

IVY HILL CEMETERY HISTORICAL PRESERVATION SOCIETY

Dedicated to the preservation of monuments, promotion of history, and protection of flora and fauna of Ivy Hill Cemetery

www.ihchps.org

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NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2011

Angels at Ivy Hill

Visits, Volunteers & Values Make a Difference



Lt. Col. Theresa Weems, USAF starts on the first Marker of the day.

We are familiar with the angels we have always seen at Ivy Hill, from the noble guardians gracing the hills to the sweet cherubs in the children's section. But there are new and different, human angels coming to Ivy Hill in greater numbers -- volunteers working on projects throughout the cemetery.

FOAA Lends a Hand

On April 2 and 3, two groups from the Friends of Alexandria Archeology (FOAA) visited to help the Society test out new tours of the Civil War graves at Ivy Hill. Their feedback



Here is a classic "Before" picture; check the IHCHPS.org website for the "After"

resulted in the refinement of two separate downloadable tours about veterans and historic Civil War figures available on the Society website. Please see *Download Civil War Tours* article on page 2.

Volunteers Honor Civil War Vets

On April 17, volunteers started the enormous task of cleaning the markers of the IHC Civil War veteran graves as an appropriate tribute to launch the Sesquicentennial Commemoration of the Civil War. The Society decided to start with the simplest and safest cleaning

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by Tom Bowling	

technique: a soft brush and water. Volunteer Theresa Weems, pictured above, grabbed equipment and provided elbow grease. To see the startling difference the cleaning makes, check the [photos](#) on the Society website. Dayle Dooley, another volunteer, came prepared

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Civil War Stories

Reconciliation Proposed by Unexpected Source

War & Remembrance

The Civil War is often characterized as having pitted brother against brother, while threatening to split the United States of America into two entities. Reconciliation of that strong divide is a major reason cited for commemorating the 150th Anniversary of the war. Most now agree that a century and a half after the start of the Civil War is more than enough time to put differences and hard feelings behind us. But long before this was the prevailing thinking, a woman who had been part of the inner circle of the Confederate movement supported reconciliation.

Changes

At the start of the war the Cary family left Vacluse, their estate in Alexandria which was eventually destroyed, and moved to Richmond. Although this move unsettled young Constance, she soon met her future husband Burton Harrison, secretary to Jefferson Davis, and was drawn further into the ranks of the Confederate inner circle. In fact, Constance and two cousins made the first three Confederate flags that were carried into battle. She also saw the results of battle. Her mother founded a hospital where Constance tended wounded soldiers and wrote their letters home.

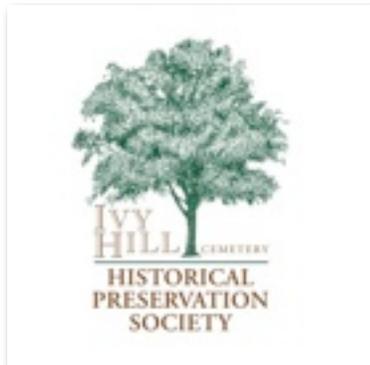
Refugitta

Despite these duties, Constance still found time to write for Richmond newspapers under the pen name *Refugitta* and became a well regarded author of articles and short stories. Although some describe certain language in her works as racist, the exploratory prose of the times emphasized the need to present of all points of view to fully discuss an issue. In her Master's Degree thesis, Gaillynn Bowman discusses how Constance used prose during and after the war to explore the wrongs inherent in slavery and the need to leave it behind, but wrote in ways that would be palatable to her audience, often presenting these thoughts in the form of an admirable fictional character.

In her story *Leander*, Constance depicted a former slave who attained his freedom without help from whites and thrived in his new life in France. (Bowman, 78) The notion that former slaves could be successful and independent was a radical notion in the post-war years in both North and South and, according to Bowman, may have stemmed from Constance's interactions with people of African descent in her travels throughout America and Europe after the Civil War. *(Continued on p. 5)*



Constance Cary Harrison
1843-1920



DOWNLOAD NEW CIVIL WAR TOURS VISIT IHCHPS.ORG

Already product-tested and refined with help from the Friends of Alexandria Archaeology, two Civil War Tours of IHC are now available to download and use. One details the lives of the all the veterans of that conflict who are at Ivy Hill. The second includes some of the better known veterans, as well as other historic figures of the Civil War at Ivy Hill. The tours are arranged so that you can download the information and drive through following the map. Graves on the tour are marked with orange flags. Or, to arrange a guided tour for any size group, please email tara@ihchps.org.

AZALEAS

Royalty

The Azalea Society of America calls azaleas the “royalty of the garden” and in Japan they are referred to as the “thinking of home bush.” Azaleas are a favorite at Ivy Hill, transporting the landscape and us into Spring each year.

Azaleas are members of the plant genus *Rhododendron*, and include both deciduous (losing their leaves in Fall) and evergreen varieties. There is a wide array of species of azaleas; they differ in flower type (and to a lesser degree flower



size), leaf size, color, and even petal shape. Add to this hybrid azaleas (formed by crossing species or other hybrids and reproduced by cuttings) and the assortment increases even more!

