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The Cemetery and Cultural Memory: Montreal, 1860–1900

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Article abstract

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Résumé:

Il est faux de croire que le cimetière conserve la mémoire de toutes les personnes disparues et ensevelies. Dans le processus funéraire, il existait des critères de sélection qui ont exclu plusieurs personnes des commémorations. Pour le démontrer, nous avons élaboré un échantillon de 1 700 individus de la deuxième moitié du XIXe siècle. Les douze patronymes retenus des archives consultées représentent les trois principaux groupes culturels vivant alors à Montréal : Canadiens français, catholiques irlandais et protestants anglophones. Cet échantillonnage a permis de reconstituer les familles, de déterminer les liens de parenté et de préciser le statut social des individus. Les registres des cimetières du Mont-Royal permettent de confirmer si les sépultures des personnes sélectionnées s'y trouvent. Le dernier élément dépend des pratiques de commémoration motivées par la religion, la culture, le sexe, le statut, l'âge et les règlements du cimetière.

The cemetery is a cultural landscape that represents, albeit slowly, social changes in communities. The landscape of the cemetery as a whole is a residue, which we can use as evidence of social trends, cultural patterns, and prevailing ideologies; and its gravestones are remnants of the ideas and beliefs of the deceased, the people who mourned them, and the society within which they lived. Nevertheless, I argue that the common conception of the cemetery as a site of memory for all is false. In this article, I will identify certain limitations of the cemetery as a site of cultural memory. My primary argument is that there were certain biases about who would be commemorated, a form of selectivity to the memorial process, that caused a great number of people

to be eroded from the landscape. Results of an empirical analysis of gravestones missing from the cemetery landscape of Montreal indicate that persons *least* likely to have been commemorated in the late nineteenth century were young, female, of lower status, Catholic, and French Canadian. It is suggested that the primary factors behind these biases in the landscape of commemoration were: financial, the inability of certain households to afford commemoration; cultural, the willingness of certain groups to expend large sums of money on plots and monuments; and cemetery regulations, with respect to the sale of temporary plots and the allocation of poor grounds.

Past and present examinations of cemeteries have primarily focussed on the existing cemetery landscape and what is known about its conception and development and have also evaluated the community within which it was established. Such studies utilise the most obvious clues found in the landscape to explain the variety and diversity of cemetery and monument design. Foundational cemetery studies by authors such as Kniffen, Francaviglia, Deetz, Meyer, and Sloane[1] attribute meaning to clues such as monument size, design and engraving, and cemetery location, design and layout. The present paper builds upon these landmark studies, and goes a step further by adopting the novel approach of going from the records to the landscape. This methodology brings to light additional evidence that was intangible in previous studies. Who is missing from the cemetery landscape and why? Archival materials provide insight into the lives of individuals and families no longer visibly commemorated and possible explanations about why certain individuals are not represented in the cemetery landscape.

The research was conducted for the time period 1860 to 1900 because of its potential for revealing social change. In Montreal, as in most North American cities, this was a period of rapid industrialisation. Massive waves of immigration brought three groups to the city: English Protestants, Irish Catholics, and rural French Canadians, each with distinct traditions and social characteristics that are reflected in cemetery landscapes. These three cultural communities made up 95% of Montreal's population: one-half French, one-fifth Irish Catholic and one-quarter Protestant of British origin.[2] Some practical restraints favour this time span as well. The decennial manuscript censuses are available as public documents from 1861 to 1901. These documents are essential to establish differences in commemoration by class, gender, and ethnicity (information about age, sex, occupation, and place of origin). Secondly, civil records of burials in Quebec down to 1899 are readily available for public scrutiny and finally, the cemeteries on Mount Royal (Mount Royal Cemetery and Notre-Dame-des-Neiges Cemetery) in Montreal were established in the 1850s.

To conduct this landscape study, it was first necessary to examine the history of cemetery landscapes in order to provide a context for the Mount Royal cemeteries. It was also necessary to locate a sample representative of the three predominant cultural groups in Montreal in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Both the cemetery landscapes and the located gravestones of individuals from the sample were analysed to provide insight into the hypothesized erosion process. Through the use of a sys-

tematic method and a controlled sample, research findings indicate that an overwhelming majority of individuals are not visibly commemorated.

The History of Cemeteries in Europe and North America

The cemetery can be viewed as a form of material culture and, as with all objects, it is imperative to understand the milieu from which it was created and influenced. The nineteenth century was a time of great changes for the cemetery landscape. Previous research suggests that France was the first to experience the strains placed upon cemeteries in the late eighteenth century. An analysis of these strains illustrates the influence of the evolving French cemetery on North American cemetery design and thus the layouts of the two cemeteries on Mount Royal in Montreal.

In eighteenth-century France, urbanisation gave rise to bourgeois communities that developed particular "perceptions and complaints about social inequities of the sepulchral system."[3] The sheer growth of cities inevitably augmented the number of corpses for burial, so that cemeteries became overcrowded. Churches were unable to expand cemetery properties due to the increased demand for space in the burgeoning city, and the combination of overcrowding and encroachment brought the cemetery under public scrutiny. As displeasure intensified, medical officials claimed that the poor sanitary conditions of cemeteries contributed to the spread of epidemics.[4] The resolution was to locate cemeteries away from the city and into the rural outskirts. It can be said that the removal of city cemeteries brought on the realisation that there was a need to change the main function of the cemetery from the disposal of corpses to the commemoration of individuals.[5]

