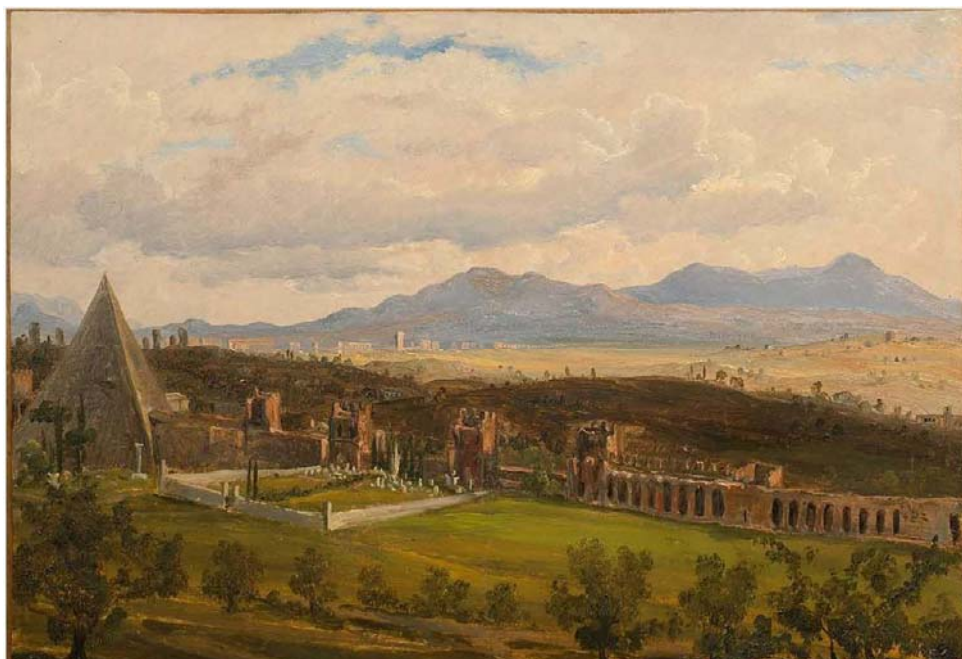


of the
Non-Catholic Cemetery in Rome



NEWSLETTER

A view from Monte Testaccio by Konstantin von Kügelgen



Konstantin von Kügelgen (1810-1880), *The Pyramid of Caius Cestius at Rome, seen from Monte Testaccio*, 1833, oil on paper mounted on board, 25,8 x 37 cm (private collection)

Six years ago a Swiss auction-house sold a view of the Cemetery from Monte Testaccio painted by Konstantin von Kügelgen and inscribed 'Rom 1833'. The online image showed a painting badly in need of cleaning. It then disappeared from sight. You can imagine the Editor's delight when he recently saw the painting, suitably cleaned, hanging in a private collection in Rome, only ten minutes' walk from his house. We are very grateful to the owner for allowing us to reproduce it here.

Konstantin von Kügelgen came from a family of German Balt artists that included his father Karl and uncle Gerhard (twin brothers). Born

at Saratow in Russia in 1810, Konstantin set off for Italy aged 21. A drawing by him of the ruins on the Palatine, also dated 1833, is known. Whatever its youthful artistic merits, his painting of the Cemetery has a documentary interest. The artist showed the bush-lined path leading from the entrance-gate up to the prominent neo-Gothic monument to Robert Finch (Zone V.15.20). He also portrayed the extent of stone monuments ten years after the New Cemetery had opened. In the background are visible the Baths of Caracalla and the Roman aqueduct marching across the *campagna*. By 1835 von Kügelgen had settled as a drawing instructor in Dorpat (now Tartu in Estonia) where his daughter Sally was born in 1860. She too became an artist and, aged 30, moved to Rome where she eventually died (see *Newsletter* 30).

Von Kügelgen's joins two similar views of much the same date. Lorenzo Scarabelotto's beautiful scenic view of c.1835 (no. 25 in our tercentenary exhibition catalogue), also depicts the spire of Finch's monument but omits much more – the Old Cemetery is not represented, for example. The American artist Thomas Cole made sketches from the same viewpoint in March-April 1832 which resulted in his finished oil painting of 1834 (see *Newsletter* 31). As J.M.W. Turner and others had already found, Monte Testaccio was a perfect spot from which to depict the pyramid and the Cemetery at the boundary between the city and the Roman *campagna* beyond.

