An Ethnographic Study of the Astor/Astor Park Cemetery

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to learn about the past life of the small, rural community of Astor, located along the Saint John's River in central Florida, through an ethnographic study of the original, historic section of the Astor/Astor Park Cemetery.[1] The data presented in this paper comes from a survey of the area's history, area maps, several personal visits to the cemetery, a study of headstones as artifacts of cultural history, and a review of historical documents such as censuses, death records, and military records. As a result of this study, a great deal about the ethnic and racial make-up of this population is revealed in addition to other interesting demographic factors regarding the past population of the Astor/Astor Park area.[2]

[1] The Astor/Astor Park Cemetery is made up of multiple acres and many different burial sections.
This study only focused on the original Astor area cemetery. None of the additional, contemporary sections were considered.

INTRODUCTION

Florida is a fascinating place due to its unique demographics. A highly diverse population exists that is comprised of local people whose families have been in the area for many generations, northerners who move down as part time residents to enjoy the warm weather during the winter months, retirees, and international immigrants. The state is also known for its agricultural products—especially citrus. The extensive coastline and abundance of beaches draws numerous tourists each year.

In particular, small communities along the St. John's River are culturally rich. Residents often support themselves with fishing, hunting, farming, and by working in other local industries such as stores and businesses owned by families living right in the community. Astor is one of these communities. Founded and created in 1874

by William Astor and his business partners, Astor has had its share of struggles[3], but the community has tenaciously survived and still thrives today (Wass de Czege 1982, 23). A window into the lives, experiences, and pasts of the residents of this area can be viewed through a study of the original section of the Astor/Astor Park Cemetery.

Cemeteries can be viewed as a culturally rich glimpse into the lives and experiences of a society. Researchers use cemeteries in a wide variety of ways. Essentially, four popular research foci regarding death include: (1) an analysis of the psychological state of people who are dying, (2) the experience of those who survive a friend or loved one and the grieving process they go through, (3) treatment given to the dead and dying by health facilities and personnel, and (4) "archaeological research which focuses on cemetery populations, tombstone rubbings and architecture as artifacts of previous religious symbolism, folk art, carving technology, and genealogical patterns" (Trevino-Richard 1984, 323). This study falls into the fourth focus group.

The purpose of this is study is to learn about the Astor community through an ethnographic study of the historic section of the Astor/Astor Park Cemetery. This work is important because not much is known or published about the area and this study adds to the limited knowledge base that already exists. In addition, a study such as this is necessary because as the world becomes more globalized, small, rural communities are dying out, and their histories need to be preserved.

This study is not a standard ethnography; however ethnographic methods are used. The American Anthropological Association website states, "Ethnographic methods can be employed in non-traditional ways in interdisciplinary projects that bridge the sciences and humanities" (2006). Although unusual, this study is not unique. Lynn Meskell, the author of "Falling Walls and Mending Fences: Archaeological Ethnography of the Limpopo," uses a hybrid form of investigation. In her article, Meskell writes, "It [Archaeological ethnography] can encompass a mosaic of traditional disciplinary forms including archaeological practice, museum or representational analysis, studies of heritage, as well as long term involvement, participant observation, interviewing, and archival work" (Meskell 2007, 384). Although she delves further into the ethnographical realm in her study, her discussion of archaeological ethnography applies to this study as well.

The first section of this paper is a brief history of the Astor area and the cemetery. Next, tombstone design and epitaph folklore are discussed. Data collected from studying the cemetery population is presented and followed by a section of further analysis. Finally, a conclusion section followed by suggestions for further research brings the paper to a close.

[3] A destructive crop freeze during the winter of 1894-1895 caused financial hardship for those who invested in citrus and banana crops, and later the Great Depression forced many to leave the area (Wass de Czege 1982, 28-33).

> An ethnographic study of headstones as artifacts of cultural history was conducted, and the discussions on tombstone design and epitaph folklore were developed as a result.

METHODS

Histories of the area were reviewed for the historical discussion on Astor and the cemetery. Cemetery details were discovered through multiple visits to the cemetery. During these visits, pictures were taken of the headstones and a digital-audio recorder was used for 'note-taking' purposes. Photos of tombstones that had deteriorated over time required additional visits to the cemetery so they could be studied physically. If the words and images were not clear, the sense of touch was employed and the engravings were felt with the hands and fingers to obtain a better understanding. Eventually, pictures of each and every headstone were printed and arranged chronologically. The pictures were studied to see if any patterns existed. In addition, a map was sketched on location and edited based on a comparison with official maps of the area. Certain history and cemetery information was provided through an interview with a member of the Astor/Astor Park Cemetery's Board of Directors. An ethnographic study of headstones as artifacts of cultural history was conducted, and the discussions on tombstone design and epitaph folklore were developed as a result. Birth and death dates provided on the headstones and supplemented by cemetery records were used in finding demographic information such as the age distribution throughout the cemetery and the death timing of spouses in relation to one another. Personal information on the deceased individuals was discovered through an examination of historical documents such as death records, marriage records, census data, and military records provided by the website Ancestry.com.

In addition, literature regarding immigration into the United States was reviewed. This information was used to explore these people's races, ethnicities, occupations, and socioeconomic statuses.

ETHICS

This study does not elicit ethical concerns because it contains information from public records and headstones. The American Anthropological Association website lists four categories which are exempt from review by an Institutional Review Board and states, "The exempt categories include research 'involving the collection or study of existing data, documents, [and] records' if these sources are public…" (2006). Review by an Institutional Review Board is unnecessary because this study falls into this exempt category.

LOCATION INFORMATION
HISTORY OF ASTOR/ASTOR PARK

In 1982, Albert Wass de Czege published a monograph entitled The History of Astor on the St. Johns: Astor Park and the Surrounding Area. Since so little information is published about the Astor area, the historical information presented in this paper relies heavily on Wass de Czege's history.

William Astor, grandson of the famous, self-made millionaire John Jacob Astor, purchased 12,905.93 acres of land in March of 1874. William Astor, along with his business partners, constructed a town on that same land, and they originally named it Manhattan. Astor built a non-denominational church, schoolhouse, and general store

for the town, and also donated land in Astor Park for a free cemetery.[4] In addition, he built two hotels: the Astor House and the Palmetto. In 1878, William Astor used the services of James E. Drake to build a railroad from Astor Landing to Lake Eustis. This development launched the tiny, parochial Manhattan into the realm of "a booming town." By 1884, Manhattan began to be called Astor (Wass de Czege 1982, 23-26).

William Astor died in 1894, and the land was passed down to his son John Jacob Astor IV, who died 18 years later with the sinking of the Titanic on April 15, 1912. The land was then passed on to William Vincent Astor, son of John Jacob Astor IV, who sold the land to the Duluth Land Company in 1916; however, "Astor and Astor Park were permanently engraved into the Florida landscape, with three churches, two school-houses, railroad terminal, steamboat, [sic] landing, hotels and restaurants" (Wass de Czege 1982, 28).

