

WILLIAM PRYOR LETCHWORTH

Sixteenth Annual Report,
1911, of the American
Scenic and Historic
Preservation Society

TO THE LEGISLATURE OF
THE STATE OF NEW YORK



TRANSMITTED TO THE
LEGISLATURE JUNE 12,
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FOUNDED BY ANDREW H. GREEN AND
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OCCGS

Brought forward		\$6,404 77
January 12, 1911.		
129. S. B. Brown, caretaker, November and December, 1910..	83 32	
130. J. E. Frost, 2nd, superintendent, December.....	83 33	
131. Estate Jacob Mills, caretaker, December 1-13.....	16 13	
132. Evans Banks, labor	27 40	
133. Stanley D. Brown, notarial services.....	17 00	
134. Frank Clark, dynamite.....	53 25	
135. Charles H. Frost, teaming.....	8 00	
136. J. E. Frost, 2nd, petty disbursements.....	4 77	
137. John Gray, labor.....	4 00	
138. F. Hamilton, typewriting.....	5 00	
139-140. Labor	442 45	
150. D. F. Thompson, loam.....	9 55	
151. Woodward & Stouffer, dynamite, etc.....	50 80	
February 10, 1911.		
152. J. E. Frost, 2nd, superintendent, January.....	83 33	
153. John V. Van Pelt, services and expenses.....	296 65	
March 7, 1911.		
154. J. E. Frost, 2nd, superintendent, February.....	83 33	
155. John Gray, labor	6 40	
156-161. Advertising	16 98	
		<u>\$7,786 46</u>

LETCHWORTH PARK.

Death of Hon. William Pryor Letchworth.

It is with deep sorrow that we record the death of William Pryor Letchworth, LL. D., the donor of Letchworth Park to the State of New York. Mr. Letchworth was born in Brownsville, Jefferson county, N. Y., May 26, 1823. He died at his home in Letchworth Park on Thursday evening, December 1, 1910, about 7 o'clock. An extended account of his long career of philanthropy will be found in the Twelfth Annual Report of this Society to the Legislature of 1907, together with a description of the beautiful estate of 1,000 acres on the Genesee river, embracing the famous Portage Falls and Gorge, which he gave to the State for a public park. Although Mr. Letchworth had been in poor health for a long time, his death came unexpectedly after a day devoted to philanthropic concerns and correspondence. It was characteristic of him that on his very last day, he should have been devoting his attention to the formation of an organization for the protection of young people seeking employment. He had recently seen an advertisement in a neighboring newspaper offering inducements to boys and girls to leave their homes to earn money, and the circumstances of the advertisement led Mr. Letchworth to think that

it was not designed to promote the welfare of young people. He had therefore begun to formulate a plan to safeguard young people from improper allurements, and on the day of his death had penciled a memorandum with these words:

The Protective League.

For the Benefit of Young Persons Seeking Employment.

Officers, a President and Secretary.

Membership subject to the unanimous approval of a Membership Committee of three members.

Mr. Letchworth's long life was a benediction to his generation, and many thousands of persons — epileptics, insane, and other unfortunates — have been benefited by the years of patient and self-sacrificing devotion given by him to the amelioration of their condition. The sentiments of a typical institution representing this phase of Mr. Letchworth's philanthropic work are expressed by the following resolution passed by the board of managers of the Craig Colony for Epileptics at a meeting held at Sonyea, N. Y., December 13, 1910:

"WHEREAS, We have learned with deep regret of the death of Hon. William Pryor Letchworth, be it therefore

"Resolved, That while we extend our sympathy to his family in their bereavement, we desire also to record our testimony as to his largeness of heart, abundant charity and his great love for all God's creatures, particularly the orphaned, the sick and the defective. His personal qualities were of the highest order; his life was an inspiration not only to all those who knew him personally but to that wider circle who were acquainted with him through the press and by reputation. His efforts toward securing the establishment of the Craig Colony for Epileptics were most effective and persistent; his later interest in its development, continuing to the very last, was most helpful and enthusiastic. The nation and the State, by his decease, have lost a great and notable worker in the cause of suffering and dependent humanity."

