

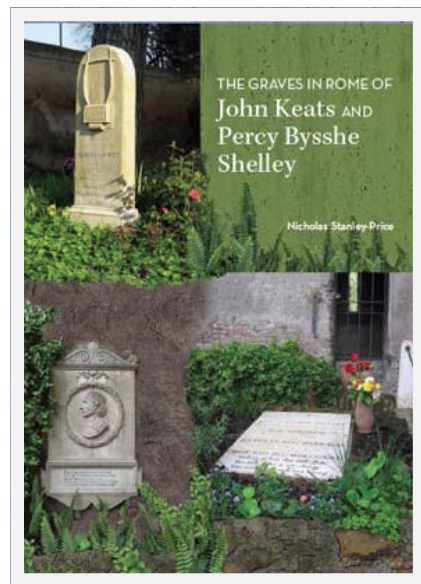
of the Non-Catholic Cemetery in Rome

NEWSLETTER



New book about the graves of Keats and Shelley

Two hundred years after their deaths (2021-2022), we examine how the poets' graves have been admired but also criticised over the years. Over 30 illustrations, many of them previously unpublished. On sale at the Visitors' Centre or online at <http://www.cemeteryrome.it/Stanley-Price-GravesKeatsShelley.html>



Our pine trees under attack by scale insects!



Photo: N. Stanley-Price

Pine trees in the Old Cemetery

It was a shock to enter the Old Cemetery after two months of closure during the lockdown that started in early March. Its monuments were black and surfaces such as paths and benches were sticky when touched. What had happened? We discovered that the pine trees were infested by a scale insect known scientifically as *Toumeyella parvicornis*.

This insect, native to the Caribbean, crossed the Atlantic to Naples in 2015 and has now infested pine trees throughout Rome. The insects exude huge quantities of a sweet honeydew substance like wax. A black sooty mould that develops on the honeydew covers the pine bark and needles and then, potentially, anything below them on the ground. That is why our gravestones were black and the paths sticky. If not treated, the trees may die.



Photo: D.Jenkinson

The Stahl monument in 2012 (see Newsletter 51)



Photo: A. Thursfield

Injecting a pine in the Old Cemetery

On the advice of Gianpietro Cantiani, our tree consultant, the Director contracted a specialist firm from Verona, G.E.A. snc, to treat the pines. The operation uses manual pressure to inject an insecticide through a small hole made at the base of the tree. The hole is disinfected and plugged with a cap made of corn starch. This method has successfully treated other pests and we hope our pines will continue to flourish.



Photo: N. Stanley-Price

The Stahl monument in July 2020

WHO THEY WERE

Malwida von Meysenbug, German writer and ‘idealist’



Franz von Lenbach (1836-1904),
Malwida von Meysenbug

Although born in 1816 into an aristocratic family in Kassel as Amalie Malwida Wilhelmina Tamina Rivalier, Malwida von Meysenbug (the title was given to her father in 1825) developed her passionately democratic and egalitarian ideas at an early age. The writer, educator, and cultural force would today also be called an *activist*. Intensifying over the years leading up to the German Revolution of 1848, her steadfast belief in and support of women’s education, self-sufficiency, and an equal role in society surpassed that of many of her contemporaries and remained undiminished throughout her life.

In Paris she became a good friend of a fellow-revolutionary of 1848, Richard Wagner, and associated with artists such as Baudelaire and Berlioz. She was present at Wagner and Cosima’s marriage in 1870 and at the laying of the foundation stone of his *Festspielhaus* in Bayreuth in 1872. There too she met Friedrich Nietzsche, another electrifying relationship that would prove very important to them both. In 1874 she moved to Bayreuth to be closer to Wagner but, concerned at her health, she relocated to Italy and eventually settled in Rome until her death.