New ideas associated with Romanticism that were shared among philosophers and designers alike, created a new frame of mind. The cemetery became an important vehicle through which people were able to construct identities and convey the meaning of their lives to others. The middle class "embraced the new style as they seemed to have viewed commemorative tombs as a way to achieve or confirm social standing that might otherwise be denied them."[6] Along with attempts to ensure dignity came the desire to create a landscape that could be appreciated by the living; hence the rural cemetery movement,[7] which treated the cemetery landscape as a school of instruction in morality, sentiment, and taste. Landscape designers fashioned the new cemetery after the English garden, with winding paths through open spaces and wooded areas, around streams and ponds, up and down hill, and with selected plants and flowers.[8] The idea was to design a landscape that differed at every turn, creating a sense of anticipation and curiosity. The Pere Lachaise Cemetery in Paris,[9] established in 1804, was the first rural cemetery. Its extra-mural location, layout, and design are evidence of the Romantic period's influence on the commemorative practices of the living toward the dead. The rural cemetery movement was a precedent to urban beautification. The movement provided a romantic landscape as a retreat for the living, who were able to leisure at the city's edge.[10]

The rural cemetery movement did not reach Canada, more specifically Montreal, until the 1850s. The city was walled in until 1817 and its fortifications restricted town planning with respect to land use, traffic patterns, and cemetery space. Following the removal of the old walls, the rate of urban growth increased rapidly, resulting in the encroachment upon burial space by buildings and traffic within city limits. Montreal's population quadrupled in forty years. By the end of the century the city was a thriving industrial centre.[11] As was the case in France, space was not the only problem faced by cemetery corporations, the outbreak of epidemics was also a perceived medical risk.[12] Although the cemetery was not the only source of unhealthiness in the city, it was continually criticised as the main one. This had as much to do with changing sensibilities as it did with hazardous emissions. Protestant and Catholic cemeteries had been relocated to new sites in the rural outskirts several times to make room for urban growth, only to be reincorporated by urban expansion. The Catholic cemetery moved to seven different locations between 1642 and 1855 to accommodate the growing number of burials and the growth of the city.[13]

By the mid-nineteenth century, the Catholic and the Protestant churches were unable to expand on their existing burial sites and were obliged to look for alternative locations outside the city. The Mount Royal Cemetery Corporation (formed by representatives of six Protestant churches) was first to purchase a tract of land (155 acres) on Mount Royal in 1847. There was no precedent in Canada for the design of such a large extent of land so the corporation turned to American planners for models of the rural cemetery fashioned after Pere Lachaise. These planners had been designing picturesque landscapes in cemeteries since 1831, when Mount Auburn Cemetery was created in Boston. J. C. Sydney, surveyor and civil engineer, was commissioned to design the Mount Royal Cemetery. Sydney was said to be a follower of Andrew Jackson Downing, who had been the corporation's first choice, but who died suddenly in 1852.[14]

A few years later, the Notre-Dame-des-Neiges Catholic Cemetery Company followed suit and purchased adjacent land on the mountain, starting with 115 acres in 1853, and gradually expanding to over 365 acres between 1865 and 1908. The cemetery company commissioned surveyor and architect Henri-Maurice Perrault to plan the cemetery's layout, and sent him to places such as Boston and New York to study rural cemetery design.[15] Both tracts of land on Mount Royal had varying topography suitable for the development of a picturesque funereal landscape in line with the day's sensibilities concerning commemoration. Once the commitment was made to establish cemeteries on Mount Royal, the previous cemetery locations were neglected and eventually removed to satisfy demands for roads, construction, and open spaces. As a result the two cemeteries on Mount Royal were the main repositories of the city's dead throughout the second half of the nineteenth century and accordingly are representative of the city's three dominant cultural groups of the time.

Methods and Sampling Strategy

To undertake the novel approach of going from the records to the landscape, I created small subsets of individuals, representative of the French, Irish Catholic, and English Protestant

populations of Montreal. The sample database comprised all persons with twelve surnames, beginning with 'B' and 'R', because the letters were easily relayed by mouth to ear, easily legible in hand-written records, and efficient for sounding nineteenth-century ledgers.[16] The entire database consists of seventeen hundred death records from 1860 to 1900, and has sufficient numbers to represent each of the three groups (French Canadian 800, Irish Catholics 500, and English Protestants 400). The pre-established database offered the advantage of links already recognised to census and tax roll records, and to life course events of the families over the entire forty years.

To address issues of social status, a simple three-part classification of occupations was used to trap class distinctions: the bottom tier consisted of labourers, the middle of semi-skilled and skilled workers, and the top of clerks, storekeepers, professionals and upper class.[17] Although this classification does not differ greatly from Katz's,[18] it is based upon local controls: the median rent of household heads of each reported occupational title. Male occupations for the majority of fathers or husbands have been verified in the census and gaps in the death records filled in from records of baptisms and marriages.

As for burial records, the management companies of the two cemeteries on Mount Royal maintain their own compilations. The Protestant company has a card catalogue that records name, date of death, lot number, cause of death, and address.[19] The Catholic corporation supplies the public with a computerised index that provides such information as date of death and location of monument. It was necessary to consult the original ledgers to obtain lot size, lot owner, and price, but these records were only available from 1884; the cemetery's office was previously destroyed by fire along with all original records. Since there is such a great difference in the percentages of individuals located in the records before and after 1884, the data is divided into two categories, 1860–1883 and 1884–1900; the latter category was

regarded as a more representative sample. The lot information obtained was cross-referenced with the contracts written by the corporation, which offered information on the conditions of the purchase and the stipulations set by the owner with respect to who was entitled to burial.

The research strategy was intentionally designed to allow for the analysis of cemetery landscapes in Montreal by comparing historical documents and photography to what is present today, and for the analysis of gravestones using a systematic search for individuals from a pre-established sample with some control over the range of social status, gender, age, and ethnicity. To study the proposed erosion process, it was necessary to establish two levels of analysis.