Nicholas Stanley-Price



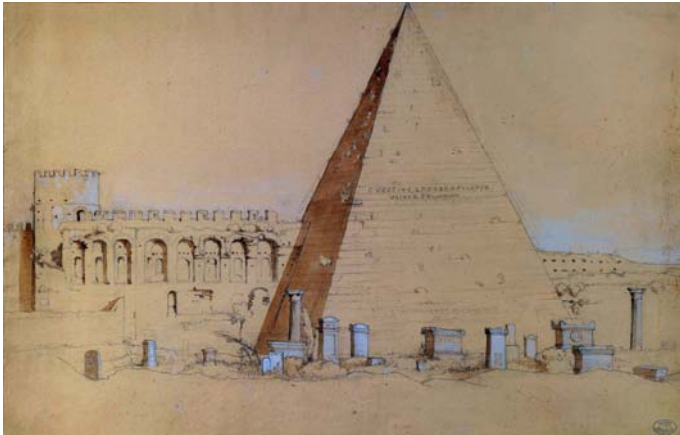
Lorenzo Scarabelotto's view of c.1835



Thomas Cole's view of 1834

NEWS FROM THE CEMETERY

Funerals at night, the graves of Shelley and Keats, and more...



Antoine-Edmond Joinville, *Cimetière des Protestants à Rome*, 1824 (private collection). The gravestone of Keats is at far left.

Why were Protestant funerals in the eighteenth century held at night with armed guards present? Was it really due to strong prejudice against the ‘heretics’? This often repeated claim is not borne out by the facts. You can read the evidence that tolerant attitudes prevailed towards the Protestants in an article posted at <http://www.cemetery.rome.it/books/reading.html>. There you will also find other recently published work about the Cemetery: on how Percy Bysshe Shelley’s grave became an object of pilgrimage; on a newly discovered drawing of 1824 that is the earliest known depiction of the grave of John Keats; and on young men buried in the Old Cemetery who probably died while on the Grand Tour.

S.P.Q. Rahtz and updating our databases of burials

Leonor Barocca has dedicated a bench in the Old Cemetery in memory of her husband, Sebastian P.Q. Rahtz. The dedication on the bench says it all (see photo). Sebastian directed the invaluable survey of all the existing gravestones in 1984-86 (see *Newsletter* 36). His computerised database (the ‘Graves database’) is now fully integrated with the ‘Burials database’ compiled from the Cemetery’s own records (see <http://www.cemeteryrome.it/graves/databases.html>). The integrated database has recently grown by more than 700 ‘new’ records that had not previously been entered, all of them dating to before 1920 (we have now nearly 5700 recorded burials in total). As we continue to correct and standardise earlier entries, the database becomes an even more valuable resource for researchers.



Photo: N. Stanley-Price

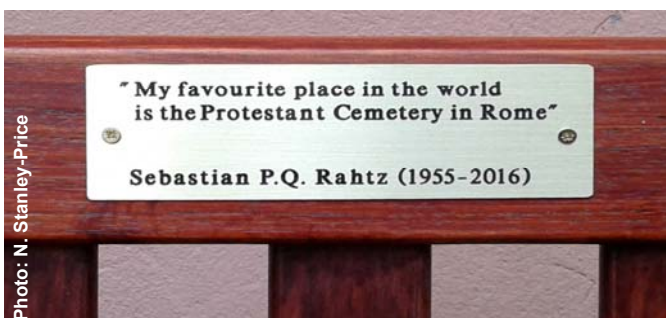


Photo: N. Stanley-Price

Keeping track of removed gravestones

Along the walls in the Zona Terza are displayed around one hundred gravestones, or parts of them, that belonged to graves that were exhumed at least 50 years ago. We have recently compiled an inventory of them. Three other stones that stand along the wall near the Visitors’ Centre have been cleaned, thanks to support from a Danish foundation. The one on the left commemorates Henry William Barfoot who died in 1888 aged 30 “from the effect of an accidental gun-shot wound received at Anzio”, presumably a hunting accident. His father George, who died in 1902, was a saddler with his business in Via del Babuino. The guide-books for foreigners in Rome recommend him as a supplier of hunting tack. The grave of father and son was exhumed twenty years ago.



