SAMUEL ALLAN LATTIMORE (1828-1913)
“He found God in his laboratory.”

By Michelle Greene

Morey, Dewey, Burton, and Lattimore—these names have become ingrained in every University of Rochester student’s vocabulary. However, few students tend to realize that these names for campus buildings were not chosen arbitrarily, but instead to commemorate some of the most important and cherished figures in our school’s history. A glance at the commemorative plaque placed just inside the main entrance of Lattimore Hall gives a glimpse at the extraordinary man behind the building:

Indeed, Lattimore did much to earn these glowing words of praise and would be pleased to hear that he has a permanent place in the university to which he devoted more than 40 years of his life. In truth, the university should be thankful that a scholar of Lattimore’s character helped to guide the early years of its history.

Wandering through Mount Hope Cemetery one fall day, I stumbled upon a name I recognized. In section L and not far from the old gatehouse, a simple granite boulder, haphazardly placed among a collection of otherwise unremarkable gravestones, caught my attention as not fitting in with its neighbors. Upon approach, I read the inscription:

SAMUEL ALLAN LATTIMORE, PH.D., LL.D.
1828-1913
PROFESSOR OF CHEMISTRY
IN THE UNIVERSITY OF ROCHESTER
FROM 1867 TO 1908
HE FOUND GOD IN HIS LABORATORY

Upon reading the last line, I developed an irresistible thirst to find out more about a man who accomplished such a remarkable feat, and at my own alma mater nonetheless. Searching the area, I discovered a row of unadorned, flat markers listing nothing more than the names and years of life of a handful of Lattimores. It did not seem possible that they belonged to the same family as the man who had the impressive victory noted on the boulder behind them. In fact, these stones would prove to be deceptive, modest markers for one of Rochester’s most prominent families one hundred years ago. Indeed, each member contributed to the betterment of the world around him.

Samuel Allan Lattimore was born May 28, 1828 in Union County, Indiana to Samuel and Mary Poague Lattimore. Prior to his birth, Lattimore’s family moved to the north in order to escape the culture of slavery. As former southern plantation owners, Lattimore’s relatives recognized the injustice in taking away another man’s freedom and treating him as an animal. After dividing up their land to help establish their former slaves, the Lattimore family

A bronze plaque is attached to a natural rock, which constitutes the Lattimore family monument in Mount Hope Cemetery.

Photo by Frank Gillespie.
used their new farm in Indiana as a first stop in the Underground Railroad as restitution for their prior lifestyle. According to the children's book *Alice and Jumbo* (1956), written by Lattimore's daughter Florence and based on her recollections of her childhood, young Samuel Lattimore used to aid his family by acting as a "porter" on the railroad, searching the woods each morning for escaped slaves. Brought up in an atmosphere of respect, Lattimore was taught early that all men were created equal and each deserved whatever kindness he could offer, even if it was merely to put extra butter on the bread of a sandwich for a hungry escaped slave. This mentality resonated deeply within Lattimore and guided many of the family's endeavors.

Lattimore's first mission in life, above all else, was the pursuit of knowledge. His collegiate education began at DePauw University (originally Indiana Asbury University), from which he graduated in 1850 with a Bachelor of Arts degree. He remained at DePauw to teach classics for two years before being appointed as a professor of Greek. On July 28, 1853, in the second of his eight years in this position, Lattimore married Ellen Frances Larrabee. Ellen was the daughter of one of DePauw's first professors, William Clark Larrabee, of the mathematics and natural science departments. Ellen's mother, Harriet Dunn Larrabee, ran a successful female seminary in the days prior to DePauw becoming a coeducational institution. It is therefore likely that Ellen had also been raised to value a good education, though not at DePauw as women were not admitted until 1867.

Possibly inspired by DePauw's efforts to combine an education in the natural sciences with classical curriculum, Lattimore made the transition from Greek professor to a position in the chemistry department of Genesee College, in Lima, New York (now Syracuse University). Seven years later, he transitioned one last time to the University of Rochester. Here, he excelled at the positions of professor and chair of the department of chemistry for 41 years from 1867 until 1908. During this time, he was recognized for his scholarly achievement by the conferment of a degree of doctor of philosophy from DePauw University in 1872, and in the same year, a doctor of laws from Hamilton College.

