



# The Preservationist



Summer 2021

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## REHABILITATING INTERIORS IN HISTORIC BUILDINGS (CONT.)

### *Identifying and Preserving Character-defining Elements*

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Preservation Assistance Division, Technical Preservation  
Services*

*This article is continued from the Spring 2021 Issue of The Preservationist.*

#### ***Recommended Approaches for Rehabilitating Historic Interiors***

1. Retain and preserve floor plans and interior spaces that are important in defining the overall historic character of the building. This includes the size, configuration, proportion, and relationship of rooms and corridors; the relationship of features to spaces; and the spaces themselves such as lobbies, reception halls, entrance halls, double parlors, theaters, auditoriums, and important industrial or commercial use spaces. Put service functions required by the building's new use, such as bathrooms, mechanical equipment, and office machines, in secondary spaces.
2. Avoid subdividing spaces that are characteristic of a building type or style or that are directly associated with specific persons or patterns of events. Space may be subdivided both vertically through the insertion of new partitions or horizontally through insertion of new floors or mezzanines. The insertion of new additional floors should be considered only when they will not damage or destroy the structural system or obscure, damage, or destroy character-defining spaces, features, or finishes. If rooms have already been subdivided through an earlier insensitive renovation, consider removing the partitions and restoring the room to its original proportions and size.
3. Avoid making new cuts in floors and ceilings where such cuts would change character-defining spaces and the historic configuration of such spaces. Inserting of a new atrium or a lightwell is appropriate only in very limited situations where the existing interiors are not historically or architecturally distinguished.
4. Avoid installing dropped ceilings below ornamental ceilings or in rooms where high ceilings are part of the building's character. In addition to obscuring or destroying significant details, such treatments will also change the space's proportions. If dropped ceilings are installed in buildings that lack character-defining spaces, such as mills and factories, they should be well set back from the windows, so they are not visible from the exterior.
5. Retain and preserve interior features and finishes that are important in defining the overall historic character of the building. This might include columns, doors, cornices, baseboards, fireplaces and mantels, paneling, light fixtures, elevator cabs, hardware, and flooring; and wallpaper, plaster, paint, and finishes such as stenciling, marbling, and graining; and other decorative materials that accent interior features and provide color, texture, and patterning to walls, floors, and ceilings.
6. Retain stairs in their historic configuration and location. If a second means of egress is required, consider constructing new stairs in secondary spaces. (For guidance on designing compatible new additions, see Preservation Brief 14, "New Exterior Additions to Historic Buildings.") The application of fire-retardant coatings, such as intumescent paints; the installation of fire suppression systems, such as sprinklers; and the construction of glass enclosures can in many cases permit retention of stairs and other character-defining features.
7. Retain and preserve visible features of early mechanical systems that are important in defining the overall historic character of the building, such as radiators, vents, fans, grilles, plumbing fixtures, switch plates, and lights. If new heating, air conditioning, lighting and plumbing systems are installed, they should be done in a way that does not destroy character-defining spaces, features, and finishes. Ducts, pipes, and wiring should be installed as inconspicuously as possible: in secondary spaces, in the attic or basement if possible, or in closets.
8. Avoid "furring out" perimeter walls for insulation purposes. This requires unnecessary removal of window trim and can change a room's proportions. Consider alternative means of improving thermal performance, such as installing insulation in attics and basements and adding storm windows.
9. Avoid removing paint and plaster from traditionally finished surfaces, to expose masonry and wood. Conversely, avoid painting previously unpainted millwork. Repairing deteriorated plasterwork is encouraged. If the plaster is too deteriorated to save, and the walls and ceilings are not highly ornamented, gypsum board may be an acceptable replacement material. The use of paint colors appropriate to the period of the building's construction is encouraged.
10. Avoid using destructive methods—propane and butane torches or sandblasting—to remove paint or other coatings from historic features. Avoid harsh cleaning agents that can change the appearance of wood. (For more information regarding appropriate cleaning methods, consult Preservation Brief 6, "Dangers of Abrasive Cleaning to Historic Buildings.")

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The Preservationist is published quarterly by the Canton Preservation Society as a benefit to Society members.

The Preservationist encourages your comments, ideas, and suggestions. Feel free to submit your letters to the Canton Preservation Society at the address listed above.

