

**THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF JOHN J. EARLEY
TO
THE FRANCISCAN MONASTERY
WASHINGTON DC**



***By Patricia A. Cunniff
Franciscan Monastery Garden Guild***



Rosary Portico with coleus and begonias. Earley's icons are above each column.

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St. Bernardine of Siena, Rosary Portico Gates

John J. Earley, 1926

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Front Cover Photo by John Cunniff. Altar in Grotto of Gethsemane
Back Cover Photo by Carolyn Fichtel. Rosary Portico
Title Page Photo by Carolyn Fichtel. St. Bernardine of Siena, Rosary Portico Gates

To my ten wonderful grandchildren.
Elizabeth, John, and Katherine Cunniff
Kathleen, Patrick, and Daniel Snee
Clare, Annie, Mark, and Sean Cunniff
May you continue to grow in grace and goodness.

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Preface

For the past three years I have had the pleasure of leading garden tours for thousands of visitors to the Franciscan Monastery. Our garden tours highlight the flowers that are blooming in the beautiful gardens, and the history, architecture, and meaning of each shrine and grotto.

In developing the garden tours, Doris DeSantis and I prepared a narrative based on easily accessible Monastery resources. It was evident from this research that when Monastery founder, Father Godfrey Schilling (1856-1934), visited the old McCeney farm site in the late 19th century, he had a great vision for his Monastery and for the Holy Land sites that would be replicated on the grounds. Fr. Schilling also had the ability to raise the needed resources to implement this vision. Monastery references such as the quarterly *Crusader's Almanac* and various editions of the *Guide to the Franciscan Monastery*, written during the early 20th century, documented each altar, shrine, and grotto as it was built, but they give little information about the artists and architects who created them.

John Joseph Earley, architectural sculptor, was truly the most influential in creating these altars, shrines, and grottos. He oversaw the development of the catacombs, several of the large altars in the Memorial Church, and most of the shrines and grottos in the famous Monastery gardens over nearly thirty years. During this time, Earley and his studio were continuing to perfect their architectural concrete—their beautiful concrete mosaics.

In this book, I hope to document these contributions of John J. Earley to the Franciscan Monastery and to describe with each new piece the development of his architectural concrete. This will add to the abundant literature about John J. Earley and to the history of the Franciscan Monastery in the Brookland section of Washington, DC.

Patricia A Cunniff
Franciscan Monastery Garden Guild
October 2015



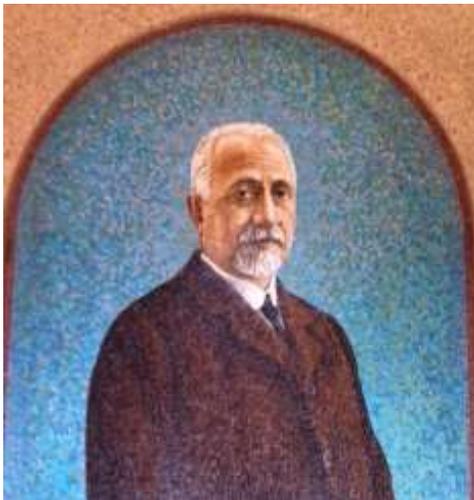
Aerial View of the Franciscan Monastery, ca 1910, Private Collection.

History of the Franciscan Monastery

The Franciscan Monastery was dedicated September 17, 1899. Reports in the local Washington newspapers indicated that more than 10,000 pilgrims came to witness the ceremony ¹. Two years earlier Father Godfrey Schilling, OFM (1856-1934), who led the Commissariat of the Holy Land in the United States, 1896-1901 and 1911-1922, had purchased a 100-acre plot of land, which has decreased significantly in size over time, from the McCeney family. Father Schilling's vision was to build a monastery to educate future priests and brothers, to raise awareness of the Holy Land among the American public by siting replicas of the various Holy Land shrines and grottos on the Monastery grounds, and to relocate the Commissariat of the Holy Land in the United States from New York City to the new Monastery in Washington DC. Father Schilling believed that few Americans would be able to travel to the Holy Land given the cost and time required for the long trip by boat. But with the new Monastery, Americans would be able to visit the nation's capital and see replicas of the Holy Land shrines without ever leaving their own country ².

The Commissariat of the Holy Land in the United States is a Franciscan-led organization, founded in 1880 by Father Charles A. Vissani, OFM (1831-1896) with the approval of the Holy See, that seeks to raise awareness of the Christian sites in the Holy Land among the American people, to provide financial support for these sites, and to provide friars to staff various parishes, schools, hospitals and other social service agencies in the Holy Land. The Holy Land includes not only Israel and Jordan, but also Syria, Lebanon, Lower Egypt and Cyprus ³.

Aristide Leonori (1856-1928), the foremost ecclesiastical architect of Rome, was selected as architect for the new Monastery. Leonori travelled to Bethlehem, Nazareth, and other sacred places, taking meticulous measurements of these holy places in order to make exact reproductions of these buildings and shrines at the Monastery ^{4,5}.



Aristide Leonori, Monastery Architect.



Franciscan Monastery, ca 1900-1910, Library of Congress.

A story appeared in the June 28, 1897 issue of *The Evening Star* about the sale of the "McCeney Place" ⁶. There was some mystery about the sale; the headline suggested that it might have been bought for the Paulist Fathers. The story goes on to say that "It is announced that some fine buildings will be erected on the property, the plans of which it is understood are now being prepared in Italy."

The Easter 1898 edition ⁷ of *The Crusader's Almanac*, a quarterly publication by the Franciscans, described the planned Monastery to its readership. The news was that there would be a college at the Monastery to educate future priests and brothers for work in the Holy Land and it would be called "The College of the Holy Land." At this time, the Monastery itself was referred to as Mount Saint Sepulcher. This name often appears on maps of that era. The *Crusader's Almanac*, established in 1893 by Father Charles Vissani, OFM, was devoted to promoting the Christian Shrines of the Holy Land and raising monies to support them. At one point, it is estimated that the *Crusader's Almanac* had a readership in excess of 50,000 persons; it was published in English, German, and Polish ^{8,9}. Father Vissani had also led the first Catholic pilgrimage to the Holy Land in 1889. Prior to this the needs of the Holy Land were little known to American Catholics. The move of the Commissariat of the Holy Land from New York City to Washington DC was approved by Pope Leo XIII in 1897 ¹⁰. His Eminence Cardinal Gibbons graciously received the Franciscans into his archdiocese. Many felt that it would be advantageous for the Franciscan Monastery to be located near the new Catholic University of America which had opened for its first class of students a decade earlier in November 1889 ¹¹.

Father Charles Vissani, who had served as Commissary of the Holy Land until his death in 1896, had envisioned developing a Monastery and relocating the Commissariat of the Holy Land to the nation's capital and near the new Catholic University of America. His dream was realized by his successor, Father Godfrey Schilling, who became Commissary on his death. When Father Schilling visited the McCeney property high on a hill in the outskirts of Washington DC, he was attracted to its beauty, its serene setting, and its potential as a place to build his Monastery and site replicas of the Holy Land shrines ¹².

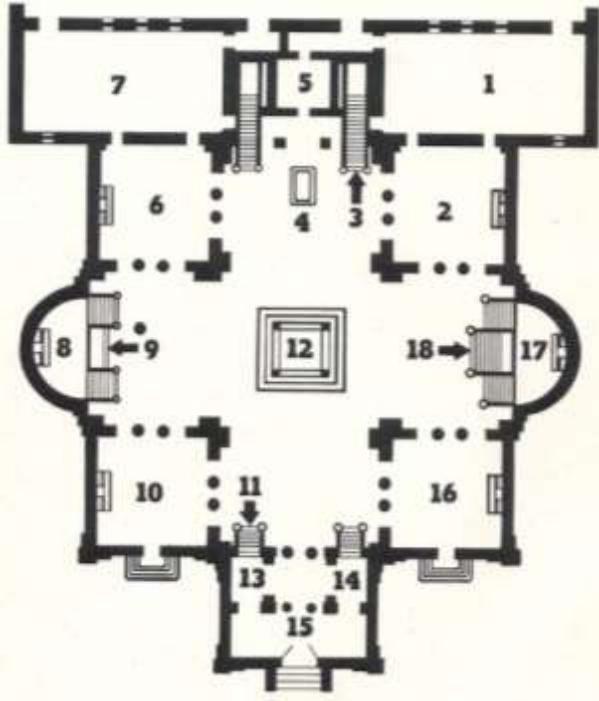
Local newspapers reported that plans for the Monastery had been drawn up in Italy at the express command of Pope Leo XIII. The Memorial Church would have replicas of the Grotto of Nazareth, catacombs replicating those in Rome, a Chapel of the Dead in the lower level, a Grotto of Bethlehem that would be a replica of the birthplace of Christ, a replica of the Holy Sepulcher, and a Calvary shrine ¹³. Several articles in the local newspapers described the land purchase by a Scott Lord of New York City and John Larner of Washington DC, acting as the local agent ¹⁴. Various rumors were put forth and then recanted.

The permit to build the Monastery on the former McCeney estate was issued on March 18, 1898 ¹⁵. John Larcombe was listed as the builder. Ground breaking was in February 1898 ¹⁶.

Unlike many of the shrines that would be built throughout the Monastery and its gardens, the Memorial Church was not built as a replica of any existing structure. The floor plan of the Church is the five-fold cross known as the Crusader's Cross, symbolic of the five wounds that were inflicted on Christ during the Crucifixion ¹⁷. At the dedication of the Monastery in 1899, two flags were raised—the Stars and Stripes of the United States and the Crusader's Cross (often called the Jerusalem Cross) pledging the people of the United States to the work of redeeming and sustaining the sacred places in the Holy Land ¹⁸. These two flags continue to fly on the grounds today.



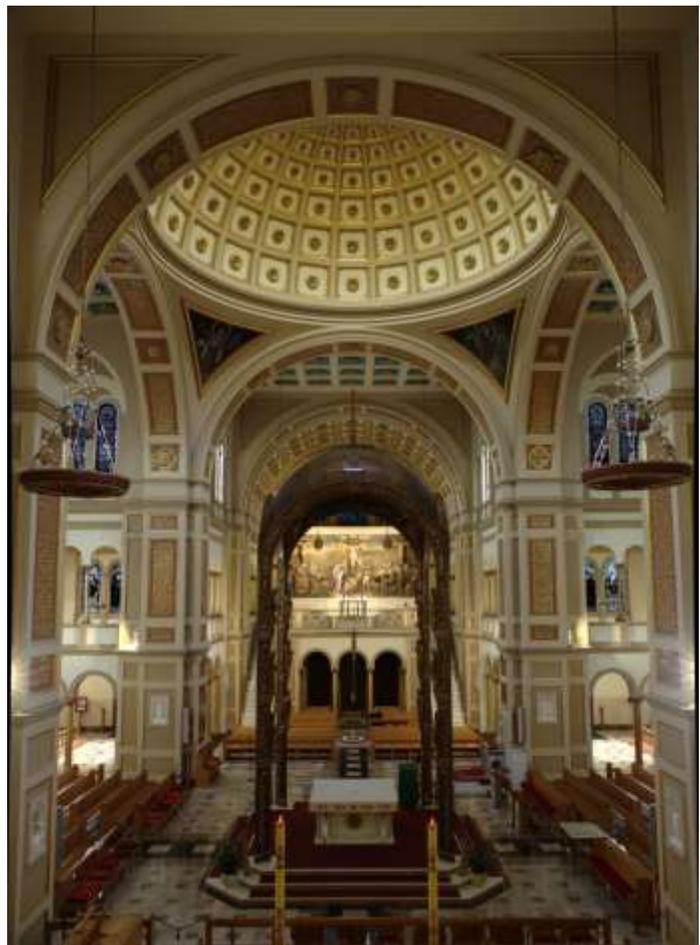
**The Crusader's Flag, Franciscan Monastery.
Photo by John Cunniff.**



The floor plan of the Monastery Church also symbolizes Jesus' five wounds.

1. Church Lobby
2. Chapel of Saint Joseph
3. Stairs to Altar of Tabor
4. Stone of the Anointing
5. Holy Sepulcher
6. Chapel of Saint Francis
7. Blessed Sacrament Chapel
8. Altar of the Holy Spirit (via steps up)
9. Stairs up from Catacombs and Bethlehem Grotto
10. Chapel of Our Lady
11. Stairs up to Altar of Calvary
12. Main Altar of Memorial Church
13. To Exit from Main Church
14. Stairs Down from Altar of Calvary
15. Altar of Calvary
16. Chapel of Saint Anthony
17. Altar of the Sacred Heart (via steps up)
18. Steps down to Catacombs and Grotto of Annunciation.

The Memorial Church, i.e., The Franciscan Monastery as it looks in 2015. The photo is taken from the Altar of Tabor looking down at the Main Altar. Directly behind the Main Altar is the Altar of Calvary. The Baldachin over the Main Altar was added for the Monastery's Golden Jubilee in 1949. In the ceiling of the Baldachin is a brilliant enamel representation of Mary, who is Mediator of all Graces, offering prayers to the Holy Trinity for the salvation of mankind. Bronze sculptures of the twelve Apostles are found on each of the columns of the Baldachin ¹⁹.
Photo by John Cunniff.



The presence of the Franciscans in the Holy Land dates back to 1219 when their founder, Saint Francis, left some of his disciples in Palestine as the successors of the Crusaders, establishing there a Province of the Order which is still called the Custody of the Holy Land ²⁰.

