

“Oakwood Cemetery, Syracuse, New York”

The Monumental News

February 1895, Vol. 8, No. 2, pp. 126-127

According to this article:

“(Oakwood Cemetery) comprises some 170 acres of land, situated not far from the center of Syracuse, N. Y., and includes hill and dale. Of gentle declivity, no inclines impracticable, and half of its area natural woods, the white and black oak predominating. Its greatest elevation is 200 feet.

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is presented on the Stone Quarries and Beyond web site.

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September 2014

**OAKWOOD CEMETERY,
SYRACUSE, N. Y.**

Beautiful Oakwood is a term appropriately applied to this attractive resting place of the dead, which originally beautiful under nature's lavish hand, has retained this characteristic



OAKWOOD CHAPEL.

feature under the wise methods adopted and pursued in its transition. It comprises some 170 acres of land, situated not far from the center of Syracuse, N. Y., and includes hill and dale, of gentle declivity, no inclines impracticable, and half of its area natural woods, the white and black oak predominating. Its greatest elevation is 200 feet.

Oakwood cemetery was established in 1859, and now comprises some 170 acres, but has only one small lake used as a lily pond. It has eleven miles of gravel roads, and on the grades the

gutters are paved with cobble stones from three to seven feet wide. There are fifty seven sections laid out, of irregular size and shape, covering some eighty acres of its area; the largest lot contains 8050 feet and there are several of 3000 to 6000 square feet of area, but probably the average may be set down at from 450 to 500 feet. No entire section is devoted to single graves; the system adopted is to locate a block of them not many in a place, in the interior of large sections. There is no "potters field," and this is a feature in accord with present ideas provided a true conception of "man's duty to man" stimulates the management.

No monuments or boundary posts are permitted on single graves and the markers are restricted to a height of 2 ft. 6 in. and a width of 2 ft. One body is only allowed in each grave and the price charged is ten dollars.

The lawn plan, as it is called, of cemetery design and maintenance, is adopted in the new portion of this cemetery, so that in the old grounds we still find the depressed paths between lots. About the newer sections grass paths are the rule and no gravel, cement or scrimshaw is used. Very liberal margins are left about the lots for ornamental planting, and all odd points and fractions are reserved for decorative effects about



VIEW IN NEIGHBORHOOD OF CHAPEL.

(photo captions) "Oakwood Chapel" and "View in Neighborhood of Chapel"

the grounds. No mounds on graves exceed five inches in height and few are above three or four inches.

No restrictions are as yet placed upon the design and form of monuments, except that they must be in every way proper, and only one is allowed on each family lot. All foundations are however built by the cemetery association, which at least prevents faulty construction in this most particular feature of cemetery work.

In regard to family vaults, the cemetery authorities exercise a censorship and all designs must be submitted for approval and accepted by the executive committee before any work is commenced upon them.

Hitherto the cemetery has not been provided with modern water facilities, but the coming summer will see a commencement of this important matter.

The Chapel and Receiving Vault combined, of which two views are given, is constructed of Onondaga gray limestone, and cost some \$20,000. The receiving tomb is arranged under ground and has a capacity of 200 bodies. The total number of interments is about 9000, and the average number per year at present is 375.

The management of this cemetery does not consider a greenhouse a necessary adjunct and in consequence Oakwood has none. Greenhouse plants can be bought so cheaply, and, moreover the planting of tender flowers is discouraged, so that greenhouse facilities have no attraction for the officials. Great care, however, is bestowed upon a small nursery, where a great variety of the best and choicest evergreens, deciduous trees, shrubs and hardy perennials are cultivated. This nursery furnishes ample stock in great variety for the ornamentation of the grounds as well as to accommodate lot owners. The plants are set out in the nursery very small and



DEDICATION VALLEY.

thus become acclimated and when required there is choice enough of good material for immediate effect which very rarely fails to grow right along. This is a policy which should be pursued more particularly than it is in all our cemeteries, and it would be well as a rule, if more attention were paid to the wild plants and shrubs indigenous to the locality. Many of our leading landscape men bestow much care in this direction and produce effects with familiar plants and bushes hard to be excelled in any other way.

The illustrations given speak well for the appearance of the cemetery. At the point illustrated by the view of "Dedication Valley" the services of dedication were held in November, 1859. Many fine monuments are scattered about the grounds.

The cemetery employs from twenty-five to thirty men, and in the spring augments the force by the addition of forty to fifty women, mostly German. The latter do the light work of raking up the leaves and cleaning up the grounds generally, and they appear to do the work satisfactorily. This is unique in cemetery work. The original surveyor of Oakwood was Howard Daniels. To the superintendent, Mr. B. Chaffee, is due the improvements now continually in progress, which are in line with progressive modern ideas.