Finnish immigrants bought up much of the land as a result of advertisements by the Duluth Land Company that stated Astor had "...the best climate and richest farmland in the country..." (Wass de Czege 1982, 29). The immigrants purchased most of the land without seeing it beforehand and moved down from the north "to retire and build the farms they were dreaming about" (Wass de Czege 1982, 30). Unfortunately, the advertisements were not entirely true. For example, even though most of the trees were cut down and removed from the land, the stumps and roots were left behind for the immigrants to deal with on their own. However, the immigrants were able to overcome these adversities and succeeded

in making Astor their home. (Wass de Czege 1982, 30).

In 1931, many Astorians had to leave their homes because of the Great Depression. Those who stayed had to face hard times in order to survive. Astor began to prosper again after the end of World War II, and northerners began to move into the area to buy winter and retirement homes. In addition, fish-camps sprang up all over the area (Wass de Czege 1982, 33-35).

By 1982, there were thirty-four active businesses in Astor and Astor Park, and the post-office served more than 4000 customers of whom 500 lived across the river (Wass de Czege 1982, 38). Despite the Astor area's growth, the beauty of nature still exists. Albert Wass de Czege wrote this about the future of Astor: "The majestic flight of the bald eagle…will be here for those whose souls are yearning for a world created by God and not yet spoiled by man" (1982, 39).

HISTORY OF THE CEMETERY
William Astor donated the Astor/Astor Park Cemetery to the people of the area as a free cemetery in 1885. On December 31, 1969, Otis M. Lee, George Drossos, and Bradford E. Brown[5] filed the Articles of Incorporation with the State of Florida in order to keep the Astor/Astor Park Cemetery free for residents. On January 7, 1970, the cemetery received a certificate of incorporation (not for profit). The first people to make up the Board of Directors were: President Otis M. Lee, Vice President George Drossos, and Secretary/Treasurer Bradford E. Brown. Additional property was donated to the cemetery in 1977 by Patsy Tatum (Cemetery Packet).

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[4] According to the cemetery board's history, the cemetery was not donated until 1885 (Cemetery Packet).

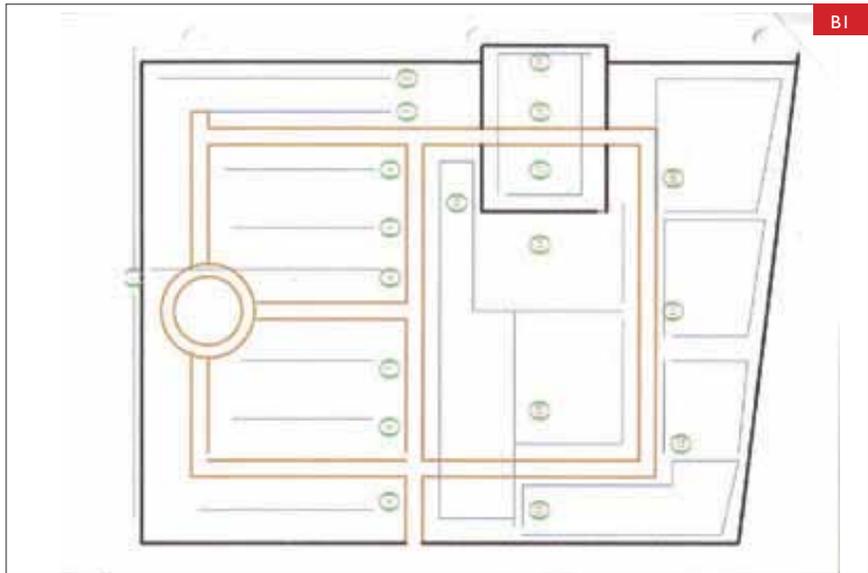[5] All three of these men are buried in the cemetery.

CEMETERY DETAILS

The deceased individual or his/ her immediate family has to be a resident of the Astor/ Astor Park area in order to be buried in the cemetery. The cemetery is free to all residents whether they own or rent their home. As a result of limited resources, the Astor/Astor Park Cemetery is not a perpetual care cemetery. The Board of Directors is comprised of residents who overlook and maintain the cemetery. All work is done on a volunteer basis, and the board members do not get paid for their efforts. Several clean ups are conducted during the year in order to keep the grounds well maintained (Cemetery Packet).

The cemetery is bordered by Wild Woods Campground on the east and an un-named, paved road on the west. Undeveloped land borders the north end of the cemetery, while State Road 40 borders the cemetery to the south.

The cemetery has paths created in the grass. Figure B1 depicts these paths. An entrance path in the center of the cemetery acts as a divider between the north and south sides. Visitors either park in the gravel or drive on the paths to bring them close to the graves of the individual(s) they are visiting. The newest burials are at the north-west and north-east quadrants. A section of African American burials is located in the south-west quadrant (containing at most four known burials), and the original Astor/Astor Park Cemetery (originally for whites only) is located in the south-east quadrant. A section for urn burials is also in the south-east quadrant located between the entrance path and the original cemetery. Figures B1 – 4 (continued on next page) are four different maps of the area that will give an idea of the cemetery layout.
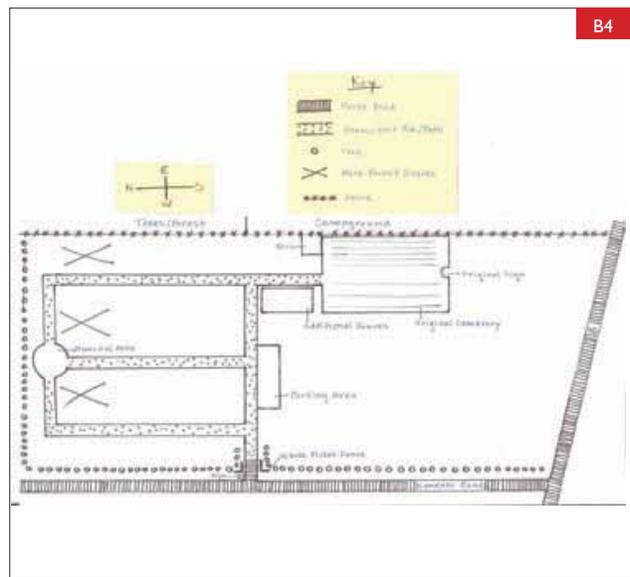
FIGURE B2, B3.
(GOOGLE MAPS). A SATELLITE VIEW OF THE WHOLE CEMETERY AND A CLOSE-UP VIEW OF THE ORIGINAL CEMETERY SECTION

FIGURE B4.
A SKETCH OF THE CEMETERY LAYOUT. (COMPASS ROSE IS ACCURATE FOR OTHER MAP FIGURES AS WELL)

As previously mentioned, the focus of this study is the original cemetery (located in the south-east quadrant). The oldest headstone in this part of the cemetery is that of H. B. Sanders who died in 1886. The burials in this area are arranged into eight general rows. Not every grave marker fits precisely into the row arrangement, but eight rows can be distinguished. All of the markers face east with one exception: that of Marrietta Jones faces north.