St. Francis of Assisi (1182-1226) was the son of a rich merchant who underwent a radical conversion and chose a life of extreme poverty. St. Francis had a vision in a crumbling church outside the walls of Assisi that he was being called by God to rebuild his church. At first, he took this quite literally, gathering stones to fix up little San Damiano and later other churches ²¹. Eventually he and others understood this call as a rebuilding of the institutional church. He did this rebuilding of the institutional church through preaching by word and example. He was very humble. He wished to be ruled, not to rule, hence the name of his order, the Order of Friars Minor ²². St. Francis was a model of simplicity and humility, two virtues that are imbedded in Franciscan tradition. In publications by the Commissariat of the Holy Land, such as periodic *Guides to the Franciscan Monastery* and issues of the *Crusader's Almanac*, there is a strong tendency to promote the spiritual significance of each new altar or shrine, but very little information is provided about the artists or sculptors who actually produced these. This might seem unusual since a great deal of effort and resources were put into the development of the Franciscan Monastery so as to erect beautiful altars, sculpt beautiful statues, and develop beautiful gardens. However, these apparent omissions do reflect Franciscan tradition.



The Franciscan Monastery is noted for its gardens with over 1,000 rose bushes that bloom from May through September. The Monastery has been called “An Oasis of Peace” in the very busy city of Washington DC. All of this might seem to contradict the virtues of humility, poverty, and simplicity espoused by St. Francis. However, this union between the Franciscans, the Franciscan Monastery, and its beautiful gardens can be traced back to the founder of the Franciscan Order, St. Francis himself. Francis has been quoted as saying, “After God, men; after men, nature”. St. Francis linked these terms together in his mind and in his life. He delighted in nature. Luxurious vegetation, beautiful flowers, the play between light and shade, the flow of water were all things that St. Francis appreciated and loved. Nature was to him always a friend; she gave him wings for his piety ²³. It is understandable then that the first Friars who toiled at the Monastery in the early 20th century not only farmed for food, but also planted trees and flowers for beauty. The statue of St. Francis in the upper garden at the Monastery shows St. Francis with a young boy releasing turtledoves ²⁴. Porfirio Rosignoli was the sculptor for this 1916 statue.

St. Francis and the Turtledoves.
Photo by P. Cunniff.

In reviewing the literature, it is clear that Father Godfrey Schilling had many friends and an engaging personality. Coming from Germany, he was able to secure donations from German Catholics as well as from Americans for several of the shrines in the Church. During the period, 1897-1899, six friars, called “Pioneers,” laid out walks, planted trees and cultivated the fields and a vegetable garden getting the property ready for the move into the new Monastery. While the “Pioneers” labored to get the land ready, Aristide Leonori was traveling to the Holy Land to measure shrines and sites for reproductions planned at the Monastery. Father Schilling, meanwhile, was raising monies for construction by selling paper “building stones” for two cents each, or a dollar a row ²⁵.



**Aristide Leonori, Fr. Godfrey Schilling, and Friar.
Visual Collection, Franciscan Monastery.**



**Fr. Godfrey Schilling holding
the dome of the Monastery.
Sculpture by Frederick Shrady, 1955.
Photo by P. Cunniff.**



At the time of the dedication of the Franciscan Monastery, September 17, 1899, one additional building, Alverna Chapel, had been erected to the northeast of the Monastery. This red-brick chapel was erected by the Young Men's Tertiary Fraternity of New York in the more secluded area behind the Monastery. The red bricks of this chapel were the same red bricks used to design the interior walls of the cloister garden, the open courtyard in the center of the Monastery structure. Alverna Chapel reminded the early Friars of Mount Alverna, Italy, where St. Francis delighted to dwell in his beloved solitude. Alverna Chapel was intended for use by the Friars only²⁶. There is a beautiful statue of St. Francis above the Chapel altar showing St. Francis in rapt meditation.

The Stations of the Cross in the Monastery gardens were blessed on Good Friday 1916. The Franciscans were the first to introduce into their churches throughout Europe the Way of the Cross²⁷. Today hundreds participate annually in the Good Friday Way of the Cross at the Monastery. This outdoor procession winds its way through the Monastery gardens stopping to pray at each Station.

Alverna Chapel, above left. Photo by P. Cunniff.

Stations of the Cross, immediate left, Franciscan Monastery Garden Guild.



Shortly after the Monastery was dedicated, the Friars made application to the DC Commissioners to

develop a cemetery on the property. Local citizen groups raised concerns that the planned cemetery would be too close to dwellings such that it might affect current and future land values. Several hearings were held. Finally in 1901, the DC Commissioners granted approval to the Monastery for the cemetery provided it would be moved a sufficient distance away from dwelling places. The Monastery agreed to move the cemetery 605 feet from dwelling places to comply with existing statutes²⁸. By 1914, five members the Order had been interred there²⁹. Today there are over 100 priests and brothers buried in the cemetery, each with a simple white cross. The cemetery which is limited to members of the Order is one of only 12 active cemeteries in Washington DC³⁰.

The Franciscan Monastery was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1991.



The Cemetery at the Franciscan Monastery. Photo by P. Cunniff.

Visitors to the Franciscan Monastery

The *Crusader's Almanac* described numerous priests and bishops and international guests who visited the Monastery in the early part of the 20th century. Attention was also given to the many pilgrimages that came to the Monastery from around the country.

When the Franciscan Monastery was dedicated, there was only farmland and a few homes nearby. Quincy Street had not been paved; the streetcar line only went to 4th and Michigan Avenue, NE ³¹. The *1914 Guide to the Franciscan Monastery* notes two wonderful changes that had occurred—first Quincy Street now had a cement sidewalk so visitors could walk in comfort to the Monastery and the Brookland street car (electric car line) had been extended to within two blocks of the Monastery, to 12th and Quincy Streets. The *Guide* went on to say that “These additions will now bring visitors from Union Station or any part of the city of Washington to within two blocks of the Monastery” ³².

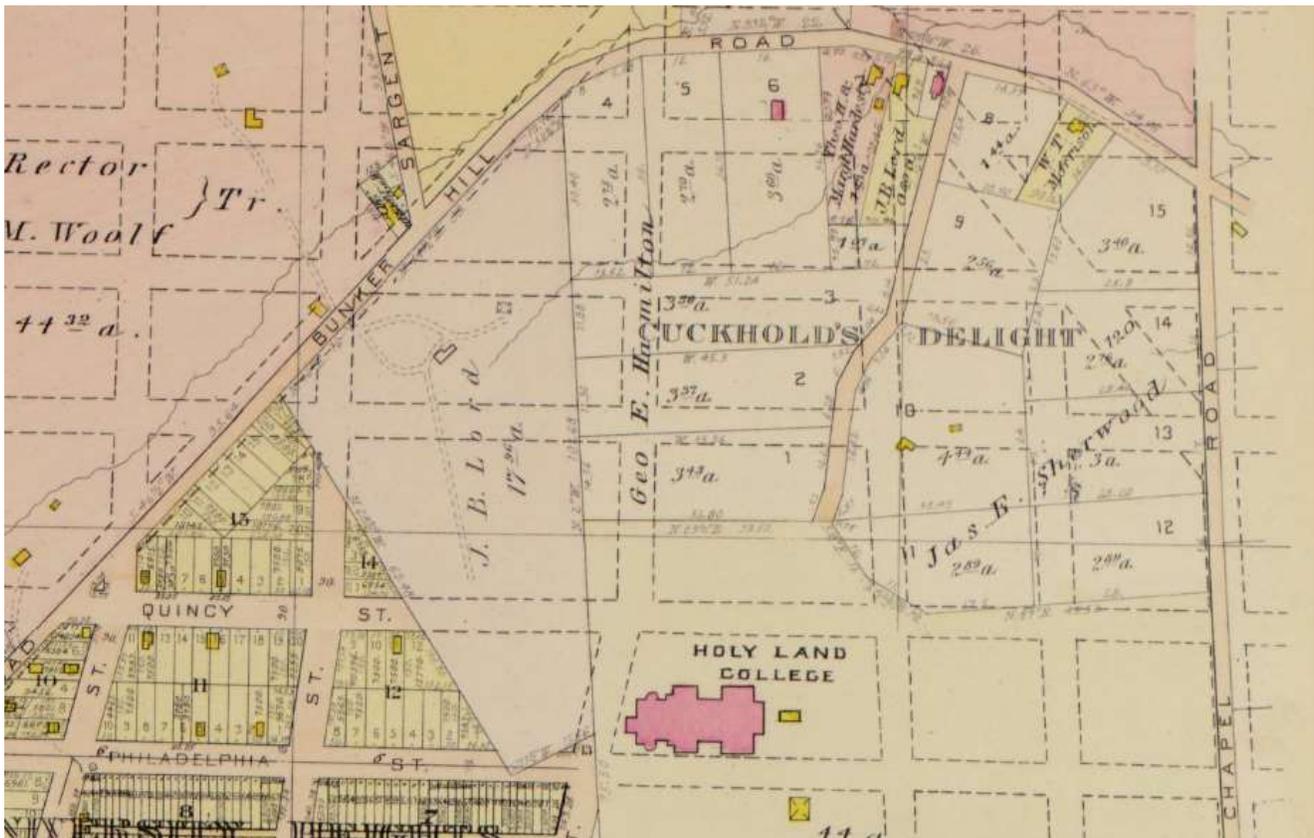
One of the later buildings constructed on the Monastery grounds was called “Pilgrimage Hall.” In the 1930s there was great need for a place for food and rest for the thousands of pilgrims visiting the Monastery ³³. Today the building at 14th and Quincy Streets, NE, is called St. Francis Hall and hosts conferences, private parties, and weddings.

**Buses for pilgrims line 14th Street in the 1930's.
Franciscan Monastery Archives.**



History of the Land

When Father Godfrey Schilling first visited the site of the future Franciscan Monastery, it was a secluded undeveloped wooded spot that contained the deserted country home of the McCeney family. The only development nearby was Fort Bunker Hill, one of the 74 enclosed forts and armed batteries that encircled Washington during the Civil War. Fort Bunker Hill had been built and named by the 11th Massachusetts infantry in the fall/winter of 1861-1862. Its guns could sweep the local arteries leading into the city like Bunker Hill Road (now Michigan Avenue) and Queens Chapel Road³⁴. These roads as they existed in the early 1900's can be seen on the map below³⁵. Bunker Hill Road was important at the time since it led to the market center in Bladensburg and was known commonly as the old road to Bladensburg. Neither Quincy Street (then called Philadelphia Avenue) nor 14th Street had been built. These streets existed only on city planning documents.



Baist Map 1907, Library of Congress.

Today much of Bunker Hill Road mirrors Michigan Avenue. Queens Chapel Road is on the far right and runs south from Bunker Hill Road. This road would parallel 18th Street today. Queens Chapel Road got its name because the road led to the Chapel that was built in 1722 on the Queen Family property in what is now the Langdon section of Washington DC. The Queen's Chapel was burned and rebuilt in the War of 1812 and in the Civil War. Today Langdon Elementary School sits on the site. The Franciscan Monastery is referred to as The Holy Land College. Several roads shown were only in the planning stage. The Franciscan Monastery was still open land even though "planned blocks" are shown. Two additional structures are shown on the Monastery land. The one directly behind the Monastery is referred to as a home; the other as a barn or out-building³⁶.

The property on which the Franciscan Monastery is built was part of the 200-acre tract of land called “Cuckhold’s Delight” that was patented in 1686 to Thomas Green³⁷. Although patented in the 17th century, the 200-acre tract, located in what was then Washington County, was not likely settled until the early to mid-18th century. The property was cultivated first with tobacco, and later with fruits, grains and potatoes, the excess of which would have been sold at the local market in the city. Cuckhold’s Delight extends south of today’s Bunker Hill Road.

In 1859, Washington County was a separate unit from the City of Washington. Maps of that era show that Robert S. Patterson owned the land in Cuckhold’s Delight where the Franciscan Monastery now stands. He died intestate in 1867 and his land was divided equally between his sister, Harriet Patterson McCeney, and his brother, Edgar Patterson. Two years later, 1869, Edgar Patterson died and Harriet McCeney, as Edgar’s sole survivor, inherited his half of “Cuckhold’s Delight.” Harriet McCeney (1820-1887) with her husband, George McCeney (1809-1866), operated the farm³⁸. They had eight children of record, three of whom died young. In addition to farming, George McCeney served as a clerk in the Department of the Treasury in Washington and was actively engaged in Washington County politics and affairs. Local newspapers recall numerous social functions attended by Harriet McCeney and her daughters³⁹. The McCeney’s were early members of historic Rock Creek Church in Washington. Grave stones in the Church Cemetery suggest that ten or more members of the McCeney family are buried in the family plot next to historic St. Paul’s Church.



**McCeney Family Plot, Rock Creek Church Cemetery.
Photo by P. Cunniff.**

The McCeney family used this Washington County property as their country home. Their city residence was on Connecticut Avenue, NW. Early maps of the McCeney farm property show 4 or 5 buildings. Some appear to be formidable structures for the family and their help; others appear to be barns and/or out-buildings⁴¹.

Following Harriet McCeney’s death in 1887, notices for auctions and sales of her estate belongings, her sizable real estate holdings in the city and her farm at Cuckhold’s Delight appeared in local papers⁴². However, between Harriet McCeney’s death in 1877 and the purchase by the Franciscan Monastery in 1897, the property and the McCeney farmhouse had fallen to ruin.

