

FEATURED BIOGRAPHIES

In honor of the upcoming Memorial Day Holiday we have chosen to feature two men who have had distinguished careers in service to our country during times of war. For more complete biographies on these individuals and to view the biographies of many other prominent people buried at Elmwood, please visit our website at www.elmwoodhistoriccemetery.org.



Russell A. Alger

Born in Ohio in 1836, Alger was to become a major figure in Michigan and national history. Orphaned at the age of twelve, he continued his education through law school while supporting a younger brother and sister. At the outbreak of the Civil War, Alger enlisted in the 2nd Michigan Calvary and was appointed Captain of Company C. He participated in over 60 battles and skirmishes during the Civil War, including the battle of Gettysburg. He was wounded four times, and at the war's end, was awarded the rank of Brigadier and then Major General. General Alger was elected Commander-in-Chief of the Grand Army of the Republic in 1889 and helped improve pensions for Civil War veterans.

After the war, Alger returned to Detroit with his wife, the former Annette Henry of Grand Rapids. He took an active part in Republican politics and was elected Governor of Michigan in 1884. Working behind the scenes, he played an instrumental part in the election of President McKinley and was appointed to the post of Secretary of War until 1899. After the death of U. S. Senator James McMillan, Michigan Governor Austin Blair appointed Alger to fill the term. He was elected to a full term by the Michigan Legislature in 1903. Alger died in Washington, D. C. in 1907. Entombed: Alger Mausoleum, Section 10

Alpheus Starkey Williams

Born in Connecticut on September 20, 1810, Alpheus S. Williams was to become one of Michigan's most active citizens of the 19th century. He was to lead a life as a businessman, lawyer, newspaper editor, civil servant, politician, diplomat and citizen soldier.

Having studied law at Yale, Williams traveled extensively before settling in Detroit in 1836 where he became active as a citizen soldier in 1836 when he joined the Brady Guards. His first active service came in 1838 and 1839 during the Patriotic War. By 1844, he was Captain in the Michigan Militia and by 1847 had risen to the rank of Colonel. In 1847 and 1848, Williams served as Lt. Colonel of the First Michigan Infantry in service at the end of the Mexican War. In 1859, Governor Moses Wisner appointed Williams to the post of Major General in the Michigan Militia and, at the outbreak of the Civil War, Governor Austin Blair appointed him Brigadier General of the First Michigan Brigade. On August 12, 1861, Williams was commissioned Brigadier of the U. S. Volunteers, the first Michigan general of the Civil War.

General Williams' war record is extensive. He served as a brigade commander, division commander and, for a time, as a corps commander in the Army of the Potomac. He and his troops saw battle at Cedar Mountain, Antietam, Chancellorsville, Winchester and Gettysburg. Williams was transferred to the Army of the Cumberland in October of 1863. He was commander of the 1st Division of the 20th Corps. During the Atlanta Campaign, Williams and his men saw battle at Resaca, New Hope Church, Kolb's Farm, Peach Tree Creek and in the siege and capture of Atlanta. In November of 1864, Williams was made commander of the 20th Corps, the first troops to enter Savannah. On January 12, 1865, Williams was breveted the rank of Major General. In the Carolina Campaign, Williams fought in the battles of Averasboro and Bentonville.

After the Civil War, Williams was elected President of the Detroit Soldiers and Sailors Union and appointed Federal Commissioner to Study War Claims in the State of Missouri. He ran for Governor of Michigan in 1866 but was defeated by Henry H. Crapo. In the fall of 1866, President Andrew Johnson appointed Williams to the post of Minister to El Salvador and he served until 1869. Williams was elected to Congress in 1874 and 1876 but was defeated in 1878. While in Congress, his main interest was the military and he worked actively in all aspects of veterans' affairs. Williams suffered a fatal stroke while working at his desk in Congress. Williams died on December 21, 1878 at the age of 68. Buried: Section B, Lot 94

FLORAL AND HOLIDAY TRIBUTES

Fresh floral tributes are welcomed in all outdoor areas. Our office supplies temporary metal vases, free of charge, for your use. Artificial flowers are allowed only in our mausoleums.

Flags may be placed on graves during the Memorial Day and Fourth of July Holidays. Flags should be kept to 12" by 18" in size or smaller and are available in our office, free of charge, to anyone wishing to place them at a memorial during this time. Flags are subject to removal by the Cemetery within ten (10) days of the Holiday.

SPACE STILL AVAILABLE

From traditional burial in our gardens, to above ground entombment in our mausoleum, and to an array of niche selections for those choosing cremation, Elmwood presents the finest and most dignified burial options, all at a price with which you'll feel comfortable. Space is still available throughout most of our gardens and mausoleums. Call us for more information or to schedule a pre-planning meeting.



TOURS

Steeped in history, art and natural beauty, Elmwood hosts hundreds of educational and community groups each year for tours. Theme tours are available or we can tailor a tour specifically for your group. Walking tours may be scheduled for groups of twelve or more. Bus tours, as well as school tours of forty individuals or less, can also be accommodated. Advance reservations are required for all group tours. Contact Chancey P. Miller at 313-567-3453 to arrange a tour.

To welcome even more members of our community to Elmwood, beginning this summer public tours will be regularly scheduled that everyone is invited to attend. Check the "Calendar of Events" page of our website for tour dates and times.

Elmwood Tours have been developed to explore specific themes including: Governors, Senators of Michigan, Past Mayors of Detroit, Civil War Generals, Black Heritage, Who's Who, Memorial Art and Symbolism, and Trees.