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If you would like to become involved in one of the above committees, please contact the office.

**LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

Dear Members and Friends,

Soon you will see a lot of activity at the Hartung House. We have hired a contractor to start some much needed repairs on the house, fence and parking lot. The house repairs include replacing some rotted railings on the porch area, rotted wood on the eaves, painting the trim, tuck pointing along with glazing the windows. I would like to thank Steve Coon, Patty and Floyd Oryszak and the David Hartung family memorials along with the Janet Cassler family memorials for their contributions. If you would like to contribute to the repairs please forward you donation to the Canton Preservation Society.

With Covid-19 improving and vaccines becoming more popular with the population soon we will be able to resume activities. The fundraising committee is working on fundraisers and an open house tour for 2022. We also will be planning our annual meeting for May 2022. We can't wait to see you in person soon.

Summer is here! We hope you keep us in mind for your good used items that you wish to dispose of. The store has had a wonderful selling season and we are in need of merchandise. We have resumed our pick up service so please feel free to contact us and schedule your pickup. Your donations are what makes the store successful. Have a great summer!

Respectfully,  
 Joseph Engel, Executive Director

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Membership Renewal is due on your "issue date" anniversary. Statements are mailed out quarterly.

**Don't forget The Canton Preservation Society in your will or estate plan.**

## KNOW YOUR HISTORIC LANDMARKS

### RISTORANTE CAPALDI

4905 Tuscarawas Street West



(Herbruck Home, 1911)

**Builder:** John Banks

**Architectural Style:** Greek Revival

The Reverend Emil P. Herbruck, pastor of the Trinity Reformed Church, created his dream of a "rose covered cottage" in the form of this attractive Greek Revival house. Here, the resemblance to a Greek temple is quite distinct, with a row of Ionic columns along the portico with its central doorway, supporting a plain entablature and a fully enclosed pediment above. Pilasters at the extreme ends of the recessed facade imitate the fluting of the columns which stand in front of them.

Later owners, Dr. and Mrs. Robert Allison, employed a local architect to copy an ornamental balustrade he had seen at the home of the poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, which may be seen today on the front lawn of the house. Working throughout the late 1970s and well into the 1980s, it took several skilled members of the Capaldi family nine years to completely remodel the interior and repair the exterior of the house, converting it into one of Canton's finest restaurants. As part of the decor, they have preserved many remnants of the past, some dating back to the original occupants of the house: the original plaster, the molded fire-place mantle, as well as the pastor's chair from the Trinity Reformed Church.

### THE FIFE RESIDENCE

1896 (NRHP, 1987) G06 McKinley Avenue S.W.

**Architect:** Guy Tilden

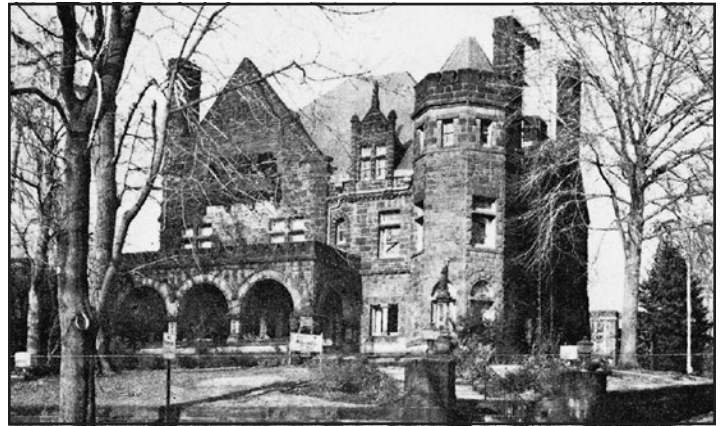
**Architectural Style:** Queen Anne

This handsome Queen Anne Style town house was designed for the family of Harry Fife, an insurance agent and stockbroker. Architecturally, the sloped gable weeps down around a gable-like projection which from a frontal view, closely resembles

An octagonal tower. But this is a wonderful optical illusion, for it is neither octagonal, nor a tower. Of the dozens of homes designed by Tilden, this is the only one to retain its original use. The house was obviously a site-specific design, evident from its extreme narrowness compared to its great length. With the demolition of the surrounding properties, its flatness is now rather exaggerated.