The first six Friars who came there while the Monastery was being built lived in the deserted McCeney farm house, shown below. One of these pioneers, Friar Isidore Germiot, described the experience in a letter ⁴³:

“The place where the Monastery is located was a wilderness when we first came, surrounded by woods on all sides. The approach was a back road which comes up from what is today Taylor and 16th Street NE. There was an old house on the estate...where we spent part of the first winter, which was rather severe.....with heavy snowfalls.”



**McCeney Family Home, ca 1900.
Franciscan Monastery Archives.**

Germiot described the house as “made of rotten wood and filled with big rats.” The McCeney farm house is believed to have been located just behind the present Franciscan Monastery, in the area where the current cemetery is.

St. Paschal’s Chapel behind the Monastery was built in 1917 by Friars using field stones from the McCeney farm house on the property.

The Chapel is named after St. Paschal of Baylon (1540-1592), a Spanish saint, who was famous for his devotion to the Eucharist. In 1690 he was canonized; later in 1897, Pope Leo XIII named him patron of Eucharistic congresses and societies. His feast day is May 17th ⁴⁴.



**St. Paschal’s Chapel, Franciscan Monastery.
Photo by P. Cunniff.**



Franciscan Monastery from the south ca 1900-1910. The land immediately south of the Monastery had to be dug out to build the shrines and grottos in the gardens. Photo Courtesy of The Historical Society of Washington, DC.

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James F. and John J. Earley—Father and Son

James Farrington Earley was a 4th generation stone mason, born in Birmingham, England in 1856 and educated at the Royal Academy of London. He then moved to Ireland where he ran a stone mason business in Dublin. James Earley came from a family of well-known ecclesiastical architects. Given the difficult economy in Ireland at the time, Earley immigrated to the United States with his wife, Mary Kelley, in time for the birth of their son, John, December 12, 1881. He worked as a stonecutter in New York before moving to Washington, DC. James Earley became an American citizen in 1882 ^{1,2}.

In the early 1890's James Earley was in Washington, DC looking for work. He approached J. Havens Richards, S.J., President of Georgetown University (1888-1898), and offered to provide a sculpture for the decoration of Dahlgren Chapel. Father Richards felt sympathy for the man and agreed to the work, provided the sculpture was installed in an out-of-the-way location. James Earley took his small compensation, finished the piece very quickly, and left immediately thereafter. The "Monk of Dahlgren Chapel" is truly in an obscure place – the northwest exterior corner of the Chapel up against the eaves. It is not much larger than a bird's nest. No one knew who the sculptor was; he was just referred to at Georgetown and in various publications as a "tramp workman."

Monk at Dahlgren Chapel, Photo by P. Cunniff.



A story ran in a Washington newspaper about the 1914 graduation celebrations at Georgetown University. Before the formal graduation, there was much storytelling and singing. A freshman, Rufus Lusk, who later became famous for his development of ongoing and accurate regional real estate transactions, told the story about a tramp carving a monk into the walls of Dahlgren Chapel in exchange for food ³. The human-interest story was picked up by local papers. After reading it, John J. Earley wrote a letter back to the newspaper explaining that he was the son of that "tramp workman" and that he remembered the day very well for he was the young boy who fell off the scaffolding while his father was finishing the sculpture ⁴.

In Washington, James Earley established a studio and stonecutting workshop in the Foggy Bottom area. He was noted for his delicate sculptures. Between 1892 and his death in 1906, James Earley was responsible for much of the sculpture found in private residences, commercial businesses, and religious structures in the city. The senior Earley did the beautiful altar rail and tall marble pulpit at St. Patrick's Roman Catholic Church, 619 10th Street, NW, Washington DC ⁵. The altar rail was a rich gothic-inspired composition with petite multicolored marble columns supporting a continuous series of open arches on which a mantle of marble rested. A *New Century* reporter noted that this altar rail would be counted as "perhaps the finest and most elaborate in the country"⁶.

At Grace Reformed Church on 15th Street, NW (1892-1903), James Earley was responsible for the stone ornamentation on the exterior, including the carved tympanums above the central door and two side doors; the figure supporting the banner of Frederick, the Elector of the Palatinate; the shields located at either side of the central door; and, the heads of the Knight and Burgher serving as label-stops. This work was a collaboration with Paul J. Pelz, the architect of Grace Reformed Church, who is best known for his design of the Library of Congress

and Georgetown University's Healy Hall. All work at Grace Reformed Church was completed by early 1903⁷. Grace Reformed Church was of particular interest at that time because President Theodore Roosevelt worshipped there while president.



James Earley was also responsible for exhibit buildings in Omaha, NE, the ornamental detail on the US Custom House in Baltimore, MD, and the work on the US Government Building at the St. Louis Exposition of 1904. Earley also did the marble relief on The Evening Star Building at 11th and Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, DC. James Earley received the Papal Medal from Pope Leo XIII for his work at the Franciscan Monastery, 1903, and the Silver Medal for his work on the Saint Louis Exposition, 1904⁸.

Evening Star Building 1900.

James Earley and Father Godfrey Schilling, founder of the Franciscan Monastery, became good friends. Father Schilling asked James Earley to do several pieces for the new Monastery which included the rosettes in the Monastery dome, various side altars and the Shrine of the Holy Sepulcher.

Beneath the current Altar of Tabor and the Transfiguration at the Franciscan Monastery is a replica of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem. According to ancient custom, the tomb was built with an ante-chamber or mourners' room which is now known as the Chapel of the Angel. James Earley did the stucco sculpture in 1899⁹. He obtained a copyright for the figure of the Resurrection in the same year¹⁰. The relief is now painted and is above the entrance to the Holy Sepulcher at the Franciscan Monastery.



Imprint for the Resurrection by James Earley, from the Smithsonian's American Art Museum Archives, "John J. Earley and James F. Earley Photographs and Reproductions 1890-1915."



Entrance to the Holy Sepulcher Franciscan Monastery 2015. Photo by John Cunniff.

The Holy Sepulcher is the tomb which the noble Joseph of Arimathea had prepared for himself in his garden a short distance from Calvary. According to the Jewish custom the noble Israelite had caused it to be cut out from the rock, so as to provide a bench for the reception of the body. It was on this that Christ's body was placed after having been taken down from the Cross. The tomb had the customary antechamber for mourners, now called the Chapel of the Angel ^{11,12}.

Entrance into the Holy Sepulcher at the Franciscan Monastery, ca 1900 ¹³.

Above the entrance to the Holy Sepulcher at the Monastery, the bas-relief sculpture in gypsum shows the Savior triumphantly rising from the Tomb. Inside there is an antechamber for mourners and then the burial chamber, replicating that found in Jerusalem.



The Holy Sepulcher was one of the holy sites and shrines that Monastery architect Aristide Leonardi measured and drew during his 1898 visit to the Holy Land ¹⁴. The stucco reliefs covered in silver and bronze, which decorate the interior chambers, are by James Earley. The current Altar of Tabor, commemorating the Transfiguration of Our Lord, was not completed when this photograph was taken.

James Earley also designed reliefs for three of the four altars at the Franciscan Monastery including that in the Chapel of the Blessed Mother.

Relief for the Chapel of the Blessed Mother showing Mary being crowned Queen of Heaven ¹⁵.



James Earley's rosettes in the dome of the Franciscan Monastery, originally gypsum, have now been painted. The dome is shown here as one looks up from the Baldachin above the Main Altar. The Baldachin was added for the golden anniversary of the Monastery, 1949¹⁶. This Baldachin, designed in bronze by Rambusch, has the effect of leading one's eye to the main altar and transforming the interior of the Memorial Church into the impressive Byzantine space that it is today¹⁷.



Looking up into the Dome of the Monastery. Photo by John Cunniff.

James Earley played a leading role as sculptor during the first years of the Franciscan Monastery. James Earley, before he died of typhoid fever¹⁸ in 1906, turned control of the Earley Studio over to his son John who was only 25. John had learned the business as an apprentice in his father's studio. John and his mentor, Basil Taylor, who had worked with his father, moved the studio to new heights¹⁹. John Earley would take on much of the later sculptural work in the Memorial Church as well as the development of the shrines in the gardens at the Franciscan Monastery. As a result of this transition from father to son, the Earley Studio took on many more commissions and received even greater recognition.

Although John Earley referred to himself throughout his career as "architectural sculptor" in some publications, and then as "craftsman" in others, his formal education was in the classics at St. John's College, Washington, DC, 1894-1899²⁰. While at St. John's College, a Christian Brothers instituton which then was incorporated in Washington, DC to offer both bachelor of arts and master of arts degrees²¹, Earley excelled in essay writing, debating, and

public speaking--skills that he used extensively throughout his career²². St. John's College continued to offer collegiate degrees until 1921 when the Board of Trustees voted to close the college departments and focus exclusively on secondary education. Whether John Earley received a collegiate degree from St. John's College (now St. John's College High School) is not known²³.

When John Earley assumed leadership of The Earley Studio at 25, he was a married man with a family. In 1904 he married Elizabeth Viboud at St. Patrick's Roman Catholic Church in Washington, DC ²⁴. Their one child, Frances Earley, was born February 8, 1905. Frances Earley would later marry John Kuhn, a Washington physician; they had one son, John J. Kuhn, born in 1936 ²⁵.

In 1911 John Earley and his wife, Elizabeth, built a home in the 1700 block of Lamont Street, NW, in the Mount Pleasant section of Washington. The home was designed by prominent Washington architect, Waddy B. Wood, with whom Earley did numerous projects ²⁶. Earley's trademark concrete can be seen in various parts of the home. The 1940 Census shows John Earley, his wife, Elizabeth Viboud Earley, his daughter, Frances Earley Kuhn, her husband, John J. Kuhn, MD, and their young son, John E. Kuhn, 3, all living at the home in the 1700 block of Lamont Street, NW ²⁷.

John J. Earley died November 25, 1945 ²⁸. The Earley and Kuhn families are buried in Section 8 of historic Mount Olivet Cemetery, Washington, DC.



**The Earley Tombstone in Concrete Aggregate. Mount Olivet Cemetery.
Photo by P. Cunniff.**

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The Earley Process

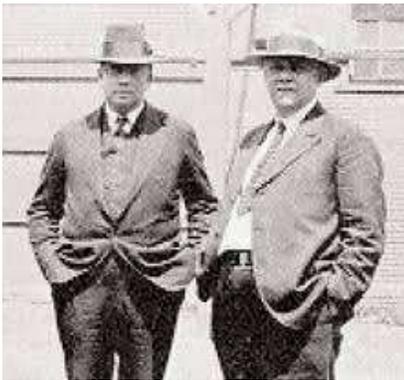
In 1899, John Joseph Earley, then 17, joined his father, James, in his studio at 2131 G Street, NW, in the Foggy Bottom neighborhood of Washington DC. His father, James, had achieved recognition here and abroad for his ecclesiastical subjects and his delicate carvings. His studio had worked predominantly in carved stone, clay, lime, and, gypsum plaster and cement stucco ¹.



Basil Taylor, another young apprentice, impressed the senior Earley. When James Earley became ill in 1906, he asked Basil Taylor (1879-1954) to help his son, John, run the business.

The front building on the G Street property served as an office. Additional buildings in the back served as the studio. The large complex was where John Earley and his workers developed the exposed aggregate concrete that Earley named “architectural concrete.” In 1921, Earley covered the façade of the G Street building with his architectural concrete ². In 1936 he moved the studio to Virginia after losing permission to build a crushing plant at the G Street location ³. George Washington University acquired the property shortly thereafter and now uses it as offices and a dance studio. The original Earley Studio on G Street NW is part of George Washington University’s Historic Preservation Plan adopted by the DC Historic Preservation Review Board, 2010 ⁴.

The Earley Studio, 2131 G Street, NW. Photo by P. Cunniff.



John Earley and Basil Taylor directed their talents to the development of manmade stone rather than following the Earley family tradition of working with plaster and stucco. John Earley’s career and that of his studio went through several phases. With each new commission Earley learned and developed something new with the concrete he was using ⁵.

John J. Earley, left, and Basil Taylor, right. Courtesy American Concrete Institute.

Experimentation and Documentation

The first phase in the development of the Earley Process was associated with a significant research study in collaboration with industry and government. When stucco construction was introduced into the US on a large scale in the early 20th century, numerous failures were reported. When Portland cement, considered the best material available, was used over metal lath, excessive corrosion was said to be the cause of these failures. The Associated Metal Lath Manufacturers in collaboration with the Bureau of Standards (now the National Institute of Standards and Technology) established a study of small test panels to determine the cause of the corrosion ⁶. The Earley Studio was involved. The test panels were subjected to two-years of exposure. From this it was determined that porousness of the stucco and imperfect embedment of the lath had more to do with the rusting than the

chemistry of the cement, lime, and gypsum in the plastering material. This initial study prompted additional research. In 1916 John Earley was asked to prepare all the samples for a second round of stucco tests and to personally sit on the Committee evaluating the results. The information gleaned from this second study was that crazing and map-cracking which led to corrosion of the metal lath below the surface could be greatly reduced by a change in the construction procedure that dealt with the amount and process for use of water. This led to Earley's first patent which dealt with the way joints should be applied for stuccoed buildings so as to minimize corrosion ⁷.

Control Amount of Water

Earley determined how to control water during the critical steps in the process of applying cement stucco. He determined that leaner stucco mixes, that is those with smaller amounts of cement and lime in proportion to sand, seemed to be more immune to cracking. Previously it had been considered good practice to douse the first coat of stucco liberally with water to ensure adherence of the finish coat. When the heavy wetting was reduced to a light dampening, there was practically no crazing or cracking. This breakthrough with stucco testing was fundamental to Earley's development of architectural concrete ⁸.