The first level of analysis consisted of the cemetery landscape as a whole, paying particular attention to its design, location and layout, and to the influence of the rural cemetery movement. In order to study the large tracts of land occupied by the two cemeteries, a variation of the point-quarter method of sampling was employed. The method consisted of tracing a transect through the cemetery incorporating sections known to have been used in the 1860–1900 period, and locating random observation points along this line. This approach allowed for systematic appraisals of the topography, vegetation, layout, design, and the organisation of gravestones.

The second level of analysis involved the location of gravestones of individuals from the three death samples. The names in the sample, drawn from death registers of the churches, were matched with the records kept by the cemetery companies. There are four categories in which to place each individual with a plot number and one for no plot number, ordered from most ambiguous to most firm and precise (Table I).

The actual monuments found in the cemeteries were classed into four groups, based loosely on categories established by

Table I: Plot Classification

Temp/poor ground	Individuals not referenced to a plot number
Ambiguous	Gravestone located in the plot referenced in the cemetery records but it did not belong to the individual or individuals in question nor did it have any apparent relation to the surname being sought
Empty plot	No gravestone. It may have been destroyed or may never have been erected
Identified family	Inscription with no mention of the individual(s) but a connection existed between the deceased and the names inscribed, for example a maiden name or the surname of a son-in-law. Many of these markers were erected in the twentieth century with no mention of family members buried earlier.[21] Monuments that were illegible or had no inscription have also been included in this category
Identified individual	Inscriptions that clearly referred to the individual(s) being sought

Francaviglia: flush, tablet, block, and obelisk.[20] The lawn-type flush marker was used mainly for infant/child deaths. The tablet was the most common type of marker employed for centuries, until the use of granite and other hard materials. The block was the successor to the tablet because the new harder materials were not easily cut into thin slabs. The obelisk-shaped monuments are the most elaborate and, in general, commemorate several generations of a family. There are five different types of obelisks: a simple column or a column adorned with an urn, a cross, a cross vault, or a pediment.

The Cemetery Landscape: Mount Royal and Notre-Dame-des-Neiges

The Mount Royal Cemetery incorporates all the principles underlying the rural cemetery movement. The tract of land purchased by the company was located "in a valley between two summits and its topography effectively cut it off from the city around, making for an even more secluded feel."[22] In this topography Sydney had the freedom to design winding paths and to create small islands of burial space of various shapes and sizes. The entrance gates are neo-gothic with a main carriageway and pedestrian passage on either side. The effect was enhanced by lawns with groupings of shrubs and flowers, adding colour to the landscape. Following the model of rural cemeteries, Mount Royal is an arboretum containing more than five hundred different species of trees and shrubs. The company still prides itself on the collection of tree and shrub specimens, many of which have identification plaques to aid visiting naturalists.

The Notre-Dame-des-Neiges Cemetery did not follow the prototype of the rural cemetery as closely as the Mount Royal Cemetery did. Its layout was not as free-flowing, with paths and drives following more of a grid pattern, and there was very little slope until subsequent acquisitions were added to the property. The cemetery has an inventory of twenty-six species of trees. Although its design broke with traditional views of the Catholic Church by incorporating naturalism into the memorial landscape, it also integrated many religious symbols, of which Catholicism had an immense repertory, without risk of scandal. In contrast, the array of Protestant denominations objected to the use of such symbols. The entrance to Notre-Dame-des-Neiges was Victorian in design with a carriageway in the centre and two pedestrian entrances on the sides. Two houses were attached, rented to employees in charge of securing the grounds. Atop the entrance was a cross flanked by "two statues representing the Angel of the Last Judgement bearing a trumpet,"[23] and underneath the cross was a small statue of Saint Jean-Baptiste. Inside the gates, a forking drive created a small island with a large cross adorned with an hourglass in the middle.[24]

At the time of its construction, cemetery superintendents referred to cemetery handbooks[25] for the latest landscape fashions and management strategies. As for vegetation, these handbooks prescribed trees with "individual merit" and slow growth, such as oak, weeping birch for its fantastic shapes, Norway maple because of its fall colours, and the Kentucky coffee tree for its peculiar trunk, branches, and feathery and graceful foliage.[26] Along the transect in the Mount Royal Cemetery vegetation is abundant, and the rich variety of tree species is apparent

even to an untrained eye. The transect through the Catholic cemetery shows less variation in the tree types, and a distinctive planting strategy: trees were often positioned on the perimeter of a section, with low-growing shrubs like hydrangeas in the interior (Figure 1). This pattern matches the arrangement of gravestones: larger monuments and larger family plots are placed on the border of the section, the smaller lots and smaller monuments in the center. No such pattern is evident in the Protestant cemetery: both large and small lots, and large and small monuments, are interspersed throughout the landscape (Figure 2, note the fallen tablets in the foreground).

There were observed differences in monument design along both transects. It is important to note that the choice of marker material, shape, and design was that of the deceased or the deceased's family. There were of course certain fashions that dominated certain time periods. It was often the engraver that dictated marker material, design, and symbol, according to affordability. The obelisk was a common shape for monuments during the study period, but the tops differed. In the Catholic cemetery, obelisks were often adorned with a cross, in the Protestant cemetery with an urn. In Catholic iconography, the urn was a symbol of death and mourning. The cross, on the other hand, dramatised resurrection, the central tenet of Christian faith, presumed to be the ultimate 'consolation.' Other monuments such as the mausoleum are more numerous in the Catholic cemetery and they are organised in rows, whereas the Protestant mausoleums are scattered between the trees and amongst all shapes and sizes of monuments. Older sections show great variety in plot sizes and in the orientation of monuments but in new sections the original founding ideals were altered to make efficient use of the space. In the case of the Notre-Dame-des-Neiges cemetery, the creation of ground for new burials has eliminated all trees and shrubbery (Figure 3). The new sections are a sea of memorial blocks perfectly arranged in linear formations, a stark contrast to the founding principles of the cemetery. A viable explanation implies changing perceptions on death and family as the monuments in the new sections rarely commemorate more than two people; husband and wife (see discussion of Ryan and Beauchamp family monuments, page 57).