Pruning

The best way to ensure that all of the varieties beautifying Ivy Hill remain lovely and healthy is to trim them. The best time to trim is now, before mid-summer (when the blooms

are done, but the new buds have not formed) and the best way to trim is hand pruning. The Society has posted links to azalea pruning tips on [the website](#) to assist plot owners in caring for their plantings.

Sources: <http://azaleas.org/azaleas.html> & <http://www.usna.usda.gov/index.html>

ROBINS



The IHC robins often visit markers & seem to consider their options

The robins are not the largest birds on the scene at Ivy Hill, but they are clearly at home and in charge here. They are busy birds and easy to observe hopping towards their goals, gathering nesting materials or hunting for insects.

The female is a talented architect, building her tree nest into a six to eight inch diameter cup shape by using her wing to press grass, moss and twigs into a bottom layer which she then coats with soft mud and covers in dry grass.

Sources: birds.cornell.edu/BOW/amerob & allaboutbirds.org/guide/american_robin/id

TURDUS MIGRATORIUS

Robins are eager and early. They are known as harbingers of Spring, although many will remain in their nesting areas during winter staying more out of sight in the trees. Once Spring arrives, they will often be the first song birds you hear each morning.

A good meal of worms or berries is the ideal robin diet. Proving that we all need variety in our food, robins have been known to become tipsy from an exclusive honeysuckle berry menu.

FROM THE CEMETERY PRESIDENT

ACID RAIN

BY TOM BOWLING



There is a lot of history to be seen on gravestones. Everything from art to economics and architecture to religious trends are reflected in how people choose to mark the resting places of loved ones. Today there is both good news and bad news about the staying power of those markers. The bad news involves environmental factors, like acid rain, that can eat away at gravestones. But there is more good news: first, there is evidence that damaging air pollution was at its worst 70 years ago and, although we still pollute, some industrial pollutants have been decreased and distanced from our urban centers and therefore from our urban cemeteries, like Ivy Hill. Second, there are ways to slow the effects of acid rain on our markers. Having bush and tree canopies around tombstones helps. Periodic cleaning is also a good low tech option we can all do. The tree program and the marker cleaning events sponsored by the Society at Ivy Hill are literally preserving history. When you participate or support one of these activities, you are making history by preserving it. For links to more information on Marker Cleaning tips or about these activities at Ivy Hill and how you can participate or help, visit ihchps.org and click on [What To Do](#).

Angels & Interns

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with a sprayer -- which had the advantage of keeping the water clean -- and gave the group tips from her experience at Congressional Cemetery and the Fairfax County Cemetery Preservation Association.

Memorial Day Flags

Forty volunteers gathered at Ivy Hill on Saturday, May 28, to commemorate all the veterans at the cemetery. Starting at 10 AM, the volunteers separated into smaller groups, took maps of each section and placed flags on the grave of every veteran. This was the third annual Memorial Day event to honor our veterans and remember their service to our country. Each year the event becomes more popular as people recognize its value as a meaningful way to celebrate our veterans. For photos of the event visit [Memorial Day Flag Event](#) at ihchps.org.

Interns

In May the Society managed to secure one of the more coveted honors in Alexandria -- being a site for an Episcopal High School internship. Johnny Ward and Rhett Griggs came to Ivy Hill for a Senior year work and learning experience. Their month started with some fanfare when their Ivy Hill Cemetery internships were declared the most interesting by the school newspaper. Taking advantage of the situation, Society President Lucy Goddin and Cemetery Superintendent Scott Saltgaver kept every minute full of activities.

The April 17 volunteers had made great progress in starting the marker cleaning of the Civil War veteran graves and the Interns finished the job, ensuring that the effects of lichen and other environmental factors were mitigated.

Next, to assess any harm that may have taken place on these grave stones over the decades, the Interns photographed any marker damage. The photos are now being used to determine needed repairs and acquire estimates. To participate in restoring Civil War grave markers, please visit [What To Do](#) at ihchps.org.

Johnny and Rhett also prepared locator maps to assist the volunteers participating in the third annual Memorial Day Commemoration at Ivy Hill. (For more on our Interns and their accomplishments, see the [2011 Internships](#) section on the Society website, ihchps.org.)

What To Do?

We are looking for more of the same. Volunteering with the Society accomplishes a variety of goals that promote the use and preservation of Ivy Hill, while cultivating camaraderie and community-building. Upcoming activities cover everything from gardening opportunities to tour development and more. Contact us at tara@ihchps.org or call Tara at (703) 626-4837.

Contributors



Thank you to Scott Saltgaver & the editor for the photos

taken at Ivy Hill Cemetery

VOLUNTEERS



Special thanks to all the Volunteers who participated at Ivy Hill this

Spring & to the Society Volunteers who prepare the mailed version of the newsletter.

To nominate someone for a profile article, please email tara@ihchps.org.



