

Entombment of Henry P. and Harriet E. Kingsland

Located in Woodland Cemetery

Researched By:

Roberto E. Villasante

In Woodlawn Cemetery—located in The Bronx, New York, New York—sits a seemingly unassuming Mausoleum with the name “Henry P. Kingsland” embossed above its doorway.¹ The structure is tucked away within the Heather Plot, hidden by nearby trees, bushes, and mausoleums. Upon first glance, it appears to be a fairly austere building. It has a Greek cross plan, a consistent and symmetrical use of materials and patterning, and its overall height is no more than thirteen feet. However, upon closer inspection, one is met with intricate details and signs of skilled craftsmanship. Its granite exterior utilizes three different finishes, adding complexity to an otherwise homogeneous use of material. There is the rough, chiseled finish of the lower level, the polished finish of the two pseudo-columns flanking the entrance, and the flat, unpolished stone which makes up the majority of the structure. Additionally, there are intricately ornate, stone carved details throughout the mausoleum. Of note there are four decorative corner pieces with an acanthus leaf design², an Irish cross with an entangled ribbon design at its base³, and a carved archway above the entrance which features several acanthus leaves⁴.

The mausoleum was commissioned in 1913 by Harriet E. Kingsland for her late husband, Henry.⁵ Original design records and correspondences indicate that the mausoleum was intended to be used by Henry, Harriet, and Harriet's niece, Evelyn H. O'Brien.⁶ However, only Henry and Harriet were ultimately interred in the mausoleum. Given that Evelyn lived in Ireland at the time of the mausoleum's construction⁷, it is likely that she ultimately remained in her home country. Therefore, Evelyn was not buried with her aunt and uncle and perhaps may not have even been buried in the United States.

¹ See Figure 1

² See Figure 2

³ See Figure 3

⁴ See Figure 4

⁵ “Woodlawn Mausoleum Cemetery Records,” Spreadsheet, Avery Architectural & Fine Arts Library, Major Monuments and Records

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ “LEAVES MONEY TO CHARITY: \$21,000 Bequeathed to Institutions in Mrs. Kingsland's Will.” *The New York Times*, June 13, 1919.

The building was designed by Presbrey-Coykendall Co. with engineering work done by Richard Storms.⁸ Its design is similar to an earlier mausoleum in Woodlawn: that of Herman Leroy Jones, husband to Henry P. Kingsland's sister, Augusta.⁹¹⁰ However, there are several stylistic deviations from that precedent, namely in the entryway and cross. The structure consists of a concrete foundation, fine-grained, medium Barre granite exterior blocks, and a blue-veined Carrara marble interior. Its three 7'-7" x 2'-10" x 2'-5" catacombs have the capacity to hold three caskets, however its interior—and, in turn, its exterior—is designed to appear as though it can hold four. This is achieved through marble panels which give the impression that they are simply waiting to be engraved with the names of the mausoleum's next inhabitants. In doing so, the mausoleum achieves a sense of symmetry which would otherwise be lost if the design was a pure reflection of its burial capacity. The overall interior space is roughly 3'-8" wide by 9'-10" long and 9'-0" tall.

The structure has largely stood the test of time. The majority of the building is intact and there does not appear to be any structural issues. However, that is not to say that there is no degradation to be found. There are many portions of the exterior which show signs of biological growth, particularly on its Northern wall where the nearby tree has clearly affected the area.¹¹ This tree has also caused a significant piece of stonework to break off from the raking cornice in the rear.¹² In both the front and back façades of the mausoleum, a nearly identical crack has appeared on the keystone of the cornice, with the mortar having disappeared to the left of the front piece.¹³ As for the interior, there are very little signs of damage. There is some biological growth and staining on the ground and on the marble beneath Henry Kingsland's catacomb, but it

⁸ "Woodlawn Cemetery Records"

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ "AMBROSE KINGSLAND JONES." *The New York Times*, August 2, 1935.