For the purpose of this study, the rows were labeled one through eight starting with the row furthest west. There are thirty-one headstones (representing the burial spaces of thirty-eight individuals) in the first row, fifteen headstones (representing the burial spaces of twenty-four individuals) in the second row, twenty-five headstones (representing the burial spaces of thirty-one to thirty-two individuals)[6] in the third row,

twenty-two headstones (representing the burial spaces of twenty-eight individuals) in the fourth row, twenty headstones (representing the burial spaces of twenty-three individuals) in the fifth row, seven headstones (representing the burial spaces of nine individuals) in the sixth row, eleven headstones (representing the burial spaces of thirteen individuals) in the seventh row, and eleven headstones (representing the burial spaces of twelve individuals) in the eighth row. The total number of headstones in this cemetery is 142. Secondary grave-markers as well as footstones are not included in this count. There is a total of 175 people represented on these headstones, but there are only 167 people buried in the cemetery as far as can be determined. There are several possible explanations for the disparity. For example, if headstones do not have a death date, it is likely that the individual has not yet died or is just not buried in this cemetery.

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[6] One of the headstones in this row is totally unreadable. It may belong to the same person as one of the markers beside it, or it may belong to a separate individual.
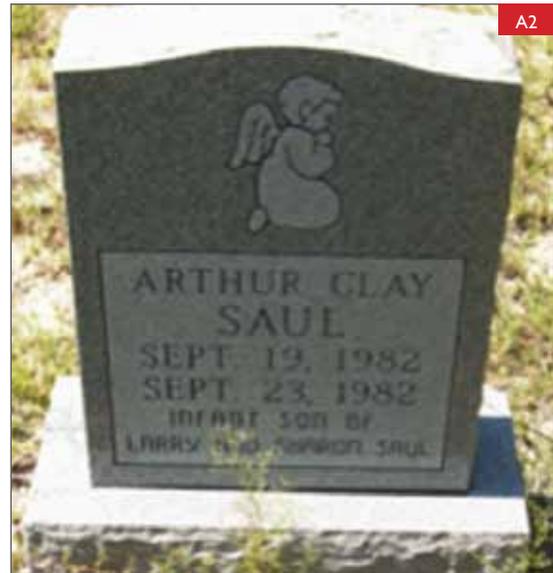
FIGURE A1.
HEADSTONE—H B SANDERS;
1881 – 1886

FIGURE A2.
HEADSTONE—
ARTHUR CLAY SAUL;
SEP 19, 1982 – SEP 23, 1982

Cemetery records have also been used in calculating these numbers, and it is possible that some of the record information is erroneous. In addition, some of the headstones may not be up to date. For the purpose of this study, the total number of interred individuals is considered 167 and the total number of individuals represented on headstones is determined to be 175. These two numbers are used to determine certain statistical information found in subsequent sections of this study.

TOMBSTONE DESIGN

Stylistically, headstones have not changed drastically throughout the generations. For example, a child's headstone from 1886 (see Figure A1) is strikingly similar to that of a child who died in 1982 (see Figure A2). The main difference is in the precision of the cut of the stone, and this is due to technological advancements. However, there does seem to be an overall trend toward shorter and wider headstones in more recent years. This could be due to stability factors. The closer a headstone is to the ground and the wider its base, the more stable it will stand over time. Tall, thin headstones, of which we see a few of in this cemetery from earlier decades, would be more easily knocked over or damaged.

The 142 headstones of the original section of the Astor/Astor Park Cemetery range in style from those with absolutely no decoration

to those which are very elaborately decorated. Sizes range from the smallest at 8 inches long by 4 inches tall (that of Unknown) to the largest at 7 feet, 1 inch long by 3 feet, 2 inches tall (that of Ralph and Anna Reeder). Headstone decoration varies. Some have no decoration at all while some have a simple decorative pattern incised on them. Others, however, are very elaborate. Floral and religious decorations are very popular, and the two coexist on many of the headstones. Secular scenes and emblems are also found on some of the grave-markers in this cemetery. In addition, there are eleven headstones of which the decorations are unable to be deciphered at all or are only partially decipherable. Sixty-eight headstones have no decoration (borders are not considered a form of decoration in this study), twenty-four have floral decoration (these also sometimes have a simple pattern accompanying the flowers), eighteen

have religious decorations, eleven have floral and religious decorations, five have secular decorations, three have only incised patterns, and two have both floral and secular decorations.

NO DECORATION

The first type of grave-marker to be discussed is that with no decoration at all. The headstones that fall into this category are the simplest in the entire cemetery. These headstones are small, rectangular, and lay either flush or almost flush against the earth. They are incised with a single line, and solely the name, birth date, and death date of the individual are inscribed (see Figure A3). There are seven such headstones. The next type is larger, but still rectangular, and is also laid almost flush with the earth. Nine of these exist, and on two, inscriptions are incised with a double line rather than a single line. Another type of headstone belonging to this category lies flush against the ground. These incorporate an incised border.

Seventeen have borders that consist of a single line, and seventeen have double-lined borders (see Figure A4).

Seven upright, wedge-shaped (wider at the base than they are at the top) headstones also belong to this category. Two have a double-line, incised border and the rest have a single-line border. Just like all the types previously mentioned, this type also usually contains only the individual's name and dates of birth and death (see Figures A5). There are seven other upright headstones in this category that are not wedge-shaped. Four are single headstones, two are multiple person headstones, and one is for a married couple (see Figure A6).

Some of the oldest headstones in the cemetery fit into this no decoration category as well. Three are upright, arched-top, stone grave-markers that have solely the name and birth and death year of the deceased carved into them (see Figure A1). Also,

in one case, it seems that a cement square was simply poured onto the ground onto which only a name was sloppily carved (see Figure A7).

FLORAL DECORATION

Floral images, usually incised but not always, are the most popular forms of decoration found on the headstones in this cemetery. It seems natural for images of flowers to appear on headstones since it is common practice for bouquets of flowers to be left on graves. Tombstone company websites have lists of common headstone symbols and their meanings. Many flowers have assigned symbolic meanings or represent specific stages in human growth and maturation. For example, a certain type of flower or a depiction of a flower bud may be used on the headstone of a child, but a fully blossomed flower may be used on the headstone of an adult. When considering the meanings given to these floral images by these

companies, it seems likely that some of the floral depictions in this cemetery have a symbolic meaning along with the seemingly more obvious purpose of beautifying the headstone itself.

