

The Ledger

Volume 1 • Issue 2 • Autumn 2021

Bulletin of *The Feriköy Protestant Cemetery Initiative*



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Editor's Note

This issue of *The Ledger* is the first of two installments devoted to heritage at the Feriköy Protestant Cemetery that predates its opening in 1859 and to the site from which it came, the “Graveyard of the Franks,” once located near Taksim Square. Reserved for Catholics and Protestants, the Frankish cemetery was one of several communal burial grounds in the Taksim area that comprised the larger necropolis of the Grand Champs des Morts. Dating back to the sixteenth century, the Graveyard of the Franks closed in the 1850s, and many of its tombs were later transferred to the new Protestant cemetery in Feriköy.

The most obvious heritage in the cemetery from the Frankish burial ground is in Monument Row, and the first of this issue’s articles discusses two memorials from that familiar line of stones. But tombs from Taksim are also located elsewhere on site. Though not as readily apparent, they are no less important. Our second article describes two such monuments, the recently discovered tombs of the daughters of Admiral Sir Baldwin Walker.

British artist William Purser depicted the Walker monuments in a watercolor painted in 1842. Labeled *View of Constantinople: The Shepherdess* by Sotheby’s, which sold it at auction in 2007, this work (above) offers a rare glimpse of the Graveyard of the Franks. Moreover, the striking contrast it reveals between the past and present state of the tombs underscores the urgency of the Feriköy Protestant Cemetery Initiative’s aim to better protect and conserve the cemetery’s precious heritage.

Brian Johnson

Testaments to a Family of Levantine Traders

The Abbott Stones in Monument Row

Michael S. Clark, PhD

Standing in Monument Row, on the east wall of the Feriköy Protestant Cemetery, are two interesting tombstones or sarcophagi covers for members of the Abbott family. The older stone has a Latin inscription for Gasparis Abbott, *Mercatoris Angli* (English Merchant), who died 24 August 1723 aged seventy-two years. This inscription further states that Gasparis resided in Smyrna (modern Izmir) for about thirty years. He then lived in Constantinople's Galata quarter for about another twenty. The other stone, some distance away on the wall, is for a George Abbott, English Merchant, who died on 18 May 1801 at the age of sixty-five years.



These Abbott stones are a bit of an anomaly, as they predate the 1859 opening of the cemetery. However, all the memorials in Monument Row date from the 1600s to mid-1800s, having come from an older cemetery that no longer exists—the so-called “Graveyard of the Franks,” a burial ground for non-Muslim Westerners in the vicinity of today’s Taksim Square.

The Frankish graveyard was long situated on the city’s outskirts, but by the mid-nineteenth century it bordered the expanding residential district of Beyoğlu. After the Feriköy Protestant Cemetery opened in 1859, gravestones from the former burial ground were moved to the new site. The tombstones of Monument Row, as well as others from Taksim located elsewhere in the cemetery, were transferred to Feriköy circa 1864.

Gasparis is almost certainly the same man as a Jasper Abbott, who was born 22 December 1655 in London, England, and baptized there five days later (27 December) at St. Michael’s Church in the Cornhill parish. The inscription on his probable tombstone records that he died aged seventy-two in 1723. This indicates that he was born about 1651, which contradicts the date in the parish register. However, it is not known when, nor by whom the tombstone was erected, and it is possible that his age at death may have been assumed.