On December 14, 1910, the board of managers of Letchworth Village adopted the following minute:

"By the death of William Pryor Letchworth, LL.D., at his home, 'Glen Iris,' on December first, nineteen hundred and ten, in his eighty-eighth year, the State loses one of its most prominent

public-spirited citizens, and Letchworth Village loses the kindly counsel and constant interest of the man for whom it is named. His personality and the ideals for which he stood make it incumbent upon the State to develop at the Village an institution worthy of him and of the high type of care and training for which he labored long and effectively. His death came after a life of great usefulness, leaving his name and example as a possession of increasing value in forming ideals and setting standards for accomplishment which will keep Letchworth Village steadily abreast of the times."

A funeral service was held in Mr. Letchworth's home at Glen Iris, in Letchworth Park, on Sunday afternoon, December 4, the Rev. Louis A. Peirson, pastor of the Presbyterian Church of Castile, officiating. On Monday, the 5th, the body was taken to Buffalo, the pall bearers being Mr. George H. Bush, Hon. Mortimer N. Cole, Mr. Miles A. Hopkins, Mr. Fred Norris, Hon. Henry A. Pierce and Mr. Silas L. Strivings. At Buffalo, the body was taken to the residence of Mr. Letchworth's brother Josiah at No. 176 Summer street. At two o'clock on Tuesday afternoon, December 6, funeral services were held in the First Presbyterian Church. The pastor, the Rev. Dr. A. V. V. Raymond, officiated. He was assisted by the Rev. Dr. S. S. Mitchell, formerly pastor of the church, and by the Rev. W. R. Boynton. The interment was in Forest Lawn Cemetery. The honorary bearers were Messrs. S. M. Clement, Charles M. Dow, Robert L. Fryer, William H. Gratawick, Edward Hagaman Hall, Frank M. Hollister, James N. Johnston, Franklin D. Locke, George B. Matthews, Roswell Park, Henry A. Pierce, T. Guilford Smith and William Rhineland Stewart. The active bearers were Messrs. William C. Letchworth, Pierre E. Letchworth, Geoffrey J. Letchworth, Edward H. Letchworth, Charles R. Wilson, George P. Warner, George Stickney, Byron Reed and W. G. Barney.

Mr. Letchworth's Will.

On the evening of Sunday, December 4, 1910, after the service at Glen Iris, Mr. Henry R. Howland of Buffalo, custodian of Mr. Letchworth's will, broke the seal of the envelope containing the document and read it in the presence of relatives and a representa-

tive of this Society. At the time of the funeral, Mr. Ogden P. Letchworth, who is named in the will as executor, was abroad: Upon his return to this country, he found it impossible to act as executor, and upon application duly made to the surrogate of Wyoming county at Warsaw, N. Y., Mr. Howland was on March 7, 1911, appointed administrator with the will annexed. The text of the will is as follows:

I. William Pryor Letchworth, hereby revoking my previous will, do make this my last will and testament, namely:

First.— I direct that my executor pay my funeral expenses and all my lawful debts, and also pay for such a marker over my last resting place as my dear brother Josiah in his kindness shall direct.

Second.— I bequeath to the following persons as follows, namely:

To Mrs. D. J. Stickney, daughter of my eldest sister, Eliza, five hundred dollars (\$500).

To Mrs. Newton L. Reed, daughter of my youngest sister, Charlotte, one thousand dollars (\$1,000).

To Mrs. Charles Sumner Hoyt, daughter of my youngest sister, Charlotte, two thousand dollars (\$2,000).

To Susan Pearl Darling, granddaughter of my brother, Edward, twenty-one hundred dollars (\$2,100).

To my cousin, Henry R. Howland, whose interest in historic subjects relating to Glen Iris I warmly appreciate, one thousand dollars (\$1,000).

To my warm friend and wise counselor through many years James N. Johnston, one thousand dollars (\$1,000). Should Mr. Johnston have passed away at the time of my decease, I bequeath this sum to his sister, Margaret.

To my faithful friend, Edward F. Walsh, two hundred and fifty dollars (\$250).

To Miss Caroline Bishop, who has been my faithful secretary for nearly a quarter of a century, twenty-nine hundred dollars (\$2,900).