Although the two cemeteries have the same basic functions, their landscapes differ. This is partially due to the existence of two distinct cultural visions of death. The Catholic cemetery has two associated ideologies: Catholicism and nationalism.[27] The religious monuments are conceived as moral guidance for the living and the cemetery is viewed as a memorial to all buried within. The Protestant cemetery, on the other hand, does not display evidence of these traits, indicating respect for the diversity of cultures and religions and more importantly individuality.

Church-related institutions strongly segmented life in nineteenth-century Montreal[28] and research has shown that cultural distinctions were exhibited in patterns of fertility and infant survival,[29] household composition and residential mobility,[30] parish formation[31] and, I argue, practices of commemoration.

Figure 1: Notre-Dame-des-Neiges Cemetery Landscape

Figure 2: Mount Royal Cemetery Landscape

Figure 3: New section in the Notre-Dame-des-Neiges Cemetery

Gravestones: Social Status

The use of archival material in conjunction with landscape studies allows for meaningful insight into the significance of the monuments located in both cemeteries. Although social status can be viewed as a potential bias about who is present in the landscape, evidence has shown that the assumption that gravestones serve as an accurate measure of an individual's socioeconomic status is not always accurate, especially in the case of the Irish sample. A comparison between the monument of a working-class Irish family and the monument of a middle-class French family clearly illustrates the desire for commemoration and the great costs incurred to achieve it.

The Irish example is that of the Ryan family. James Ryan, a labourer, and his wife Anne Reilly were born in Ireland and married in Montreal in 1846. Of their eleven children, two died before the age of seven. James Ryan purchased the family plot in 1873 at a price of $40 for 100 square feet (9.3 square meters). This was a substantial sum at the time, comparable to a year's rent ($44/year in 1871). Their gravestone is of average height, a cross-vault obelisk with an engraved cross at the top and the family name engraved on the base (Figure 4). The inscription names the father, the mother, and five of their children.[32] The format is typical for that time, that of paternal reference: in memory of 'the husband,' 'also his wife' and 'their' children. The two children who died before the plot was purchased were likely buried in small individual plots, here referred to as tem-porary graves. Visitors to the cemetery would not know that this monument represented a family that survived by 'common labour.' The price of the plot and the current monument are indications of the length and expense a family would endure to achieve a respectful burial with proper commemoration.

The French example is that of the Beauchamp family. Their monument, an obelisk, is of average height but with a cross on top, and the Beauchamp name engraved on the base (Figure 5). The plot is somewhat larger (132 square feet/12.3 square meters) than the Ryan plot, and was purchased by Jean-Baptiste Beauchamp, a joiner, in 1891 and again the price approaches a year's rent, $70/year.[33] Jean-Baptiste had previously purchased a plot of 50 square feet (4.6 square meters) and exchanged it for the larger one, which explains how it is that five of the individuals mentioned in the inscription died prior to 1891. Their bodies were relocated when Jean-Baptiste purchased the larger plot, apparently to accommodate his extended family. Seventeen individuals are mentioned in the inscription: his parents, both his wives and their children, representing, in all, four generations and the breadth of an extended family. According to cemetery records, three other individuals from the sample, all of them Jean-Baptiste's grandchildren, were buried in this plot, but their names are omitted from the epitaph. This monument represents the desire for a respectful burial and is a good example of the kinship networks that existed in nineteenth-century Montreal. Like the Irish monument, it also symbolises the desire for a Christian identity.
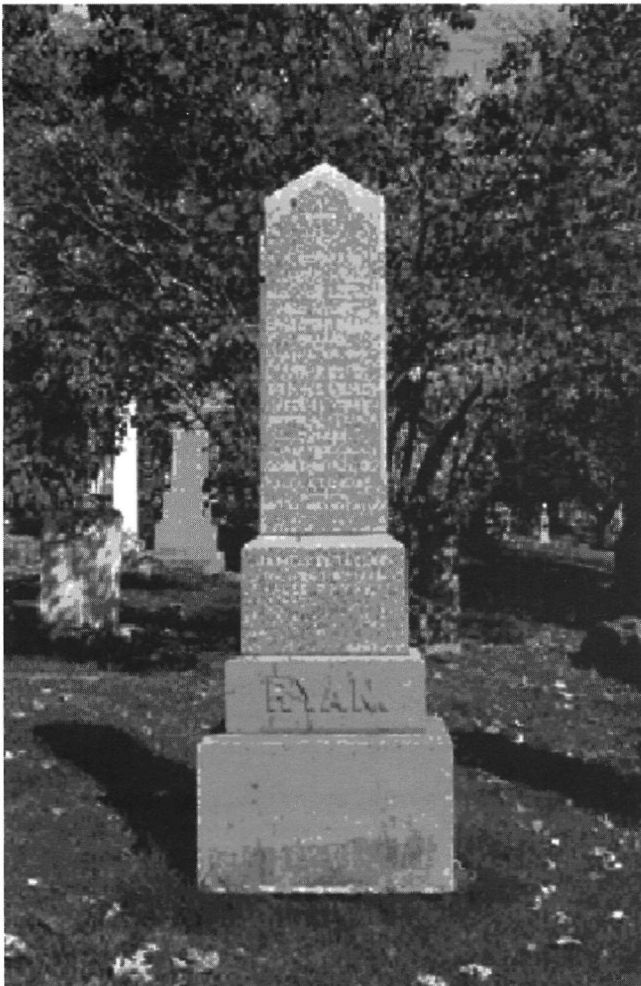
Figure 4:   James Ryan family monument, Notre-Dame-des-Neiges Cemetery