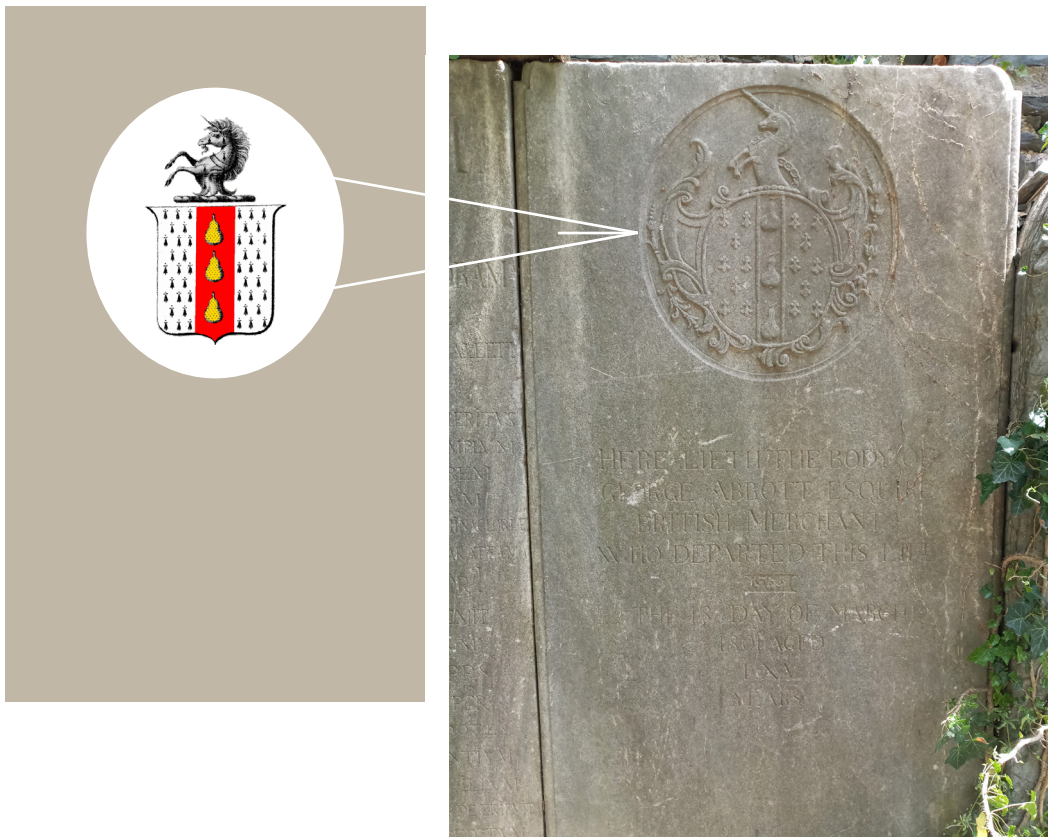
Jasper’s parents are listed in the Cornhill parish register as Robert and Bethia Abbott, his father being a scrivener (scribe and money lender), who died in 1658 as one of the wealthiest men in London. Jasper’s cousin, Robert Clayton (1629–1707), inherited Robert Abbott’s business interests and went on to become a Member of Parliament and Lord Mayor of London, for which he was knighted. He is also considered by many historians to be the father of the British banking system.

Jasper was the ninth child, and youngest son of the ten or so children of Robert and Bethia Abbott, which means he stood to inherit little from his father. He was also subordinate in the family business to his aforementioned older cousin Robert Clayton. Thus, Jasper as a young man sought his fortune elsewhere, and became a trader in the Mediterranean part of Asia, known historically as the Levant. He was probably associated in some way with the British Levant Company, as they had a trade monopoly in Turkey and Syria. Also, his father had an interest in at least two ships that sailed for the Company. We know from Jasper’s tombstone that he was an English merchant in the Levant for fifty or so years. He had one known son named Peter, who was born in 1696 in Constantinople and served as treasurer there for the Levant Company. Little else is known about Peter, except that he died in 1768 in either Constantinople or Ankara. However, he did have many sons and grandsons, who perpetuated a vast Abbott family trading empire in Greece and Turkey.

1. Tombstone of Gasparis (Jasper) Abbott

One of Peter's sons is a George Abbott, thought to have been born about 1736 in Ankara. George's nephew Henry Alexius Abbott (1764–1819) is the father of famous British generals Sir James Abbott (1807–96) and Sir Frederick Abbott (1805–92), and he put together in 1804 a family pedigree,¹ which shows that George died in 1798, probably in Constantinople. Despite the inconsistency in the death date, this is likely to be the same George Abbott named on the other Abbott family tombstone found in Monument Row.

If the family relationships are as suggested, then the above George Abbott is the grandson of Jasper Abbott and the great-grandson of Jasper's father, London money lender Robert Abbott (d. 1658). Evidence for this is a coat of arms inscribed on George's tombstone that are the same arms as those granted in London on 9 August 1654 to Robert Abbott by Oliver Cromwell's herald Edward Bysshe.



The arms granted to Robert, and shown on George's grave marker, are described as "ermin on a Pale Gules 3 Peares Or & for his Crest on a Helmett and Wreath . . . a Unicorn."² These arms were also displayed by George's brother John Thomas Abbott (1733–83), who registered with the College of Heralds on 15 March 1771 a pedigree for "Abbott of Constantinople from Abbott of London." A bookplate also exists for a William Abbott (1766–1852), nephew of George and John, whom John raised as his own son. William evidently considered John his de facto father and felt free to display John's arms, legally or otherwise, as his own on his bookplate.