Photo: N. Stanley-Price

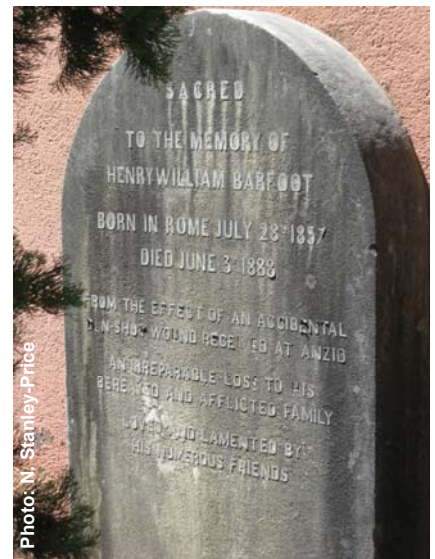


Photo: N. Stanley-Price

The Barfoot gravestone before cleaning



Noel Norton Carter, *Lady Nicolls (1783–1844), Wife of Major General Sir Jasper Nicolls, KCB*, c.1828 (National Army Museum, UK)

who was her faithful servant for twelve years, died nine days later, aged only 37. She was buried in the same grave as her mistress. The cause of their deaths is unknown.

WHO THEY WERE

Adolf Hallman, Swedish writer and illustrator



Hallmann with his dog, Gaston

As a teenager I came across a paperback edition of Swedish writer Hjalmar Söderberg's classic love story, *Den allvarsamma leken* (The serious game). This novel of youthful romance in fin-de-siècle Stockholm was congenially illustrated by A. Hallman, a name hitherto unknown to me. The discovery made me explore Hallman's work, and over the years I have become a great admirer of this fascinating illustrator and writer. Following his footsteps led me in 2001 to his grave at the Non-Catholic Cemetery in Rome. Unfortunately, the stone was in a bad state, with the name almost illegible. To mark the 50th anniversary of his death, a group of admirers donated the funds necessary to restore Hallman's grave (Zone 1.2.38).

But who was he? Adolf Hallman was born in Gothenburg, Sweden, in 1893. He started as a cobbler's apprentice, but his artistic talents and

yearning to see the world soon made him an itinerant chronicler of his times. His foldable drawing-desk became his real home. He was seen in Copenhagen, Paris, Munich, Florence, and New York – but rarely in Stockholm or elsewhere in Sweden. A deep dislike of what Hallman considered the narrow mindset of the country's artistic circles would remain a constant theme throughout his life.

In 1929 Hallman published his first book, *På Boulevard Europa* (On Boulevard Europa), which he also illustrated. In his prose Hallman comes across as a cosmopolitan outsider, with a tough, acrimonious tone, very different from the cultivated Swedish travel-

writing of the era. His observations instead focus on failed artists, prostitutes and anarchists. His debut was followed by other illustrated books about Paris (*Paris under 4 årstider*; Paris during 4 seasons), Copenhagen and New York, where he and his Danish wife Edith moved in the late 1940s.

After a hectic decade in New York, Hallman felt disillusioned with the commercial-artist mentality and longed to return to Europe. But where to go? The couple's beloved Dalmatian dog, Gaston, played a decisive role in choosing a new place to live. Italy had no quarantine rules that would have kept Gaston isolated, and this made the Hallmans finally settle in Rome in 1959, living at Via Margutta, 54. The area was then a vibrant artistic neighbourhood, where the couple soon felt at home after the years in the United States: "Coming back to Europe feels like waking up from a severe illness", Hallman told a reporter who met him in 1961. In the same interview he mentions that he was working on a book about Rome.

However, when in 1965 after his long silence he finally published a book, it was his memoirs *Tala i egen sak* ("Speak for yourself"). But his new Roman environment still merited a chapter: he looks out over the silent city, with its sounds of water from the fountains and the old fig-tree in the backyard. He spots a neighbour, "an artist and zen philosopher", with his mistress, and continues discovering the life of Via Margutta's many residents – a seminarian with pictures of the Madonna and of Gina Lollobrigida; an ageing artist's model; the concierge Concetta – allowing his mind to drift towards other memories from Paris and New York. His last years were marked by failing health and a bitter feeling of being forgotten by his readers back in Sweden. He died of lung cancer in 1968 and was buried in the Cemetery.

There is to date no biography or academic study of Hallman and his work. The most valuable source is the introduction to a selection of Hallman's texts in *På barer och bakgator* (In bars and back alleys), published in 1989 by Swedish journalists Stig Hansén and Clas Thor which includes a short bibliography. The introduction is the main source for this article.

