

In a secluded corner of Woodlawn Cemetery in the Bronx lies a mausoleum built to honor the life of Dr. Jokichi Takamine, who was once the most famous Japanese person in the United States. Jokichi began this life on November 3, 1854, in Takaoka City, Japan, coincidentally the same year that Japan's strict isolationism ended by a treaty of amity with the United States, and he spent much of his sixty-eight years promoting this relationship that was born with him. In his early childhood, Jokichi lived in the capitol of the Kaga Province, where he was raised in the Kanazawa samurai clan and began studying science and English at an early age. After his schooling, he worked to improve indigenous Japanese industries through the application of Western science. In 1884, he moved to New Orleans to be co-commissioner of the Cotton Exposition, where he was charged with learning how Japan could use similar exhibits to promote their own industries.ⁱ

There he met Caroline Field Hitch, the daughter of his landlord, and they became engaged when Jokichi was thirty years old and Caroline was eighteen, but he returned to Japan alone after his assignment in hopes of gaining financial stability.ⁱⁱ He fulfilled his promise to marry her in 1887, having established a Japanese fertilizer company using special rocks he had bought in New Orleans. Back in Japan, Caroline struggled to adjust to being one of very few Westerners, and to their home's unpleasant proximity to the fertilizer plant. Soon after the birth of their sons, Jokichi Jr. and Eben, in 1888 and 1890, Jokichi moved his young family to the United States with the intention of reversing the direction of his work: he now wished to adapt a Japanese technology to a western industry, specifically by bringing Japanese knowledge of enzymes to American distilleries.ⁱⁱⁱ

After a series of hurdles—including his being struck with acute liver disease—he found success with his enzyme process and established an independent laboratory in New York City, where his most noteworthy accomplishment was discovering adrenalin.^{iv} Specializing in enzymes and pharmaceuticals, Dr. Takamine gained fame and wealth and became known as the "Japanese Thomas Edison."^v As his prominence increased, he turned his attention towards improving Japanese-American relations. He and Caroline owned several showpiece homes featuring Japanese architecture and furniture, in order to expose Americans to the traditional Japanese aesthetic, and he funded the first gift of cherry blossom trees from Japan to Washington, DC.^{vi} His legacy as a good-will ambassador between the two nations is reflected in

the Woodlawn mausoleum where he is entombed with his wife, their two sons, and a daughter-in-law.

Dr. Takamine never intended for this mausoleum to be his final resting place; in fact, it was not constructed until three years after his death on July 22, 1922, from long-term liver and heart disease.^{vii} In his will, he had bequeathed his body to his liver surgeon, Dr. Malcolm L. Harris. If Dr. Harris deemed his body to be of no great benefit to science, or if Caroline objected, Dr. Takamine's body was to be cremated, with one half of the ashes buried in Woodlawn and the other half sent to his sister in Japan, and indeed, that was Dr. Harris' conclusion. However, the twist in this story was Dr. Takamine's conversion, six weeks before his death, to Roman Catholicism, which forbade cremation as an interference with natural law. *The New York Times* quoted Caroline as saying "...unless the Court specifically orders, the body will be buried in Woodlawn Cemetery...I am sure that Dr. Takamine did not know of the prohibition of cremation by the Catholic Church, and if he were alive now he would certainly alter the will in this respect."^{viii}

According to Dr. Takamine's perceived wishes, his body remained in a receiving vault at Woodlawn.^{ix} The erection of the mausoleum did not occur until 1925, when Caroline ordered it built by the popular monument company Farrington, Gould & Hoagland, whose notable Woodlawn designs include the Egyptian-inspired Woolworth mausoleum.^x In 1939, Eben Takamine established a Perpetual Care Fund for the caretaking of the mausoleum, which was funded by \$1000 each year until 1945, from Eben, Caroline, and Jokichi, Jr.'s wife, Hilda I. Thomas. Jokichi, Jr., had died in 1930 and joined his father in the mausoleum. Eben was third to be interred in the mausoleum in 1953, followed by Caroline in 1954, and Eben's wife Catherine in 1994.^{xi}

The Takamine mausoleum is set back on a large lot, located at the curved meeting of two avenues and facing an undeveloped lot. In addition to this relatively isolated location, the most striking feature upon approaching the mausoleum from either avenue is the heavy degree of tree coverage. While there is no evidence of whether this landscaping was original to Farrington, Gould & Hoagland's plan, it contributes to the strong sense of enclosure that is inherent in the mausoleum's architecture itself. This sense derives partially from the exterior's sturdy construction of very large blocks of Greens Landing granite^{xii}. With a front-heavy plan, each of the building's side facades bear only four small, bronze grated vents, and the simple back façade