The first example of floral decoration appears on a headstone from 1958. Eleven headstones have floral decorations paired with religious decorations, two have floral decorations paired with secular decorations, and nineteen have solely floral decorations. The simplest depiction included in this category is the appearance of branches on one headstone. The next simplest floral depictions occur on four upright headstones. On these, an incised border with an arched-top is accented by symmetrical flower designs in the upper corners. These designs consist of one simplistic, five-petaled flower in each corner that includes a small stem that has three leaves sprouting from it.

Flowers often accent the corners of headstones. A simplistic four to five-petaled flower accompanied by leaves is used on ten headstones. Seven of these also have religious decorations and one also contains a secular image. Four headstones have a simplistic flower, much like the five-petaled flower discussed earlier, along with some leaves carved at the bottom, top, or top and sides of the headstone—one of these is also accompanied by a secular image. There is variation among the floral accents used in the corners. The simple flowers mentioned previously are not the only style. A rose-type flower is used on twelve headstones, and an orchid-type flower is used on one headstone (see Figures A8 and A9).
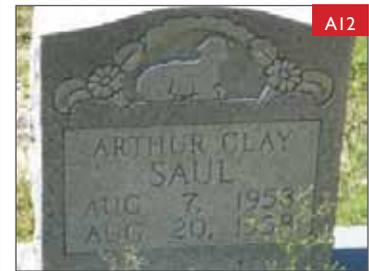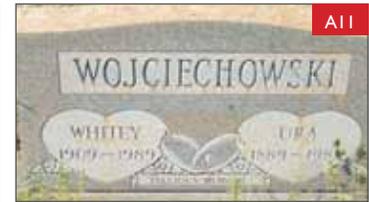
FIGURE A10.
EXAMPLE OF A WREATH EMBLEM

FIGURE A11.
HEADSTONE—
WHITEY WOJCIECHOWSKI,
1909 – 1989;
URA WOJCIECHOWSKI,
1889 - 1985

FIGURE A12.
HEADSTONE—ARTHUR CLAY
SAUL; AUG 7, 1953 – AUG 20, 1958

Wreath emblems are also being considered a form of floral decoration, and five grave-markers have small wreath emblems located at their tops (see Figure A10).

RELIGIOUS DECORATION

Religious images are the second most popular type of decorations found in the cemetery. This is not surprising as the area is heavily populated by Christians—specifically Baptists. For the purpose of this discussion, marriage symbols (such as linked wedding bands) are considered a form of religious decoration (see Figure A11). In addition, it is assumed that depictions of lambs are considered to be "the lamb of God," Jesus Christ (see Figure A12). Images of linked wedding bands carved into couple headstones appear twice, and single lambs are incised on two headstones as well. Both the wedding bands and the lambs are usually accompanied by depictions of flowers.

The simplest of the religious decorations are single crosses which appear on fifteen headstones. They are usually incised and are most commonly centered at the top of the headstone; however, there are two instances of single crosses centered at the bottom of grave-markers. These two crosses are raised. In addition, nine of the incised crosses are surrounded by an incised circle.
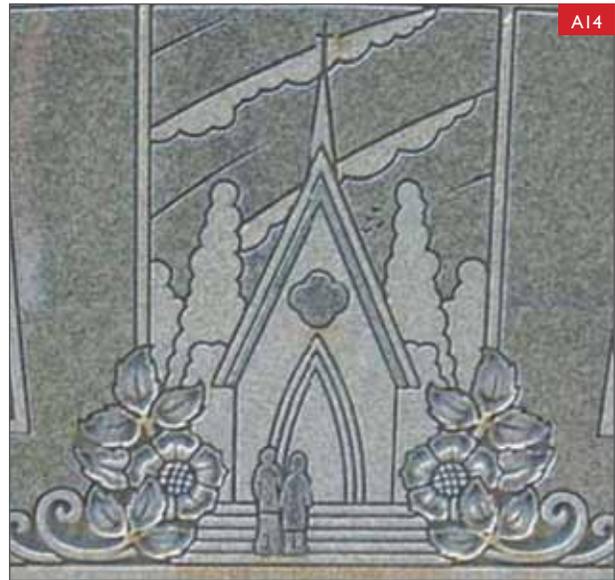
FIGURE A13.
PICTURE OF PRAYING HANDS
ACCOMPANYING A CROSS

FIGURE A14.
PICTURE OF THE CHURCH SCENE

FIGURE A15.
PICTURE OF THE SCENE
IN WHICH GOD'S HAND
REACHES DOWN FROM HEAVEN

Crosses appear quite often on other headstones with more elaborate decorations. In one instance, praying hands accompany a cross (see Figure A13), but praying hands also appear alone on two other headstones. Angels appear on headstones as well—twice alone and twice as one of multiple symbols.

There are two elaborate scenes involving religious symbols. The first depicts a small, charming church against a backdrop of trees and cloud-streaked sky. Two people are standing on the steps of the church gazing toward the building as if waiting to be welcomed in through its doors (see Figure A14).

The second depicts two hands reaching up through flowers toward another, slightly larger hand that is descending from the clouds (see Figure A15). This scene is to be interpreted as the hands of the two deceased individuals reaching up to embrace the hand of God. He is ushering them and welcoming them into Heaven.
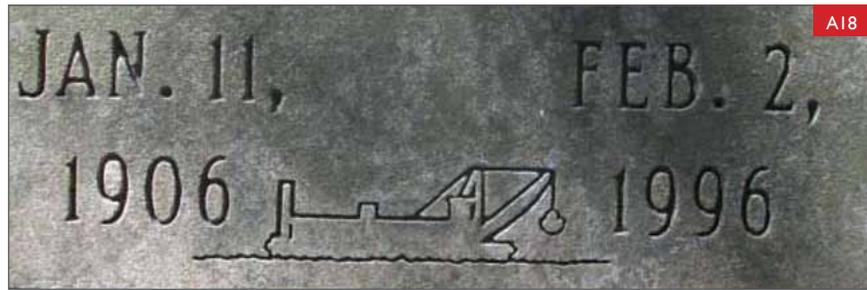
SECULAR DECORATION

Secular decorations are those that do not have an obvious connection with religious groups or ideas. These images may represent something that was important to the deceased during his/her life. The secular decorations are mostly limited to specific symbols. For instance, three headstones are engraved with Masonic symbols (see Figure A16). There is one occurrence of heart decorations[7]—a pair located in each upper corner of the headstone (see Figure A17). One headstone even has an industrial or commercial boat engraved at its center (see Figure A18).

Two of the most interesting, elaborate, and beautiful headstones are set apart from the other headstones with secular decorations because they contain landscape scenes. One of these scenes consists of a snowy field with a few blades of grass peeking out of the snow.

