

Commemoration and Consumption in Mid-Nineteenth Century Cemeteries of Cazenovia, New York

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INTRODUCTION:

This work explores production and consumption of mortuary goods through a study of three nineteenth-century cemeteries within the Towns of Cazenovia, Nelson, and Fenner in Madison County, an agriculturally-focused region of upstate New York. This research fits into a larger community-based landscape archaeology initiative in the region, where there is strong interest in preserving and gaining a deeper understanding of historic cemeteries. This poster began as an attempt to apply the object biography framework to pilot study data to understand production of grave monuments by master craftsmen but has grown to also include spatial analysis using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) technology to visualize a network of those who formed the mortuary economy surrounding Cazenovia, Nelson, and Fenner as well as the spatial and social context of mortuary display in which they were working.



Figures 2, 3 and 4: Evergreen Cemetery, Needham Family Cemetery, and Nelson Rural Cemetery

METHODS:

Data was collected in Madison County, New York as part of a pilot study for the author's dissertation over a two-week period in the summer of 2022.

- Pedestrian survey conducted using an ArrowLite GLONASS GPS receiver and the ESRI Field Maps app on an iPhone 12, connected via Bluetooth; GPS points were generated for each grave monument. These data were then used to create a point-based shapefile in ArcGIS Pro, resulting in 87 data points.
- Created spatial visualizations of monuments, sites of production and consumption in ArcGIS Pro
- Archival research into deathworking economy using resources digitized by the Cazenovia Public Library
- Measured road-distance from production sites to cemetery sites, and from known farms to known burial places using ArcGIS Pro

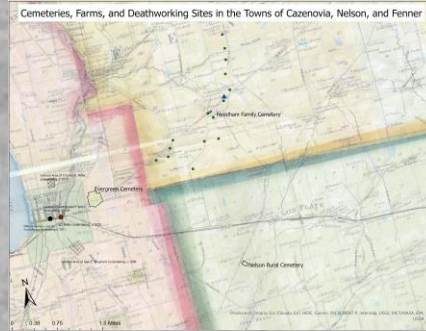


Figure 1: Map showing cemetery sites, known farm sites, and areas of deathwork and mortuary good production overlaying 1859 maps of Cazenovia, Nelson, and Fenner, NY

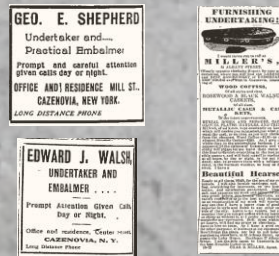


Figure 6, 7, 8: Advertisements from the Cazenovia Republican for local undertakers



Figure 5: GIS data collection in the field using an ArrowLite GLONASS GPS Receiver

RESULTS:

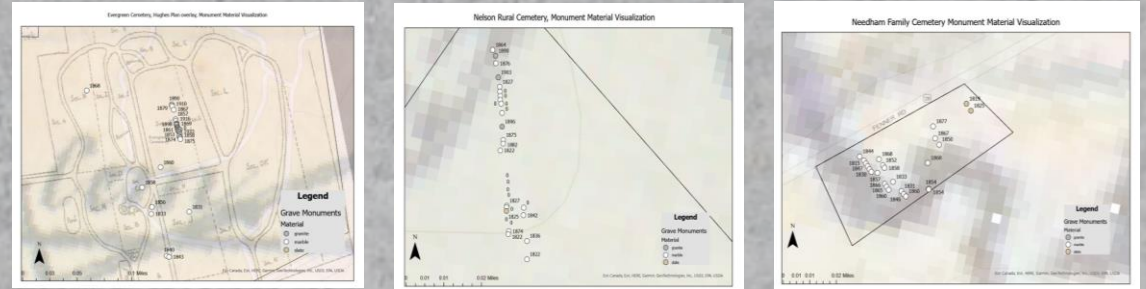


Figure 9, 10, 11: Monuments by material type visualizations at Evergreen, Nelson Rural, and Needham Family Cemeteries

Cemetery Site	Deathworking Site	Road Distance	Distance from Farm to Burial Place	Site of Burial
Evergreen Cemetery	Miller, Kingsbury, and Co. Furniture and Undertaking c. 1871	.83 Miles via Fenner Rd and Albany Street	2.91 Miles via Fenner Road	John M. Allen
	Geo E. Shepherd Undertaking c. 1908	.86 Miles via Fenner Road and Road 9	1.64 Miles via Fenner Road	Newton Weed
	Edward J. Walsh Undertaking c. 1909	.62 Miles via Fenner Road	03. Miles via Fenner Road	Sardis Dana
Needham Family Cemetery	Miller, Kingsbury, and Co. Furniture and Undertaking c. 1871	3.14 Miles via Fenner Road, Albany Street	.58 Miles via Shephards and Fenner Roads	Artemas and Abel Town
	Geo E. Shepherd Undertaking c. 1908	3.26 Miles via Fenner Road and Road 9	4.87 Miles via Fenner Road	Daison Haskel
	Edward J. Walsh Undertaking c. 1909	2.93 Miles via Fenner Road	1.08 Miles via Fenner Road	Rufus May
Nelson Rural Cemetery	Miller, Kingsbury, and Co. Furniture and Undertaking c. 1871	3.31 Miles via Thomas Road, Road 20, Fenner, and Albany Street	.98 Miles via Shephards and Fenner Roads	William P. Barrett
	Geo E. Shepherd Undertaking c. 1908	2.84 Miles via Thomas Road, Road 20, Fenner Road, and road 9		
	Edward J. Walsh Undertaking c. 1909	3.03 Miles via Thomas Road, Road 20, and Fenner Road		

Figure 13: Road distance from known farms to known burial sites

Figure 12: Road distance between cemeteries and known undertaker and funeral goods shops

DISCUSSION AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS:

The high number of marble markers at Needham Family Cemetery indicates that Fenner's farming families were still participating in a discourse of international, cosmopolitan Victorian mourning, counter to stereotypes about rural life. It is evident that by the 1840s, a well-established funeral industry existed in the region surrounding Cazenovia. From initial archival work, it appears that sites of production were clustered in closer proximity to Evergreen Cemetery and the Town of Cazenovia than the outlying Towns of Fenner and Nelson. For mourners selecting the burial place of loved ones, it appears that proximity to home was not the only factor: further research is required to understand the relationship between places of life and sites of burial. Expanding the monument sample size and further archival research will allow for a more complete vision of consumption and production of mortuary goods in nineteenth-century Madison County, revealing class and gender intersections in this space and a deeper understanding of how large social and economic trends, such as American-Victorian mourning practices, are adapted and enacted in specific local contexts.



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