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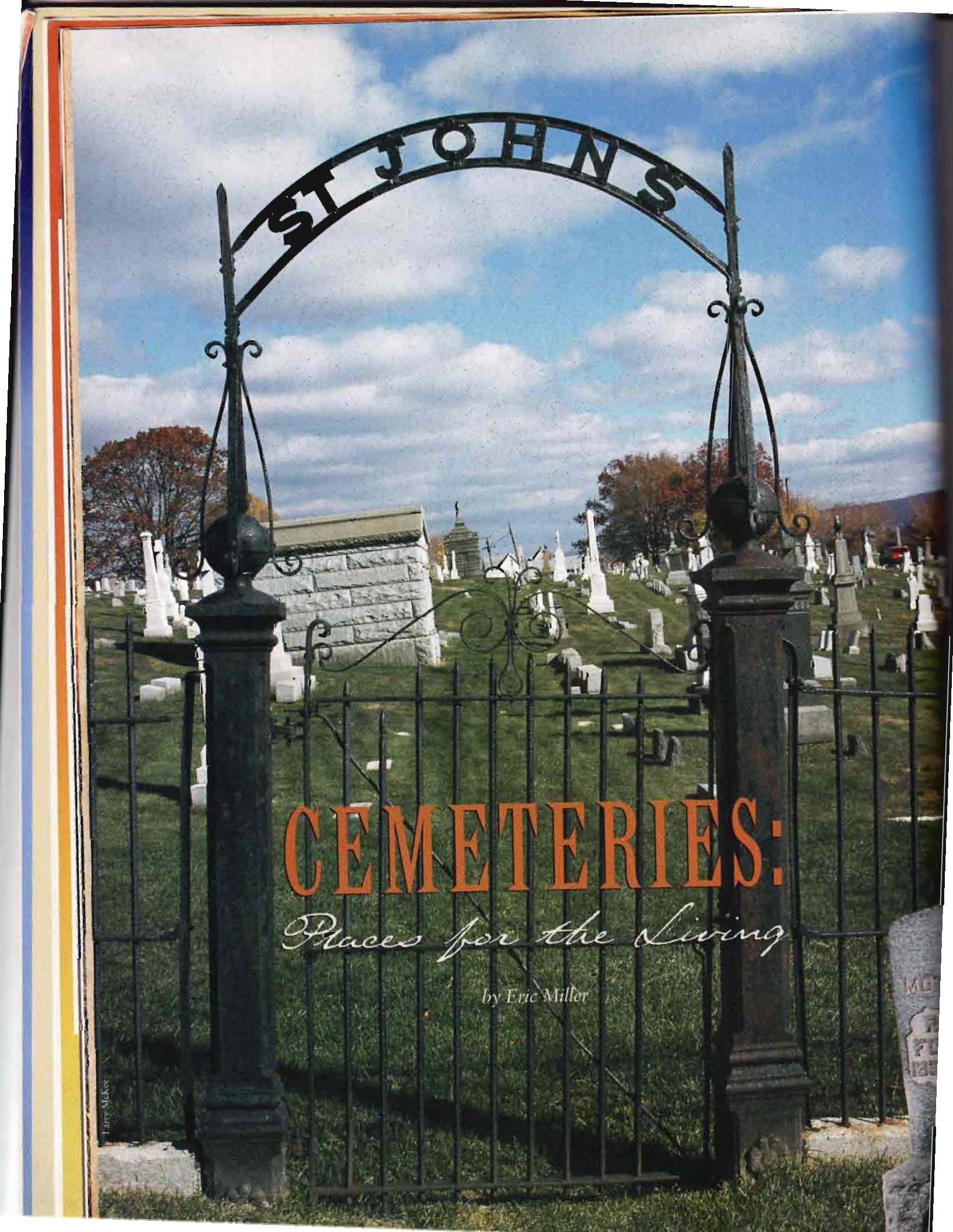
ST JOHN'S

CEMETERIES:

Places for the Living

by Eric Miller

Larry McKee



Buried outside of a church in the Washington County town of Amity lies a man once thought by some to be the real source of the Book of Mormon.