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[7] There are also two other headstones in the cemetery that make use of hearts, but not in the same way being discussed here. One headstone is in the shape of two hearts and another has the names of the deceased individuals inscribed in hearts. These two headstones also contain religious decorations.
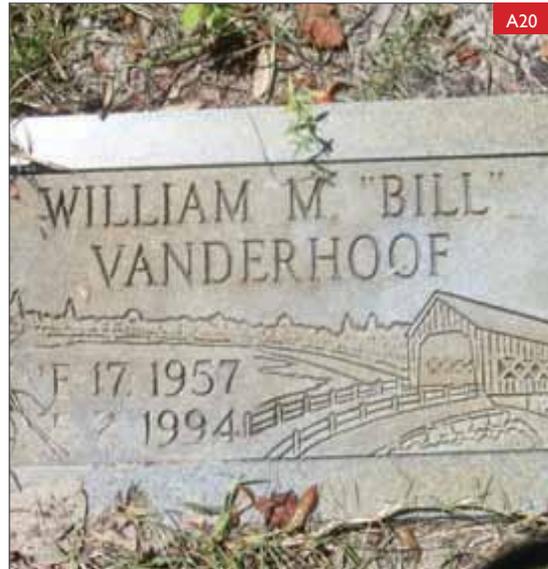
A buck and a fawn (or a doe) graze in the field (see Figure A19). The other shows a covered bridge over a river. Open land surrounds the bridge, and trees can be seen in the distance (see Figure A20).

OTHER

In addition to all the headstone designs discussed above, there are some headstones that have depictions that cannot be completely deciphered. This is due to erosion, dirt, and difficulties caused by ambiguous designs.

EPITAPH FOLKLORE

Only 23 of the 142 headstones in this cemetery have epitaphs.[8] These epitaphs range in date from 1898 to at least 2004. There is one other headstone with an epitaph that may or may not be later than 2004, but its year of production is unknown. This type of folklore is the product of multiple individuals. For example, the person who selects the epitaph is obviously involved; however, the person who physically creates the epitaph is also involved (i.e. an engraver). There are three different individuals who may be involved in selecting the epitaph: (1) the deceased individual (for example, if headstone is purchased before death), (2) the family members or friends who are making the burial arrangements for the deceased individual, or (3) the cemetery directors (if there is no one to make the burial arrangements for the deceased individual). The epitaphs in this cemetery all fall into five different thematic categories:

[8] Headstones of some veterans state the war and branch of the military in which the individual served. In this study, these statements were not considered epitaphs.

- Informative statement
- The temporary state of death
- Characteristic of the deceased
- Remembrance of the deceased
- God's role in death and the presence of an afterlife in which God is involved

Keep in mind that some of these epitaphs harken to more than one theme, but for the most part they fit best into one thematic category, and this main category sets the parameters for the following discussion.

The informative statement is one of the least used types of epitaphs. This type of epitaph states a fact about the deceased individual and is not what one would typically expect to read on a headstone. There are only two examples of this type of epitaph: (1) Born in Turku, Finland and (2) Infant son of Larry and Sharon Saul. Both of these provide information about the deceased.

Two other epitaphs portray the theme of the temporary state of death; however, they portray this theme in different ways. One epitaph states, "We will meet again." This statement declares that the separation between the deceased and loved ones is temporary—in fact, there will be a future encounter. Therefore, this epitaph also harkens to the presence of an afterlife (this theme will be discussed in more detail later). The other epitaph reads, "Only Sleeping." This phrase seems to mean that death itself is only temporary. Eventually, this individual will wake up. Just like the previous epitaph, this one also harkens to an afterlife.

There are four epitaphs that describe a characteristic of the deceased. A main theme within this category is love. These epitaphs include (1) Loved by all, (2) Beloved, (3) Loved by their children and grandchildren, and (4) Beloved son, brother, father—Hard Head. All of these state that the individual was, and is still, loved. The last is particularly interesting because the second part of it, "Hard Head," embodies a bit of humor. This is the only instance of humor seen in all the instances of epitaphs in this cemetery.

Remembrance of the deceased is a very popular theme. There are seven instances of epitaphs that fall into this category. Many are self-explanatory. For example, there are two occurrences of "In loving memory of" and one occurrence of "In loving memory."[9] The others include: "Gone but not forgotten," "Immortalized in the writings of Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings," "Precious Memories," and "In our hearts forever." Each one of these states, in a similar way, that despite death the individual lives on in the memories of loved ones. The epitaph that speaks of immortalization is particularly interesting because it means that this individual will be remembered for generations. The use of the word "immortalized" leads one to believe this man can never be forgotten.

The most popular theme is that of God's role in death and the presence of an afterlife. Eight epitaphs fall into this thematic category. Two of these simply read "At Rest." Wherever the deceased individuals happen to be now, they are "at rest." This seems to hint at the presence of an afterlife. One of these epitaphs is very

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[9] "In loving memory of" and "In loving memory" also adhere to the theme of love discussed in regard to the epitaphs that state characteristics of the deceased. It is important to note that there is overlap between epitaph themes.
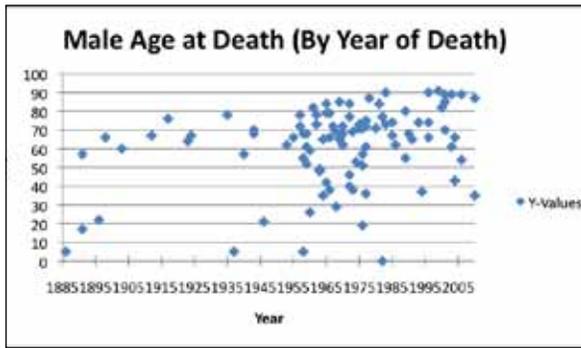
FIGURE B5
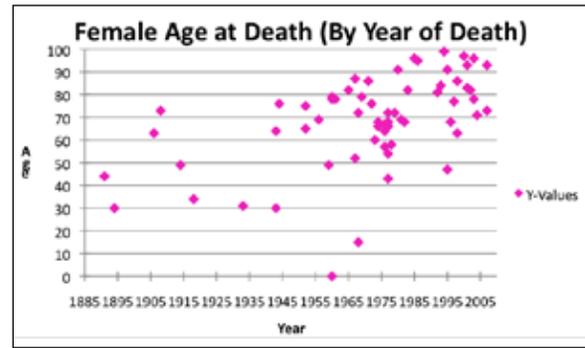SCATTERPLOT DIAGRAM—MALE AGE AT DEATH (BY YEAR OF DEATH)

FIGURE B6.
SCATTERPLOT DIAGRAM—FEMALE AGE AT DEATH (BY YEAR OF DEATH)

difficult to decipher. However, it appears to read, "God gave, he took, he will...." The word after "...he will..." is undecipherable. It is a jumble of letters that does not actually spell a word. The letters appear, "i cslo ve." Erosion may have destroyed some letters or may have altered the appearance of existing letters resulting in erroneous interpretation. This epitaph possibly means that God gave life, took life, and that in the future will act further (pers. comm. Kimberly Flint-Hamilton). Since we don't know what the last word is, we don't know what God's future action will be. Two other epitaphs, "My trust is in God" and "In God's Care," all declare that God is expected to take care of the deceased in their afterlife. "Our Father which art in Heaven" is clearly religious because it is the first phrase of the Lord's Prayer. The next epitaph in this category reads, "Precious Lord take my hand." The Lord will guide the deceased in the afterlife. The final epitaph of this category reads, "In my Father's house are many mansions." The house can be interpreted as Heaven because that is where God resides. The deceased are expected to join God in his house.

DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

Cemeteries are a treasure trove of demographic information. This part of the study reveals the most important information about the people of the area in the late nineteenth through the twentieth centuries including age at death, sex, race, and ethnicity. This knowledge coupled with immigration and occupation information allows conclusions to be drawn about socioeconomic status.

DEATH TIMING AMONG MALE/FEMALE

The oldest person buried in this cemetery was 99 years old, and she died in 1994. The youngest person died at 1 day (or less) old, and she died in 1960. Note that both of these individuals are female and thus represent the oldest and youngest females buried in the cemetery. The oldest male buried in the cemetery was 91 and died in 1999 while the youngest male buried in the cemetery was 5 days old and died in 1982. The average age at death for adults (only people eighteen years old+ were used to calculate this number) is 67.22 (based on 157 individuals). The average age at death for adult men is 64.97 (based on 95 individuals), and the average age at death for adult women is 70.66 (based on 62 individuals). According to these numbers, women outlive men by an average of 5.69 years. The average number of years women outlive men based on the cemetery numbers is only slightly higher than the four years women are presently expected to outlive men according to the United Nations Statistics Division's life expectancy calculations for the years 2010 through 2015 (United Nations Statistics Division).

Age at death based upon year of death between the males and females buried in this cemetery is pretty evenly distributed according to the scatterplot diagrams—especially considering the ratio of 100 males to 64 females. Figures B5 and B6 are scatterplot diagrams that depict distributions of age at death by year of death (for all ages, not just the adults). These diagrams show that many more women than men were living into and beyond their eighties. In addition, many more males than females were dying under the age of thirty, and more male
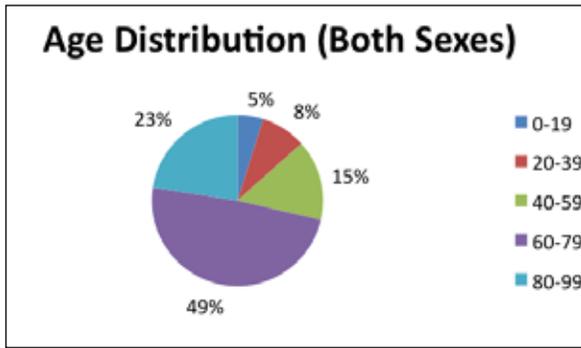
FIGURE B7.
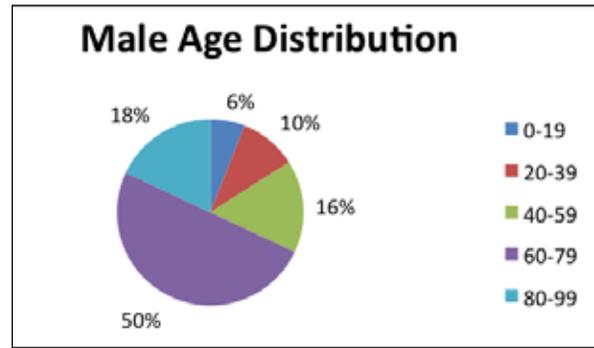PIE CHART—AGE DISTRIBUTION OF BOTH SEXES

FIGURE B8.
PIE CHART—AGE DISTRIBUTION OF MALES

children than female children were dying. However, in the years preceding about 1940, many more males than females were dying at older ages. Starting at about 1950, the diagrams show a substantial upswing in the amount of burials in the cemetery. This fact likely indicates dramatic population growth.

DEATH TIMING AMONG SPOUSES

There are forty-seven couples, known to have been married, that are buried in this cemetery. Married couples were determined through the use of census records and marriage records. In addition, shared headstones were sometimes indicators of married couples. Headstone décor was taken into consideration as well. For example, if an image of linked wedding bands was present on a shared headstone, it is obvious that the two individuals were married. Helen and William Press may or may not have been a couple. There is no evidence to support whether they were married, blood related, or just happen to have the same last name, so they were not included in this part of the study. Of these forty-seven couples, twenty-two of the husbands died before their wives, and twenty wives died before their husbands. Three couples died in the same year. Both the husband and wife of one couple are either still alive, not buried in the cemetery, or have headstones that are not up to date because there are no death dates engraved on them. For one couple, the order of death is uncertain because there is no death date on the wife's headstone or in the cemetery records.

The combined average of one spouse outliving the other is 13.22 years. On average, the wives outlived

their husbands by 14.79 years and the husbands outlived their wives by 11.11 years. This number supports the demographic notion that women live longer than men. Interestingly, 14.79 years is much larger than the expected four years women are presently expected to outlive men. It is important to remember that many of these people died several years ago when life expectancies were different. However, there is also a disparity between the number of years spouses outlive each other and the number of years women outlive men in this cemetery population (these numbers were discussed in the previous section).

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION
STATISTICS (AGE DISTRIBUTIONS, ETC.)

Age at death can be calculated for 165 people buried in this cemetery. There are at least 167 people buried in the cemetery, but an age cannot be calculated for two of the individuals due to a lack of birth and death dates on both the headstones and cemetery records. Eight of the deceased are between the ages of zero (infants) and nineteen, fourteen are between the ages of twenty and thirty-nine, twenty-five are between the ages of forty and fifty-nine, eighty are between the ages of sixty and seventy-nine, and thirty-seven are between the ages of eighty and ninety-nine. The age distribution for all individuals as well as a separate male age distribution and female age distribution can be seen in Figures B7-B10 (continued on next page). These pie charts indicate that a majority of the cemetery population was dying between the ages of sixty and seventy-nine. The second
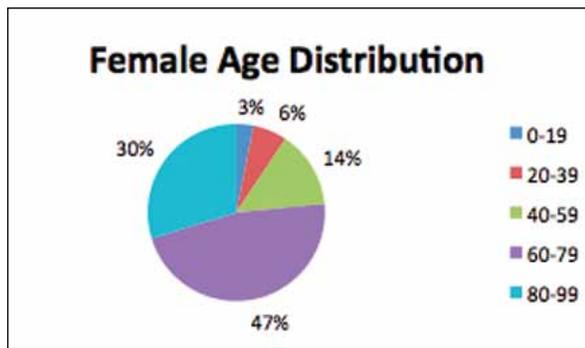
largest group of deceased based on age is comprised of individuals eighty years of age and above.