1 Henry Alexius Abbott, *Memoirs and diary of Henry Abbott* (1764–1819), London, British Library, India Office Select Materials, Mss Eur B412 (2 vols., 2 fols., genealogy chart). A transcript of the diary is also available at the LDS Genealogy Library in Salt Lake City (942.1/L1 U3a 2 vol.). A transcript of the genealogy chart by Mike Clark is accessible online at http://www.mikesclark.com/genealogy/portraits/abbott_pedigree1.gif.

2 Jasper Andrew Abbott, "Robert Abbott, city money scrivener, and his account book 1646–1652," in Library Committee of the Corporation of London, *The Guildhall Miscellany* 7 (London 1956), 31–9 (esp. 36–7). See also *Abbott of Constantinople descended from Abbott of London* by John Thomas Abbott, which is the source for Abbott's (1956) discussion of the family coat of arms. This source document is dated 15 March 1771, and it resides in the College of Heralds in London.

2. Robert Abbott's coat of arms
3. Tombstone of George Abbott

Only two tombstones survive in Monument Row for members of the Abbott family, but one is for the founder of the Levantine branch of the family, and the other is for one of his grandsons. Their legacy spans two hundred years, from seventeenth-century British bankers to eighteenth-century Levantine traders and nineteenth-century British generals with careers in India and the Middle East.

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Images of British and Turkish Heritage at the Feriköy Protestant Cemetery

The Tombs of Admiral Walker's Daughters

Briony Llewellyn
Richard Wake-Walker
Brian Johnson

In 1842, William Purser (1789–1858), a British artist then living in Constantinople,¹ painted a watercolor of two chest tombs surrounded by an iron grille, situated on a hillside overlooking the Bosphorus (front page illustration). Nearby a young girl plays with two lambs. They are in the area then known as the “Graveyard of the Franks,” the Catholic and Protestant cemetery in the vicinity of today’s Taksim Square. In the background is Çamlıca Hill, on the Asian side of the Bosphorus, and Dolmabahçe is below the slope, on the European side. Recent research has revealed that the two tombs, now located at the Feriköy Protestant Cemetery, are those of Admiral Sir Baldwin Walker’s two

1. Baldwin Walker in Ottoman uniform, watercolor by Sir David Wilkie, 1840



infant daughters, who died while he and his wife Mary were in Constantinople. They are Caroline, died 6 August 1840, aged one year and seven months and Frances Catharine, whose death occurred just under a year later on 30 July 1841, aged one year and one month. It is the most poignantly personal of a series of watercolors that Walker commissioned from Purser circa 1841–2, apparently to commemorate his time in Constantinople.

Baldwin Walker (1802–76), one of the most distinguished British naval officers of the nineteenth century, had been seconded to the Ottoman navy. He had first come to the notice of the Turks in 1828 when he was dispatched by the Commander-in-Chief Mediterranean, Admiral Sir Pulteney Malcolm, to

1 Purser, a topographical artist, had trained as an architect at the Royal Academy Schools in London. He had arrived in Constantinople by 1837, as dated watercolors testify, but little is known of his life there. By 1840 he was regarded as a resident, for the painter Sir David Wilkie, visiting the city in that year, refers to him as such (A. Cunningham, *The Life of Sir David Wilkie, with his journals, tours, and critical remarks on works of art*, [London 1843], 3:326).



2. Warships in the Bosphorus (perhaps the Turkish fleet on its return to Constantinople after the Second Egyptian-Ottoman War), watercolor by William Purser

Constantinople with messages for the British ambassador to the Ottoman Porte, Sir Robert Gordon. Ten years later, Walker was appointed as a Royal Navy captain to be in charge of the Ottoman fleet, just before the young Sultan Abdülmecid (r. 1839–61) came to power. The sultan immediately promoted Walker to an Ottoman admiral. His Turkish squadron played a key role in the successful 1840 bombardment of Acre, during the Second Egyptian-Ottoman War (1839–41). The allied action against the forces of Muhammad Ali of Egypt (r. 1805–48) included the taking of Sidon and Beirut, along the Levant coast.