Collaborate with Industry and Government and Publish Results

In these stucco tests, Earley proved himself to be an excellent experimentalist. He was meticulous about his measurements, he documented his work, and he worked with leaders from both industry and government to publish the results. These traits were strengths that Earley exhibited throughout his career. This work at the Bureau of Standards also solidified Earley's relationship with J.C. Pearson, the Bureau's Cement Chemist, and led to Earley's first well-known commission, Meridian Hill Park⁹.

While the stucco tests were going on, the US Office of Public Buildings and Grounds was undertaking a park project in the fashionable Meridian Hill section of Washington, DC. Meridian Hill Park is a 12-acre site that had previously been the estate for the Porter Mansion, and then Columbian College, the predecessor of George Washington University. During the Civil War, union troops encamped there. The Park received its name from its location on 16th Street NW which runs on an almost north-south axis. From the top of the park, one can see the White House and the Washington Monument¹⁰.



Meridian Hill Park's Beautiful Cascades and Concrete Aggregate. Courtesy National Park Service.

Horace Peaslee, Architect of Public Buildings and Grounds, Washington DC, designed the park as an elaborate neoclassical composition of retaining walls, staircases, balustrades, reflecting pools and formal gardens modeled after fashionable Italian gardens. The estimated cost for this initial plan was very high. When Congress refused to

appropriate sufficient money to execute this design, a decision was made to use concrete with a stucco finish¹¹. Earley was asked to do the final stucco coating on all concrete elements.

Do Small Scale Mockups First

Before proceeding with the contract, the Earley Studio was required to make a full-scale sample for the approval of the designer, Peaslee, and the US Commission of Fine Arts. Earley completed this first full-scale sample, but it was deemed to be drab and uninteresting because of its flat, gray color. Earley then redesigned the wall, casting the piers against plaster molds that produced deep rustications in the concrete. He also gave a rough beg-dash finish to the stucco to create strong highlights and shadows. This second attempt was an improvement, but it still did not meet the approval of Peaslee and the US Commission of Fine Arts¹¹. It was still considered too dull.

Cass Gilbert, renowned architect and then chairman of the US Commission of Fine Arts, suggested that the proper finish might come from imitating Italian pebble mosaics. These mosaics were made by pressing pebbles of various colors into mortar while it was still plastic. While Earley was sure he could do this, he worried that the process would be too costly and too labor intensive. He was also concerned that the freezing and thawing during the winter might dislodge the pebbles that were applied in this manner¹².

Innovate and Strive for Continuous Improvement

A new process occurred to Earley¹³. Why not produce a pebble finish by exposing the pebbles already in the concrete mix? The pebbles used at Meridian Hill Park had been dredged from the Potomac River. They were an appealing yellow-brown in color. For the aggregate stones to show, the gray cement would have to be removed. This could only be done before the concrete was set into a hard mass. Earley solved the problem by stripping the forms while the concrete was still green and not fully set; then he exposed the larger pebbles by removing the still-soft surface with a wire brush and washing with dilute acid. Instead of being a dull gray color, the exposed pebbles imparted a soft, warm color. The wall was a decided improvement. Earley called it “Architectural Concrete” and it was enthusiastically approved by the US Commission of Fine Arts¹⁴.

Use Gap Grading to Improve Appearance and Prevent Clumping of Heavier Aggregates

The exposed aggregate concrete at Meridian Hill Park was some of the first in the US. The Studio implemented a two-step gap grading of aggregates for a superior appearance and good structural quality. This process was protected by Earley’s second patent¹⁵.



Left, Obelisk at Meridian Hill Park showing different sizes of pebbles, giving column greater aesthetic appeal. Ridges also add relief.

Right, Part of Urn at Meridian Hill Park showing similar differences in color and pebble size. Photos by P. Cunniff, 2015.





At Meridian Hill Park, Earley selected Potomac River gravel from 1/8 to 1/4 inch in diameter and added just enough sand and cement to fill in the space between the gravel. Earley also realized that if he screened the sand to one-tenth the size of the pebbles, then the larger gravel would fit together more tightly and there would be no clumping of the larger aggregates. The results were outstanding. These gap-graded mixtures, which were the focus of his second patent, boosted Earley's success¹⁶.

Authorities in the field have noted that Earley was an articulate writer and speaker, but, he was also an astute businessman. His articles describing improvements in moisture control, consistency of the aggregates, and later, the use of color, did not divulge the Earley Studio's critical procedures. In this way, he maintained the Studio's competitive advantage for more than 40 years¹⁷.

Balustrades at Meridian Hill Park. Photo by P. Cunniff.

Remove Excess Water.

There was yet another problem to overcome in the early stages of the development of "architectural concrete of the exposed aggregate type." Balusters are an integral part of the design of Meridian Hill Park. This intricate shape posed a problem. In order for the concrete to flow into the mold and fill in the complex shape of the mold, it had to be mixed with excess water. But when the mold was removed, suction was created and, because of the excess water, parts of the piece came off in chunks. The "wet" concrete was not as strong in the same amount of setting. To solve this problem, John Earley resorted to earlier stucco experiments at the National Bureau of Standards. He determined that if the excess water needed for mixing could be drawn off after being poured into the mold, the chemical set of the concrete would be faster. The workmen used any absorbent material available including newspapers to achieve a successful result¹⁸.

Improve Molds

In collaboration with the Bureau of Standards' Cement Chemist, J.C. Pearson, Earley continued to experiment with permanent coloring techniques for exposed aggregate stucco. When constructing East Potomac Park Field House in southwest Washington, DC, 1919, Earley combined cast-in-place concrete, large precast components, thin precast elements and hand-applied stucco to economically create a uniform architectural finish¹⁹. To eliminate the time-consuming job of touching up the plaster molds after each casting, Earley began using thin metal lining within the molds to make them more durable. These linings were so effective that all the column capitals were cast in one set of molds. Earley received his third patent for molds²⁰.

Earley used what he had learned at Meridian Hill in constructing the *Fountain of Time*, Chicago, IL, 1922, which celebrated the first one hundred years of peace between the US and Great Britain ²¹. Earley used a porous inner mold to absorb water from the concrete that was placed into the outer mold reasoning that this would reduce concrete shrinkage and help the surface detail stand out more sharply. The *Fountain of Time* was done in collaboration with Lorado Taft who had originally wanted to sculpt the nearly 130-foot-long piece in marble at a cost of \$300,000. He sought out Earley who incorporated his concrete aggregate at a cost of \$45,000.



Fountain of Time, Chicago, IL, 1922.

In 1919, the Earley Studio was commissioned to construct Peace Cross, a monument to honor residents of Prince George’s County, Maryland, who lost their lives in the line of duty during World War I. The 40-foot cross, constructed of cast concrete with exposed aggregate selected for its color and distribution, is set on a base of cast concrete in a tan aggregate, matching the cross itself. Construction began in 1919 but was delayed because of insufficient funds. The local American Legion was able to raise sufficient money for the completion of the project in 1925²².



**Peace Cross, Bladensburg, MD.
Photo by P. Cunniff**

Let the Colored Aggregate Dominate

Earley’s next major development occurred around 1920-1921 when he was approached by the architectural firm of Murphy and Olmsted to collaborate in the design of the Shrine of the Sacred Heart on 16th Street, NW, Washington, DC. The parishioners wanted a church in ‘the northern Italian Romanesque style’. The architects wanted the interior to be of the same quality as the mosaic-covered interiors of the Romanesque churches of Italy. The broad use of color on the interior was suggested by the extensive areas of the walls, vaults, and dome, which in the Romanesque period, were decorated through the free use of rare marbles and mosaics, rich in color and interest. These materials were no longer available; nor were they within budget for the Shrine of the Sacred Heart. In the search for materials that might render the complicated decorative detail desired on the interior of the Shrine, concrete was considered and finally adopted. As Earley put it,

We are in need of a new artistic material; one better in keeping with the character of our time, quicker, less costly.....This is what attracted us to concrete..... Is it unreasonable then to assume that concrete, a permanent plastic, when taught to take form, color and texture at the will of the designer and under the direction of the craftsman, will be the long-looked for material?

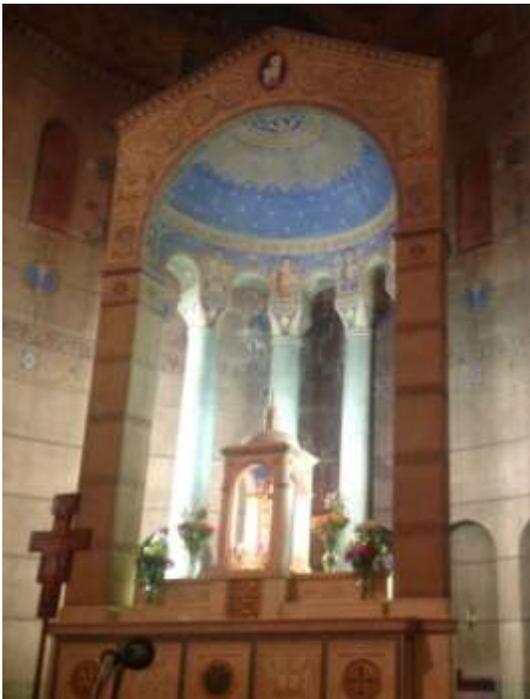
The aggregate is the dominant element of concrete, therefore it should exercise a dominating influence on the structure and appearance. The importance of the aggregate is the principle which has been developed by all our investigations into the causes which control the appearance of concrete. By constructing a skeleton of aggregate, volume changes, segregations and settlement are prevented. It is by causing the aggregates to occupy a very great part of the surface that predetermined color and texture are obtained. It is the aggregate which takes the form and gives the color and texture. The cement is a binary material.....The water is a carrier which places the material with the least amount of work ²³.

Use Raised Contour Lines to Separate Multiple Colors

Earley stated that when the architects of Sacred Heart, Murphy and Olmsted, contracted with his studio, they opened to us “the greatest opportunity of this time in our profession.” It was at Sacred Heart that Earley introduced polychrome concrete with multi-colored aggregates in concrete mosaics. He did so by using a wet process on the walls using squeeze molds to create ridges in the underlying brown coat. The ridges separated different colored concrete mixes placed by the craftsmen. The studio refined its technique with precast polychrome mosaics using raised contour lines on the mold surface to separate the many colors placed during a single casting²⁴. The studio also began to incorporate small precast polychrome concrete pieces into larger precast components such as column capitals²⁵.

Earley noted that many more colors could be realized by blending aggregates of varying hues, thus increasing the number of colors available from a smaller number of good aggregates. Because of the large interior of Sacred Heart, Earley and his workers were able to use aggregates less than ¼ inch in size up to those which were more than 1.5 inches in size. The aggregate materials used were gathered from this continent, France, Italy and Africa, thus providing a rich variety of color and texture²⁶.

Various icons such as the Lamb of God at the top of the Main Altar, the candle, an icon representing the Light of the World, on the rear wall of the Shrine, and the beautiful ceiling of the main altar are examples of Earley’s use of brightly colored aggregates. Earley’s work at Sacred Heart would play a significant role in the design of some of the icons on the Portico at the Franciscan Monastery and in the beautiful dome of Ascension Shrine. Furthermore, the Shrine of the Sacred Heart was the beginning of many successful collaborations between John Earley and architects, Murphy and Olmsted.



**Main Altar at Sacred Heart..
Photo by John Cunniff.**



Decorative detail in the Shrine of the Sacred Heart. The icon represents Saint Philip. Photo by John Cunniff.

Flat drawings for some of Earley's religious icons at both the Shrine of the Sacred Heart, The Franciscan Monastery, and the eight other churches he designed can be found in the Cron-Earley Collection at the Special Collections Library at Georgetown University²⁷. Earley became interested in the study of religious symbols and traveled to Europe in 1928 and again in 1936 to review churches and religious symbols in the Vatican Library²⁸.

Seek Continuous Improvement and New Challenges

The Baha'i House of Worship, Wilmette, IL, presented both an opportunity and set of new challenges for Earley and his studio. In solving these problems, the Earley Studio created some of the first architectural precast concrete panels installed on a structural steel framework. The principles and techniques that Earley and his partner, Basil Taylor, developed remain sound practices to this day²⁹.

The cornerstone for the Baha'i Temple was set in 1912, but it took more than 40 years before the Temple was completed. The Temple was dedicated in 1953. The architect was Louis Bourgeois³⁰ who had an idea how to fashion the decorative elements in this unusual building. In 1920 he visited Earley in Washington, DC, who at that point had developed a strong reputation for inventing new processes for the use of ornamental concrete. Bourgeois and Earley agreed on how dazzling white concrete could be poured into molds and pieced together to make a dome. The Studio subsequently prepared a sample mold, producing a concrete with a mixture of quartz, sand and Portland cement. A finished panel was then sent to Wilmette where it was placed outside to see how it would weather. It would be another 10 years before the Earley Studio would receive a contract for the entire dome. Financial issues and very deliberate decision-making accounted for the delays.



Baha'i House of Worship, Wilmette, IL, Dedicated 1953. Courtesy Baha'i Temple.