OCCUPATIONS

Of all the people represented on the headstones in the cemetery, occupations (held at some point during the deceased's life) were found for forty-two. The majority of the occupations are manual labor jobs: farmers, fishermen, gas station attendants, etc., with only a few exceptions. Some of these exceptions include merchants, business owners, and store clerks (Ancestry.com Operations, Inc. 2009). Notice that all but one of the individuals on this list are men. The only woman is Nan Hendrickson (toward the end of the table) who is listed as being a merchant in Astor in 1945 (see Figure B10 on next page).[10] During the years this part of the cemetery was used regularly, it was unusual for women to work outside the home. This idea is reflected in the fact that Hendrickson is the only woman with an occupation.

RACE/NATIONALITY

The races of 144 of the 175 people represented on the headstones in the historic section of the cemetery have been discovered. All 144 people are white (Ancestry.com Operations, Inc. 2009). This is not surprising because there is a known historic "black" section of burials in the Astor/Astor Park Cemetery. However, this section was only found when additional land was cleared for the cemetery. Originally these burial sites were hidden among the trees in a wooded area. The existence of a section of historic African American burials coupled with the racial data found for the 144 individuals leads one to believe that all the interments in the historic section are going to be white burials. The nationalities of some, but not all, were also found. Twenty-six of the people buried in this section of the cemetery were immigrants. The majority of the immigrants were Finnish, but a few were from other countries. There is one person from the West Indies, one from Greece, one from Ireland, one from Russia (a citizen of Russia but born in Finland), and one from Scotland. Finnish immigrants are by far the majority with twenty-one buried in the cemetery. (Ancestry.com Operations, Inc. 2009).

FURTHER ANALYSIS
FINNISH IMMIGRATION

Many of the people buried in the original section of the Astor/Astor Park Cemetery were immigrants, but the vast majority of these immigrants were Finnish. Why did they come to the United States? Why did they stay in rural Astor instead of being pulled to industrialized urban centers like most other immigrants? Between 1880 and 1921, "new immigration...made its debut in the United States" (Kraut 1982, 8). In the 1900s, Finns left the rural areas of their country to find work in urban, industrial areas; however, some did stay put to revamp farm life. On the other hand, some Finns left their home country altogether and decided to try their luck in America (Hoglund 1960, 3). After 1860, thousands of Finnish immigrants began entering the United States. Finns had come into the country at earlier times, but not in very large numbers. The 1860 instance of immigration

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[10] These occupations were found through Ancestry.com. This website allows users to access numerous kinds of records in order to track down ancestors to build a family tree. Ancestry.com proved very valuable to this project because it contains historical documents that provide information on sex, age, race, occupation, birthplace, native language, genealogical connections, etc. The data in Figure B10 came from census records and military registration records.

Name	Year of informative document (Location of home): Occupation
Ralph N. Darden	1935 (Astor, FL): Laborer
	1945 (Astor, FL): Merchant
Arthur L. Smith	1920 (Nassau, FL): Fisherman
	1930 (Astor, FL): Farmer
Arthur Martin Sutton	1900 (NC): None
Henry Saul	1930 (VA): Farmer; General Farm
	1945 (Astor, FL): Laborer
Arthur Merle Shearer	1930 (TN): Salesman; Electric Appliances
Charles Gilbert Dorris Sr.	1930 (Lake, FL): Laborer; Filling Station
	1943 (Volusia , FL): Attendant; Gas stations/parking lots
	1945 (Daytona Beach, FL): Navy Service
Charlie H. Cason	1930 (Polk, FL): Laborer; Farm
	1942 (Volusia, FL): Attendant; filling stations and parking lots
Walter H. Campbell	1920 (FL): Linesman; Western Union
Hubert C. Saul	1943 (Lake, FL): Skilled welders and flame cutters
Alex Niskanen	1930 (MI): Machine Hand; Motor Car Co.
	1935 (Astor, FL): Farmer
	1945 (Astor, FL): Merchant
George Drossos	1930 (NY): Owner (or possibly "Server"); Restaurant
Uuno Kujanpaa	1920 (Astor, FL): Fisherman; Lake
John Rudolph Uleen	1910 (Chicago): Machinist; Machinery
	1920 (Astor, FL): None
Albert Maki	1920 (Astor, FL): Farmer; Truck Farm
	1930 (Astor, FL): Farmer; Poultry Farm
	1945 (Astor, FL): Merchant
Charles J. Okerman	1930 (NY): Carpenter; Buildings
Sam Lahti	1920 (Astor, FL): Farmer; Truck Farm
	1930 (Astor, FL): Laborer; General
	1935 (Astor, FL): Farmer
	1945 (Astor, FL): Farmer
	1920 (Astor, FL): Fisherman; River
Nestor S. Wick	1930 (Chicago): Carpenter; Building
Victor Saari	1930 (Astor, FL): None
	1935 (Astor, FL): Merchant
Johan R. Gronlund	1920 (Astor, FL): Machinist; Machine Shop
	1935 (Astor, FL): Machinist
William Gronlund	1920 (Astor, FL): Farmer; General Farm

FIGURE B10.
(ANCESTRY.COM OPERATIONS, INC. 2009). OCCUPATION TABLE.

	1935 (Astor, FL): Farmer
Fred Arthur Hosford	1918 (Astor, FL): Farmer; for self
	1930 (Lake, FL): [unreadable]; General
Bradford E. Brown	1943 (FL): Attendant; gas stations/parking lots
Adam Niskanen	1917(MI): Automobile-Bodyworker
	1935 (Astor, FL): Farmer
	1945 (Astor, FL): Carpenter
	1930 (Volusia, FL): Fruit Grower; Citrus
Sherrill Dillard	1935 (Volusia, FL): Farmer
William "Bill" R. Moulton	1930 (Miami, FL): Clerk; Feed Store
	1945 (FL): Engineer
Spencer T. Pease	1930 (Ohio): Lay Out; Zepland?
Rodney Dale Loucakis	2004 (Satsuma, FL): Owner/Operator of Rodney's Pressure Washing
Alonzo Click	1930 (KY): Laborer; Oil and Gas
O. L. Baber	1880 (MS): Farmer
Calvin Long	1900 (FL): Farmer
W. H. Bryan	1900 (Astor, FL): None
	1870 (FL): Farmer
Albert Thomas Gustafson	1943 (FL): Foremen, Construction
	1945 (FL): Army
Charles Gustafson	1930 (Astor, FL): Carpenter; House
	1935 (Astor, FL): Carpenter
	1945 (FL): Labor
Otis Lee	1945 (Lake, FL): Marines
John W. Sullivan	1900 (Astor, FL): Farmer
	1910 (Astor, FL): Farmer; Stock
Curtis Moore Richie	1880 (SC): Farmer
	1900 (Astor, FL): Farmer
	1910 (Astor, FL): Farmer
Robert Lightfoot	1945 (FL): Labor
Paul Arnold	1941 (FL): Fishing Occupations
Thomas Nisbet	1910 (Astor): Fisherman; River
	1920 (Astor): Fisherman; River
James C. "Pete" Johnson	1945 (Lake, FL): Painter
Nan J. Hendrickson	1945 (Astor): Merchant
Matt E. Soini	1945 (Palm Beach, FL): Car Repair

was the one to pave the way for the main period of Finnish immigration. The greatest number of Finns arrived in America between 1890 and 1910 (Hoglund 1960, 7-8).

