

## Marker Text

### WOODLAND CEMETERY

Howard Daniels, who lived from 1815-1863, was a noted architect and landscape gardener. Over the course of his life, he designed six Ohio and New York cemeteries, including Woodland that began in 1852 when he laid out 20 of its 60 acres into fashionable “rural cemetery” style. Later acreage in the cemetery adapted his curvilinear design. “As beautifully prepared for a burial place as fancy and taste could desire,” Woodland was dedicated on June 14, 1853, and became Cleveland’s primary cemetery. An ornate gatehouse, chapel, and fountains came later. Generations of Clevelanders, pioneering and prominent, as well as veterans onward from the War of 1812, are buried here. For more than a century, Woodland, in its original and newly platted sections, has embraced people from every race, the rich and poor, natives and immigrants, and the famous and obscure. It has truly become a community cemetery.

Woodland Cemetery’s first burial, which occurred on June 23, 1853, was 15-month old Fanny Langshaw. Two Ohio governors, Reuben Wood (1850-1853) and John Brough (1864-1865), are here as are several nineteenth-century Cleveland mayors. Other notables include John P. Green and William H. Clifford, African American legislators; Joseph Briggs, developer of free city mail delivery and national postal superintendent; Levi Johnson, ship and house builder; J. Milton Dyer, Cleveland City Hall’s architect; and Eliza Bryant, founder of the Cleveland Home of Aged Colored People. Groups that have plots for their members here are the Old Stone, Trinity, and Woodland Avenue Presbyterian congregations; Grand United Order of Odd Fellows, and Cleveland Firemen’s Relief Association. Woodland Cemetery was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1986 and was designated a Cleveland Landmark in 2008.

WOODLAND CEMETERY FOUNDATION OF CLEVELAND, OHIO  
OHIO HISTORICAL SOCIETY



### These People and Organizations Have Made the Marker Possible

Adams Charitable Foundation  
Anonymous  
Molly Anthony  
Barbara Austin  
Bob Back  
Steve Bowley  
Virginia Brunning  
Merry Cerwin  
Janice Cigler  
City of Cleveland  
Elizabeth Corethers  
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Early Settlers’ Association  
Ilene Elliot  
Janet Esmond

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Alan Fodor  
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Friends of Monroe  
Street Cemetery  
Gerald Fuerst  
Diane Gravelee  
Joan Green  
Philip & Ann Handerson  
Mary Jo Howard  
Linda Jeffries  
Betty Johnson  
Bill & Diane Luther  
Bette McIntosh

Genevieve Miller  
Linda Murr  
Diane Oster  
Richard “Ted” Prasse  
Herman Rueger  
Kathryn Rybak  
Harry Squire  
Mariam Standen  
Wade Toth  
Gilbert M. True  
VFW Strongsville Post 3345  
VIP Restoration  
William Penn Association  
Branch 14  
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*Dedication of the  
Woodland Cemetery  
Ohio Historical Marker*

*Sunday, the Fourteenth of June  
Two Thousand and Nine  
One O'clock*



## In the Beginning

On Tuesday, June 14, 1853, the parade of carriages left the leased quarters Clevelanders called “City Hall” to travel beyond the city’s eastern boundary to dedicate “the new and beautiful City Cemetery...situated on Kinsman street.” Twenty acres of the entire sixty were termed “improved..neatly divided and handsomely ornamented..” Sermons, speeches, music, and poetry honored the fashionable “rural cemetery,” the successor to the older City Cemetery we now call Erie Street Cemetery.



## Marker Biographies in Brief

**Howard Daniels** (1815-63), noted for cemeteries in Cincinnati (Spring Grove, 1846), Xenia (Woodland, 1848), and Columbus (Green Lawn, 1849), was the architect for what is now called the Old Montgomery County Court House (1845) on Dayton’s Courthouse Square. A prolific proponent of landscaping, Daniels called the rural cemetery a “peculiarly American institution” whose presence in large cities paved the way for “the next great step in rural progress...providing public Gardens and Parks for the people.” He died while working in Baltimore; he is buried in Green Lawn Cemetery.



**Fanny Langshaw** (1851-53), one of the twins born to Stephen and Hannah Bates Langshaw who had come to Cleveland from Lincolnshire in England, died before her second birthday. On June 23, 1853, hers was the first burial in Woodland Cemetery. *Section 19, Lot 23*

**Reuben Wood** (1792-1864) was Ohio’s 16<sup>th</sup> governor (1850-53) at a pivotal point in Ohio’s history, the adoption of the 1851 Constitution that governs the state today. Coming to Cleveland in 1819 with his wife and daughter, he became prominent in local and state government as a representative and supreme court judge. He narrowly missed being the 1852 Democratic Party’s nominee for President. *Section 21, Lot 44*