During his six-year posting in Constantinople, Walker completed his primary mission to streamline the Turkish fleet and apply Royal Navy discipline and efficiencies through publishing a handbook of naval tactics and procedures for the Ottomans. The Orientalist scholar and lexicographer James Redhouse assisted Walker as his interpreter and technical translator during his time with the Ottoman fleet. Redhouse was also present at the Acre action. At times, Walker experienced considerable opposition from within the Porte, due to competing bureaucratic factions. This stood him in good stead for his highly political appointment as Controller of the Navy in London later in his career. Walker was knighted for his part in the bombardment of Acre and was made an hereditary Pasha of the Ottoman Empire.

Walker had married Mary Worth in 1834. She was the daughter and granddaughter of naval captains. They had eleven children, six daughters, and then five sons, in that order. Four of the girls were born in Constantinople, two of whom, Caroline and Frances Catharine, also died there.

The subjects of William Purser's group of watercolors painted for Baldwin Walker seem to have been chosen to represent aspects of the Admiral's life in Constantinople. Besides the depiction of his daughters' tombs in the Graveyard of the Franks, the series includes two images of the Ottoman naval buildings at Kasımpaşa,² and another that likely shows the return of the Turkish fleet to

2 Ömer M. Koç Collection.

Constantinople after the successful campaign against Muhammad Ali.³ The paintings resemble Purser's many other well-executed, if consciously pretty, views of Constantinople that were aimed at a Western audience, eager for picturesque images of the city and its inhabitants. These watercolors seem to have sold successfully, but none are known to have been engraved for publication. It is likely that Purser remained in Constantinople until his death in 1858,⁴ but since no dated watercolors after 1842 are known, he may have ceased painting.

Baldwin Walker returned to England in 1845 and was appointed Controller of the Navy in 1848. His most significant contribution in this post was the proposal, planning, and construction of the largest and most powerful and technologically advanced warship of the day, HMS Warrior, built in response to a dramatic increase in French naval rearmament. Its construction, and Walker's vision, forced the French to abandon their fleet expansion plans, thus preventing possible war with France.



3. The tombs of Admiral Walker's daughters at the Feriköy Protestant Cemetery, separated by a tree: Caroline's, right, and Frances Catharine's, left (above)

4. Broken pieces of Caroline's tomb (above right)

Later, as Commander-in-Chief Cape of Good Hope in the 1860s, Walker helped to eradicate slavery along the East coast of Africa, his greatest humanitarian achievement. French, Portuguese, and maritime Arab slavers had moved to Mozambique, Madagascar, and Zanzibar until Walker deployed his Cape squadron to intercept them and destroy their trade. While at the Cape, Walker also assisted David Livingstone in his efforts to combat slavery in the African interior, by sending him vital supplies and moral encouragement. Admiral Sir Baldwin Walker died at home, in Suffolk, in February 1876, at the age of seventy-four.

About a decade after Baldwin Walker left Constantinople (1845), the Graveyard of the Franks, where he had buried his daughters, would be closed. Established in vacant fields more than two centuries earlier, the Catholic and Protestant cemetery near Taksim was now bordered by populated areas of the Beyoğlu district and blocked further expansion to the north. Already in 1842, urban encroachment had whittled away a portion of the burial ground, forcing on-site relocation of some graves. Finally, in 1853, the Ottoman authorities declared it unsuitable for use.

In compensation, Sultan Abdülmecid granted Catholics and Protestants land three kilometers to the north, in Feriköy, to serve as a common cemetery. But

3 Sold Strauss & Co. Auctioneers, Cape Town, South Africa, 15 October 2018, lot 331.

4 Special thanks to Canon Ian Sherwood of Istanbul's Crimean Memorial Church for examining funerary records, thus discovering that Purser died in the city in January 1858, aged 69.

the Crimean War (1854–6) postponed the transfer of tombs from Taksim, and when the matter returned to the agenda in 1857, the previously allotted area was judged too little for both communities, probably because the Catholics had filled a fair amount of space with French and Italian military dead from the Crimea. In April of 1857, by the sultan’s command, a separate, nearby site was granted to the Protestants alone, forming the core of today’s Feriköy Protestant Cemetery.



The first burial at the new Protestant cemetery took place in November 1858, and the site opened officially in February 1859. But several more years passed before graves and monuments from Taksim were relocated to Feriköy. The cemetery’s registry shows that the tombs of Admiral Walker’s daughters, as well as their remains, were moved in February 1864, a few months after the process seems to have begun in 1863. Located in the rows to the right of the Visitor’s Lodge, their graves are in the heart of the cemetery’s British section, alongside the tombs of notable Levantine families of English origin, such as the Sarells.