Living in the Villa Mattei on Via della Polveriera overlooking the Colosseum, she produced a number of memoirs, among them further volumes of her famous *Memoirs of an Idealist* (the first volume, in French, had been published anonymously in 1869 in Switzerland). She also wrote novels, short stories, and translations, and held a salon known as the ‘Roman Club’ for young educated women. At one of its meetings in 1882, another extremely important friendship was born: with the young Lou Andreas-Salomé, a writer, later protégé of Freud, and eventual psychoanalyst, who would also go on to become a friend and inspiration to both Nietzsche and Rilke. Even this was not to be the last of von Meysenbug’s crucial friendships, for a few years later she became close to Romain Rolland, a future winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature – von Meysenbug herself would become the first woman ever nominated for the same Prize. After a long and extremely active life, she died in 1903 and was buried in the Cemetery (Zone 1.14.18). Her impressive monument shelters a simple urn adorned on its base with two of the most revolutionary words in any language: *Amore. Pace*.

Alexander Booth is a writer and translator formerly of Rome, now in Berlin. His work can be found at Wordkunst.

After taking part in the revolution in Frankfurt, von Meysenbug moved to Hamburg to enrol in a progressive Catholic women’s institution. In 1852 she went to Berlin but, due to police surveillance related to her democratic associations, after only one month she left for London. There she became a prominent reference point in the city’s intellectual and cultural landscape, especially within the émigré community. She came to know such figures as Garibaldi, Mazzini, and Louis Blanc. Around 1860 she set off for Paris after adopting Olga Herzen whom von Meysenbug had been employed to teach by her father Alexander Herzen (known also as ‘the father of

The monument to Malwida

Unusually for a composite memorial in the Cemetery, we have a record of who designed and built it. The Olga Herzen whom Malwida adopted (see above) married in 1873 the French historian Gabriel Monod. Not only did Monod organise the memorial but he published a pamphlet (*A la mémoire de Malwida Rivalier von Meysenbug*. Vendredi 1er avril 1904, Rome) celebrating its inauguration and printing the text of his address. As a proud Frenchman, Monod emphasized her father’s French (Rivalier) origins. Malwida had asked that her cremated ashes be placed in the Cemetery in an urn to a specific design: an enlarged copy in marble of a silver vase made by Monod’s son Edouard. This is the urn in red marble installed within the edicule structure. Above the urn is a bronze portrait medallion of Malwida produced by “our sculptor friend Landowski”. That would be Paul Maximilien Landowski (1875-1961) who won the Prix de Rome at the Villa Médici in 1900. His name is legible on the medallion. In his subsequent career as a sculptor, his most famous work was to be the astonishing *Christ the Redeemer* statue overlooking Rio de Janeiro.

The edicule was designed by “our architect friend Hulot” and executed by “M. D’Aquila.”. Louis Jean Hulot (1871-1959), was a colleague of Landowski, holding the Prix de Rome from 1901 to 1905, whereas “M. D’Aquila” was probably the *marmista* Augusto Dell’Aquila, listed in the *Guida Monaco* for 1894 with premises on the Via Flaminia. All these artists attended the inauguration, as did the director of the Académie de France, Eugène Guillaume. Among other distinguished guests were the historian Ugo Balzani (see below) and the Norwegian writer Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson who the previous year had won the Nobel Prize in Literature.

Another writer, Norman Douglas, found her grave some fifteen years later. “It is good to pause awhile and etheralise oneself in the neighbourhood of her dust”, he wrote. “She lived a quiet life in an old brown house, since rebuilt, that overlooks the Coliseum, on whose comely ellipse and blood-stained history she loved to pasture eyes and imagination. Often I walked thence with her, in those sparkling mornings, up the



Photo: N. Stanley-Price

Palatine hill, to stroll about the ilexes and roses in view of the Forum, to listen to the blackbirds, or the siskins in that pine tree.” (*Alone*, 1921).