To achieve the bright white architectural concrete desired, two different types of quartz were used. One was crystalline quartz from Spartanburg, SC, and the other, opalescent quartz from Monita, VA. The quartz was crushed, screened to a specific size, and then mixed with sand and cement. It took 743 tons of quartz to make the panels for the ornamental exterior of the dome. All the work was done in the Earley Studio, now in Virginia, and then transported to Wilmette³¹.

Use Thin Precast Polychrome Slabs

In 1933 Earley was commissioned to produce polychrome ceilings at the Department of Justice. He was presented with a new challenge. None of the studio's techniques allowed them to place and finish such a large area of polychrome ornamentation within the time required for the simultaneous construction of the structural concrete. To solve this Earley invented the use of thin precast, reinforced, polychrome concrete slabs and boxes to serve as the framework for the structural concrete. The structural concrete was placed after the polychrome elements were installed into their final position on the building. By eliminating the cost of the structural concrete forms and reducing the cost of applying a decorative surface, Earley achieved a double savings³².



Ceiling, US Department of Justice, 1933.

Private Residences

Earley aspired to expand his “mosaic concrete” into the construction of private homes. His first house, referred to in the literature as Polychrome I, was completed in 1934. It is located in the 9900 block of Colesville Road, just north of the Washington Beltway in Silver Spring, MD³³. Four other similar homes were built on contiguous lots with adjoining back yards. All were completed 1934-1935. The homes, which were built on relatively small lots ranging from 7400 to 10,000 square feet, have been in continuous use as single family residences on their original sites since construction. Polychrome I³⁴, a five-room house, has exterior walls comprised of 32 two-inch thick precast mosaic concrete panels, each four to eight feet wide and nine feet high. Metal casement window and door frames were imbedded in the panels before casting. The panels were produced in the studio, transported to the site, and raised into place, using “tilt-up” construction. The main panels are pink-beige, the result of exposing surface aggregates of red jasperite.



The front door is painted red and is inset with three square mosaic concrete panels in an intricate red and black design. Documentation indicates that there are several interior ornamentations in the home using the “mosaic concrete.” These five houses are referred to as the “Polychrome Historic District.” Earley worked with architect, John Robie Kennedy on Polychrome I. Earley's patented structural system³⁵ led to the widespread use of precast architectural concrete as a major exterior cladding material. At the time these Polychrome homes were being built, the US was weathering a major depression. Earley wrote about the social changes taking place in the US during the 1930s and the demand for what he termed “social justice.” The Polychrome houses represented his attempt to solve the “small house problem” by providing innovative housing at modest cost during the economic and social upheaval of the Great Depression.

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Front door of Polychrome 1, 1934. Photo by P. Cunniff, 2015.

Earley stated that he felt that the simplest way in which such economic security can be achieved is to enable everyone to procure a small house and a plot of ground, which can be cultivated and which will produce sustenance³⁶. The first two polychrome homes built in the 9900 block of Colesville Road were one-story homes. He also built three two-story homes on the adjacent Sutherland Road.

Two-story Polychrome Home.

Photo by P. Cunniff, 2015.



Earley's house construction did not flourish; homeowners preferring instead traditional brick homes. However, these structures were the proving ground for the viability of the Earley Process panels in curtain-wall construction. As a result, architectural concrete became a major exterior cladding material used in skyscrapers worldwide³⁷.

In Hyattsville, MD, Earley contributed to a much larger home, the Marche House at 4200 Crittenden Street, just off Baltimore Avenue. The home, built on a 2.3-acre parcel of land around 1933 for Augusta E. Marche, was another collaboration between architect John Robie Kennedy and John Earley. It is an example of the popular Colonial Revival style. The two-and one-half story house is flanked by one-and one-half story wings. The masonry house and foundation are constructed, not of pre-cast concrete like the Polychrome houses above, but of bricks that were covered with an exposed concrete aggregate pioneered by the Earley Studio. The windows on the first story have a decorative lintel with Greek key and arabesque motifs, as well as decorated concrete window boxes.

The southeast corner of the Marche property was subdivided in 1959 to serve as a commercially zoned property for the Marche family's floral shop³⁸. The Marche home was listed in the Maryland Historical Trust in 1990.



Marche Home, Hyattsville, MD. Photo by P. Cunniff.

Professional Accomplishments

Earley's achievement as a master craftsman, a visionary, a champion of the concrete industry and a major contributor to advances in architecture and engineering were recognized nationally. In 1934, he received the American Concrete Institute's most prestigious award, the Turner Gold Medal, for outstanding achievement in developing concrete as an architectural medium. The American Institute of Architects awarded Earley its Craftsmanship Medal in 1936 for meritorious and original work in the application of color to masonry and the development of a new technique for the decorative use of concrete³⁹. In 1938, Earley was elected president of the American Concrete Institute, the first non-engineer to hold that position.

Earley suffered a stroke on the job and died a few weeks later, on November 25, 1945⁴⁰. On his death bed he sold the business to his partner, Basil Taylor for \$1. Basil Taylor continued to run the plant until his death in 1952. After Taylor's death, the Earley Studio joined with Marietta Concrete Corporation, Marietta, OH, to become a large-scale manufacturing corporation. In 1962, the Earley Studio relocated to an even larger site in Manassas, VA. The company was the leader in precast concrete paneling until it went out of business in 1973⁴¹.



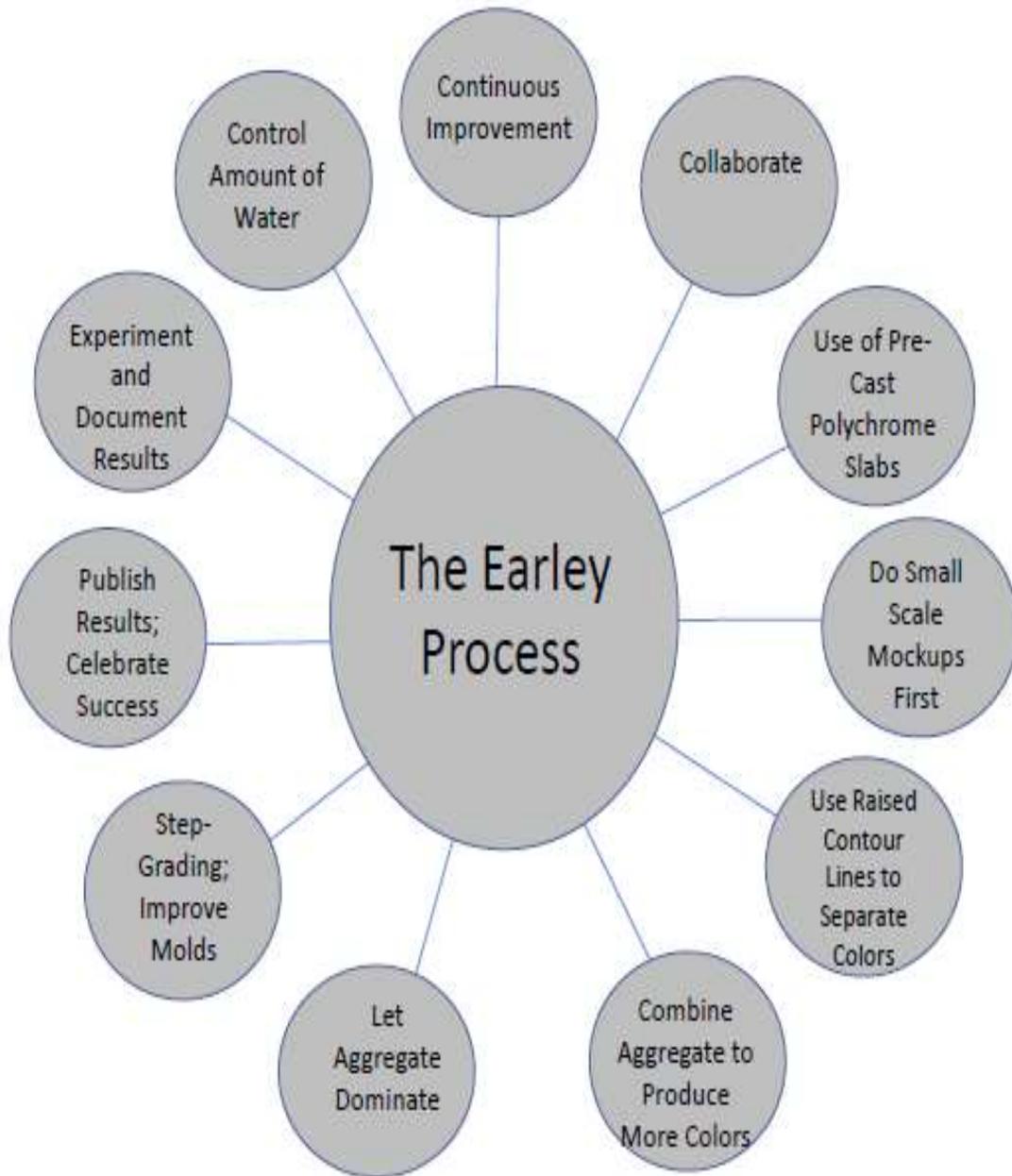
John Joseph Earley. Courtesy of David Alfuth.

What is the Earley Process?

John J. Earley and the Earley Studio made many technical breakthroughs with concrete. Their innovations include color, type, selection, crushing, sizes, and mix formulations. Additional innovations involved model making, molds, the use of polychrome concrete, and the exposure of aggregate surfaces. In all these innovations, Earley and his studio fostered a desire for continuous improvement and the pursuit of excellence. Many peer reviewed papers were written by Earley and Taylor, and patents were obtained. Yet, it has been difficult for people in the field to exactly duplicate the results. Current restoration projects for Meridian Hill Park, the Edison Memorial Tower in New Jersey, and now the Baha'i Temple in Illinois have elucidated new insights into Earley's production techniques⁴².

The Appendix lists many of the structures done by John J. Earley and the Earley Studio prior to Earley's death in 1945. The Earley Process was complex and evolutionary. The following graphic attempts to describe all facets of this Process.

The Many Components of the Earley Process.



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The Reptile House, Washington National Zoo. Courtesy, Smithsonian Institution. The entrance to the Reptile House demonstrates Earley's use of polychrome concrete aggregates using raised contour lines. Executed in 1927.

John J. Earley and the Franciscan Monastery

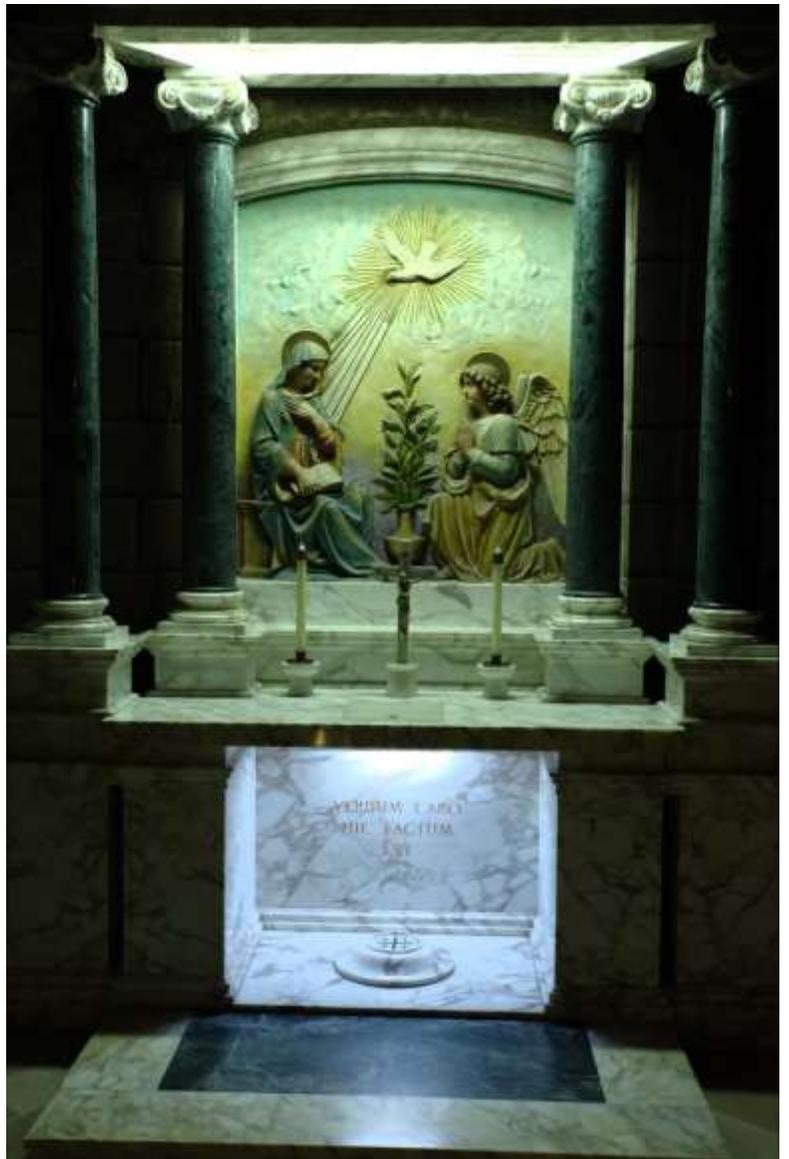
James Farrington Earley, John Earley's father, worked with Farther Godfrey Schilling, founder of the Franciscan Monastery, to build and sculpt some of the initial altars and shrines there. With James Earley's death in 1906, less than seven years after the Monastery's dedication, John Earley took over his father's studio and the work at the Franciscan Monastery. John Earley is credited with most of the shrines and grottos in the Monastery gardens, the Rosary Portico, the statues of Saint Michael and Saint Bernardine at the entrance to the Portico, the Statue of Saint Christopher in the Upper Gardens, and the beautiful Altars of Calvary, the Transfiguration, the Sacred Heart, and the Holy Spirit in the Memorial Church. John Earley also oversaw the development of the Monastery catacombs. This work was done between 1906 and 1935. In addition to Aristide Leonori, the Franciscan Monastery architect, John Earley is considered most influential in shaping the look of the Monastery's interior and garden shrines and chapels that we know today¹.