Figure 5:   Jean-Baptiste Beauchamp family monument, Notre-Dame-des-Neiges Cemetery

The Anglo-Protestant population, as well as the French- and Irish-Catholic population, expressed the desire for a respectful burial, but working-class people are under-represented in the preserved landscape. Other sources, however, such as wills, can attest to this desire. The will of labourer William Boyd, for example, illustrates the consideration of siblings toward one another during life and after death. It may also suggest that William had relatives he didn't trust or like, or he experienced relationships that had to be negotiated and smoothed over for posterity, so that "discussions of previous weeks, arguments and disappointments disappear in the documents reformulated into legal language."[34] Despite the circumstances of those relationships, William stipulates that his sister is to be respectfully interred. The will states that all is to be left to his friend Hugh Hylands, also a labourer, on condition that he board, lodge, clothe, and maintain his aged unmarried sister Isabella Boyd:

> . . . be as careful of her and as kind to her and show her every kindness consideration and treatment as she is receiving from me . . . and bury her decently in the Mount Royal Cemetery and pay for a grave, and give her a respectful fu-

neral in the Presbyterian Church . . . that none of my relations shall remove her from the care and charge of Hugh Hylands in whom I have every confidence.[35]

The importance of a respectful burial was a concern of all three cultural groups, but the significant difference in the number of individuals from the Protestant sample classified as working class and found in the cemetery illustrates that the desire for a decent burial and respectful interment exceeded the ability to expend large sums of money on lasting commemorative markers. Similarly, there were no working-class individuals from the French sample found in the present cemetery landscape. Explanation for this occurrence lies in the different regulations established by the cemetery companies, outlined below.

Erosion Process

As Table II illustrates, the vast majority of individuals from all three cultural groups are not locatable in the cemetery landscape. The Irish and Protestant samples both have larger numbers of individuals referenced to plots (excluding *temp/poor*

ground), and a greater number of *identified individuals*. Social status does not seem to influence these figures. A closer look at the identified individuals with firmly identified monuments shows that 30% of the Irish sample is working class, compared to only 2% of the Protestant, and zero of the French samples.

All three of the cultural communities seem to have had strong kinship ties; therefore the ties that existed among the Irish are only a factor and not an explanation of the high percentage of working-class individuals located in the cemetery landscape. It is documented that first-generation Irish immigrants were labourers, but were ambitious at achieving status and property. Younger generations were upwardly mobile over the period 1860 to 1880, as shown in their housing,[36] and were able to afford to bury older generations, as they would have liked. The monuments found are not necessarily as old as the first burial date inscribed. It is difficult to determine a century later when a marker was in fact erected. It is possible that some of the monuments we see today were erected by later generations to commemo-

Table II: Catholic and Protestant Death Samples (%)

	French Catholic*	Irish Catholic*	English Protestant
Identified individual	2	12	16
Identified family	8	14	13
Empty plot	5	12	29
Ambiguous	6	12	8
Temp/poor ground**	62	35	9
No plot reference	17	15	25
Total	100	100	100

* Time period 1884–1900

** 'Temp' refers to temporary graves available in the Catholic cemetery; 'poor ground' refers to graves available in the Protestant cemetery.

rate ancestors. We cannot, therefore, simply attribute the monument still present in the cemetery landscape to the individual known to have purchased the plot.

The French sample did not yield any monuments of working-class individuals but did yield a number of individuals from the middle tier. There are indications of equally strong kinship ties among the French, along with the apparent desire for a respectful burial, but the need for visible commemoration does not seem to be as prevalent as it was with the Irish population. This is evident in the number of individuals from the French sample buried in temporary graves, of which almost half are classified as middle status.

The Protestant sample did not yield many monuments of individuals from the working class, and this can partly be explained by the lower incidence of individuals classed as lower status. The majority of the sample fell equally into the middle- and high-status occupational ranks, perhaps an indication that unlocated gravestones had succumbed to climatic conditions or may not have ever been erected.

The majority of individuals referenced to plot numbers from the three cultural groups and the three occupational tiers are not visibly commemorated in the cemetery landscape. Who were these people and what happened to their gravestones? The research methods employed highlight the possible biases involved in the commemorative process, each of which will be addressed according to the established plot classifications (Table II).

The category *identified family* includes individuals who are referenced to a particular plot but are not specified in the inscription of the monument found. In the case of the French sample, the majority are children under the age of 10. Many were not direct descendants of the lot owner, but nieces or nephews. This finding indicates the desire of parents to have their children respectfully buried with family. Several cases demonstrate that such families purchase family plots later, and the children, interred elsewhere, are included in the family's epitaph. The most common incidence among the Anglo-Protestant and Irish-Catholic samples is the presence of a monument with no inscription other than the family name.