Lattimore, sometimes affectionately referred to by students as "Latty," was well loved and respected for his teaching abili-

Dr. Lattimore taught chemistry in Anderson Hall on the Prince Street campus of the University of Rochester. Photo by Frank Gillespie.
ties, Lattimore was held in high esteem by students and peers. While other faculty looked to him as a mentor and confidante, students viewed him as "a fine teacher with a charming personality." In a biography written about him for the 1885 *Interpres*, Lattimore was described as "one of the most honored and respected members of our faculty." Even more impressive was the detailed and glowing depiction of his disposition: "His character is that of a noble Christian, his heart is kindly, his bearing calm and dignified, and his manner courteous and genial. He is ever anxious for the welfare of his students, and frequently, yet quietly and unostentatiously, renders advice and assistance. All whom he meets entertain for him the highest respect and admiration, and no student passes from under his instruction, without looking back and recognizing in him a ripe scholar and an affable Christian gentleman."

Further, this apt teacher was noted for his ability to make scientific fact both comprehensible and engaging. Some of his own words by which he was informally immortalized by his students include: "You cannot use a breath of air without spoiling it" and "Now, gentleman, I will represent a cylinder, a square cylinder, if you please." Lattimore left a lasting impression on four generations of students.

Lattimore's geniality was appreciated in his academic efforts outside of the classroom as much as it was by his students. He was influential in the startup of the Rochester Microscopic Society, serving as the organization's first president and offering his classroom in Anderson Hall as the location for the first conference in 1879. Surely Lattimore felt at home with such peers, all enthusiastic about the latest scientific technology. Even when the Society expanded to the Rochester Academy of Science in 1881, Lattimore was still a regular attendee of meetings. Trained in many aspects of science, he offered a good deal of scientific commentary, even if he did not present many formal papers. Upon his death, his contributions to the group were summarized: "His remarks were always so interesting, his illustrations so apt, his examinations so clear and his manner of presenting a subject so simple and lucid that he was always a welcome speaker."

Lattimore could engage his peers as much as he did his students. For his efforts, Lattimore was made an honorary member of the society.

Lattimore even excelled at making science understandable and fascinating to the workingman. He believed it to be unfortunate that many intelligent and hardworking men were not privileged to relevant scientific knowledge simply because their circumstances did not allow for a formal education. He believed that this knowledge was practical to all men in everyday life and that productivity at work. For many years, he planned on holding lectures to spread what he saw as "fascinating truths of science," but was often discouraged by peers who saw it as unfeasible. Finally in 1874, he saw his vision become reality with a series of four free lectures open to any interested person in Rochester. The lectures were great hits. Each Friday evening in January that year, City Hall filled to the maximum with eager minds excited to gain new knowledge. Some weeks, hundreds of citizens were turned away at the door due to fire code enforcement. Those who chose to attend had a true desire to be stimulated intellectually and appreciated Lattimore's efforts. They were delighted as he unraveled some of the mysteries of common substances; the first year covered the topics of "the wonders of the air," "the wonders of water," "carbon," and "genius of fire." Lattimore made some of the basic principles behind these topics easy to understand, and dazzled the eye with countless experiments to show their fascinating properties. Crowds of several hundred responded with enthusiastic applause and "hums of admiration" after each demonstration. Local newspapers detailed each experiment and explanation in lengthy articles each week for the benefit of those unable to attend. They described his style as "very natural and well suited to a popular audience" and his illustrations as "highly entertaining". For his efforts, Lattimore refused monetary payment. Being allowed to hold discussions that combined entertainment and learning was compensation enough.