Unfortunately, the Walker monuments have suffered neglect over the last century and a half. Forgotten and untended, they are in serious disrepair, eroded by the elements and damaged by vegetation. Their historic legacy has also been overlooked, now even further obscured by large modern tombs that have sprung up randomly and unexpectedly close by. Their condition today contrasts sharply with their original state depicted by William Purser in 1841–2. Testaments to the crucial service of a renowned English naval officer to the Ottoman Empire, the Walker tombs are significant heritage for both Britain and Turkey, which deserve to be better remembered, protected, and preserved.

Briony Llewellyn (bjl@btinternet.com) is an independent scholar and curator who specializes in British and Maltese artists’ depictions of the Ottoman Empire, including the work of Amadeo Preziosi, David Roberts, and John Frederick Lewis. She has published extensively on these subjects in exhibition and auction catalogues, in journals and in multi-author collections. Her catalogue of the British and Maltese works in the Ömer M. Koç Collection in Istanbul is forthcoming.

Richard Wake-Walker (wakewalkers@aol.com) comes from an old naval family, maternally and paternally. Connected by blood and marriage to more than fifty admirals, he is the great-great grandson of Admiral Sir Baldwin Walker. He has studied naval history all his life and is planning a full biography of his eminent ancestor. In his business career, Richard has worked internationally as an expert in rough diamonds.

5. The oldest part of the cemetery’s British section today, displaying a mix of historic tombs and brand-new constructions, with the Walker graves on either side of the tree in the foreground (above right)

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Cemetery Happenings

Compared to 2020, when the constraints of the pandemic curbed the Feriköy Protestant Cemetery Initiative's efforts, 2021 was a year of progress. Student programs and other projects resumed at the cemetery, guided visits increased, and a plan to renovate the chapel took shape. Recognition in February of the Initiative as advisory council to the cemetery's governing board spurred this activity, and the board's new president—Dr. Gábor Fodor, director of Istanbul's Hungarian Cultural Center—has encouraged it since taking office in August.



After a pause in 2020, the Initiative recommenced site recording in mid-summer. BIAA-ARIT intern Olivia Dietrich and ARIT volunteer Yuka Oiwa carried out the work both singly and together, and their combined labors from July to October raised the total percentage of documented monuments at the cemetery from fifty to seventy percent.

Olivia, a Skidmore College graduate, had been chosen for an internship in 2020 that was cancelled due to the pandemic. 2021 offered a second chance for what she later described as “a great experience in which I got to learn about something I thought I would never know anything about—namely, graveyards.” Besides outdoor exercise and puzzlelike challenges recording tombs, she recounted that the job provided an unexpected opportunity to interact with the living, specifically the cemetery caretaker and his family:



1. Yuka Oiwa (left), American Research Institute in Turkey (ARIT) volunteer, and Olivia Dietrich, joint British Institute at Ankara (BIAA)-ARIT intern
2. Olivia and Necla Demirkol enjoy a Turkish breakfast

Aslan [Demirkol] and his wife, Necla, were immediately sweet to me even though I couldn't understand any Turkish whatsoever. Over time we learned how to communicate with each other through Google Translate, and Aslan practiced his English with me when he was working. Slowly, I was able to say little things like “good morning,” “thank you,” and “very hot” (in reference to the weather). Twice during the summer Necla invited Yuka and me to eat breakfast with her and the two children, and the food was absolutely amazing: we ate eggs, homemade cheese and yogurt, homemade bread, fruit, vegetables, and marmalade out on the table beside their house. It was really fun to be able to play tic-tac-toe with the kids while learning more about their family and their lives from Necla.

When Olivia returned home in August, Yuka, an expat from the US, continued the recording tasks. Her background in archaeology and experience in working with mortuary contexts proved invaluable. She documented more than 300 plots, took over 600 photos, and finalized four sections of the cemetery. Reporting later on her work, she emphasized the cultural value of the cemetery's heritage and the urgency of preserving it.

Without doubt, the most important item on the conservation agenda is the chapel. A deficient drainage system, leaky roof, and interior as well as exterior damage require immediate attention. Board president Gábor Fodor addressed this matter even before he began his term in August. Through his initiative, an architectural survey of the chapel was selected as the project for the “Third International Workshop on Turkish-Hungarian Bilateral Relationships,” held from 28 June to 4 July 2021 and sponsored by the Gül Baba Heritage Foundation and Yıldız Technical University (YTU). Supervised by Drs. Zafer Sağdıç and Gergő Máté Kovács of YTU and the Budapest University of Technology and Economics respectively, students from these two institutions made drawings of the building and captured all of its details with a laser scanner. Their work resulted in a thorough structural analysis of the chapel.