This transition from Father to Son is evident in the Grotto of Nazareth on the Lower Level of the Memorial Church. Here there is an altar dedicated to the Annunciation, a replica of the shrine as it exists today in the Basilica of the Annunciation in Nazareth. James Earley designed the bas-relief behind the altar prior to his death in 1906; his son, John, designed the marble altar. The bas-relief depicts the Archangel Gabriel announcing to Mary that she would become the Mother of God. The Latin inscription below the altar, *Verbum caro hic fatum est*, means *The Word was Made Flesh*. A similar inscription appears on the Altar in the Basilica of the Annunciation in Israel².

Both the bas-relief and the altar were installed in 1907³. This bas-relief, like the sculptural panels in the other chapels in the Memorial Church, was originally unpainted. The black marble columns shown in the photograph replicate the columns in the original shrine in Nazareth⁴.

Just beyond the Altar of the Annunciation, there is a small grotto that contains a painting of St. Joseph holding the Infant Jesus. The small altar below this painting is also attributed to John Earley⁵. It was dedicated in 1932.

Altar of the Annunciation, Grotto of Nazareth, Franciscan Monastery. Photo by John Cunniff.



To the left of the Altar of the Annunciation is the entrance into the famous Monastery catacombs. These replicas of the catacombs of Rome were begun at the same time as the Memorial Church. Stucco was used to give the walls and crypts in the catacombs a rock-like appearance. John Earley oversaw this development⁶.



The catacombs have replicas of open grave sites along the passageway leading to the Martyr's Crypt where the relics of St. Benignus are encased beneath the altar. Nearby is the Chapel of Purgatory which leads to chapels dedicated to St. Cecilia and St. Sebastian. Retracing your steps leads to the Nativity Grotto, a faithful representation of the Nativity Grotto in Bethlehem⁷.

Throughout the catacombs are icons, inscriptions, and pictorial representations of Church history and teaching throughout the centuries⁸. These include: the Peacock or Phoenix, symbolizing the Resurrection of the body; the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end; and, the Anchor, a symbol of hope. Several of these icons were later reproduced in concrete aggregate by John Earley in the over 200 icons that grace the Rosary Portico surrounding the Monastery grounds, 1926⁹.

Catacombs, Franciscan Monastery. Franciscan Monastery Archives.

Earley's Work in the Lower Gardens at the Franciscan Monastery Shrines and Grottos

John Earley and the Earley Studio oversaw the development of the shrines and grottos in the lower gardens at the Monastery. Most were done between 1910 and 1930. Before any shrines or grottos could be built, the land had to be dug out. Workers in the photo to the left are using farm animals to pull the excavated earth and debris.



Workers in the photo to the left are using farm animals to pull the excavated earth and debris.

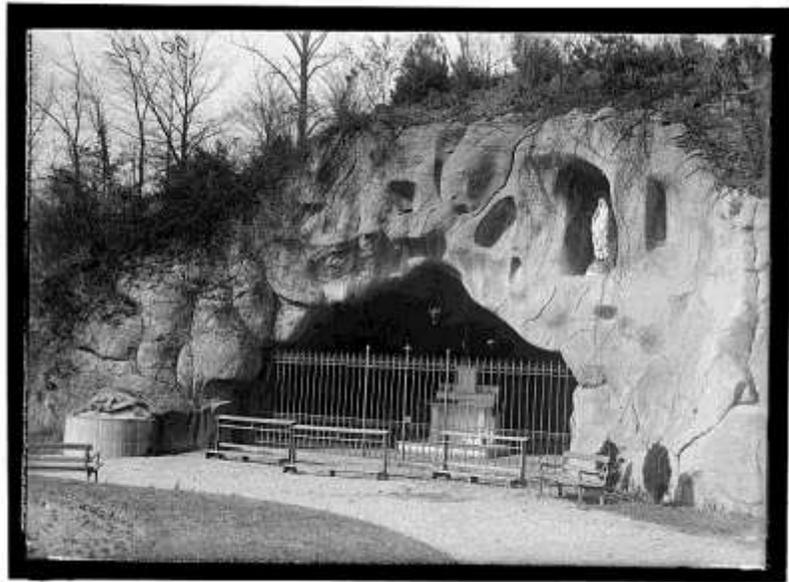
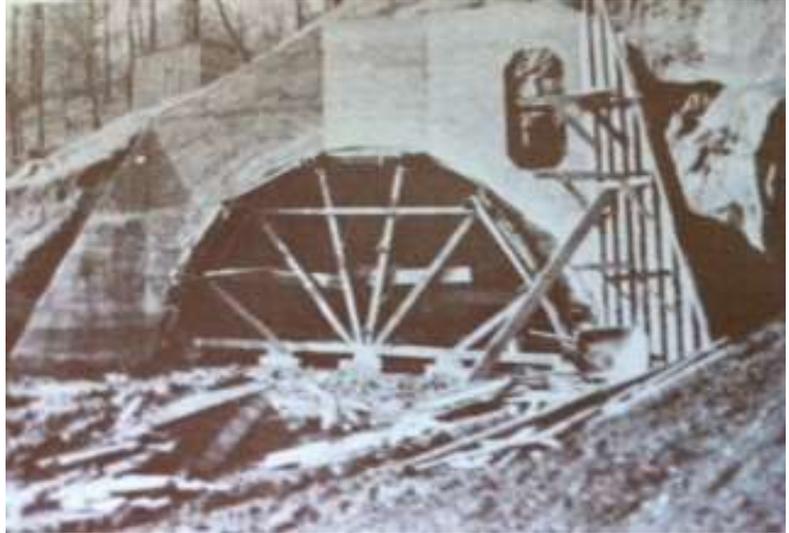
Digging out to build Lourdes Grotto, 1912. Franciscan Monastery Archives.

The road on the left in this photo would lead to what is now 14th Street.

Once the big grotto area was carved out, wooden frames and poured concrete were used to create a man-made cliff and niche for the statue of the Virgin Mary.

**Lourdes Grotto Construction, ca 1912.
Franciscan Monastery Archives.**

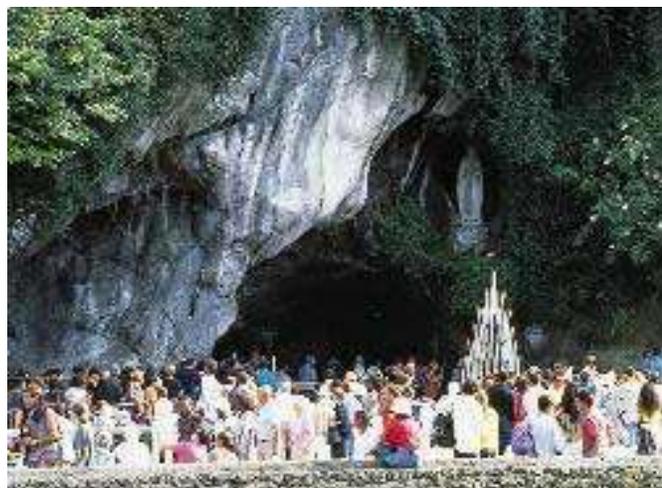
The Grotto of Lourdes, the first grotto to be built in the Lower Gardens, was not a replica from the Holy Land, but rather a replica of the cave-like Grotto of Lourdes in southern France at the foothills of the Pyrenees. Here tradition says that the Blessed Mother appeared to a 14-year-old peasant girl, Bernadette of Soubirous, beginning in 1858. According to Bernadette, the Blessed Mother told her to have the local priests build a chapel on the site and organize processions to the grotto. Numerous miracles occurred¹⁰. This fascination with the miraculous happenings at Lourdes spread over the globe and prompted the faithful to erect a representation of the Grotto of Lourdes in their own midst at the Franciscan Monastery. Bernadette was made a saint in the Catholic Church in 1933¹¹. The town of Lourdes, with a population of 15,000 (2007) has 4-6 million tourists annually¹².



Grotto of Lourdes, Franciscan Monastery, 1919. Library of Congress.

The Monastery's Lourdes is based on drawings by a French architect in the late 19th century. Using these drawings, John Earley oversaw its development. He used poured concrete molded to look like the rock that surrounds the Lourdes Grotto in southern France.

Grotto of Lourdes, Lourdes, France.





Grotto of Lourdes, Franciscan Monastery, 2015. Photo by John Cunniff.

The Grotto of Lourdes at the Franciscan Monastery was dedicated August 15, 1913¹³. This Grotto is used for Easter Sunrise Service, an annual candle-lit Mass on the feast of the Assumption, August 15th, and other religious celebrations. Roses and annuals surround the circle in front of the grotto and beautiful azaleas bloom each spring on the hill to the right. The fact that the Lower Gardens were dug out prior to construction ensures protection from the harsh spring winds for the beautiful camellias and azaleas that bloom there.

In the next few years, the *Crusader's Almanac* announced three new shrines in the Lower Gardens—the Grotto of Gethsemane, the Shrine of Saint Anne, and the Tomb of the Blessed Mother. In 1914, the *Crusader's Almanac* noted that Father Godfrey Schilling, Monastery founder, traveled to Jerusalem and made measurements and took photographs of the Grotto of Gethsemane near the Garden of Olives¹⁴. In the following year, the *Crusader's*

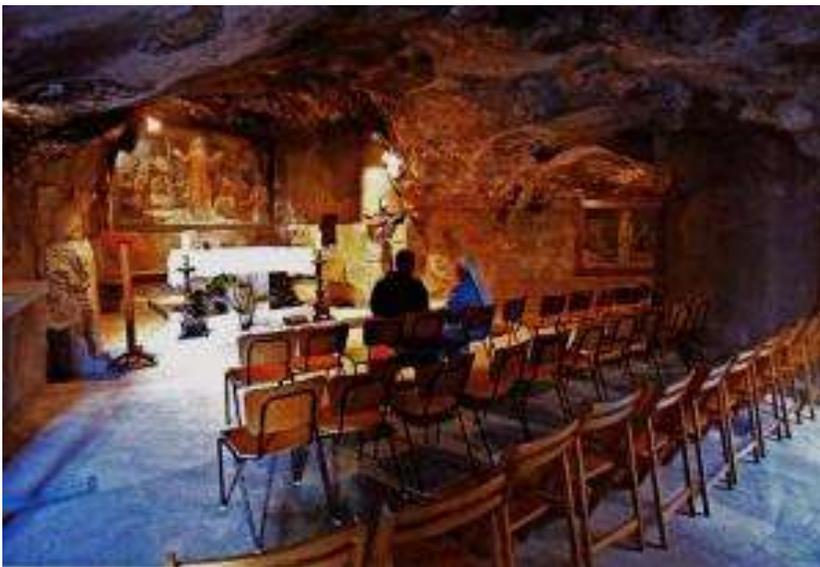
Almanac noted the building of the new Grotto of Gethsemane at the Monastery and thanked its donors. In doing Gethsemane, Earley and his workers used reinforced concrete poured into a series of wooden molds to give it the shape of living rock. The Grotto of Gethsemane opened October 24, 1915¹⁵. John Earley's characteristic rock-like concrete is evident along the pathway leading to this Grotto as well as inside.



John J. Earley, right, with Father Godfrey Schilling, and friends. Concrete wall for Gethsemane, ca 1914. Franciscan Monastery Archives.



Altar in Grotto of Gethsemane. Earley's bas-relief above the altar, now painted, reflects the words of St. Matthew, "*My Father, if this cannot pass me by without my drinking it, then your will be done!*"
Photo by John Cunniff.



Grotto of Gethsemane, Jerusalem.
Courtesy Custodia Terrae Sanctae.

In Jerusalem, the Grotto of Gethsemane (which in Aramaic means the place of the olive oil press) is located near the Tomb of the Virgin. The Franciscans took possession of the cave in 1361 and have continued to be its owners to the present day. The Grotto of Gethsemane is located near the Mount of Olives¹⁶.

Although the New Testament says nothing about the death and burial of Mary, there is a strong Christian tradition that the tomb of Mary where she was kept prior to her Assumption into heaven was in a dimly-lit church at the foot of the Mount of Olives. Several religious groups share control of the Tomb of Mary in Jerusalem¹⁷. At the Franciscan Monastery, there is a large room inside the Tomb. From this room, one can enter the mausoleum through a low door. Inside is a marble burial slab. The Tomb of Mary was dedicated August 15, 1917¹⁸.



Tomb of Mary, Jerusalem. Courtesy Sacred Destinations



Tomb of Mary, Franciscan Monastery, Dedicated 1916. Franciscan Monastery Archives.

Other grottos in the Lower Gardens were developed in the same time period. The *Crusader's Almanac* in 1915 pointed out that a benefactor had visited the Shrine of Saint Anne deBeaupre in Canada and was so moved that she donated monies to the Monastery to build a shrine in honor of Saint Anne, the mother of the Blessed Virgin Mary, in the Lower Gardens¹⁹. This Chapel, completed in 1916, is housed in a cupola designed by John Earley. Below the Chapel of Saint Anne is a replica of the House of Cairo, where according to tradition Jesus, Mary and Joseph stayed when they fled into Egypt. The House of Cairo was constructed by John Earley based on drawings and measurements brought from the Holy Land by Monastery architect, Aristides Leonori²⁰.