Four lectures did not quench the intellectual thirst of Rochester's working citizens, and as such the series was reinstated the following year. The 1875 free lecture lineup included "Iron," "Masquerade of the Physical Forces," "The Spectroscope and its Revelations," and "The Wonders of the Sun." Further, as per Lattimore's example, lectures on "The Eye" and "The Wonders of the Moon" were also offered by two other professors in much the same manner as Lattimore's popular presentations. The crowds again turned out in large numbers,
with 300 people being turned away from the first lecture in January. At this first lecture of 1875, Lattimore further clarified his purpose in creating this "novel project". His duties as a consulting chemist for manufacturers often brought him in contact with the workingman, for whom he developed a great interest and respect. He recognized that many men were capable enough not only to understand but utilize the secrets of nature and science, and thus he sought a forum in which he could discuss these interests with them. The lectures were not only appreciated by the citizens of Rochester but also envied and requested by other cities, such as Buffalo. Eventually, the series became so popular that the Lattimore Free Lecture Association formed to support production. With topics such as "Modern Explosives—Nitro-Glycerin, Gun-Cotton, and other Play Things—The Mysteries of Chemistry", it is no wonder that 2,000 people would venture out on cold Friday evenings to be entertained by science.

Lattimore contributed to the betterment of the city in many other ways as well. Along with other prominent men of Rochester, Lattimore was asked to participate in the organization of the Western New York Institution for Deaf Mutes, now the Rochester School for the Deaf. He viewed the school as holding an educational, not charitable, function for Rochester, but also hoped that the school would benefit deaf children with a rarely experienced companionship with peers. He also served as a visitor for New York State Charities Aid Association to the Rochester State Hospital for the insane for several years. Lattimore did not limit his attention to merely one or even a handful of worthy causes.

He made practical use of his extensive scientific background and served as consultant in numerous court cases, on various industrial technologies, and in municipal health matters. His courtroom testimony in a handful of cases resulted in, among other things, establishing a postmaster-blacksmith's guilt in reading his neighbor's love letters.

Industrially, Lattimore was called upon to explain chemical oddities hindering George Eastman's development of photography. On the municipal level, he may best be remembered for his work in calming fears about the toxicity of Hemlock and Canadice lakes; he explained that suspicious, fear-inducing odors were simply caused by a harmless microscopic alga. He was also commissioned to investigate the conditions of large public slaughterhouses and to expose other sources of food adulteration at a time when notions of public health were first emerging. On a national level, Lattimore's services were twice sought on the President-appointed commission analyzing gold and silver coinage at the mints. Locally, the geologist in Lattimore also concerned himself with protecting the area's natural features, including the Pinnacle Hills of Rochester and other natural regional characteristics.

As he aged, Lattimore showed no signs of slowing, even in the last two decades of his long life. He successfully served as acting president of the university in the years from 1896-1898. Even after retirement from teaching in 1908, Lattimore remained a familiar face on the Rochester campus, visiting his laboratory almost daily. He also kept himself busy as one of the original trustees of Reynolds Library and the president of the board from 1905 until 1912, just a year before his death at age 84. Perhaps his persistent academic and professional ventures kept him sharp until the end, when cancer of the stomach and an internal hemorrhage took his life on the morning of February 17, 1913. During his final days, he laid propped up in his bed so that he could watch the hustle and bustle of the campus to which he had devoted more than half of his life. Fittingly, as an advocate of cremation, his remains were cremated before his burial. Lattimore would have been pleased to know that the University of Rochester became his neighbor in death when the campus was relocated adjacent to Mount Hope Cemetery in 1930.

Lattimore was survived by his wife, Ellen, and five daughters, two of whom were later buried alongside their parents. Lattimore appeared to have had a son, Charles A. Lattimore, who is also buried in the family plot. Charles lived a mere eight years, from 1856-1864.

In the course of all of my readings, I failed to find any direct mention of Samuel Lattimore's exciting find of God in his laboratory. However, I could not be disappointed at this omission after gaining a glimpse into his hearty life. His diligent and enthusiastic approach to academics and social interactions demonstrates a true passion and appreciation for life. Lattimore earned his distinction as head of one of the most prominent families in Rochester not through position alone, but through their spirit, compassion, and intelligence as demonstrated throughout their lives. Further, Samuel Lattimore did more than pass knowledge of science to others; he revealed the wonders of science in the world around him. His experiments into these mysteries did much to excite a sense of awe in Lattimore and the larger public. During the first of his free lectures in 1874, Lattimore openly pondered the greater force that must exist in order to so seamlessly design the marvels of nature. My probing into the lives of this amazing family has, in a similar fashion, left me to wonder at the same greater force's ability to craft individuals capable of executing their lives in such an admirable and interesting manner.