A visitor might just walk by Solomon Spaulding's headstone without notice. It reveals only that he died on October 20, 1816, at the age of 55. But a taphophile or cemetery buff may recognize Spaulding as the author of writings that some believed were later copied in the Book of Mormon.

Cemeteries are the last places where many people would want to spend a vacation. Still, the numbers of tourists visiting cemeteries and searching for the graves of people like Spaulding continue to grow every year.

People visit cemeteries for a variety of reasons.

Thousands of jazz fans listen to the sounds of Duke Ellington and Miles Davis within the Bronx NY cemetery where those fabled musicians are interred. Visitors to Mount Auburn Cemetery near Boston can rent an audio cassette guide of the grounds and wander through the past at their leisure. Lawyers and Congressional aides regularly meet for coffee in Washington's

Congressional Cemetery, while last year more than 5,000 people toured Cleveland's Lake View Cemetery, stopping by the graves of Elliot Ness, John D. Rockefeller Sr. and President James Garfield.

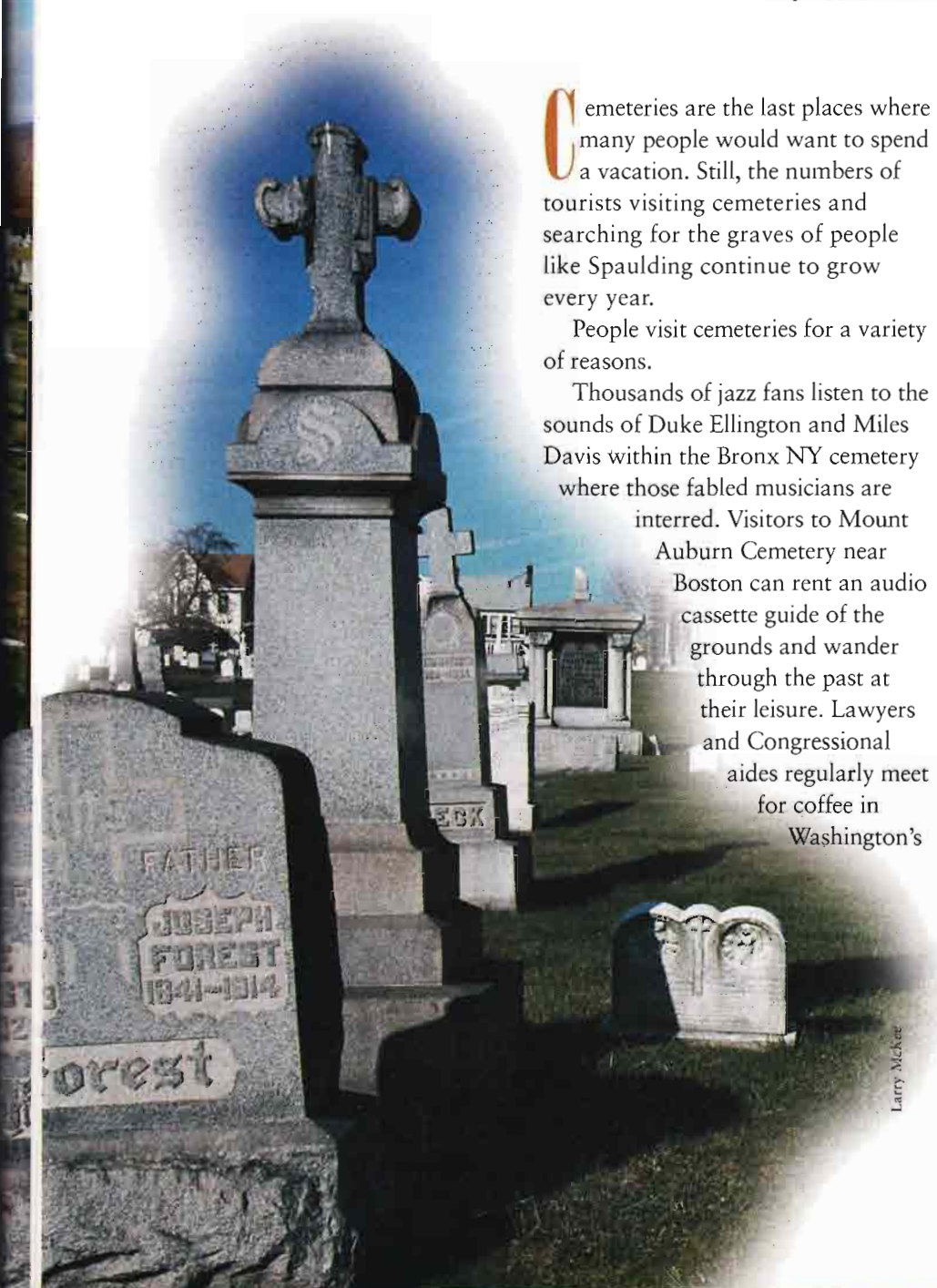
Cemeteries are like books with magnificent stories to tell, and stories like Spaulding's are ones that "tombstone tourists" relish.

