

# Oak Leaves

## Oak Hill Cemetery Association

1705 Mt. Vernon Rd. S. E. • Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52403

*Oak Hill Cemetery is non-profit lot owner association dedicated to preserving the heritage of Linn County, Iowa.*

## The Entrance Pavilion (Shelter House) & Fieldstone Wall

*This distinctive structure was given to the cemetery by Harriette Weare Daniels (of Daniels Park) in honor of her second husband. Lawson Daniels. Lawson, as well as her brothers John and Charles Weare, were on the Board of Directors of Oak Hill Cemetery for many years.*

- Lawson Daniels was serving in the office of President when he died suddenly on June 16, 1906.
- Charles Weare, then Secretary of the Oak Hill Cemetery and brother of Harriet Daniels died on June 19, 1906.



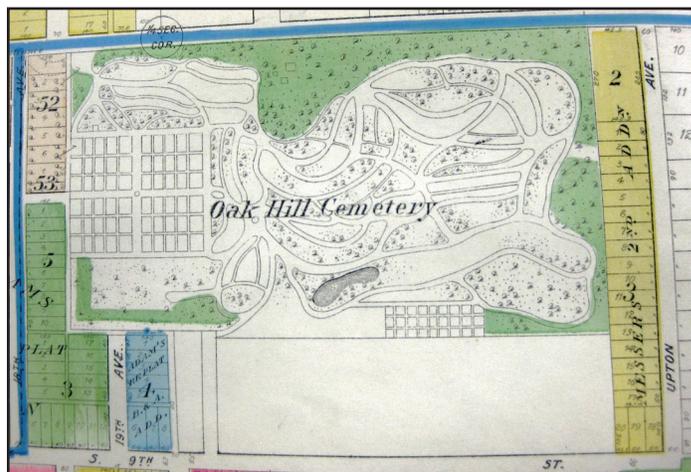
The fieldstone wall, gateway and shelter house (as it was described because the street car stop for the neighborhood was located at the corner) was planned, and constructed in the years 1907-1909 at a cost of over \$6000.00.

The Cedar Rapids Daily Republican  
Tuesday, March 24, 1908

### HANDSOME NEW ENTRANCE TO BE ERECTED AT OAK HILL

New Iron Gateway and a Shelter House of Boulders with a Tile Roof

A new gateway and shelter house at the entrance to Oak Hill Cemetery is one of the added beauties to Cedar Rapids which has been made possible through the kindness of Mrs. Lawson Daniels. The late Lawson Daniels at various times in his life expressed a wish that there might be a better gateway at the entrance and before his death he asked that this be done although he did not provide for it in his will. The firm of Josselyn and Taylor architects have drawn up the plans for this new entrance and already the stones to be used in its construction are being hauled to the place. The gateway contemplated is one of granite boulder posts with an iron gate and a shelter house of boulders with a tile roof. The entrance will be placed about one half block this side of the present entrance, the land having been secured for this purpose.



*Oak Hill Entrance as shown on a map in an Atlas dated 1907. This would pre-date the construction.*



*Oak Hill Entrance as shown on an early postcard. Date is unknown, but the receiving vault in the background was only used until about 1919-1920*



---

*Lowell, Lawson and Harriette (Weare) Daniels*

---

Lowell, the third Daniels brother, (Addison, Preston, Lowell, and Lawson), was born in North Brookfield, Massachusetts. (His brother Addison was first to arrive, and was among the group of men who purchased the squatters rights of Osgood Shepherd.)

Among the early merchants of Cedar Rapids, Lowell began business with his oldest brother, Addison, in 1846. In 1854 he married Miss Harriette S. Weare, the youngest daughter of John and Cynthia (Ashley) Weare. Lowell Daniels was a born merchant, possessing a quick and discerning mind and ready and willing hands to meet the many varied wants of his customers. He possessed great tact and diplomacy. Later he was joined by Lawson, with the firm known as L. Daniels & Company. Lowell Daniels died on November 7, 1876.

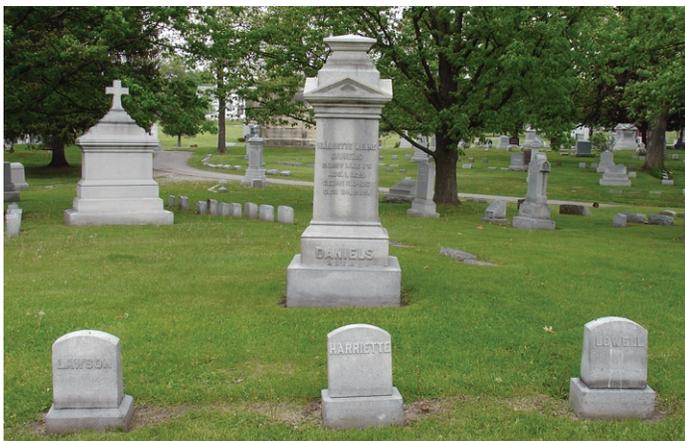
After two years in Springfield Mass., Lawson Daniels left his job as a clerk in the book store and publishing house of G. & C. Merriam to return to North Brookfield Mass., his hometown. He was a clerk in a general store until 1848. In the fall of that year he joined his 3 brothers and his sister in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Lawson continued the mercantile business L. Daniels & Company until 1880.