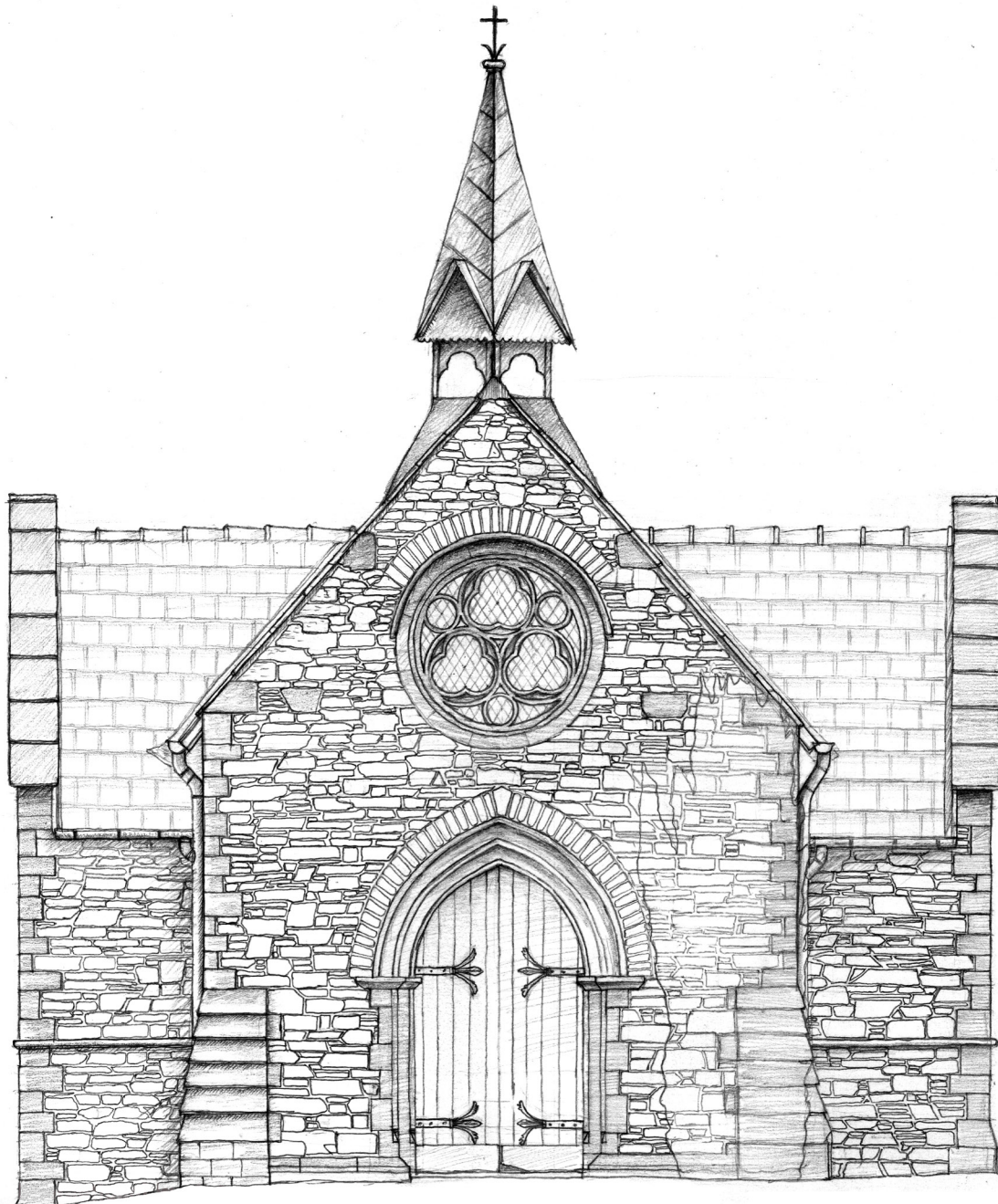


3. Orientation session for participants in the Third International Workshop on Turkish-Hungarian Bilateral Relationships, 28 June 2021

Subsequently, in late autumn, Gábor Fodor met with Mahir Polat, deputy secretary-general of the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality, guided him around the cemetery, and secured his commitment to renovate the chapel. The municipality will fund the project and provide restoration specialists to oversee the work, which is expected to begin in early 2022.