(Editor's Note: Michelle Greene is a student at the University of Rochester and prepared this essay as part of the course requirements for Religion 167 taught by Professor Emil Homerin, who is also a trustee of the Friends of Mount Hope Cemetery.)
THE FRIENDS OF MOUNT HOPE CEMETERY
2008 TOUR SEASON

SATURDAY AND SUNDAY GUIDED WALKING TOURS

Free to the public
Saturday, May 3 through Sunday, October 26
Every Saturday at 1:00 p.m.
Every Sunday at 2:00 p.m. and 2:30 p.m.
Meet at north gatehouse
(opposite Robinson Drive).
No reservations required.
Tours last about 1 1/2 hours.
Free refreshments follow tours.

TWILIGHT TOURS

$4.00/person, free to members
Thursdays at 7:00 p.m.
May 15 through August 7
Take a different route through the cemetery,
visiting many sites not included on our public
Saturday and Sunday walking tours.
Meet at north gatehouse
(opposite Robinson Drive).
No reservations required.
Tours last about 1 1/2 hours.
Free refreshments follow tours.

THEME TOURS

$4.00/person, free to members
No reservations required.
Tours last about 1 1/2 hours.

Saturday, May 10 at noon:
THE NEW SECTION
The south half of Mount Hope developed after
the Civil War represents a different cemetery
model from the earlier “rural cemetery” model
of the north half. Tour includes industrialists,
war heroes, and many surprises. Meet at ceme­
tery office (opposite the Distillery).

Saturday, May 31 at noon:
EAST AVENUE
This tour visits the permanent residences of for­
er East Avenue residents and presents the his­
tory of East Avenue, its development, the hous­
es, their architects, and, of course, their resi­
dents. Meet at north gatehouse (opposite Robinson Drive).

Sunday, June 1 at 1:00 p.m.:
JEISH ROOTS
Explore the enormous contributions of Rochester’s Jewish community. Meet at ceme­
tery office (opposite the Distillery).

Saturday, June 7 at noon:
ZINC MONUMENTS
Everything you want to know about these unique Industrial Age monuments of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and the families that bought them. Meet at cemetery office (opposite the Distillery).

Friday, June 13 at 7:00 p.m.:
MISCHIEF MURDER, & MAYHEM
Something very different for Friday the 13th.
Meet at north gatehouse
(opposite Robinson Drive).

Saturday, June 14 at 10:00 a.m.:
FAMOUS ARTISTS
Visit interesting monuments designed by artists
and the graves of famous artists buried in Mount Hope. Meet at north gatehouse
(opposite Robinson Drive).

Saturday, June 28 at noon:
BREWERY TOUR
Tour includes the family plots of those impor­tant to the brewery business in Rochester,
including the recently restored Charles Rau
Mausoleum. Meet at north gatehouse
(opposite Robinson Drive).

Saturday, July 12 at 11 a.m.:
MOUNT HOPE’S SECTION G
This tour, entirely in a single section of Mount Hope, includes many of the most influential Rochesterians of the 19th century. Meet at north gatehouse (opposite Robinson Drive).

Saturday, August 2 at 1:30 p.m.:
THE CIVIL WAR
The Civil War is told against the backdrop of Mount Hope Cemetery with a focus on local involvement. With the vast Civil War resources of Mount Hope, this tour covers new themes each year.
Meet at the north gatehouse (opposite Robinson Drive).

Saturday, August 9 at 1:30 p.m.:
ICE CREAM TOUR
Learn about Rochesterians involved with making and serving ice cream from the 1800s to the present. The tour concludes with ice cream (included in tour price) for all.
Meet at cemetery office (opposite the Distillery).