Nicholas Stanley-Price

Countess Augusta Balzani of Kilwaughter Castle and Rome

In 1895 the *Ballymena Weekly Telegraph* in Ireland announced the death on 3 July of Countess Augusta Simon Balzani. It also informed its readers that the dispensary for sick children in Via Galilei 51 in Rome had been re-named the 'Dispensary Augusta Balzani'. Founded on 21 February 1893 and supported by donations from a committee of lady benefactors, the dispensary received children, male and female, up to ten years old (*Guida Monaci*, Rome 1915).

Maria Augusta, born on 3.11.1847 in Cobh of Cork (Ireland), was the daughter of Thomas Collyns Simon, an English philosopher and author of various scientific works, and an Irish lady Maria Agnew. Her parents came to know each other in Ireland when Thomas was her tutor. They had to run away to England to marry since he was 33 but she only 18 and not thought highly of by Maria's aunt who was opposed to it. When only ten years old, Maria Augusta lost her mother who died of scarlet fever. Now alone, she made various trips with her father to Europe, especially in Italy to Florence, Venice and Rome.

She shared his intellectual activities. She kept up exchanges of correspondence with notable figures of that period in English and Italian society, for instance: Francesco Fiorentino, philosopher and historian; Ruggiero Bonghi, philologist and politician, who wrote her a long dedication in his book *In autunno su e giù* of 1890; Louise Creighton, wife of the historian Mandell Creighton, and a writer and activist for greater representation of women in society, including for the right to vote, and in the Church of England; Count Terenzio Mamiani della Rovere, etc. A woman of intellect and ability, she spoke seven languages.

While with her father visiting Count Mamiani to discuss an article to be published in the periodical *La filosofia nelle scuole italiane* which Mamiani had founded at Florence in 1870, she came to know Count Ugo Balzani (1847-1916), a lawyer and student of history. They married in 1878 at Kensington in London where Ugo converted to Protestantism. They were both aged 31. From their marriage



Augusta Balzani (family collection)



Ugo and Augusta Balzani, wedding photograph, 1878 (family collection)

came three children, the first a boy who died a few days after birth, then Guendalina (1882) and Nora (1883). The couple had pet names for each other of 'Child' and 'Cilda'.

From her only maternal uncle, William Agnew, Augusta in 1891 inherited Kilwaughter Castle in Co. Antrim in Ireland. The building went back to 1622 but was modified and enlarged in 1807 by John Nash (1752-1835), the architect who designed Regent Street in London. Because she was helping Ugo collect material for his historical studies, Augusta did not want to – and did not know how to – manage a large property, so she decided to rent it from 1892, for more than 30 years, to a distant Irish cousin, John Galt Smith, and his American wife, the wealthy and well-connected Elizabeth 'Bessie' Bringhurst. The couple used it as their principal residence, making improvements and furnishing it. That very summer of 1895 the countess Augusta and Ugo had planned to spend several days at Kilwaughter Castle. Various letters suggest that Augusta went frequently with only her servant to Anzio, recommended by her doctor, since she was not well, suffering often from loss of appetite as a result of internal complications which had started in the early 1880s. In the summer of 1895, within a few days her poor health deteriorated into something more serious and she died on 3 July (Zone 2.17.6; Ugo and their daughter Nora are buried with her).

Kilwaughter Castle passed to the two daughters Guendalina and Nora. Bessie Bringhurst Galt Smith, now being widowed, returned in 1922 to America, putting some of the furnishings up for auction and taking others with her. In World War Two the castle by virtue of being in Italian ownership was declared enemy territory. It was occupied by soldiers and in 1944 by the American army while preparing for D-day. After the war it remained uninhabited and gradually fell into ruin. With the death of Nora in 1972 it passed to my grandmother Bianca Balzani but she sold it almost immediately in 1982. It is now an impressive ruin, lacking roof, doors and floors, which the current owner is aiming to restore to its former splendour.