### FIVE OAKS

The Massillon Woman's Club



The J. Walter McClymonds mansion in Massillon is virtually unchanged from the time of its completion in 1894. Virtually. Since it stood through the coal furnace and factory smokestack era its once light (in color, not weight) quarried stone is sooty gray. And, inside, some of the furnishings are gone.

The paneling and cabinetry are intact and to those who appreciate fine wood, fine carving, and fine finishing, they are marvels. The doors are as neatly fitted, the joints as tight today as in 1894. The wood gleams through 11 - honest - coats of varnish.

There is much low relief carving, some in unexpected places. It is almost filigree work. It is said that this carving was drawn from the basic stock itself. In other words, it was not glued onto a timber that had been made clear and smooth with a plane.

Many of the wall coverings are original. That in the former billiard room is Morocco leather. The hallways, above paneling, are handsomely stenciled.

The McClymonds' house is second to none in quality of workmanship. Each of the 10 fireplace mantles is unique not only in design but also in kind of marble. All the flashing, gutters and downspouts are copper. Every bathroom fixture - wash basins, tub, toilet stands on what in effect is a marble "platter". The "platter", which must weigh some, was put there to catch leaks and drips and thus save flooring and ceilings below.

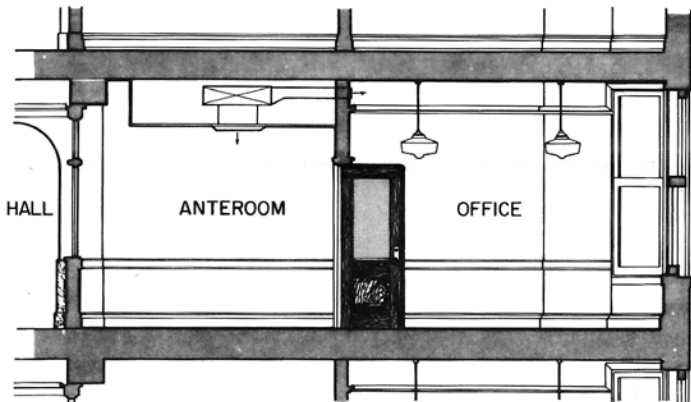
The mansion, at 210 Fourth St N.E., has been the seat of the Massillon Woman's Club since 1924.

Mr. Clymonds, an industrialist and banker, died at age 70 in 1912.



REHABILITATING INTERIORS IN HISTORIC BUILDINGS *CONT.*

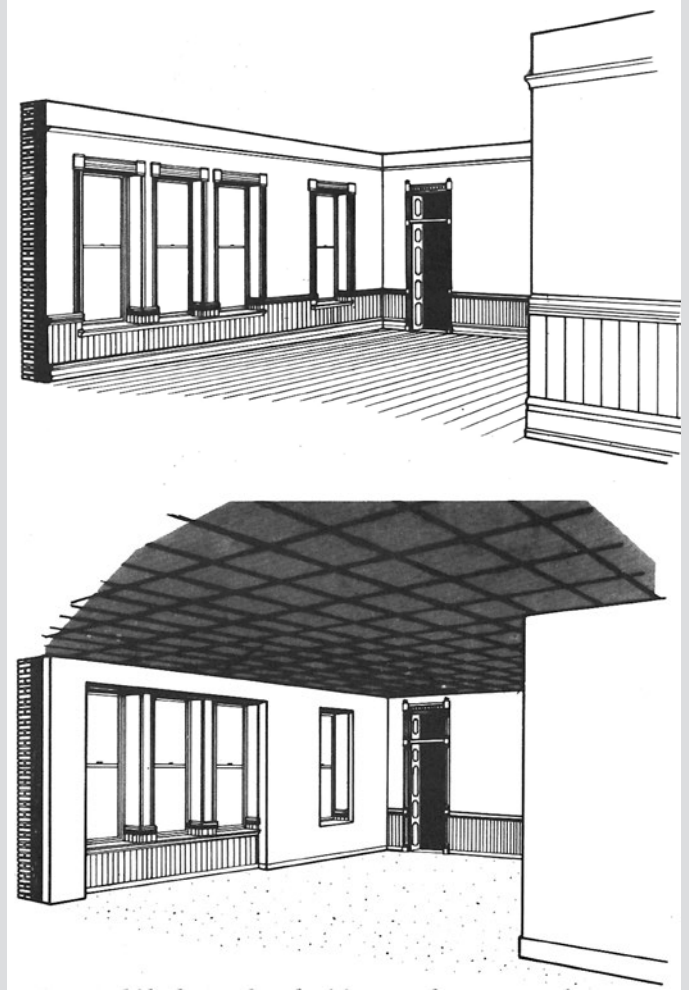
Continued from page 1.