Saturday, September 13 at noon:
SPEAKING STONES
An examination of symbols, inscriptions, and funerary art that expressed views of life, death, and immortality in the 19th century. Meet at north gatehouse (opposite Robinson Drive).

Saturday, September 20 at noon:
THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR
The American Revolution told through the stories of its veterans, including action in western New York. Meet at the north gatehouse (opposite Robinson Drive).

Saturday, September 27 at noon:
GEOLOGY AT MOUNT HOPE
The really ancient history, with geologist Bill Chaissen.

Saturday, October 25 at 11 a.m.:
FALL FOLIAGE
Enjoy the variety and beauty of Mount Hope’s trees in autumn with landscape architect Ed Olinger. Meet at the north gatehouse (opposite Robinson Drive).

Saturday, October 25 and Tuesday, October 28 at 6:30 p.m.
GRAND LUMINARIA TOUR
The finale of our tour season with a special tour path illuminated by a thousand candles. Meet at north gatehouse (opposite Robinson Drive).
Each year for the past four years, the Friends of Mt. Hope have been taking a day-long field trip to another cemetery. The first year we went to Buffalo to see the Forest Lawn Cemetery and the architecture of Frank Lloyd Wright, including his Blue Sky Mausoleum. Our own Richard Reisem was our tour guide. The next year we visited the Mt. Albion Cemetery in Albion, NY. Combined with that trip was the Tiffany-decorated Pullman Memorial Universalist Church, and the Cobblestone Museum. Bill Lattin, historian for Orleans County and Director of the Cobblestone Museum was our host and guide throughout the day.

In 2007 we went to Syracuse to visit famed Oakwood Cemetery. Our day began at 8:30 a.m. when we gathered at Mt. Hope where our motor coach picked us up. The first stop was a mystery, known only to myself and the bus driver. This visit was prompted by a comment that Bill Lattin had made the year before about himself, and experts from our group. He said that

he bet that he, and some from the Friends could be dropped down into an unfamiliar cemetery and give at least an hour tour—cold, with no preparation. I decided to see if this was true, and so asked Bill and Dennis Carr, chief of the guides for Mt. Hope, if they would be willing to give this a try. Both said, “Yes.”

The plan was that when we arrived at the mystery cemetery, Bill and Dennis would get off the bus a few minutes ahead of the rest of us to lay a quick plan, then they would leap-frog through the cemetery, one talking while the other wandered nearby to find the next stop on the spontaneous tour.

On the bus, I gave a brief history of Woodlawn Cemetery in Syracuse, our mystery stop, then turned the group over to Dennis who began by telling a brief history of cemetery design, commenting that Woodlawn was of the “park lawn” style. Bill took it from there and for an hour and a quarter we explored the old section of Woodlawn. The guys cheated a little bit by asking fellow trustee and tree expert, Ed Olinger to comment on the trees (mostly sugar maples) and me to say something about the zinc grave markers that dotted the landscape, including a huge Civil War monument.

Our next stop was at the original Dinosaur Bar-B-Q in downtown Syracuse. We blew the budget on lunch, which was served family style with plenty of food for everyone. We waddled out of the Dino BBQ, re-boarded the bus and went to Oakwood Cemetery, which is just south of Syracuse University. It can be seen from I-81—but don’t take your eyes from the
road unless you're a passenger. Oakwood was dedicated in 1859, 21 years after Mt. Hope's dedication; however both are the same "rural" style.

Our tour was provided by Historic Oakwood Cemetery Preservation Association, and our host was Karl Orlick. For the next couple of hours we tramped over a substantial portion of Oakwood. While it has many fewer than Mt. Hope's 82 mausoleums, theirs tend to be far more spectacular than our conservative little Greek temples. A special treat for the afternoon was provided by Theresa Page who is president of the board of trustees of another Oakwood Cemetery—this one in Troy, NY. Terry is an engaging speaker and told us the story of Mrs. Russell Sage. Mr. Sage is buried in Oakwood-Troy, while Mrs. Sage is buried in Oakwood-Syracuse. Mrs. Sage survived Mr. Sage and took great delight in thwarting as many of his desires after his death as she could. By the end of the walking tour, we were all ready to get back on the bus and sit for a while. We arrived back in Rochester right on schedule at 5:15 p.m., after a day filled with food, fun, and information. In spite of the fact that our group shares a common interest in cemeteries, and we visited two interesting ones, the big hit of the day was Dino-lunch.