The occurrence of *empty plots* was far more prevalent in the Protestant cemetery. This is due to the fact that the Protestant corporation offers graves in perpetuity, in contrast to the Catholic cemetery which offers temporary graves (to be discussed). What accounts for these empty spaces? It is important to take into consideration the type of material that was used for monuments at the end of the nineteenth century as a possible explanation. It was common practice to use softer stones because they were economical and easier to shape and engrave; the use of wooden and iron crosses was also a common economical choice. Granite became the material of choice toward the turn of the twentieth century, primarily at the insistence of cemetery companies because it can withstand centuries and requires little upkeep. Given the significant number of empty plots, especially in the Protestant sample, it would be safe to assume that the type of marker chosen was not one of great durability. Shape and size also played a part in determining the 'life span' of a marker. For example, the Protestant cemetery had a section reserved for infant and child burials and the monuments are generally very small flush stones. Many of these markers have become broken and overgrown with time (Figure 6).

The *ambiguous* category included lots with monuments commemorating individuals that could not be related to the deceased. The most obvious explanation would be that of clerical errors, especially in the case of the Protestant cemetery. As for the Catholic cemetery, the re-use of the plot by others as a consequence of conditions of the contract between the cemetery corporation and the plot owner is a more suitable explanation. The corporation sold single graves, the price determined by square foot, and gave the plot a number, but rights were only ex-

Figure 6:   Child burials section, Mount Royal Cemetery

tended for a period of 30 years, after which the plot was resold. They also sold ordinary graves for a term of five years for which the family paid only a burial charge and had the right to erect a marker for an additional charge.[37] It is also possible that the Catholic cemetery company repossessed plots for unpaid fees, removed the markers and resold the parcels. An Act in the Quebec Statute of Laws Related to Cemeteries respecting the Roman Catholic Cemetery Corporations states that the corporation determines who may be buried in the cemetery, controls the right over any lot left with no provisions by the owner, and retains the right to petition the court to return a grave or a lot left abandoned for more than thirty years. In such cases there is a new monument in place of the old. An example of this would be the disappearance of Elizabeth Ryan, the widow of James McBride. The plot her husband purchased and where she is reportedly buried now has a monument commemorating the Matar family; the first interment was in 1995.

The fifth category, *temp/poor ground*, does not comply with the proposed erosion process. The individuals in this grouping were never eroded from the landscape because they were never represented in it. Both the Catholic and the Protestant cemetery allotted land to the burial of the poor. In all three samples, individuals referenced to these locations were from the two lower tiers of the occupational ranks and were more likely to be children, in the case of all three samples, and females, in the case of the Irish and French samples. The latter can be partially explained by the predominantly lower social status of individuals in these two cultural groups and by the limited rights accorded to unmarried and widowed women.[38] As Table II indicates, a far

greater percentage of Irish and French individuals are referenced to the category *temp/poor ground*. For the sample from 1884 to 1900, using the original ledgers, nearly two-thirds of French and one-third of Irish samples were recorded as buried in temporary plots. This can be explained by the regulations established by the Catholic cemetery company. There are four types of temporary graves: the *petite fosse* for a child, the *grande fosse* for an adult, free lots reserved for members of the Union de Prière, and gratis lots. After a seven-year period, the *petite* and *grande* lots were used for other burials. Nearly half of French and 20% of Irish temporary graves were the small lots, as we might expect in view of the high percentages of children less than ten years of age referenced to this section. This is consistent with the infant mortality rates and the greater number of Irish with plot numbers.

For members of the Union de Prière there was no burial fee. Members paid 25 cents a year and upon death were granted interment in the designated section. A much larger percentage of the French sample is buried in this section, mostly married women and widows. These graves were allocated for a term of five years. Graves free of charge (gratis lots) were allotted for a term of five years to persons of families known to be too poor to pay burial fees. These were called common graves and no marker of any kind was allowed; the same rule applied to the *poor ground* in the Protestant cemetery. In other words the right to commemoration was denied.

The final category is that of *no reference*. This category of individuals is always puzzling. Given the limited number of cemeter-

ies available during this time period to both Catholic and Protestant burials indicates that these individuals left the city of Montreal prior to death, or were interred with family buried in locations outside the city.

Conclusions

The fundamental differences between the Catholic and Protestant cemetery landscapes are due to the existence of two distinct cultural visions of death. The Notre-Dame-des-Neiges cemetery drew upon the fundamental ideals, but did not follow as closely as did the neighbouring Protestant cemetery, the prototype of the rural cemetery. The religious monuments in the Catholic burial grounds integrate many religious symbols, and they are conceived as moral guidance, the cemetery landscape being a site of commemoration for all buried within. The Protestant cemetery does not display evidence of these traits, showing a respect for the diversity of cultures and religions and a greater emphasis on the individual.

A great number of people are not visibly commemorated; at least eighty percent of individuals in all three death samples were not identifiable in the cemetery landscape. For the Catholic samples, this was in part due to segregation that occurred in the cemetery. The corporation continues to offer temporary graves for periods of five to thirty years and to offer 'regular' plots for a period of ninety-nine years, unless the family stipulates that they wish to keep the plot for another period of ninety-nine years. The separation in space and the turnover of plots account for the lower percentage of Catholics located in the cemetery. Protestants were consistently more likely to be identifiable in the present-day landscape because they were more prosperous, the majority falling into the two higher occupational tiers, but more importantly because the Mount Royal Cemetery Company offers its plots in perpetuity.

Through the use of a systematic method and a controlled sample, it became evident that there are more individuals missing from the landscape than are present, thus refuting the common assumption that the cemetery is a site of cultural memory for all. This research has shown that there were certain biases in who was being commemorated and has uncovered what was always there but not typically seen. Aside from monument material, time and cemetery regulations, the biases that become apparent are those faced by children and adult females; a reflection of the infant and child death rates and the gender roles that existed in the latter half of the nineteenth century.