Contributed by Lorenza Gatti Balzani, daughter of the greatgranddaughter of Augusta Balzani

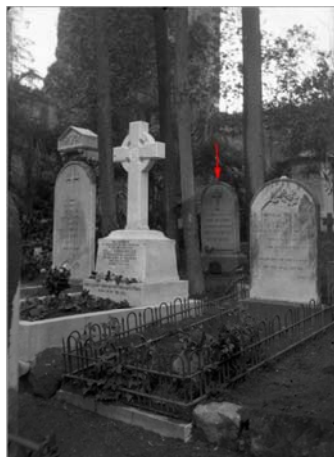


Kilwaughter Castle, Co. Antrim, Northern Ireland, 2016

Jules de Guimps's grave of 1859: the photographic proof

The painting that Luciano Cerulli found in a Rome street-market proved to be historically credible (see *Newsletter* 45). The gravestone on the right bears a carefully painted inscription to a young Swiss, Jules de Guimps, who died in May 1859. Our old inventory confirmed his burial even though the grave no longer exists. But we have now found a photo of it!

It is visible in the background of a photo taken by Marcello Piermattei (see *Newsletter* 50) of the new memorial to Ellen Lee Tayler (1862-1926; Zone 1.14.26). Its inscription matches precisely the one in the painting. To the left of Tayler's Celtic cross in the photo stands the headstone to Marjory Cunningham (Zone 1.14.25) who had died the day before de Guimps. In the painting it is the nearer of the two



The de Guimps gravestone (arrowed)



Inscription on the de Guimps gravestone



Unknown artist, *The grave of Jules de Guimps*, ca. 1859

similar stones at left. It survives today, as do two of the four cypress trees planted around de Guimps's grave. The gravestone to the right of Tayler's with the name 'Cornelia Ray King' also survives - it is in the *lapidarium* in the Zona Terza. Paintings and photographs such as these give further meaning to names that have often been forgotten.

Restoration of the Gutmann tomb

In May 2018 the last heir of the German Guttman dynasty, the granddaughter of the founder of the Dresdner Bank, made a visit to Rome along with members of the family and the author, a faithful friend. The occasion arose out of an admirable initiative to conserve the Gutmann funerary monument (Zone 1.14.28). Lili Vera Gutmann, journalist and wife of the Greek consul at Milan, Spyros Jean Collas, was close to her own family which has always had Italian roots (*Newsletter* 13).



Eugen Gutmann, founder of the Dresdner Bank (left) with his son Max in Rome, 1914 (family collection)



Lili Orsini Baroni (née Gutmann) with her granddaughter Lili Gutmann, 1951 (family collection)



Lili Vera Gutmann at the tomb

Her paternal aunt Lili Ludmilla Gutmann (1873-1967), wife of Ambassador Luca Orsini Baroni, and another uncle, Count Max Gutmann (1885-1948) were buried in this family tomb. Thanks to Signora Gutmann's contribution, it has now been restored to its original state and the once-illegible inscriptions made visible again. Lili Vera Gutmann, born in Holland on 17 July 1919, was the daughter of Fritz and Louise both of whom tragically died in the Nazi concentration camps. She herself died in Florence on 28 January 2020. For more information on this family see *The Orpheus Clock* by Simon Goodman (2015) and *Gli Orsini Baroni, storia politica diplomazia* by Elena Ceccarini (Ets, 2010).

Contributed by Elena Ceccarini

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

via Caio Cestio, 6, 00153, Roma

Director: Amanda Thursfield

OPENING HOURS

Monday to Saturday 9:00am - 5:00pm
(last entrance 4.30pm)
Sunday & Public Holidays: 9.00am -1.00pm
(last entrance 12.30pm)
Tel 06.5741900, Fax 06.5741320
mail@cemeteryrome.it

NEWSLETTER of the Friends of the Non-Catholic Cemetery in Rome

Nicholas Stanley-Price, EDITOR
Anka Serbu, GRAPHIC DESIGN
Grafica Di Marcotullio, PRINTER
ROME, 2020

Contact: nstanleyprice@tiscali.it
Disponibile anche in versione italiana

All previous Newsletters and an Index of contents are at www.cemeteryrome/press/newsletter.html