¹¹ See Figure 5

¹² See Figure 6

¹³ See Figures 7 and 8.

all appears easy to brush/wash away without leaving any lasting signs of damage.¹⁴ Finally, the stained glass window is now bowing inwards towards the direction of the doorway. However, there are no visible signs of cracking in the glass.

Henry P. Kingsland was born circa 1839 in New York, New York. He was the third child born to Ambrose Cornelius Kingsland (1804-1878) and Mary Lovett Kingsland (1814-1868).¹⁵ The Kingsland family had lived in and around Belleville, New Jersey for about 200 years by 1878.¹⁶ Ambrose owned and operated a successful mercantile and sperm oil company which he began with his brother, Daniel C. Kingsland. He also briefly served as Mayor of New York City between 1851 and 1853 and was the first mayor to serve a two year term rather than a one year term as had been the case with his predecessors.¹⁷ It was through legislation enacted by him—advocating for the city's purchase of land along the East River which was then occupied by Jones' Wood—that the process of creating what is now known as Central Park began. His company, D & A Kingsland later A.C. Kingsland and Sons, secured the fortune by which the Kingsland family lived. Henry's older brother, George L., took over the family estate following the death of their father. According to census records, Henry remained unemployed and living with his family as late as 1870 at the age of 35¹⁸. By the following census, in 1880, he was already married and "retired."¹⁹ While it is not known for certain, one can conclude that Henry lived off of his family's fortune for the entirety of his life, never having an occupation of his own. Given that the 1880 census states he was a retired merchant, if at any point he was employed, it would likely have been within the family business sometime between 1870 and 1880.

¹⁴ See Figures 9 and 10

¹⁵ *History and Genealogy of the Cock, Cocks, Cox Family: Descended from James and Sarah Cock, of Killingworth Upon Matinecock, in the Township of Oyster Bay, Long Island, N.Y.* Privately printed, 1914.

¹⁶ "EX-MAYOR AMBROSE C. KINGSLAND." *The New York Times*, October 15, 1878.

¹⁷ Caliendo, Ralph J. *New York City Mayors: Part I: The Mayors of New York City before 1898*. Bloomington, IN: Xlibris, 2010.

¹⁸ U.S. Census Bureau (1870). Schedule 1 Inhabitants. Retrieved from Ancestry.com

¹⁹ U.S. Census Bureau (1880). Schedule 1 Inhabitants. Retrieved from Ancestry.com

In 1884, Henry P. Kingsland married Harriet E. (Honora) O'Brien. Harriet was born circa 1857 in Ireland.²⁰ The two owned and lived in properties in various locations throughout New York City, but seemingly maintained a summer residence in New Jersey (where the Kingsland family had long been rooted). They never had children and maintained a number of servants in their home(s). By 1900, the couple had four servants living under their roof: a laundress, a ladies maid, a cook, and a chambermaid²¹.

Henry died August 26th, 1912 at his summer home in Lincoln Avenue, Elberon, New Jersey. According to the records at Woodlawn Cemetery, his late residence was in Long Branch, New Jersey. Harriet died seven years later on May 9th, 1919. According to the same records mentioned above, her late residence was the Hotel Pennsylvania in New York City. Upon her death, Harriet bequeathed \$21,000—roughly \$359,500 in 2022—to various institutions in her will. She also left \$20,000 to her friend Honora Tehan and the residue of her \$500,000 estate was given to her nephews and niece John, Timothy, and Evelyn O'Brien, the latter of whom received \$25,000 outright²².

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ U.S. Census Bureau (1900). Schedule 1 Inhabitants. Retrieved from Ancestry.com

²² "LEAVES MONEY TO CHARITY: \$21,000 Bequeathed to Institutions in Mrs. Kingsland's Will." *The New York Times*, June 13, 1919.

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"Woodlawn Mausoleum Cemetery Records," Spreadsheet, Avery Architectural & Fine Arts
Library, Major Monuments and Records



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3



Figure 4



Figure 5



Figure 6



Figure 7



Figure 8



Figure 9



Figure 10