Notes

1. J. Deetz, *Of Small Things Forgotten* (New York: Doubleday 1977); R.V. Francaviglia, "The Cemetery as an Evolving Cultural Landscape," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 63 (1971): 501–9; F. Kniffen, "Necrogeography in the United States," *Geographical Review* 55: 549–77; R.E. Meyer, *Cemeteries and Gravemarkers: Voices of American Culture* (Michigan: UMI Research Press 1989); D.C. Sloane (ed.), *The Last Great Necessity: Cemeteries and American History* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press 1991). See also: K.L. Ames, "Ideologies in Stone: Meanings in Victorian Gravestones," *Journal of Popular Culture* 7 (4 1981): 641–56; E. Dethlefsen and J. Deetz, "Death's Heads, Cherubs, and Willow Trees: Experimental Archaeology in Colonial Cemeteries," *American Antiquity* 31 (4 1966): 502–10; T.A. Kselman, *Death and the Afterlife in Modern France* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press 1993); B. Linden-Ward, "Tel l'Eden avant la chute: les

cimetières de Montréal dans le contexte du mouvement des cimetières 'ruraux' de l'Amérique du Nord," *Frontières* 7 (Winter 1995): 5–12; B. Linden-Ward, *Silent City on a Hill: Landscapes of Memory and Boston's Mount Auburn Cemetery* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press 1989); M. Nelson and D.H. George, "Grinning Skulls, Smiling Cherubs, Bitter Words," *Journal of Popular Culture* XIV (4 1981): 633–40; G. Pinard, *Montréal: son histoire, son architecture, tome 4* (Montreal: Editions du Meridien 1991); J. Zanger, "Mount Auburn Cemetery: The Silent Suburb," *Landscape* 24 (Summer 1980): 23–28; W. Zelinsky, "Gathering Places for America's Dead: How many, where, and why," *Professional Geographer* 46 (February 1994): 29–38.

2. J. Gilliland and S. Olson, "Claims on Housing Space in Nineteenth-Century Montreal," *Urban History Review/Revue d'histoire urbaine* 26 (March 1998): 3–16.

3. Linden-Ward, *Silent City*, 30.

4. P. Ariès, "The Reversal of Death: Changes in Attitudes Toward Death in Western Societies," *American Quarterly* 26 (Winter 1974): 135–58; R. Etlin, *The Architecture of Death: The Transformation of the Cemetery in Eighteenth-Century Paris* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press 1984); S. French, "The Cemetery as Cultural Institution: The Establishment of Mount Auburn and the 'rural' Cemetery Movement," in *Death in America* (Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press 1975); T.A. Kselman, *Death and the Afterlife in Modern France* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press 1993); Linden-Ward, *Silent City*; Linden-Ward, "Tel l'Eden," 5–12; M. Simeon, *The First Catholic Cemeteries of Montreal and a Guide to the Present One* (Montreal: E. Senecal & Fils, Printers and Publishers 1887); Zanger, "Mount Auburn Cemetery," 23–28.

5. Ariès, "The Reversal"; Etlin, *The Architecture*.

6. D. Robinson, *Saving Graces: Images of Women in European Cemeteries* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company 1995), 122.

7. The nineteenth century saw a radical change in the location, design, and layout of the cemetery. These changes began in France but it was not until these innovations came to America that the expression rural cemetery movement was coined. It is important to note that today the term "rural" is used only to describe the design of a cemetery. When established in the nineteenth century, cemeteries were in fact located in rural outskirts. As cities grew, they reincorporated burial grounds creating urban cemeteries by location but rural cemeteries by design.

8. Ariès, "The Reversal," 135–58; C.E. Beveridge and P. Rocheleau, *Frederick Law Olmsted: Designing the American Landscape* (New York: Rizzoli International Publications Inc. 1995); Etlin, *The Architecture*; French, "The Cemetery"; Kselman, *Death and the Afterlife*; Linden-Ward, *Silent City*; Linden-Ward, "Tel l'Eden," 5–12; Simeon, *The First Catholic*; D.C. Sloane, "La conversation des souvenirs privés: le cimetière américain et la commemoration publique," *Frontières* 7 (Winter 1995): 18–23; H. Weed, *The Modern Park Cemetery* (Chicago: R.J. Haight 1912): Zanger, "Mount Auburn Cemetery," 23–28.

9. The location of Pere Lachaise Cemetery is no longer a rural one. Its landscape no longer shows evidence of the influence of English garden design as the vegetation has been replaced by concrete roads and elaborate monuments, and the open stretches have been used to maximise burial space.

10. W.H. Wilson, "The Ideology, Aesthetics and Politics of the City Beautiful Movement" in *The Rise of Modern Planning 1800–1814*, ed. A. Sutcliffe (London: Mansell 1980).

11. P. Lambert and A. Stewart, *Opening the Gates of Eighteenth-Century Montreal* (Cambridge: MIT Press 1992).

12. Simeon, *The First Catholic*, 43.

13. C. Mappin, "The Evolution of Montreal's Cemetery Space From 1642 to the Present" (unpublished M.A. Thesis, McGill University, 1995).

14. G. Bodson et L-A. Ferron, "Les deux grands cimetières du Mont Royal," *Continuité* 49 (hiver/printemps 1991): 19–22; Linden-Ward, "Tel l'Eden," 5–12.

15. Bodson et Ferron, "Les deux grands," 19–22; Linden-Ward, "Tel l'Eden," 5–12, 10; G. Pinard, "Le cimetière de Notre-Dame-des-Neiges," in *Montréal: son histoire, son architecture, tome 4* (Montreal: Editions du Meridien 1991).