Many other official guests paid visits to the cemetery in 2021, accompanied by members of the Feriköy Protestant Cemetery Initiative. In August, Richard Wittmann, acting director of Orient-Institut Istanbul, gave a tour to German consul general Johannes Regenbrecht, who was especially impressed by the cemetery’s diverse funerary heritage. Mr. Regenbrecht voiced concern about the deterioration of monuments and commended the Initiative’s preservation objectives. To celebrate the Initiative’s recognition as advisory council to the governing board, he hosted a reception at the German consulate in October, which was attended by diplomatic representatives of all the nations responsible for the cemetery.

BIAA Assistant Director Daniel-Joseph Macarthur-Seal guided British Consul General Kirsty Mason around the cemetery in May, and ARIT Librarian Brian Johnson gave a tour to US Deputy Chief of Mission Scott Oudkirk and US



4. One of the manual survey drawings of the chapel (southwest elevation, scale: 1/50) from the Third International Workshop on Turkish-Hungarian Bilateral Relationships (Istanbul, 28 June–4 July 2021)

Consul General Daria Darnell in October. DCM Oudkirk has a special affinity for the cemetery, having previously served on the governing board when he was posted at the Istanbul US Consulate earlier in his career. Brian also led a tour for staff from Istanbul's Robert College, who are now keen to conserve the tombs of Henrietta and Harriet Hamlin, wives of Cyrus Hamlin, Robert College's founder.



5. German consul general Johannes Regenbrecht (left) and Richard Wittmann

More might be said about recent happenings at the Feriköy Protestant Cemetery, but brevity is the soul of communication. Accordingly, it is fitting to end with a short reflection from Yuka Oiwa about the tomb of a young boy, Kaspar Sigrist, which caught her notice more than once during her work in Feriköy:

His marble obelisk was decorated with a broad cross with a delicately carved wreath resting underneath. Curbs outlined the plot, and in the block of marble covering the top half there was a porthole gazing into the earth. The copper-rimmed glass was always misted with moisture, but I never waited long enough to see if it cleared. With unusual internments like these, I wondered if Kaspar himself requested this window to the daylit world or if his loved ones asked [for it] to see him through to the afterlife. For me, *memento mori* had never been so succinct—all the letters were discarded but for one seeing and unseeing “O.”



6. Kaspar Sigrist's tomb, with a window to the daylit world

The Ledger: Bulletin of The Feriköy Protestant Cemetery Initiative

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The Ledger is published twice a year online by The Feriköy Protestant Cemetery Initiative. Written contributions are welcome. Queries should be addressed to the editor at: bdjohnson62@gmail.com.

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Front page: Courtesy of Sotheby's

Page 5: Courtesy of Strauss & Co. and Denver Hendricks

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Brian Johnson: pp. 2, 3 (right), 8 (left), 11 (bottom), 12; Sevil Üzrek: pp. 6, 7; Yuka Oiwa: p. 8 (right)

Flora and Fauna



"Cats are connoisseurs of comfort"
—James Herriot

Collections

Michael S. Clark Collection: p. 3 (left); Ömer M. Koç Collection: p. 4; Richard Wittmann Collection: 11 (top); Hungarian Cultural Center, Istanbul: pp. 9, 10

Support for layout and design is provided by the American Research Institute in Turkey and web hosting by Orient-Institut Istanbul.

Founded in 1859, the Feriköy Protestant Cemetery is the main burial ground for Istanbul's foreign Protestant and otherwise non-Catholic or Orthodox dead. It is managed by a governing board comprised of the consuls general of Germany, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Sweden, Hungary, Switzerland, and the USA.

The Feriköy Protestant Cemetery Initiative is a scholarly working group established in 2018 to document and preserve the Protestant cemetery at Feriköy as a heritage site. Affiliated with six Turkey-based international research centers (the American Research Institute in Turkey, the Netherlands Institute in Turkey, the Orient-Institut Istanbul, the Hungarian Cultural Center, the Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul, and the British Institute at Ankara), it serves as an advisory body to the cemetery's diplomatic governing board. For more information, please visit the Initiative's website: <http://www.ferikoycemetery.org>.



The Feriköy Protestant
Cemetery Initiative