In the early 1800s, Solomon Spaulding wrote a fanciful history of ancient races showing that American Indians were descended from one of the 10 lost tribes of Israel. Though he never saw his book published, he called it "The Manuscript Found."

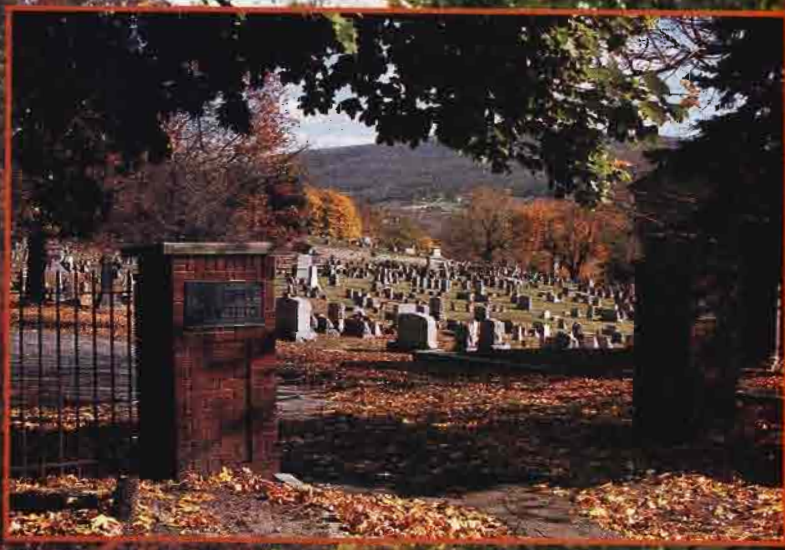
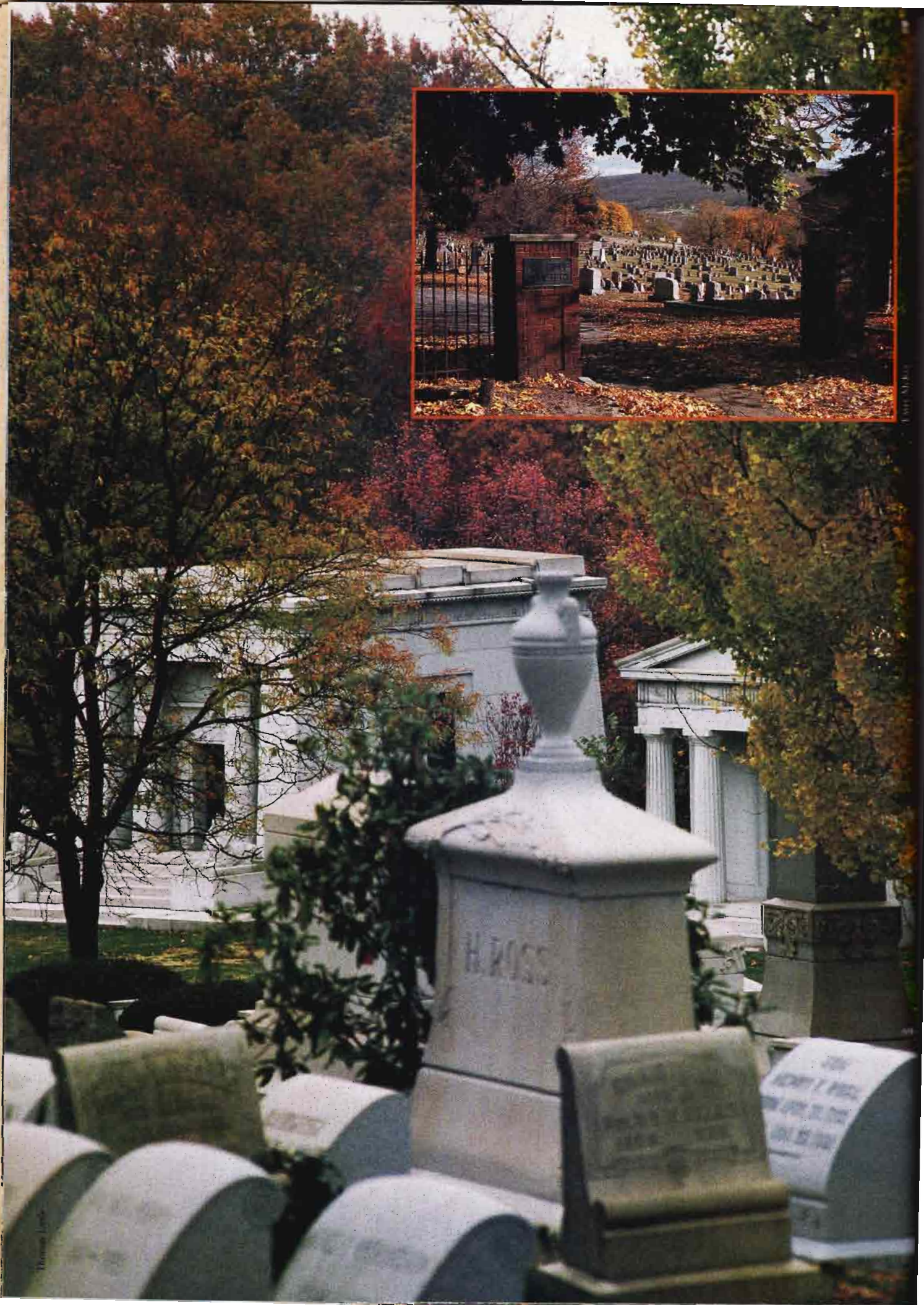
Years later in 1830, when the Book of Mormon was unveiled by Joseph Smith, who claimed the writings were given to him by a heavenly messenger, acquaintances of Spaulding's were struck by the resemblance. Years later the Mormon Church published Spaulding's work to show the two were not related.

Spaulding's story is but one of hundreds that are waiting to be discovered in Western Pennsylvania's cemeteries. Another unfolded in the 1930s.

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Larry McKee



Thomas Jones

In 1933 workers were erecting a monument, commemorating the site of an 18th-Century massacre near Saxton in Bedford County, when they began unearthing the remains of 10 soldiers killed there on July 16, 1780.

Captain William Phillips was leading a Revolutionary War-era patrol to Fort Bedford when they sought shelter in an abandoned cabin. As the story goes, Capt. Phillips awoke early to find the cabin surrounded by Indians. A battle ensued, the cabin was set aflame and the patrol soon surrendered.