Industrialization and new opportunities drew the Finnish, along with other groups of immigrants, to America in general and the United States specifically. The historic section of the Astor/Astor Park Cemetery shows that a large amount of Finns lived and died in the area. However, sources dealing with immigration are adamant about the fact that people were moving away from agriculturally based areas. "By the 1880s, most immigrants found that cities offered them more plentiful economic opportunities than the country-side," Alan M. Kraut writes, "The United States was beginning a period of rapid industrial expansion which necessitated a ready supply of cheap, unskilled, and semiskilled labor for factories and mines" (1982, 12). Astor and Astor Park were predominantly agriculturally based. A large number of the occupations these people held at certain times in their lives dealt with farming.

Why did these Finnish immigrants (1) stay in this area despite the trend to move to industrialized urban centers, or (2) choose to move to this area from industrialized centers? Often times when Finns moved to industrial centers for work, the trades they were skilled at were no longer useful; however, when they moved to farms, they were able to use "their old skills as jacks of all trades" (Hoglund 1960, 23). In addition, as more and more Finns moved to the area, maybe Astor became a 'Little Finland' for the immigrants. "As soon as they came to America,

Finnish immigrants sought each other's companionship," A. William Hoglund writes, "In their trials they found solace through informal contacts among themselves" (1960, 37).

CONCLUSION

Ethnographic studies of cemeteries can reveal a great deal about the culture in which the people lived and died. The Astor/Astor Park Cemetery provided a wealth of information about religious beliefs, socio-economic status, race, and nationality of the area's past population. The cemetery provided a view into the lives of those interred within its bounds.

Due to limited time, only a fraction of the information this cemetery has to offer was gathered in this study, but multiple conclusions can still be drawn. Overall, a continuity of décor and epitaph themes exist throughout the generations of headstones. In addition, it seems that a variety of shapes and sizes of headstones has always been available. There is variation in headstone appearance even among the earliest headstones in this cemetery. Taking tombstone décor into consideration, this community seems to have been composed predominantly of non-religious people since only 28 of 142 headstones have religious decorations. This is surprising due to the large Christian influence currently found in the community. However, only 50 percent of the headstones have any decoration at all. Floral decorations are the most common, and Christian decorations are the second most common. Despite the low number of religious headstones, the fact that only Christian depictions are

represented in the cemetery does suggest that if residents of this community did belong to a religious group, it was a branch of Christianity.

The large amount of headstones without decorations could be due to financial reasons. It is likely that simple headstones were all that the families in this rural area could afford. The Astor/Astor Park Cemetery is and has always been a free cemetery, so it is not surprising that people of lesser economic means would choose it as the burial place of their loved ones. Perhaps more headstones would have had religious decorations if family members could have afforded more elaborate headstones.

The fact that a majority of the headstones in the cemetery are plain and simple leads to the assumption that these people were not wealthy. However, a number of the simple headstones may not be original headstones. Perhaps the original headstones were more elaborate but were damaged after several years and subsequently replaced with simpler, less-expensive headstones. However, the idea that the people living and dying in this area were not wealthy is supported by the occupation findings that reveal that the people buried in this cemetery had careers that would have put them in the lower end of the socio-economic spectrum. This was a farming community largely made up of immigrant families. Another possibility does exist: maybe wealthy people did live and die in the area and are just buried in a different cemetery since the Astor/Astor Park Cemetery is a free cemetery. In addition, wealthy people may have lived in the area and died after the new sections of the cemetery were being used and are therefore interred in a section of the cemetery not focused on in this study. Occupation findings also reveal that the earliest people buried here lived during a time when women were not expected to have jobs, and men were expected to be the breadwinners. It was unusual to find a woman working outside of the home. This conclusion is drawn from the occupation findings presented in Figure B10 in which Nan J. Hendrickson is the only woman found to have been employed. However, occupation information was not found for every person in the cemetery, so it is possibly that a few more may have had jobs.

The racial data found on these individuals supports the claim that this original, historic section of the cemetery was an all-white cemetery; however, it seems like it continues to be an all white cemetery to this day because the recent burials are generally family members of people previously buried in this section of the cemetery. In addition, it seems that the Astor/Astor Park area in general was predominantly white since there are only four known black burials (at most) in the black section of the cemetery (located outside the historic cemetery section). Astor has continued to remain a predominantly white area even today.

When comparing the age distribution pie charts between male and female, the death pattern between the two sexes is fairly equal; however, when comparing the scatterplot diagrams, many more women are living into their nineties than are men. In fact, there is only one man that surpasses 90 to reach 91 years of age at time of death.

Overall, it can be concluded that this area was composed of predominantly white, low to lower-middle class individuals who were probably Christian and tended to die after the age of sixty. Clearly Astor was an area largely based on agriculture. In addition, it is obvious that Finnish immigrants found Astor to be a good quality area in which to live, work, and raise families as roughly 13 percent of those interred in the cemetery are first generation Finnish.

Throughout the course of this investigation there have been a few difficulties. For one, history about the Astor area is hard to come by, and sometimes histories contradict one another. In addition, the cemetery records contain errors. For instance, the records for the section of the cemetery discussed in this study are missing three individuals, have one person listed as two separate individuals, and sometimes have birth dates, death dates, or interment dates in the wrong columns. Also, the records are missing birth dates, death dates, and interment dates for many of the individuals buried there. Additionally, there is no record of which headstones are originals and which headstones are replacements or of when and how many times headstones have been replaced. This made it very difficult to study how headstones have changed stylistically over the generations.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

A search of the Lake County public records would be helpful in further investigation of the Astor/Astor Park Cemetery and the individuals buried there. In addition, a much richer understanding of the history and culture of these people and the general area would have resulted from interviews with relatives of the deceased and community members. Also, further outside research concerning epitaph and headstone design patterns throughout the generations in other cemeteries would have been valuable in comparison with the Astor/Astor Park Cemetery. Lastly, a study of the black section of the cemetery (which is not located in the original section) along with a comparison between the original Astor/Astor Park Cemetery and the black section of the cemetery would be informative—especially regarding how African Americans lived in earlier decades and regarding race relations in the area.

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