis Karabatsos, event chair and cemetery Trustee. "Our hope is to continue that tradition and see the Cemetery through the eyes of present-day artists." Prize levels are as follows:

First Prize: A cash award of \$1,000. The winning piece will become the property of the Lowell Cemetery and will hang prominently in the Cemetery office.

Second Prize: A cash award of \$500.

Third Prize: A cash award of \$250.

Full event rules and an entry form may be found on the Lowell Cemetery website at www.lowellcemetery.com or by calling the Cemetery office at 978-454-5191.

Lowell Historical Society Board Members

The current members of the Lowell Historical Society's Board Includes:

Kim Zunino, Pres.	Phil Belanger
VP vacant	Pauline Golec
Lewis Karabatsos, Treas.	Marie Sweeney
Eileen Loucraft, Clerk	Ryan Owen
Vacant, Librarian	Aurora Erickson
Anthony Sampas, Archivist	Corey Scuito
Walter Hickey, Genealogist	Cliff Hoyt
Stephanie Donahue	Gray Fitzsimons

Lowell Trivia

By Martha Mayo

1. What island in the Merrimack River did the Indians call Wickasauke?
2. Who was the first Irish mayor of Lowell?
3. What is the C.M.A.C.?
4. When was Lowell incorporated as a town?

Answers on page 6.

Lowell Historical Society
P.O. Box 1826
Lowell, MA 01853

Non Profit Org.
US Postage Paid
Permit #154



The preservation of Lowell history depends heavily on your membership. If you have not yet sent in your membership renewal, please do so as soon as possible.

Lowell Historical Society

The Lowell Historical Society's Mission is to collect, preserve and publish materials related to Lowell and to promote the study of the history of the City. We are located at the Boott Cotton Mills Museum, 115 John Street, Fourth Floor, Downtown Lowell Massachusetts 01852.

The office is open 9:00 am to 3:00 pm Friday. The site telephone number is 978- 970-5180 or on the Web at: <http://www.lowellhistoricalsociety.org>.

Center for Lowell History

The Center for Lowell History, 40 French Street, currently is open Tuesday through Friday 9-5.

The contact point for information is Janine Whitcomb, 978-934-4998. The Center's web address is: <http://library.uml.edu/clh/>.

Answers to Trivia Questions

1) Tyng's Island, 2) John J. Donovan, 3) Corporation of the Members of Catholic Association, and 4) 1826

Calendar of Events

Program: *Lowell Irish Book Signing &*

St. Patrick Church History Tour
Conducted by Dave McKean

Date: Saturday, April 9th at 1:00

Location: St. Patrick Church, 282 Suffolk St., Lowell, MA.

Program: Association for Gravestone Studies (AGS) Chapter Meeting at Lowell Cemetery

Time: Sunday May 15th,
10 AM - Tour of Lowell Cemetery
1 - 4 PM - AGS Programs at Talbot Chapel

Location: Lowell Cemetery, Lawrence Street, Lowell, MA

Program: Grave Tales: Lowell Cemetery's Nineteenth-Century Mill Girls Barilla Adeline Taylor and Louisa Maria Wells by Dr. Bridget M. Marshall

Time: Saturday, June 4, 1:30 - 3:00 p.m.

Location: Talbot Chapel of the Lowell Cemetery, Lawrence Street, Lowell, MA