The captives were marched about a half mile from the house where they were tied to trees and shot with arrows. Their bodies had already begun to decompose when they were found by a group of settlers and buried in shallow graves, only to be discovered again in 1933.

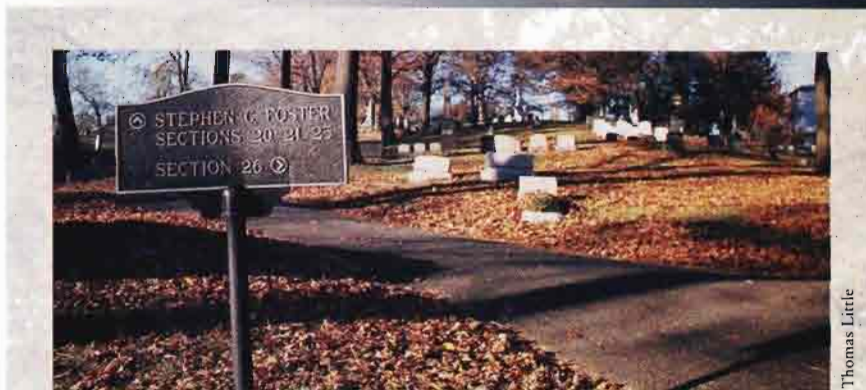
Other resting places are better recorded. In addition to the graves of the first American air ace in World War II, Lt. Col. Boyd "Buzz" Wagner, and John G. McCrory, the founder of the McCrory 5-and-10¢ store chain, a section in Johnstown's

Grandview Cemetery contains many of the 2,209 victims of the 1889 Flood, one of the worst calamities in our nation's history. A monument, and 816 individual markers for victims who were never identified, were dedicated

at Grandview in 1892 in the presence of about 10,000 people.

A cemetery in Blair County's Sinking Valley dates to the 18th

(Facing page) The Allegheny Cemetery, the final resting place for some of Pittsburgh's most notable figures. (Inset photo) Oak Ridge Cemetery of Altoona, traditionally a Protestant burial ground.



Thomas Little

NOTABLE PEOPLE RESTING IN WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA CEMETERIES

Joshua Barney, U.S. Naval hero, Allegheny Cemetery, Pittsburgh; **Gen. Edward Braddock**, British general, Farmington; **John Brashear**, astronomer, Allegheny Observatory, Pittsburgh; **Stephen Foster**, composer, Allegheny Cemetery, Pittsburgh; **Henry Clay Frick**, industrialist, Homewood Cemetery, Pittsburgh; **The Rev. Demetrius Gallitzin**, pioneer priest, Loretto; **Errol Garner**, jazz musician, Homewood Cemetery, Pittsburgh; **Josh Gibson**, baseball player, Allegheny Cemetery, Pittsburgh; **Henry J. Heinz**, industrialist, Homewood Cemetery, Pittsburgh; **Hedda Hopper**, columnist, Rose Hill Cemetery, Altoona; **David L. Lawrence**, Pittsburgh mayor, Calvary Cemetery, Pittsburgh; **John G. McCrory**, merchant, Grandview Cemetery, Johnstown; **Andrew Mellon**, U.S. Secretary of the Treasury, Homewood Cemetery, Pittsburgh; **Galbraith Perry Rodgers**, aviation pioneer, Allegheny Cemetery, Pittsburgh; **Rosey Rosewell**, voice of the Pittsburgh Pirates, Allegheny Cemetery, Pittsburgh; **Lillian Russell**, actress, Allegheny Cemetery, Pittsburgh; **Charles Schwab**, industrialist, Loretto; **Harry Thaw** (killed Stanford White), Allegheny Cemetery, Pittsburgh; **Pie Traynor**, baseball player, Homewood Cemetery, Pittsburgh; **Lt. Col. Boyd "Buzz" Wagner**, WWII air ace, Grandview Cemetery, Johnstown; **Honus Wagner**, baseball player, Jefferson Memorial Cemetery, Pittsburgh; **Andy Warhol**, artist, St. John the Baptist Cemetery, Bethel Park.