On Sunday, July 20, we will again take a day-long field trip, this time to Auburn, NY where we will visit two homes of prominent citizens, tour another Tiffany-decorated chapel, have lunch, and visit the fascinating Fort Hill Cemetery. You are invited to come along. A separate, brightly colored sheet inserted in this issue of the Epitaph has details and a registration blank.
AN UNCLAIMED JEWEL
AGE 28 AND HOLDING

Eitsa C. Petsos was the charming spinster aunt of Holly and Cassandra Petsos of Browncroft Boulevard. Eitsa stopped counting at age 28 and lived to a fine advanced age in her spacious handsome house in the elegant Browncroft neighborhood. And yes, she was an unclaimed jewel. Eitsa died on May 21, 2006.

SEND US YOUR E-MAIL ADDRESS

The Friends of Mount Hope Cemetery would like to be able to reach our members quickly through e-mail in order to announce special events and other news. A number of interesting or important events occur in Mount Hope Cemetery that just can't be covered in this quarterly newsletter in a timely manner, so members never hear about them.

If you would like to be informed about such happenings, please send an e-mail to Friends trustee Don Hall and ask to be placed on our e-mailing list. We will make sure that your e-mail address is not distributed to anyone else, and also, our e-mails to you will be infrequent and sent only when the situation is of particular interest or importance. Be assured that we will not bug you all that often. Send your request to: donh22@frontiernet.net
You are invited to join other Friends of Mt. Hope Cemetery on our annual field trip to visit interesting cemeteries in the area. We will depart from the south gate of Mt. Hope (near the Distillery restaurant) at 8:30 a.m. on Sunday, July 20. You may park on cemetery roads.

Our deluxe motor coach will take us to Fort Hill Cemetery, dedicated in 1852 (14 years after the dedication of Mt. Hope), which is a rural style cemetery--like the north part of Mt. Hope. We will begin in the Silas L. Bradley Gothic Revival style chapel, then walk among the family plots for the Willards, Schweinfurths, Cases, Sewards and other historical notables, plus see interesting and unusual grave markers. The Fort Hill Cemetery is one of the best-preserved fortified villages of the ancient Cayuga Indians.

After a picnic lunch (included) we will visit the Seward House, which was owned and occupied by four generations of family members from 1816 to 1951. The latter is a mixture of Federal and Tuscan-style architecture surrounded by two acres of garden and trees. Its most famous inhabitant was William Seward, Secretary of State for President Andrew Johnson. Our last stop will be the Willard Chapel built in 1892-1894. The interior of the Chapel was designed and handcrafted entirely by Tiffany Glass and Decorating Company including windows, Moorish styled chandeliers, glass mosaics tile, gilt bronze, furnishings of oak inlaid with metal and glass mosaic, a ceiling with gold leaf stencils and mosaic flooring.

We will be back at Mt. Hope by 5:45 p.m. This leaves the evening open for your usual wild Saturday night. To fully enjoy this tour you should be able to walk for two hours over uneven ground.

If you have questions about this trip, please email FOMH Trustee, Don Hall, donh22@frontiernet.net Confirmation will come from Don via email (or telephone).

Full refunds will be available through July 7. After that, refunds will be made ONLY if we can replace you with another member from a waiting list. Fees not refunded may be considered a contribution to the FOMH.

To join us, please complete the form below and send it along with your check for $49 (covering all trip costs) to FOMH Trustee: Sally Millick, PO Box 572, Macedon, NY 14502.

Name(s)__________________________________________________________
Address _________________________________________________________
________________________________________________ ZIP___________
Email Address ______________________________________ Phone Number____