**Figure 7.** When the Monadnock Building was rehabilitated, architects retained the basic floor plan on the upper floors consisting of a double-loaded corridor with offices opening onto it. The original floor-to-ceiling height in the corridors and outside offices the most important spaces was maintained by installing needed air conditioning ductwork in the less important anterooms. In this way, the most significant interior spaces were preserved intact. Drawing by Neal A. Vogel



**Figure 9.** The tangible reminders of early mechanical systems can be worth saving. In this example, in the Old Post Office in Washington, D.C., radiators encircle Corinthian columns in a decorative manner. Note, too, the period light fixtures. These features were retained when the building was rehabilitated as retail and office space. Photo: Historic American Buildings Survey



**Figure 8.** Furring out exterior walls to add insulation and suspending new ceilings to hide ductwork and wiring can change a room's proportions and can cause interior features to appear fragmented. In this case, a school was converted into apartments, and individual classrooms became living rooms, bedrooms, and kitchens. On the left is an illustration of a classroom prior to rehabilitation; note the generous floor-to-ceiling height, wood wainscoting, molded baseboard, picture molding, and Eastlake Style door and window trim. After rehabilitation, on the right, only fragments of the historic detailing survive: the ceiling has been dropped below the picture molding, the remaining wainscoting appears to be randomly placed, and some of the window trim has been obscured. Together with the subdivision of the classrooms, these rehabilitation treatments prevent a clear understanding of the original classroom's design and space. If thermal performance must be improved, alternatives to furring out walls and suspending new ceilings, such as installing insulation in attics and basements, should be considered. Drawings by Neal A. Vogel

## REHABILITATING INTERIORS IN HISTORIC BUILDINGS *CONT.*



**Figure 10.** In this case plaster has been removed from perimeter walls, leaving brick exposed. In removing finishes from historic masonry walls, not only is there a loss of historic finish, but raw, unfinished walls are exposed, giving the interior an appearance it never had. Here, the exposed brick is of poor quality and the mortar joints are wide and badly struck. Plaster should have been retained and repaired, as necessary.

### *Meeting Building, Life Safety and Fire Codes*

Buildings undergoing rehabilitation must comply with existing building, life safety and fire codes. The application of codes to specific projects varies from building to building, and town to town. Code requirements may make some reuse proposals impractical; in other cases, only minor changes may be needed to bring the project into compliance. In some situations, it may be possible to obtain a code variance to preserve distinctive interior features. (It should be noted that the Secretary's Standards for Rehabilitation take precedence over other regulations and codes in determining whether a rehabilitation project qualifies for Federal tax benefits.) A thorough understanding of the applicable regulations and close coordination with code officials, building inspectors, and fire marshals can prevent the alteration of significant historic interiors.



**Figure 11.** These dramatic "before" and "after" photographs show a severely deteriorated space restored to its original elegance: plaster has been repaired and painted; the scagliola columns have been restored to match marble using traditional craft techniques and missing decorative metalwork has been reinstalled in front of the windows. Although some reorganization of the space took place, notably the relocation of the front desk, the overall historic character of the space has been preserved. These views are of the lobby in the Willard Hotel, Washington, D.C. Credit: Commercial Photographers (left); Carol M. Highsmith (right)

### *Sources of Assistance*

Rehabilitation and restoration work should be undertaken by professionals who have an established reputation in the field.

Given the wide range of interior work items, from ornamental plaster repair to marble cleaning and the application of graining, it is possible that a number of specialists and subcontractors will need to be brought in to bring the project to completion. State Historic Preservation Officers and local preservation organizations may be a useful source of information in this regard. Good sources of information on appropriate preservation techniques for specific interior features and finishes include the Bulletin of the Association for Preservation Technology and The Old House Journal; other useful publications are listed in the bibliography.