is marked only by a stained glass window that cannot be clearly seen from the outside, but hints at the building's interior. Slightly battered walls and especially the layering of platforms at the mausoleum's base draw the visitor in and towards the center, as well as further separating the interior from the outside world and contributing to the feeling of enclosure. Like many mausoleums in Woodlawn, the Takamine building uses clearly classical language, including correctly proportioned ionic columns on either side of a recessed entry, which creates further seclusion. This change in plane, and the façade's symmetry and proportions emphasize the central entrance and the bronze plate above it. In addition to unusually featuring the inhabitants' name, as opposed to its being carved in the granite façade, this plate also includes arrow wheels or "yaguramas," a samurai symbol usually featured on traditional carp streamers or "koi nobori."^{xiii} This is a personal detail on an otherwise stock design; the building bears the same bronze doors as an adjacent mausoleum, and while the majority of the ionic mausoleums in Woodlawn are of a more monumental, four-column design, the Takamine mausoleum has the same basic form as a number of other Farrington, Gould & Hoagland mausoleums in Woodlawn and elsewhere—the common features being battered walls, two columns within a recessed entry, a window in the back wall, and often, a multi-tiered base and a slab atop a simple cornice. In fact, the Takamine mausoleum is virtually identical to the Runk mausoleum, also in Woodlawn.^{xiv}

The Takamine interior consists primarily of Tennessee Pink limestone (referred to as marble by Farrington, Gould & Hoagland) that is separated from the foot-wide granite walls by a one-inch ventilation shaft, the exterior evidence of which is the bronze vents. The catacombs, which run parallel to the side walls with four catacombs stacked on each side, are Pennsylvania Ribbon Slate. Rosettes on the catacombs, a ceiling hanger, and window frames are bronze.^{xv} The interior is only four feet wide, roughly a third of the building's width, with a ceiling height of nine feet and three inches. This narrow space within the building's symmetrical plan continues with the sense of enclosure and leads straight to the other significant personal details, Japanese vases displayed before a stained glass window portraying Mount Fuji.

Although the Takamine mausoleum was not Jokichi Takamine's choice, one can postulate why Caroline might have chosen this model for him, and why he might have approved. The building is striking, worthy of such a notable first inhabitant, but in its location and design, it is not ostentatious, as Dr. Takamine did not want a burial in the first place. Like Japanese formal

poetry, the building is simple but highly structured and serves to encapsulate significant imagery suggestive of deeper meaning. Reflecting his work and his life, the mausoleum is an infusion of western building design and Japanese traditional imagery. In a tribute quoted in Dr. Takamine's obituary, his friend J.I.C. Clark said, "Apart from his devotion to science, it was his dearest wish to promote abiding and enduring friendship between the land of his birth and that of his adoption... An intense lover of Japan, its ancient art, its domestic values, its rich traditions, he became an equally ardent lover of the United States, its high ideals, its balanced freedom."^{vi} The Takamine mausoleum pays tribute to Dr. Takamine's life by combining the "high ideals" of classical architecture with the "rich traditions" of traditional Japanese imagery.

ⁱ Tetsumori Yamashima, "Jokichi Takamine (1864-1922), the samurai chemist, and his work on adrenalin," Journal of Medical Biography, Vol. 11, Iss. 2 (London: May 2003) 1-3.

Proquest, 16 Oct. 2010

<<http://proquest.umi.com.ezproxy.cul.columbia.edu/pqdweb?index=7&did=521673841&SrchMode=2&sid=2&Fmt=4&VInst=PROD&VType=PQD&RQT=309&VName=PQD&TS=1287382139&clientId=15403>>.

ⁱⁱ Yamashima 3.

ⁱⁱⁱ Joan Bennett and Yutaka Yamamoto, "Dr. Jokichi Takamine: Japanese father of American Biotechnology," Deerland Enzymes, 17 June 2005, 1-2, 16 Oct. 2010

<<http://www.deerland-enzymes.com/article.php>>.

^{iv} Bennett 2.

^v Yamashima 7.

^{vi} Bennett 4.

^{vii} Bennett 4.

^{viii} “Dr. Takamine’s Will to be Disregarded,” The New York Times, 4 Aug. 1922, 16 Oct. 2010
<<http://query.nytimes.com/gst/abstract.html?res=F10713FE385D1A7A93C6A91783D85F468285F9>>.

^{ix} “Dr. Takamine’s Will to be Disregarded.”

^x Takamine Mausoleum plans, Woodlawn Archive, Drawings and Archives Department, Avery Library, Columbia University, New York, NY.

^{xi} Takamine Mausoleum documents, Woodlawn Archive, Drawings and Archives Department, Avery Library, Columbia University, New York, NY.

^{xii} Takamine Mausoleum documents.

^{xiii} Gabi Greve, “Carp streamers (koinobori),” World Kigo Database, 1 Mar. 2005., 16 Oct. 2010
<<http://worldkigodatabase.blogspot.com/2005/03/carp-streamers-koinobori.html>>.

^{xiv} Farrington, Gould & Hoagland trade catalogue, Classics Department, Avery Library, Columbia University, New York, NY.

^{xv} Takamine Mausoleum plans.

^{xvi} “Jokichi Takamine, Noted Chemist, Dies,” The New York Times, 23 July 1922, 16 Oct. 2010
<<http://query.nytimes.com/gst/abstract.html?res=F10C10F6355413738DDDAA0A94DF405B828EF1D3&scp=1&sq=jokichi%20takamine&st=cse>>.

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