On July 26, 1882 Lawson married Harriette, his brother's widow. In 1883, he helped organize the Cedar Rapids Savings Bank, and was elected vice president. Lawson Daniels was one of the stockholders in the company that gave the city its water works. He assisted in completing the Chicago, Iowa & Nebraska Railroad, now a part of the Northwestern system, from Clinton to Cedar Rapids by purchasing stock.

He was secretary of the Cedar Rapids Bridge Company and secretary of the Cedar Rapids Transportation Company during its existence. He was a stockholder in the Oak Hill Cemetery and served as secretary of that company from its organization until in later life he served as president.

It was a dream of Lowell and Lawson Daniels to present the city with a park, which was done by Mrs. Daniels and is still known as Daniels Park.

The entrance to the cemetery was carried out by Harriette after the death of Lawson and stands as a memorial to him.



From the journal of Directors Minutes, 1906:

*A special meeting of the Directors of the Oak Hill Cemetery Company was held at the office of the company, Monday June 23rd, at 1:30 p.m. 1906.*

*Present – John S. Ely, George B. Douglas, W. D. Douglas, being all of the surviving directors.*

*George B. Douglas, Vice President, in the chair. W. D. Douglas acting as Secretary Pro tem. The following resolution was unanimously adopted on the motion of W. D. Douglas:*

*Mr. Lawson Daniels, the President and Treasurer of this Company, died June 16th 1906, and Mr. Charles Weare, Secretary of this Company, died June 19th 1906.*

*In recording the deaths of these two men, we, their associates and surviving directors of this Company realize what an affliction has visited us and what a sweeping loss we have sustained.*

*This memorial which we spread on the records of the Company is but a feeble attempt to express what this community has lost, what this Company has suffered and what ties of friendship have been broken.*

*From the very beginning of this city, through all of the many trials and difficulties of pioneer life, through the struggles of more recent times, for nearly sixty years, these two men have stood together, devoting their labors to the up building of the city and the best interests of the community.*

*Connected with the management of this Company, from its inception, for forty years they have officially guided its affairs. Whatever success has been attained in providing and beautifying Oak Hill Cemetery as a final resting place for our dead is due in great measure to the efforts of Mr. Daniels and Mr. Weare.*

*As friends and associates, our loss is to be measured by our long time relationship with these men of loyal friendships and sterling integrity. We realize that with their deaths the former generation has passed away, the generation of founders and pioneers, and upon us, their successors, devolves the conduct of institutions which they have established. We continue in this work with the earnest hope that our labors may in a measure produce results commensurate with the heritage we have received.*

*On the motion of W. D. Douglas, Mr. John S. Ely, was unanimously elected president and treasurer to fill the vacancy occasioned by the death of Mr. Lawson Daniels.*

*On the motion of J. S. Ely, Mr. John McCosh was appointed assistant secretary to hold office during the pleasure of the board.*

*On the motion of W. D. Douglas, J. M. Dinwiddle was elected secretary of the Company caused by the death of Mr. Charles Weare.*

*On motion the meeting was adjourned.*



***The Weare Family***

Early accounts tell us *John L. and Elizabeth (Weare) Shearer* arrived in Linn County in 1839, settling about sixteen miles northeast of Marion, on Otter Creek in Marion Township. This would be a year later than the Osgood Shepherd claim of squatters rights to the east side of the river. It was the same year David W. King, arrived on the west side of the river as the founder of Kingston.

By 1842, Judge Greene and Nicholas B. Brown were proprietors of the waterpower and construction of the first dam was begun. Construction began using brush and small trees brought down river from neighboring islands, and rock quarried from the river in 1842.

The dam would fail, by flooding, inadequate construction, or bad design, and Judge Greene would set out to find someone with more capital and experience to rebuild. Meeting with *John L. and Elizabeth (Weare) Shearer* he learned of *Alexander and Mary (Weare) Ely*, of Allegan Michigan. In the spring of 1843 he went to visit the Ely family and make his appeal. Alexander could not leave on short notice, but the then twenty four year old *Mrs. Mary (Weare) Ely*, set out with the Greene Party to visit her sister, with Alexander to follow later to bring her home. When he arrived he was impressed with the city, and accepted a one twelfth interest in the town site for building a new dam and flour mill. In 1844 construction began, taking three years to complete. Workers were attacked by waterborne illnesses, malaria and rough pioneer living. It was October 1847 when the mill was operational. By 1848, Alexander and two small children had died. His brother John F. Ely came to Cedar Rapids to look after his brother's property. In 1853 he married his brother's widow.