### *Protecting Interior Elements During Rehabilitation*

Architectural features and finishes to be preserved in the process of rehabilitation should be clearly marked on plans and at the site. This step, along with careful supervision of the interior demolition work and protection against arson and vandalism, can prevent the unintended destruction of architectural elements that contribute to the building's historic character.

Protective coverings should be installed around architectural features and finishes to avoid damage in the course of construction work and to protect workers. Staircases and floors, in particular, are subjected to dirt and heavy wear, and the risk exists of incurring costly or irreparable damage. In most cases, the best, and least costly, preservation approach is to design and construct a protective system that enables stairs and floors to be used yet protects them from damage. Other architectural features such as mantels, doors wainscoting, and decorative finishes maybe protected by using heavy canvas or plastic sheets.

### *Summary*

In many cases, the interior of a historic building is as important as its exterior. The careful identification and evaluation of interior architectural elements, after undertaking research on the building's history and use, is critically important before changes to the building are contemplated. Only after this evaluation should new uses be decided, and plans be drawn up. The best rehabilitation is one that preserves and protects those rooms, sequences of spaces, features and finishes that define and shape the overall historic character of the building.



## BORDNER HOMESTEAD

*(NRHP, 1978) 4522 Seventh Street S.W.*

**Builder:** Haman Bordner, 1880

**Architectural Style:** High Victorian Italianate

Haman Bordner was a prosperous Perry Township farmer whose acreage included what is now Canton Centre (Mellett Mall) and Central Catholic High School. He and his wife must have taken great pride in their new home, since it carries the inscription "Haman & Lidia Bordner, 1880" engraved in the sandstone hood over the main entrance. The low-pitched roof with overhanging eaves, with double brackets in the cornice alternating with semicircular windows, and the segmental windows with the weighty hood molds are all elements of the High Victorian Italianate style. In fact, by the various block-like elements of the house, it could well fit the Italian Villa style, except that it lacks the essential three or four-story tower.

The walnut and chestnut woodwork used in various internal applications came from trees that were grown and milled on the property. While the house has been expanded to accommodate bathrooms and other alterations have been made, much of the interior is original and paint has been removed from the wood surfaces. The original Victorian porch was removed early in this century, and the enclosed porch seen here is a much later addition.

## PRIVATE RESIDENCE

*132 22nd Street N.W*

(Mr. and Mrs. John G. Obermeier, 1932)

**Builder:** Louis Hoicowitz, Canton, Ohio

**Architectural Style:** French Norman Revival

Louis Hoicowitz was a Russian immigrant who settled in Canton and operated his own construction company here from 1922 to 1952. He built more than a dozen houses in Ridgewood in a variety of styles but is best known for his French Norman Revival structures. The coarse and unusually long bricks used in the construction of the Obermeier residence give it an antiquated, rustic appearance. The tower-like projection with the round headed window and conical roof actually encloses a stairway. The gabled portico features a round-headed stone doorway with a semi-circular hoodmold. Note also the dentilated cornice, hipped roof dormers, and tall chimneys, one of which is hidden behind the branches of the tree to the left.



## CHANCE-KRICHBAUM HOUSE

*1870 721 13th Street N.W*

**Builder:** Peter Chance

**Architectural Style:** High Victorian Gothic

Built in the High Victorian Gothic style by Canton's second Mayor, Peter Chance, this home was later occupied by two judges: Seraphim Meyer, who ordered the triple hanging in Public Square in 1880, and Charles Krichbaum, Probate Judge from 1914 to 1921.

Gothic characteristics evident here include carved stickwork in the gables, the steep roofs - which in this case splay outwardly at the eaves - and finials at the peaks of the gables. Even the wooden hood-molds over the windows hint at the Gothic pointed arch, which in fact makes a single appearance in window of the dormer above. The Victorian penchant for decoration is further illustrated in such non-Gothic details as brackets on the posts and under the eaves of the porch. While the home survived with some of its original decoration intact, it has been lovingly restored by its current owner, and is now a private residence.