**John Brough** (1811-65) came to Cleveland in 1861 after a varied life throughout Ohio as a journalist, lawyer, railroad president, state representative, and state auditor. After the Panic of 1837, in this last office, he brought fiscal stability to a bankrupt state. In 1863, becoming the state’s 21<sup>st</sup> governor, Brough strongly supported the Union cause, much to Lincoln’s appreciation. *Section 27, Lot 1*

**Cleveland’s Mayors**

**George Senter** (1827-70), 1859-60, 1864-65, *Section 11, Lot 1*

**John H. Farley** (1846-1922), 1883-84, 1899-1900, *Section 26, Lots 7 & 8*

**George Gardner** (1834-1911), 1885-86, 1889-90, *Section 4, Lot 3*

**Robert Blee** (1839-98), 1893-95, *Section 2, Lot 13*.

**John P. Green** (1845-1940), born of free parents in North Carolina, came to Cleveland with his widowed mother in 1857. Becoming a lawyer (1870), Green practiced in South Carolina and Cleveland where he was the city’s first elected African-American (1873-82) as justice of the peace. Active in Republican politics, he was a state representative – where his bill made Labor Day a state holiday (1890) before it was a national holiday – a state senator (1892), and an official in the U.S. Post Office(1897-1905). He wrote and practiced law until his death. *Section 29, Lot 74*.

**William H. Clifford** (1862-1929), a Cleveland native, was an African-American public servant and Republican politician of prominence at local, state, and national levels of government. Elected twice to the Ohio House (1894-95 & 1898-99), he served in the War Dept. (1908-1929) in Washington, D.C. *Section 43, Lot 174*

**Joseph W. Briggs** (1813-72), out of necessity during the Civil War, invented a government service we now take for granted – free mail delivery by street address. Few can imagine how arduous it was to devise an orderly system to replace getting one’s mail at the post office. Yet Cleveland postal clerk Briggs did that; first, by convincing the local postmaster that the service could be profitable, then by serving as the first letter carrier. Briggs and the U.S. Postmaster convinced Congress and Lincoln to employ letter carriers (1863). Until his death, Briggs worked tirelessly to implement free delivery nationally. *Section 38, Lot 13*

**Levi Johnson** (1786-1871), a young man from upstate New York where he mastered the carpenter’s trade, put his building skills to immediate use when he came to Cleveland in the early 1800’s. For the lake trade he built sail and steam vessels; on land he built residences, commercial buildings, piers, and lighthouses. Of his nine buildings on the Cleveland Landmarks Commission list, only one stands today. As a respected citizen of means, Johnson held many public and private posts. *Section 21, Lot 1*

**J. Milton Dyer** (1870-1957) came as a youth from Pennsylvania to Cleveland where he received training at Central High School and Case Institute of Technology. Returning from European study, Dyer set up an architectural office from which came numerous designs, sixty-three being on the Cleveland Landmarks Commission’s list, and came several young architects who formed their own local firms. His work from the first two decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century is best admired. Among Dyer’s remaining works are Cleveland City Hall (1916), Summit County Courthouse (1906-08), and Lake County Courthouse. *Section 50, Lot 39*

**Eliza Simmons Bryant** (1827-1907), born into slavery in North Carolina, came with her mother, Mary “Polly” Simmons, and her brother to Cleveland in 1848 after being freed by her father, the slave owner. Apparently the family had been provided with funds to purchase a house. There seem to be few specifics about the family’s early life in Cleveland although it is known that before, during, and after the Civil War the family assisted emancipated slaves who came to Cleveland. At some point Eliza married Needham Bryant. By 1893 Eliza Bryant at age sixty-six was sufficiently concerned about the condition of Cleveland’s elderly black women to work toward forming the *Cleveland Home of Aged Colored People* (1896) which received church and community assistance from, among others, John D. Rockefeller. Today, Eliza Bryan’s work is still carried on in *Eliza Bryant Village*, one of Cuyahoga County’s oldest nursing facilities. *Section 40, Lots 39 & 40*



## Organizations Owning Cemetery Lots

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century churches, lodges, professions, and benevolent organizations often formed cemeteries specifically for their members or purchased lots in existing cemeteries to provide a secure place, not the potter’s field, for their dead. The marker identifies five such organizations with lots in Woodland Cemetery.

**Grand United Order of Odd Fellows (GUOOF), Ohio Lodge 1188** – The Colored branch of the American Independent Order of Odd Fellows purchased a lot in 1862 in which over thirty men and women are buried. *Section 14, Lots 50 & 51*

**Trinity Church Home “Poor & Friendless” by Mrs. M. Bradford**– The record indicates six lots were purchased in 1875. *Section 53, Lots 16-21*

**First Presbyterian (Old Stone) Church** – The record indicates at least three lots were purchased in 1882. *Section 50, Lots 63, 65,66, 69*

**Woodland Avenue Presbyterian Church** – The church purchased a small area in 1892. *Section 72, Lot 2 E ½*

**Cleveland Firemen’s Relief Association** – Donated by the City of Cleveland to the Firemen’s Relief Association in 1854. *Section 14, Lots 23-25*