Memorial Day Weekend found 40 Volunteers at Ivy Hill, planting flags to honor our Veterans

Civil War Profile

Mrs. Burton Harrison

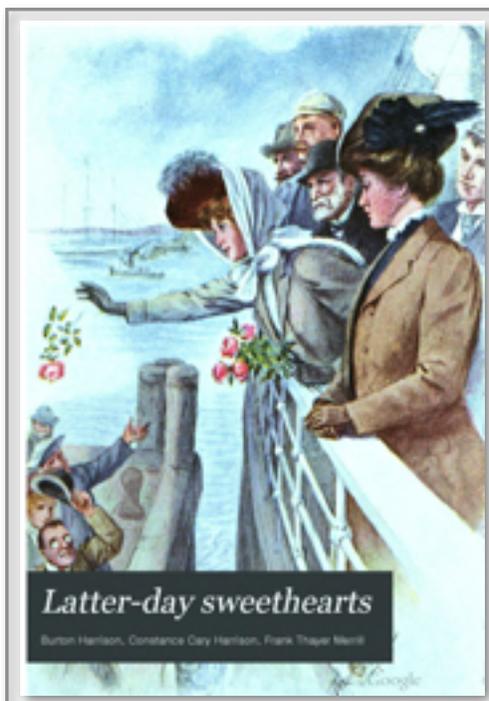
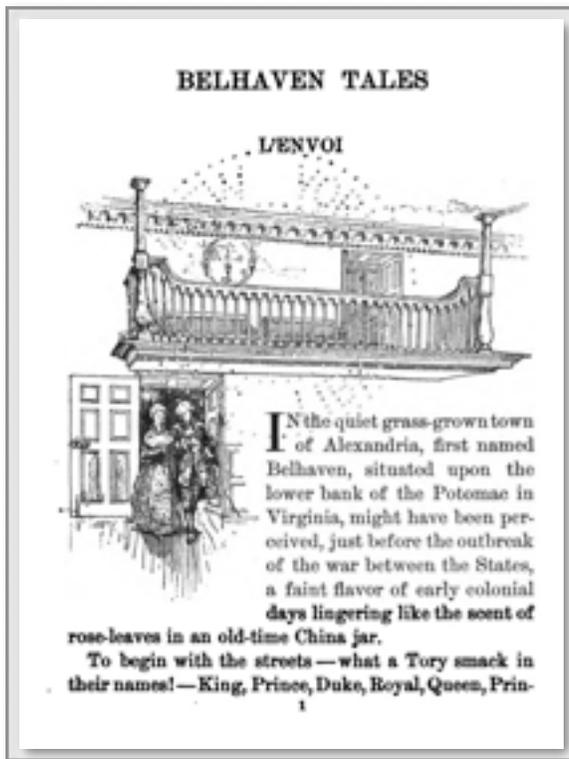
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Loss & Recovery

Constance Cary Harrison lost a great deal during the Civil War. Her home was leveled, her way of life destroyed, and she was briefly a prisoner of war for running a blockade. Yet, she focused on the end of slavery, the one important good she felt had come from the war, and strove to forward that cause through her writing.

The Harrisons lived in New York City and Bar Harbor, Maine during their married life. Burton was a member of the Bar in New York and became a successful businessman and Democratic Party activist. She and Burton remained strong proponents of reconciliation between the North and South.

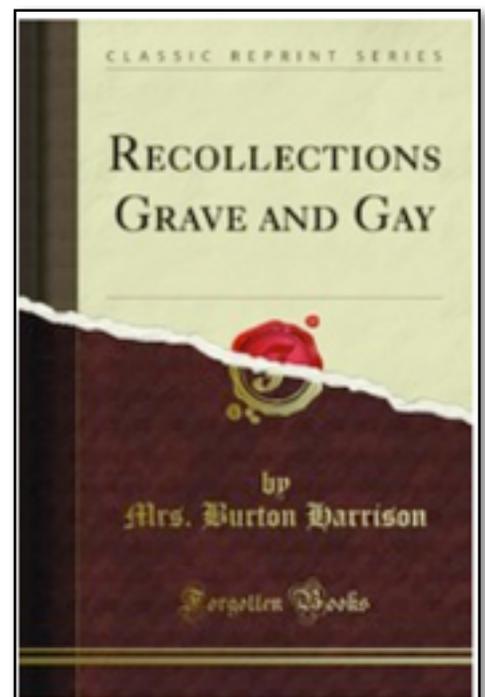
Burton and Constance had two sons, Fairfax Harrison (1869-1938) -- who became President of the Southern Railway Company -- and Francis Burton Harrison (1873-1957) -- who served as a Congressman and later as Governor-General of the Philippines under President Wilson.



After her husband's death in 1904, Constance returned to live in Washington where she wrote her memoirs, *Recollections Grave and Gay*.

Copies of many of Constance Cary Harrison's works are available to read or download at no charge from Google Books and ForgottenBooks.org. See links below.

Refugitta of Richmond, Recollections Gay & Grave, edited by Nathaniel Cheairs Hughes, Jr. and S. Kittrell Rushing, was published in February.



<http://www.forgottenbooks.org/>

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