St. Anne's Shrine, left. House of Cairo, right. Franciscan Monastery Archives.



In the 1917 issues of the *Crusader's Almanac*, there were several stories about the planned Ascension Shrine along with requests for donations for this structure. In 1924, John J. Earley wrote to the Monastery Commissariat, Father John Forest Donegan, that the Shrine of the Ascension will be an artistic representation of the chapel of the Crusaders which was erected on the site of the Ascension on the Mount of Olives near Jerusalem²¹.

In doing the dome of Ascension Shrine at the Franciscan Monastery, John Earley built upon what he had learned at the Shrine of the Sacred Heart in Washington, DC, using polychrome concrete aggregates. Earley used molds with raised contour lines to separate each color in a drawing or set of figures. The palm-like trees, similar to those at the Shrine of the Sacred Heart, separate each of the Apostles in this scene of the Ascension.



Dome of Ascension Shrine. Photo by Carolyn Fichtel.

In the dome Jesus is on the left ascending up to heaven. To his left and right are a total of eleven apostles. His mother, Mary, is on the opposite side of the dome. These figures were done, not by painting, but by using polychrome concrete aggregate placed into molds with raised contour lines—molds that had been developed from the original drawings by Earley. Should there have been any overlap of unwanted concrete, Earley and his workers were able to wire-brush off the excess and then use a dilute solution of muriatic acid.

In doing sculptures of religious figures and icons, Earley would first do a drawing on thin parchment paper. He would then color in each part of the drawing using colored pencils. Often he would do several drawings, testing out different groups of colors trying to see which would be best. He would often write the reference he had used for the religious figure or symbol on his drawings. Several examples of these colored drawings of religious symbols with references can be found in the Cron-Earley Collection, Special Collections Library, Georgetown University²². Once Earley was satisfied with the color scheme and size for a drawing, he and his workers would

then make the appropriate molds with raised contour lines for his polychrome concrete aggregates.



The sections of the dome of Ascension Shrine would have been precast in the Earley Studio and brought to the Monastery for assembly. The Ascension Shrine was dedicated on the Feast of the Ascension in 1926²³. The beautiful figures in the dome are considered one of Earley's finest creations.

Ascension Shrine contains a replica of what has been traditionally regarded as the last impression of Jesus' right foot on Earth before He ascended into heaven. This can be found below the altar in the center of the Shrine²⁴. The exterior of the Ascension Shrine is made of Earley's trademark concrete aggregate.

Ascension Shrine, Franciscan Monastery. Dedicated 1926. Franciscan Monastery Archives.



Ascension Dome, Jerusalem. Courtesy Sacred Destinations.

Ascension Dome in Jerusalem is both a Christian and a Muslim holy site that is believed to mark the place where Jesus ascended into heaven. This Chapel in Jerusalem also contains a slab imprinted with the footprint of Jesus²⁵.

Earley's Work in the Upper Gardens at the Franciscan Monastery

Chapels, Altars, Icons, and Statues

In 1925-1926, the Chapel of the Portiuncula was built in the upper gardens at the Franciscan Monastery. This chapel, a replica, not of a Holy Land site, but of the 4th century church that was restored by Saint Francis in Assisi, Italy, is considered the Mother Church of the Franciscan Order. The Portiuncula Chapel was dedicated July 14, 1926²⁶. This beautiful chapel was constructed of Potomac stone and designed by the architects, Frederick Murphy and Walter Olmsted, who did significant architectural work at the Franciscan Monastery, Catholic University, and for numerous churches in the Washington, DC area²⁷. The marble altar was designed by John Earley²⁸. The Franciscan Monastery Garden Guild, a support group for the Franciscan Monastery, decorates the Chapel for Christmas and places lit candles dedicated in the name of a loved one here during the Christmas season. The Garden Guild also uses the Chapel for the lilies that are donated to the Memorial Church for the Easter season.



**Portiuncula Chapel, Dedicated 1926.
Photo by John Cunniff.**



Portiuncula Chapel at Christmas. John Earley's marble altar has the Crusader's Cross inscribed. Franciscan Monastery Garden Guild.

The San Damiano Cross is over the altar. St. Francis was praying before this cross when he is said to have received the commission from the Lord to rebuild the Church²⁹.

The Rosary Portico



The Rosary Portico showing the ten arches between each shrine. Earley's religious icons are above each column. The Golden Showers Climber blooms next to the Portico Gates. Photo by P. Cunniff.

In the 1920s the neighborhood of Brookland was becoming more populated with new homes, shops and paved streets. Visitors and pilgrims were flocking to see the replicas of the Holy Land sites on the Monastery grounds. The Friars felt a need for greater safety and privacy, and a more organized access route into the gardens and Memorial Church. The Rosary Portico around the Monastery grounds was designed to meet these needs.

The Rosary Portico was first referred to as The Arcade of Saints in the 1917 issue of the *Crusader's Almanac*³⁰. It was presented as a "Dream for the Future." The article noted the need for greater privacy and for some type of shelter for Monastery visitors from the heat of the sun and inclement weather. It took several years before sufficient funds could be raised to support this project. A 1920 article in the *Crusader's Almanac*³¹ went on to ask for additional donations using a Memorial Subscription Card with images of stones surrounding a picture of the Portico. Eventually sufficient funds were raised and work began. A neutral color was selected in order to harmonize with the buff colored brick of the Memorial Church. The Portico was dedicated October 3, 1926; the next day marked the 700th anniversary of the death of Saint Francis³².

During the years, 1917-1926, while the Franciscan Monastery was raising funds to build the Rosary Portico, John Earley and the Earley Studio were perfecting their concrete aggregate process at the Shrine of the Sacred Heart in Washington, DC, and several other US churches. These commissions also enabled Earley to develop a greater

knowledge of religious symbolism. The Rosary Portico was another collaboration between John Earley and the architectural firm of Murphy and Olmsted.

The Franciscan Monastery Portico is about 1,100 feet long. There are fifteen chapels along the route, corresponding to the fifteen mysteries of the Rosary (five Joyful Mysteries, five Sorrowful Mysteries, and five Glorious Mysteries.) Each chapel originally contained a bas-relief in the Earley Process. These weathered and were subsequently replaced in the 1950s by the current mosaic panels. Between each chapel, there are ten arches symbolizing the ten Hail Mary's in a decade of the Rosary. Two additional chapels were added, one to commemorate the Institution of the Third Order of Franciscans that includes lay men and women, and the second for The Franciscan Crown³³. Eleven formal rose beds with over 500 rose bushes surround the interior of the Rosary Portico. These constitute about half of the rose bushes on the Monastery grounds.

The gates of the Rosary Portico contain sculptures of Saint Michael, the Archangel, and Saint Bernardine of Siena. Saint Michael is considered one of the principal angels. Several scriptural references allude to the great battle in heaven between the Archangel Michael and Satan. Saint Bernardine of Siena became a Franciscan priest in 1404. He is often called the "Apostle of Italy" for his efforts in attempting to strengthen the Catholic faith in Italy during the 15th century³⁴.

**Rosary Portico Gates, Franciscan Monastery.
Sculpture of Saint Michael, the Archangel.
Photo by P. Cunniff.**



Numerous relief sculptures can be found on the Rosary Portico Gates. Several of these were also used on the walls and altars at the Shrine of the Sacred Heart in Washington, DC. The words on the exterior of the gates are: "Hosanna to the Son of David. Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."



**Sculpture on the Rosary Portico Gates, Peacocks
drinking from a vase symbolizing human souls drinking at the
Source of Life³⁵. Photo by John Cunniff.**

The late architect, Roger Adams Cram, said that art is the symbolical expression of otherwise inexpressible ideas³⁵. It was art and architecture that John Earley used in designing the symbols above each column in the Portico. Each icon describes some facet of the history and truths of the Catholic faith. Earley and his Earley Studio completed over 200 symbols around the Rosary Portico representing symbols of each of the Apostles,



**Rosary Portico with icons of St. Peter and the Greek Cross.
Photo by P. Cunniff.**

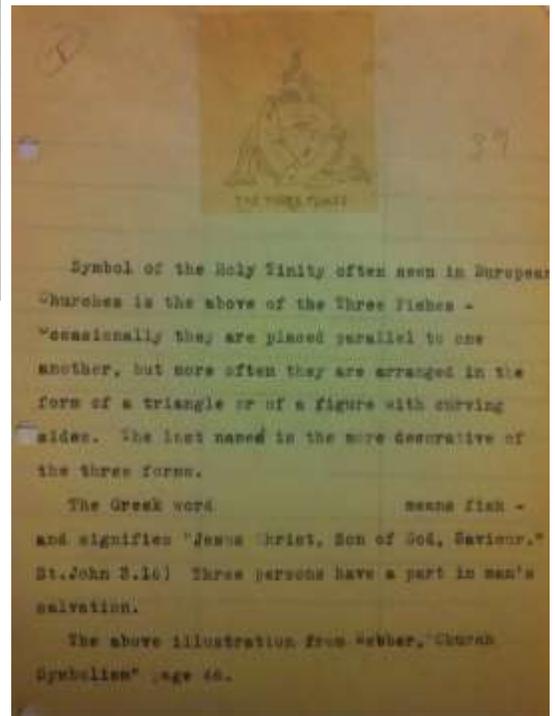


The Three Fish, symbolizing the Trinity, Rosary Portico Icon, Franciscan Monastery. Photo by Carolyn Fichtel.

Christian religious symbols, Biblical figures and stories, and over 20 crosses. All have been photographed and catalogued³⁷.

The Portico columns here illustrate the development of Earley's architectural concrete, from the flat columns with their attractive yellow-brown Potomac River pebbles at Meridian Hill Park, to the Portico's beautiful columns with their colored aggregates from around the world and their attractive relief.

In the Cron-Earley Collection at Georgetown University are typewritten notes and drawing by John Earley describing different symbols. Below is a copy of three fish symbolizing the Trinity, Earley's comments, as well as a reference from Webber's *Church Symbolism*³⁸.



The Portico is also used by the Franciscan Monastery Garden Guild for its Christmas Luminaria Program. Over 1,000 candles are placed around the Portico, dedicated to a loved one, either living or deceased. The candles are lit on Christmas Eve and burn for seven days.



The Rosary Portico decorated with luminaria for the Christmas Season. Franciscan Monastery Garden Guild.

In 1935, the Friars chose to place plaques of the Hail Mary in over 150 different languages throughout the Rosary Portico. These languages reflect the global nature of the Catholic Church, the evolution of various languages, for example Old Turkish and Modern Turkish plaques, and the desire to retain languages that were becoming extinct throughout the world. Languages are from Christian and non-Christian regions of the world³⁹.

On the next pages we see the icons that decorate the columns in the Rosary Portico by the Shrine of the Nativity as well as the Mosaic for the Nativity Shrine. References are given for each icon⁴⁰.

Joyful Mysteries
The Nativity



The Pelican is feeding her young with her own blood. This signifies Our Lord's Atonement. (Webber, p. 62)

Cross Patee. A decorative cross that is widely used. (Webber, p. 123)

Our Lady, Queen of Heaven and Earth.

Cross Pomee. Cross whose arms extend in single knobs. (Webber, p. 125)



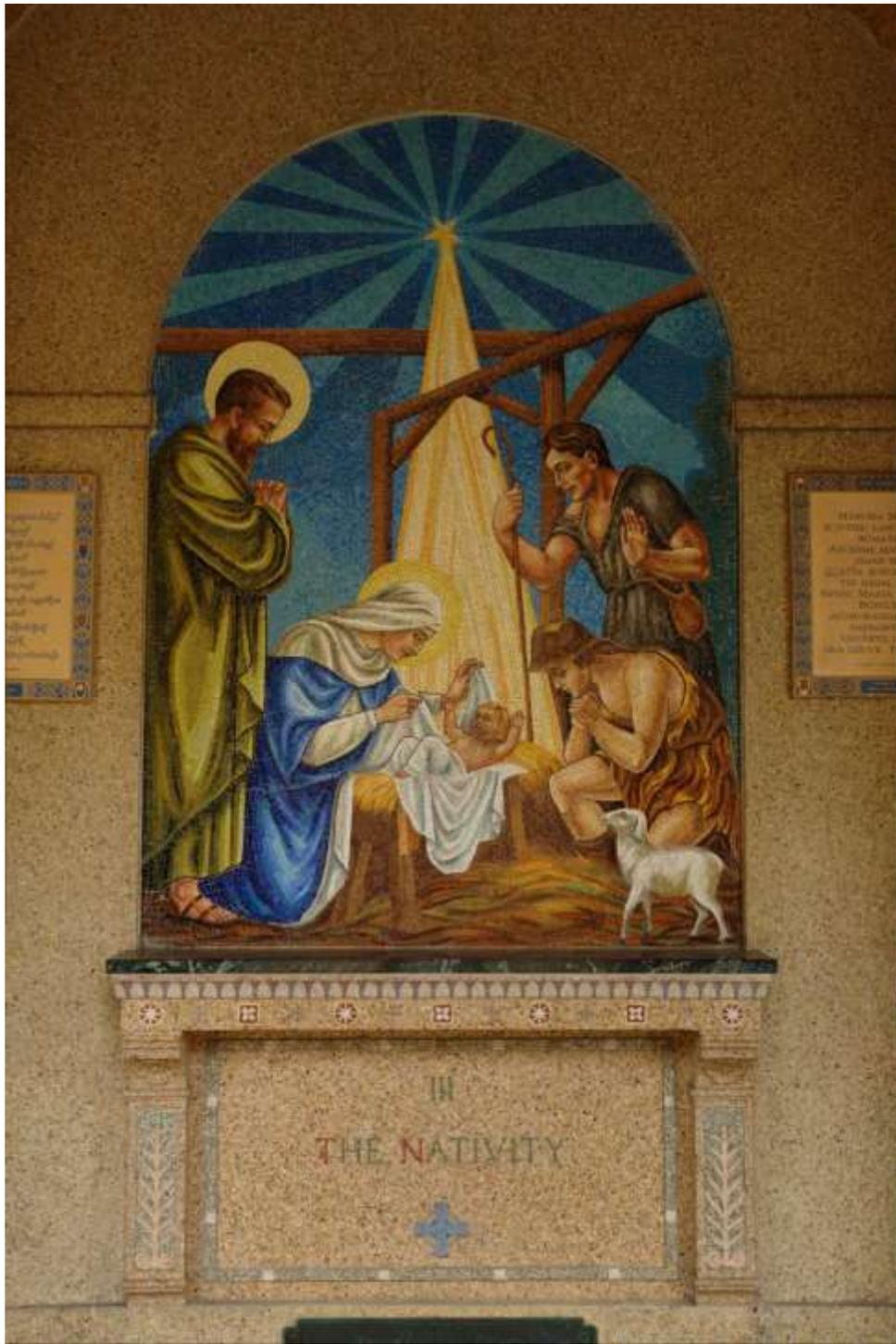
The Hand of God, Latin version, proceeding from a cloud of glory. The three extended fingers represent the Trinity. (Webber, p. 50)