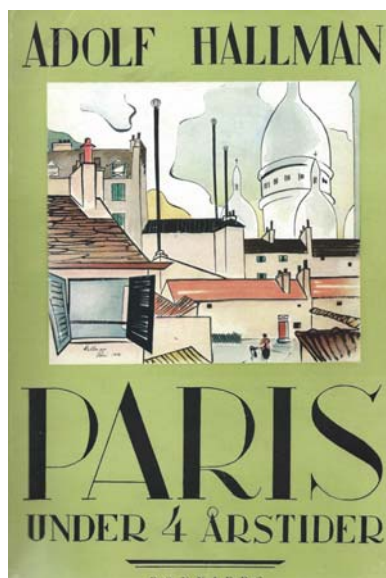
Christian Bondeson-Eggert



Roy Elliot, British sailor on war-time service

My uncle, Sub-Lieutenant Roy Elliot, was an internee at the Vatican during the German occupation of Rome in 1943-44 and died on Wednesday 15 March 1944 after falling from a window on the 2nd floor of the Vatican. He was 21 years old and is buried at the Cemetery (Zone 3.4.3.12).

Roy was 19 years old when he joined the crew of the Royal Navy submarine HMS *Saracen* on active service in the central Mediterranean in 1942-43. When he wrote to his father about the posting, he describes it as 'a great life...



Cover of *Paris under 4 årstider* (Bonnier, 1930)

→ continues on page 4

continued from page 3

I am serving under one of the more famous captains and he really is a first class chap.' On 14 August 1943 the *Saracen* was depth-charged and severely damaged by the Royal Italian corvette *Minerva*. Five officers and 41 members of the crew were taken prisoner. Whilst being conducted through the back streets of Rome, Roy together with Major John Sym broke away with the intention of reaching the Vatican and seeking refuge there. Sam Derry's *The Rome Escape Line* (1960) conveys a sense of the atmosphere of danger and daring that was all around the streets of Rome in 1943. They were lucky to make contact with an Italian doctor who drove them to the Vatican. They were two of the last internees to be taken in before the Vatican made its no-admittance rule.

Once interned in the Vatican, my uncle soon realised that he would not be freed by an Allied advance as he had anticipated and, although in good company, he was frustrated and impatient. He worked as a principal assistant to Captain Henry Judson Byrnes who was compiling a card index of all known escapees in Italy. Sir D'Arcy Osborne, the Minister of the British Legation to the Holy See, wrote to my grandfather after Roy's death: "He was very kind in helping us with cyphering and we greatly appreciated his assistance. His youth, his very English good looks, his quiet modesty, his personal charm and his distinctive individuality made him a refreshing and attractive addition to our limited society here."

He celebrated his 21st birthday in January 1944, which he described with some delight in a letter home. Then, two months later, on 15 March he fell to his death from the window of the room in which he was sleeping. The testimonies after his death suggest that he had been reliving the torpedoing of his submarine in vivid nightmares. Byrnes writes in his testimony: "on several occasions he told me of his dreams and on the 15th March had said that they were getting worse and that the night before he had dreamt that he and I were in a sinking submarine, unable to escape."

Hugh Montgomery, secretary to the British Legation at the Vatican, offered the family a touching description of the preparations for his funeral. He wrote: "His body was laid out this morning in a quiet room at the First Aid Post, not far from the barracks, and his fellow officers covered the bier with lovely spring flowers, Arum Lilies and White Hyacinths. His body was placed in an oak coffin on the Friday morning March 17th. The coffin was moved on the afternoon of Saturday March 18th to the chapel of the Protestant Cemetery...the coffin was carried from the Guardia Medica to the hearse by Roy's fellow brother officers all of whom were deeply moved. Sir D'Arcy Osborne, the British Minister, was present. The coffin was taken and laid in the chapel where, covered with a black velvet pall and surrounded by flowers, it was to lie until the funeral, which has been fixed for Monday." Roy's comrades were not permitted to leave the Vatican but several soldiers of the Swiss Guards attended the burial. On 20 March the Rev. Guido Comba conducted the Church of England burial service at the chapel. The Swiss Guards insisted on carrying the coffin to the grave.

Montgomery wrote further to my grandfather that "The grave, which is quite near to the chapel, is in a quiet corner of the beautiful cypress-shaded cemetery." In 2004 I visited my uncle's grave for the first time. I found it as Montgomery described, although the original box border



The Royal Navy Submarine HMS *Saracen*

was gone and the headstone has been replaced by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

Contributed by Mary Chadwick

Editor's note: Sir D'Arcy Osborne, who served in the Vatican throughout the difficult war years, was honoured with burial in the Old Cemetery on his own death in 1964.



HOW TO BECOME A FRIEND

This Newsletter is made possible by the contributions of the Friends of the Cemetery.

The Friends also help fund the care of the trees in the cemetery and the restoration of tombs. Please can you help us by becoming a Friend? You can find a membership form at:

www.cemeteryrome.it

THE NON-CATHOLIC CEMETERY IN ROME

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(last entrance 4.30pm)
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