16. The database was initially assembled by Patricia Thornton (Concordia University) and Sherry Olson (McGill University) for a study of infant mortality, see S. Olson and P. Thornton, "Familles montréalaises du XIXe siècle: trois cultures, trois trajectoires," *Cahiers québecois de démographie* 21 (2 1991): 51–75; S. Olson and P. Thornton, "Family Contexts of Fertility and Infant Survival in Nineteenth-Century Montreal," *Journal of Family History* 16 (4 1991): 401–17; P. Thornton and S. Olson, "Infant Vulnerability in Three Cultural Settings in Montreal 1880," in *Infant and Child Mortality in the Past*, ed. A. Bideau, B. Desjardins and H. Perez-Brignoli (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1997): 216–41. See also J-P. Bardet, *Rouen aux XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles, les mutations d'un espace social* (Paris: SEDES 1983); S. Olson, "Pour créer un avenir: stratégies de couples montréalais au XIXe siècle," *Revue d'histoire de l'Amérique française* 51 (Winter 1998): 357–89.

17. M. Katz, "Occupational Classification in History," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 3 (Summer 1972): 63–88; R.D. Lewis, "Home Ownership Reassessed for Montreal in the 1840s," *The Canadian Geographer* 34 (Summer 1991): 150–52; S. Olson, "Occupations and Residential Spaces in Nineteenth-Century Montreal," *Historical Methods* 22 (3 1989): 81–96; J. Gilliland, "Modeling Residential Mobility in Montreal, 1860-1900," *Historical Methods* 31 (1998): 27–42.

18. Katz, "Occupational Classification," 63–88.

19. The Mount Royal Cemetery currently provides burial information on a database accessible to the public.

20. Francaviglia, "The Cemetery as an Evolving," 501–9.

21. One exception is worth mentioning. The inscription on the gravestone of an Irish family reads: "Sacred to the memory of; Mr. Thomas Ryan and family; also Daniel Jm Ryan; who departed this life July 9 1919; May they rest in peace; Erected by Miss M Lachapelle." Daniel James Ryan, who died at the age of 53 years, was the son of Thomas and Margaret. Seven individuals are recorded as having been buried in this plot, including children of the couple and Thomas' brother and sister. Who was Miss M. Lachapelle?

22. Mappin, "The Evolution," 45.

23. Linden-Ward, "Tel l'Eden," 12.

24. Bodson et Ferron, "Les deux grands," 19–22. The archways of the entrance have since been removed as hazards.

25. The rural cemetery movement spurred the publication of manuals intended to educate cemetery companies. Examples of such handbooks are the Association of American Cemetery Superintendents' *Modern Cemeteries* (1898); *The Cemetery Handbook* (n.d.); John C. Loudon's *On the Laying Out, Planting and Managing of Cemeteries* (1843); J. Jay Smith's *Design for Monuments and Mural Tablets Adapted to Rural Cemeteries, Churchyards, Churches and Chapels* (1846); and later on Howard Weed's *Modern Park Cemeteries* (1912).

26. S. Parsons, "Trees for Autumnal Effect," in *The Cemetery Handbook* (Chicago, Illinois: Allied Arts Publishing Co n.d.); O.C. Simonds, "What Trees and Shrubs Should we Plant in Cemeteries?," in *The Cemetery Handbook* (Chicago, Illinois: Allied Arts Publishing Co n.d.).

27. Bodson et Ferron, "Les deux grands," 19–27.

28. P.-A. Linteau, *Histoire de Montréal depuis la Confédération* (Montreal: Boreal 1992); J.-C. Robert, *Atlas historique de Montréal* (Montreal: Art Global 1994); B. Young and J.A. Dickinson, *A Short History of Quebec: A Socio-economic Perspective* (Toronto: Copp Clark Pitman 1988).

29. Olson and Thornton, "Infant Vulnerability"; Olson and Thornton, "Familles montréalaises," 51–75; Olson and Thornton, "Family Contexts," 401–17.

30. Gilliland, "Modeling Residential," 27–42; J. Gilliland and S. Olson, "Claims on Housing Space in Nineteenth-Century Montreal," *Urban History Review* 26 (March 1998): 3–16.

31. R. Trigger, "The Parish as a Site of Construction and Negotiation of Irish Catholic Identity in Nineteenth-century Montreal" (unpublished M.A. thesis, McGill University, 1998).

32. The conditions of James Ryan's contract with the cemetery allowed for the burial of his widowed daughter Ellen and his grandson James Taylor. There is no reference to his son John or his two daughters, possibly because they had a plot with their new families, but one of his daughter's sons (James Taylor) is buried there.

33. At $54 for 132 square feet, in partial exchange ($19) for a previously purchased lot of 50 square feet.

34. B. Bradbury, *Wife to Widow: Class, Culture, Family and the Law in Nineteenth-Century Quebec* (Montreal: Programme d'études sur le Québec de l'Université McGill 1997).

35. National Archives, Notarial Records, Act of Brodie July 10, 1886.

36. Gilliland, "Modeling Residential Mobility," 27–42 ; Gilliland and Olson, "Claims on Housing"; S. Courville ed., *Population et Territoires* (Sainte-Foy, Québec: Presse de l'Université Laval 1996).

37. Simeon, "The First Catholic"; Ville de Montréal, *By-Law Concerning the Keeping and Administration of Notre-Dame-des-Neiges Cemetery* (Montréal: Beauchemin et Valois 1877); Ville de Montréal, *By-Law Concerning the Keeping and Administration of Notre-Dame-des-Neiges Cemetery* (Montréal: Beauchemin et Valois 1894).

38. Bradbury, *Wife to Widow*; B. Bradbury, *Working Families: Age, Gender, and Daily Survival in Industrialising Montreal* (Toronto: McClellan & Stewart Inc. 1993).