Greek Cross. Arms are of the same length. (Webber, p. 103)

Birds feeding at the vine of life. The vine represents Our Lord Jesus. The birds represent human souls feeding at the vine of life. (Webber, p. 239)

Design similar to that shown at The Shrine of the Sacred Heart, Washington, DC.

Alpha and Omega. Our Lord is the beginning and end of all things. (Webber, p. 96; Whittemore, p. 5)

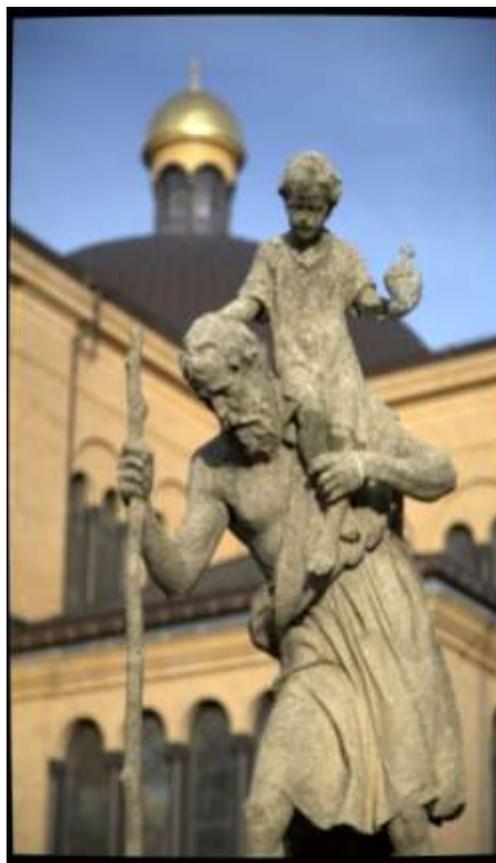


The Nativity Shrine in the Rosary Portico, Franciscan Monastery. Photo by John Cunniff.

The columns of the Rosary Portico were done by Earley in a slightly smaller form for the base of the Statue of St. Francis in the Upper Gardens and the base for the Statue of St. Christopher holding the Christ Child. The Statue of St. Christopher, done in 1926 by John Earley⁴¹, welcomes all visitors as they come through the Portico gates. The Statue of St. Francis was done by Porfirio Rosignoli. Both are shown below.



**St. Francis and the Turtledoves..
Base by John J. Earley.
Photo by P. Cunniff.**



**St. Christopher and the Christ Child,
Statue and Base by John J. Earley, 1926.
Photo by John Cunniff.**

Earley's Work in the Interior of the Franciscan Monastery Altars and Relief Panels

The Altar of Tabor was the first altar in the Memorial Church to be completed. It was installed in 1916. It marked John Earley's first commission for one of the large altars in the Memorial Church. The large single relief panel depicts Christ's ascension into heaven and was based on the 19th century French artist, Gustave Dore's concept of the Transfiguration from St Mark⁴². Moses with the tablet and Elijah are shown with Christ. Today on the heights of Tabor (Thabor) stands a magnificent Basilica dedicated to Our Lord's Transfiguration⁴³. Mount Tabor is a hill that is about 1200 feet above the plain in lower Galilee.

**Altar of Tabor by John Earley,
Dedicated 1916. The Holy Sepulcher is
directly below the Altar of Tabor.
Photo by John Cunniff.**

The Altar of the Holy Spirit is located in the apse across from the Altar of the Sacred Heart and next to the Chapel of St. Francis. A wooden altar was used here until 1925 when it was replaced by John Earley's design made of Botticino marble and executed in Italy⁴⁴. Surrounding the altar is a large relief panel design by Earley and sculpted by artists in his studio. The relief consists of three separate panels, each depicting scenes related to the Holy Spirit. Directly above the altar is a figure of a Dove, symbolizing the Holy Spirit. On the right is a panel depicting St. Francis of Assisi, blessing his followers as they set out to carry the gospel tidings.

**Altar of the Holy Spirit by John Earley,
Dedicated 1925. Photo by John Cunniff.**





The Dove at the center of the Altar of the Holy Spirit. The Altar is decorated with lilies for Easter. Photo by John Cunniff.



The Altar of Calvary by John Earley, 1925. Photo by John Cunniff.

The Altar of Calvary is a facsimile of the Greek altar in Jerusalem which covers the place where Our Lord died⁴⁵. Earley included in his design an opening in the marble to replicate fissures caused in the rock by the earthquake that occurred at the time of Christ's death. The panel to the left includes Mary, the Disciples and the Good Thief, while the panel to the right depicts Christ's enemies. Mary Magdalene kneels at the base of the cross.

Earley had intended for the relief sculptures at the Monastery to remain unpainted, but the Friars wanted them to be colored and have artificial spotlights believing that this would appeal to the emotions and senses of Monastery visitors. Earley's Altar of Calvary at the Franciscan Monastery is considered by many to be his crowning piece⁴⁶.

The Altar of the Sacred Heart in the south apse next to the Chapel of Saint Joseph was also installed in 1925. The altar itself, made of Italian marble, was designed by John Earley and executed by the McBride Studio.

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The Legacy of John J. Earley

The beauty of the interior altars and the many garden shrines at the Franciscan Monastery owe much to the genius of John J. Earley. His extensive contributions at the Monastery spanning nearly thirty years exemplify Earley's continual desire to strengthen his knowledge in the use of architectural concrete and his ability to use this art form to provide religious meaning and joy for all visitors.

Fr. Godfrey Schilling OFM, who founded the Franciscan Monastery, was truly a man of vision, but it rested upon John J. Earley to execute this vision. Earley is highly respected by those in the concrete industry, by historic preservationists, by city planners, and by all those religious organizations who benefitted from his genius. He was truly a leader in his craft, among his colleagues, and most importantly, with the workers in his studio. .

Earley perhaps said it best when he wrote:

Concrete is so wonderfully responsive that it has wound a spell around me and around the men in my studio. When the work is taken from the moulds each morning and the colors are exposed, there is something so spectacular, so magical about it, that our enthusiasm never abates. Many of the men have fallen under the spell to such an extent that they object to working with other materials. Architects and artists who have used concrete feel this attraction just as much as these craftsmen.

*John J. Earley in **Substance, Form and Color Through Concrete**, p.27. The Atlas Portland Cement Company, New York, NY, 1924.*

Appendix

Sample of Works by John J. Earley and the Earley Studio up to 1945

Taken from the Cron- Earley Collection, Special Collections Library, Georgetown University, Washington, DC, the Prince George's County Historical Society, and the Fourth Biennial Symposium on the Historic Development of Metropolitan Washington, DC, University of Maryland School of Architecture, College Park, MD, April 1, 2001.

(Dates are given if known.)

Lobby of Willard Hotel, Pennsylvania Avenue, Washington, DC ca 1910.

John J. Earley House, 1710 Lamont St., NW, Washington, DC, 1911.

East Potomac Park Field House, Washington, DC, 1919.

The Peace Cross, Bladensburg, MD (designed 1919, dedicated 1925).

Fort Lincoln Cemetery Center Gate and Gate Lodge, Brentwood, MD ca 1920.

The Fountain of Time, Chicago, IL (cast in stone), 1922.

Meridian Hill Park, Washington, DC, 1915-1922.

Shrine of the Sacred Heart, Washington, DC, 1922-1923.

George Washington University, doorway to Adams Hall, Washington, DC, 1923.

Embassy of Thailand, Washington, DC, 1924.

Louisiana State University, Memorial Tower, Boyd Hall, and Murphy J. Foster Hall, exterior walls, Baton Rouge, LA, 1924-1926.

Parthenon, Nashville, TN, 1925.

Church of the Holy Family, Dayton, OH, mosaics and precast ornament, 1925.

Franciscan Monastery, Washington, DC. Gardens, Grotto of Lourdes, 1913; , Grotto of Gethsemane, 1915; Tomb of the Blessed Mother, 1916 St. Anne's Shrine and House of Cairo, 1916; Altar in Portiuncula Chapel, 1926; Rosary Portico and Religious Icons, 1926; St. Christopher Statue, 1926 ; Ascension Shrine, 1927.

Franciscan Monastery, Washington, DC, Interior of Memorial Church, Altar of the Annunciation, 1907; Lower Level; St. Joseph's Altar, Lower Level, 1932; Catacombs, stucco to resemble rock, ca 1905; Altar of Tabor, altar and reliefs; 1916; Altar of Holy Spirit, altar and reliefs, 1925; Altar of Calvary, marble altar and reliefs, 1924-25; Altar of Sacred Heart, design, 1925.

Catholic University, Mullen Library, entrance and ceiling of second floor reading room, mosaics, 1926-1927.

Basil Taylor Residence, 1610 Buchanan Street, NW, Washington, DC, 1927.

Chapel of the Sisters of the Incarnate Word, Houston, TX, mosaics and interior ornament, 1927.

Washington National Zoo, Entrance to Reptile House, 1927.

St. Mary's Church, Mobile, AL, mosaics and precast interior ornament, 1927.

Church of St. Francis deSales, Buffalo, NY, mosaics and precast ornament, 1927.

Church of the Sacred Heart, Newark, NJ, mosaics and precast interior ornament, 1928.

Church of St. Philip and St. James,, Baltimore, MD, interior ornament, precast and applied, 1929.

Church of the Immaculate Conception, Jenkintown, PA, mosaics and precast ornament, 1929.

The Claridge Hotel on the Boardwalk, Atlantic City, NJ, applied interior lobby walls, 1930.

Baha'i Temple, Wilmette, Ill, 1932-1950.

The Marche House, Route #1, Hyattsville, MD, 1932.

Municipal Center, Washington, DC, exterior memorial fountain for fallen Washington DC law enforcement officers at north side, 1931-1934.

US Department of Justice, ceiling and panels, 10th Street, NW, Washington, DC, 1933-1934.

Polychrome Houses, Silver Spring, MD, 1934-1935.

David Taylor Model Basin, Administration Building, six mosaic concrete interior panels depicting history of US Naval Ships, 1936-1938.

St. Charles Borromeo Church, Newark, NJ, 1936.

Federal Reserve Board Building, Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, DC, pebble mosaic pavements around exterior fountains on south terrace, 1936.

Walker Building, 15th Street, Washington, DC, polychrome concrete panels at door and window heads, 1937.

The Marilyn Apartment Building, Connecticut Avenue, NW, Washington, DC, exterior medallions, 1938.

Edison Memorial Tower, Menlo Park, NJ, 1938.

Scottish Rite Temple, 16th Street, Washington, DC, concrete mosaic panel over front door, 1939.

Saint Anne's Church, Houston TX, interior ornamentation, 1939.

US Naval Academy Chapel, Annapolis, MD, interior precast ornamental work, 1940.

Reagan Washington National Airport, Virginia, mosaic ceiling of the Portico, 1941.

Holy Rosary Church, Ansonia, CT

John Earley died in Providence Hospital, Washington, DC, November 25, 1945. The Earley Studio continued to do extensive work throughout the United States until 1973 when it closed.

About the Author

Patricia A. Cunniff was raised in the shadow of the Franciscan Monastery in the Brookland section of Washington, DC. She currently serves as a garden tour guide for the Franciscan Monastery Garden Guild. She holds a Ph.D. in physical chemistry from the University of Maryland College Park, and is the author of seven books and multiple refereed papers. She retired as an academic dean from Prince George's Community College, Largo, MD, and currently teaches as an adjunct professor at the University of Maryland. She also serves as a docent in the Human Origins Exhibit at the Smithsonian Museum of Natural History. Patricia Cunniff and her husband, Patrick, have four adult children and ten grandchildren.

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