Century. Peter McMullen, who founded Saint Luke's Cemetery, deeded that part of his land as a burial ground for "Roman Catholics and no others." The most recent burial in Saint Luke's Cemetery was in 1917.

Cemeteries in the East End of Altoona – Saint John's, Saint

Mary's and Oak Ridge – reflect the ethnic and religious diversity of the people who migrated to that city. Ethnic enclaves first formed in neighborhoods, then in cemeteries.

Saint John's and Saint Mary's served Catholics while Oak Ridge served Protestants. Oak Ridge is adjacent to Eastern Light Cemetery, an area, which custom

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CEMETERIES

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holds, was reserved for African Americans.

Even within cemeteries, discrimination did not stop with death. Chinese and the African-Americans were given the least accessible plots – often on hilltops – in more rural burial areas. Yet in more formal urban cemeteries such as Homewood Cemetery in Pittsburgh, the higher spaces were reserved for the mausoleums of industrialists, while the plots on steep hillsides and in valleys were left for ethnic and racial minorities.

While a picnic, a jog or even a wedding in a cemetery might be less out of the ordinary today than it was a few years ago, cemeteries have always been used by the living.

Before 1830, cemeteries were located almost exclusively on church grounds, which quickly reached capacity. The crowding, combined with sanitary concerns, led to the establishment of formal burial grounds on the edges of cities.

However, as the Industrial Revolution progressed, cities like Johnstown, Altoona and Pittsburgh grew around the once rural cemeteries. Cemeteries became oases of natural scenery in otherwise gloomy and congested cities.

Today, many cemeteries still are beautiful places. While some people use them for picnics or places to take wedding photographs, tombstone tourists go looking for the graves of interesting people. Efforts to promote the interesting burial grounds around the U.S. have increased tourism and even stimulated interest in local history.

Tombstone tourism is one way our cemeteries can raise the money

See for Yourself:

Allegheny Cemetery, 4734 Butler St., Pittsburgh PA 15201 (412) 682-1624

Allegheny Observatory, Riverview Park, Pittsburgh PA 15214 (412) 321-2400

Amity U.P. Church Cemetery, 1270 Amity Ridge Road, Amity PA 15311 (724) 225-2915

Grandview Cemetery, 801 Millcreek Road, Johnstown PA 15905 (814) 535-2652

Homewood Cemetery, 1599 S. Dallas Ave., Pittsburgh PA 15217 (412) 421-1822

Jefferson Memorial Park, 401 Curry Hollow Road, Pittsburgh PA 15236 (412) 655-4500

Rose Hill Cemetery, 1207 12th Ave., Altoona PA 16601 (814) 942-1152

St. John the Baptist Cemetery, PA Route 88 and Conner Road, Bethel Park

St. Michael's Church, 321 Saint Mary St., Loretto PA 15940 (814) 472-8551

Also visit:

www.findagrave.com



Grandview Cemetery's Plot of the Unknown Dead in Johnstown.

needed to preserve their historic treasures, fend off encroaching commercial development and provide security and maintenance.

There are more than enough stories in Western Pennsylvania cemeteries to make them a stop on the heritage trail. In addition to those already mentioned, Western Pennsylvania cemeteries are the final resting places of some famous people including Charles Schwab, Hedda Hopper, General Edward Braddock, John Brashear and Andy Warhol. Allegh-

eny and Homewood Cemeteries in Pittsburgh contain monuments to prominent families including Frick, Mellon, Horne, Benedum and Heinz.

Still leery of spending too many living hours this close to death? Consider the epitaph of astronomer John Brashear, inscribed near his tomb at the Allegheny Observatory in Pittsburgh:

"We have loved the stars too fondly to be fearful of the night."

Eric Miller is a native of Altoona and now lives in San Francisco. Ruth Miller contributed to this story.

