



Stonington Cemetery

P O Box 345
Stonington CT 06378



Stonington Cemetery Association



Volume 4 • Fall 2019

T O M B S T O N E C H R O N I C L E S

EARLY VOLUNTEERISM in our cemetery is represented by the Grand Army of the Republic monument that was erected early in the 20th century with funds raised by the Women's Relief Corps.

The Grand Army was founded in 1866 by members of the Union Army, Navy, Marines, and U.S. Revenue Cutter Service (later the Coast Guard) to honor Civil War veterans. The organization eventually included hundreds of posts, mainly in the northern U.S., but also in the south and west. It was disbanded in 1956, when Albert Woollen, the last surviving veteran, died. Albert could not have been much older than 15 when he served in the Civil War.

The Women's Relief Corps (WRC) began in 1879 as a secret society whose members pledged allegiance to the Union and who perpetuated the memory of the Grand Army. The women were neither all white nor all from the North and it's not clear whether members needed to be related to those who had already



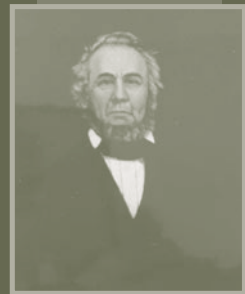
Grand Army of the Republic Marker

joined. Their work included petitions to the federal government for nurses' pensions, patriotic education and the laying of wreaths at the graves of Union soldiers and nurses. They raised money and campaigned for veterans' assistance and to make Memorial Day a national holiday. Many of the more than 2,700 national chapters funded memorials to Union soldiers. The heyday of their

monument installation was at the end of the nineteenth century; our monument came decades later.

The Stonington chapter of the WRC was established in 1888 and lasted 44 years until its dissolution in 1932. Ida F. Chesebrough, Mary H. Brayton and Sarah H. Fairbrother were several of the surviving charter members present at the installation of the Stonington monument on August 29, 1923. Members Luella Gager and Ida and Margaret McGrath were also daughters of Civil War veterans.

The *Stonington Mirror* reported that two of the four surviving members of the local J.F. Trumbull Post 8, Jerome S. Anderson and Charles E. Staplin, were present at the ceremony. The remaining two survivors, Sanford N. Billings and Daniel E. Barker, could not attend. According to the Thomas Hale collection, more than 60 veterans of the Civil War, including one member of the Confederate Army, are interred in Stonington Cemetery. The last surviving member of our local post, Jerome Anderson, died in 1929.



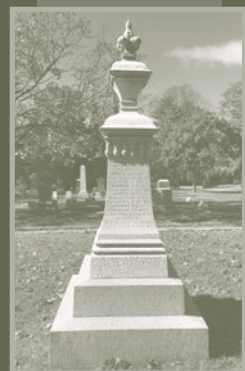
Orrin Doty. Unknown artist

THE HEADSTONES AND MONUMENTS in the oldest portions of the cemetery showcase the work of a variety of carvers. Chester Kimball of New London and Rockwell Manning of Norwich are two early artists. Only a small number of stones were signed and attribution is often determined by style.

One of the known makers is Orrin Doty (1808-1884), an artisan who carved his signature into a number of monuments in Stonington Cemetery. Doty was born in Sharon, Connecticut and moved around 1829 to Stonington, where he soon married Hannah Hancox. By age 25, he had taken over the gravestone business of Shelton Tomlinson and bought Tomlinson's house and workshop in Stonington Borough. A number of his rejected markers remain on the property today, testimony to the enduring nature of granite and Doty's reputation.

The monuments that are certainly Doty's work are those signed by him: Doty or O. Doty. In Stonington Cemetery, these include a pair of obelisks in the C.P. Williams plot marking the burial location of Deacon David C. Smith and his wife, Betsey D. Another notable signed monument stands near the Receiving Tomb and marks the burials of the Stanton-Pendleton families. It's hard to know how many stones were Doty's, because many weren't signed.

Doty fathered eight children with Hannah and four more with his second wife Josephine, whom he married when he was 77. Only six survived infancy. Orrin's son, Amos, married into the Smith family of Westerly, Rhode Island, providing a link between Orrin and an important 20th century granite business.



Stanton - Pendleton Marker



THE VICTORIAN SHED was substantially renovated this summer by Eugene and John Anderson, great grandsons of Jerome Anderson. Work remaining is a gated fence linking this building to the Hearse House. A neglected area near the shed has been graded and seeded.

FRAGILE HEADSTONES toppled and broken by a 2018 storm have been mended and a dislocated obelisk set right on its base. Our insurance paid for these repairs

320 VETERANS GRAVES were identified, mapped and flagged at Memorial Day. We now have a data base of veteran graves.

WE WOULD LIKE TO THANK everyone who gave to the Stonington Cemetery Association during the past fiscal year – 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019. Contributions received since 1 July will be honored in our Fall 2020 newsletter. If we have inadvertently missed you, please forgive us and send us a correction. Gifts of \$500 and over are noted with an *. Gifts of \$1,000 and over are noted with a **.

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Website: www.stoningtoncemetery.org

Email: thestoningtoncemetery@gmail.com



OUR BEST WORK happens with the help of volunteers such as Bob Suppicich, who has cleaned hundreds of marble and granite stones and during summer months is docent for the grounds. The American Legion Post supplies flags and helps add them to veterans' graves. Harold Stedman watches over our iron fence. Community members pitch in for cleanups, while outside organizations – the C.B. Allyn Foundation, Town of Stonington and the State Office of Historical Preservation – assist through grant support. The Keena family grooms our grounds with pride. *Thank you!*



Stonington Cemetery

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Dear friends,

The Stonington Cemetery Association is 170 years old this year, making it one of the oldest non-sectarian nonprofits in our community. As with other successful local nonprofits, we began with a gift from philanthropic citizens. We flourish today through community generosity.

The goals of the founders – to provide a non-sectarian cemetery and a place for quiet public recreation and contemplation – remain the goals of the Association. Added to that, in this century, is the care and preservation of what are now antique structures and monuments.

We derive up to half of our income from cemetery services, but this isn't sufficient to fund the various aspects of our mission, from the preservation of stones and structures to the maintenance of our landscape. This requires reaching out to you for assistance. Our call has been generously answered during the past several years, making it possible for this Board to properly care of this important public landscape.

Our budget for FY2019 is \$95,000. We count on our donors to provide at least \$30,000 of this. As in the past, we will look beyond our donors – to the Town of Stonington, private foundations, and the State of Connecticut to assist with funding.

On behalf of the board of directors, I would like to thank you for your continued support. We are grateful for every gift. There is strength in numbers. Look what you have accomplished! In addition to your donations, we always welcome your sharing ideas and dreams for our future.

Warm regards,

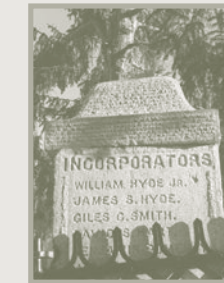

Lynn Callahan, *President*

WISH LIST. Can you help us with these projects? Our annual appeal doesn't generate funds to pay for everything. Perhaps you can consider an additional gift to assist with these unfinished projects:



Repair to one or more of our marble headstones.

Cost: \$375



Replace the decorative granite ball that's missing from the south gatepost.

Cost: \$4,000



Replace the old oil drum with new easy-to-empty trash receptacle.

Cost: \$800