*John Weare, Sr.* moved here from Michigan in the spring of 1845 in order to be with his children who had previously emigrated. Mr. John Weare Sr., held the office of justice of the peace up to the time of his death in 1856. Son, *John Weare Jr.* became a noted banker and railroad promoter. He was responsible for the hiring of Landscape Architect Horace Cleveland, the addition of the receiving vault and was active in the expansion of the cemetery grounds. *Charles Weare* became engaged in constructing railroads, was mayor of Cedar Rapids, postmaster, and consul in foreign countries. Upon the death of his brother John, Charlie took an active role on the Board of Directors of the Oak Hill Cemetery. He was with the First National

Bank of Cedar Rapids, as well as with the Cedar Rapids Water Company. George Weare became a noted banker in Sioux City.

*Lydia Weare*, like her sister, married an Ely. Elisha Ely died suddenly on a trip to Philadelphia. Her three children lived in the Ely and Daniels homes as Lydia served as a matron in soldier's hospitals during the Civil War.

*Sarah Weare*, taught in one of the first schools and in 1850 married Seymour Carpenter, son of Oak Hill Cemetery founder, Gabriel Carpenter. Mary Carpenter, sister of Seymour, married George Weare.

---

### ***Colonial Connections***

Cynthia Ashley Weare, was the daughter of Revolutionary War Colonel Samuel Ashley, of Vermont and mother of the five Weare sisters whose marriages united so many leading families in the history of Cedar Rapids.

The Ely Family were descendants of Nathaniel Ely, of Thomas Hooker's congregation, about 200 that received a special permit from King Charles I to emigrate to the New England colony and there to worship God without restriction. They sailed from Ipswich in 1634 and settled in Newtown, now Cambridge, Massachusetts. In 1636 Nathaniel Ely removed to Hartford, Connecticut.

Alexander Ely was the son of Elisha Ely, who served in the War of 1812. Shortly after the war, Elisha moved from Massachusetts to Rochester New York, as a pioneer of milling and merchandising. Twenty years later, his sons repeated the legacy in Michigan, with interests in water power, mills, railroad building and lake traffic to Chicago.

---

### ***The Planners, the Materials and Construction***

*The firm of Josselyn and Taylor architects have drawn up the plans for this new entrance and already the stones to be used in its construction are being hauled to the place. The gateway contemplated is one of granite boulder posts with an iron gate and a shelter house of boulders with a tile roof.*

First person accounts passed down through the Weare and Ely family tell us the structure was built of material from a local glacier deposit. It had to be located near town, as farmers would collect the stones and bring them into town





by wagon, purchase supplies and return home the same day. Additional stone was brought in by train on flatbed cars putting it near a rail line. From *The Story of Cedar Rapids by Frederick Murray*, the cut granite boulders, a strictly local building material in this glaciated geological region, were most likely gathered from the ancestral farm of the Honorable James Good, just north of the city limits on Center Point Road.

The gate is believed to be a product of the Carmody Foundry, which produced such products as manhole covers and fire escapes which still appear in the city.

After the sudden death of John Carmody the foundry became known as the Iowa Steel Company under the direction of Howard Hall.



#### *Architects – Josselyn and Taylor*

*Henry Josselyn* studied at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Boston, and studied for a year in France. As a prominent architect with the firm Josselyn & Taylor, the firm was named the architect for the Montrose Hotel, The Cedar Rapids Public Library, Grace Episcopal Church, the First Congregational Church, as well as other structures in Cedar Rapids and throughout Iowa. Among the older residences the firm was associated with is Brucemore.

*Eugene Taylor* was born in Denmark, Iowa in 1853. He was a graduate of Grinnell College in 1876 and took a special course at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. In Cedar Rapids he was associated with Josselyn & Taylor from 1882 to 1924 where he



designed the Iowa Hospital for Insane in Cherokee, Iowa in 1898 and he was involved with the design of St. Luke's Hospital and Mercy Hospital in 1902.

*George Josselyn*, father of Henry was the superintendent of construction for the firm. Born at Kingston, Jamaica he made his home with an aunt in England. She sent him to school in Germany being educated for the profession of mechanical engineering. In the United States he learned carpentry in Ohio, and in 1855 he came to this state and settled at Mt. Pleasant. There he helped in the construction of the Insane Hospital, being foreman of carpenters and superintendent of construction. In 1868 he went to Independence Iowa and was connected with the building of that hospital.



#### *The Honorable James Good*

James Good, was a student of Coe College, a local lawyer, the city attorney and later a congressman for his district. He served as Western Campaign Manager for Herbert Hoover in 1928. As a member of the Hoover Cabinet, he was serving as Secretary of War, (in today's terms the Secretary of Defense) in November of 1929 when he died suddenly. His funeral and burial at Oak Hill Cemetery was said to be "one of the most impressive burial services ever held elsewhere than in Washington".

It would include an escort from the Deacon home (family of Mrs. Good) to the Church by a squadron of the Fourteenth Cavalry, and an escort to the cemetery by the National Guard, the Coe College Band and ROTC, The Hanford Post American Legion Color Guard, the caisson drawn by six horses, and the official salute of nineteen guns.