*One of our long time board members, Sharon Carpenter found this most interesting article in the magazine "The Economist". We hope you enjoy the article as much as Sharon and I did.*

## RESCUED CHARM

*Baltimore's abandoned homes are being recycled into furniture*

Nineteenth Century brick row houses on McKean Avenue, a once humming, now rather desolate street in East Baltimore where many homes have been demolished or abandoned, can be bid for as little as \$12,000. A more popular way to snap up a bit of historic Baltimore is to spend nearly a quarter of that at Room & Board, a furniture chain based in Minneapolis, on a McKean media cabinet, fashioned from roof-decking planks from the city's razed houses.

The planks come from the Baltimore Wood Project, which was established by the US Forest Service as a joint venture with local non-profits and the city, to show how discarded wood can be kept out of landfills. A lot of wood waste, which releases carbon dioxide and methane as it rots, has little sale value, but the old buildings can yield precious salvage. The yellow pine that was used to build Baltimore's rowhouses came from old growth forests, and is more dense and rot resistant than faster growing new lumber; a century of oxidation has given it a handsome, dark patina. Furniture makers and interior designers play up its provenance, designing items around its joisted, plank-shaped pieces, some of them pocked with nail holes and saw marks. They also advertise the fact that the venture trains formerly unemployed Baltimoreans, many of them former prisoners, in deconstruction and salvaging techniques.

Maryland's biggest city, once a booming factory and port town, is fertile ground for such a project. Its rowhouses, constructed in sprawling grids and quickly filled in by immigrants from Europe during the brisk industrial growth of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, began to empty in the second half of the 20th century, as its shipping and steel industries declined. Since 1950, when Baltimore was America's sixth-biggest city, a third of the residents have left; today it is the thirtieth biggest. In the poorest neighborhoods, more than half of adults are unemployed. Some 16,000 buildings are officially designated empty; the true number may be twice that. Entire streets are boarded up. The city is planning to demolish thousands of them.

Projects like the Baltimore Wood Project, which the Forest Service hopes will take root in other cities, are likely to remain small-scale. Deconstructing a house in order to save the materials from which it is built is more expensive and time-consuming than going at it with a wrecking ball. In some long-empty houses with broken rooftops, all the wood has been lost to rot. In the past six years, as the project has salvaged wood from around 850 houses, many more have been reduced to rubble.

But the project has shown that construction efforts can pay. Last year Brick & Board, the non-profit established to sell the salvaged wood, became a for-profit: it now sells reclaimed wood from other towns and cities, as well as Baltimore brick and the white marble stoops that were once found at the front doors of even the most modest old rowhouses. These steps, one of Baltimore's most distinctive architectural hallmarks, are likely to stay in the city. Their most enthusiastic buyers are gentrifiers, who reuse them in neighborhoods less blighted by decline.

## CANTON HEBREW CEMETERY



*by Ann Dulabahn*

High on a ridge southeast of Canton sits Canton Hebrew Cemetery, site of Jewish burials since the 1890's. It serves primarily the Orthodox congregation of Agudas Achim and Conservative Shaaray Torah.

Open iron gates in the brick wall fronting Central Ave. S.E. provide a quick view of close-set stones, many graves with small American flags, and a commanding monument standing toward the rear. Small, weathered stones in the southeast corner mark the earliest graves.

Typical later monuments are larger, of red or gray granite, carrying inscriptions in both Hebrew and English. Grave monuments vary in size and material, but regulations now limit the dimensions in order to simplify maintenance.

A narrow concrete border or foundation defines each plot and is often planted with low evergreen groundcover. The foundation allows the ground to be filled in as the grave settles, Jewish caskets being constructed of wood and pegged together.

In the earliest period of Canton history there were few Jewish settlers, but at least one congregation was meeting by 1869. Some think there are Jewish burial sites in a cemetery on East Tuscarawas, but lost records make this hard to verify. Many of the families settled in southeast Canton; their numbers increasing in the 1890's as a result of political upheaval in Europe. At the turn of the century there were an estimated 300-350 persons in this community.

There are only a few old, unknown graves in the cemetery, according to Max Weisbrod, president of the Canton Hebrew Cemetery Association. These are believed to be victims of the 'flu epidemic of 1917. All burials are now listed in the cemetery chapel.





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Please mail check or money order to The Canton Preservation Society 131 Wertz Ave. NW Canton Ohio 44708. We also accept Visa, Master Card, Discover and American Express.

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