To Miss Marion G. Weatherston, a skillful graduate nurse who has ministered to my welfare for several years past, two hundred and fifty dollars (\$250).

To the following named persons who were in my employ at least a portion of the year 1906, I bequeath as follows, namely:

To Miss Mary J. Blood, my stenographer, one hundred dollars (\$100).

To Mrs. M. P. Annabel, fifty dollars (\$50).

To Miss Kate E. Nusbickel, fifty dollars (\$50).

To Miss L. Grace Nusbickel, fifty dollars (\$50).

To Miss Rose A. Ryan, fifty dollars (\$50).

To Mr. Fred Wilson, fifty dollars (\$50).

To Mr. Adelbert E. Ludwig, fifty dollars (\$50).

To Mr. Joseph Buebendorf, fifty dollars (\$50).

To Mr. Michael Langen of Portageville, fifty dollars (\$50).

To Mr. James Dumbleton, fifty dollars (\$50).

To Mr. Herbert L. Weidright and wife, fifty dollars (\$50).

To Andrew Swyers and wife, fifty dollars (\$50).

Third.— For the benefit of a few of the great number of charitable organizations and public institutions in which I feel a deep interest, I bequeath as follows:

To the Buffalo General Hospital, one thousand dollars (\$1,000).

To the Buffalo Hospital of the Sisters of Charity, one thousand dollars (\$1,000).

To the Home for the Friendless, five hundred dollars (\$500).

To Mrs. William C. Letchworth the sum of five hundred dollars (\$500) to be dispensed by her for the benefit of the Women's Educational and Industrial Union.

To Mother Mary Ann Burke, of the order of the Sisters of Saint Joseph, to be dispensed in her judgment for the comfort of the aged sisters of Saint Joseph, five hundred dollars (\$500).

To the Buffalo Fine Arts Academy, one thousand dollars (\$1,000).

To the Buffalo Historical Society, one thousand dollars (\$1,000).

To the Buffalo Society of Natural Sciences, five hundred dollars (\$500).

To the Charity Organization Society of Buffalo, five hundred dollars (\$500).

To the Queen City Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, five hundred dollars (\$500).

To the Buffalo Children's Aid Society, five hundred dollars (\$500).

To the Working Boy's Home of the Sacred Heart, five hundred dollars (\$500).

Fourth.— I request that my executor set apart the sum of six thousand dollars (\$6,000), and all my private letters, papers,

memoranda, and books, to be used in whole or in part, as his judgment may direct, for compiling, editing, putting in type and binding, such material relating to my life and work as may be thought worthy of preservation, or of benefit to workers in the field of social science. I prefer that this work be done under the direction of Mr. Joseph N. Larned, whose distinguished ability and large experience in literary work eminently fit him for the performance of such a task.

Fifth.— I hereby bequeath to the *American Scenic and Historic Preservation Society* all the residue of my property. I desire in particular that all objects of historic interest upon the Council House grounds, all my household furniture, pictures, books, and objects of interest, and all my live stock, farming implements, and other property, be used by said Society so far as practicable, in order to preserve, care for, develop, and make more attractive, Letchworth Park.

Sixth.— It is my hope that the interior aspects of my present home be as little changed as possible, and that my oil paintings, pictures, souvenirs, objects of art, musical instruments, and household furniture and furnishings be retained for use and ornament in my home; and that my library, with the exception of books, papers and documents relating to my life or charities and my charity work, be retained in my present home. I desire that such books and papers relating to charity work be eventually kept in a fire-proof building on the Council House grounds. Should Miss Caroline Bishop become Superintendent of Letchworth Park, as is my wish, because of her experience and capacity, I should like her to occupy my home.

Seventh.— In consideration of the great confidence I have in the ability and integrity of my nephew, Ogden P. Letchworth, I hereby nominate him to be executor and trustee of this my last will and testament, giving unto him full power to do all necessary acts to execute this will and testament.

Witness my hand and seal this fifteenth day of February, nineteen hundred and seven.

WILLIAM PRYOR LETCHWORTH. (L. S.)

We, whose names are hereto subscribed, do certify, that on the fifteenth day of February, nineteen hundred and seven, the testator subscribed his name to this instrument in our presence and in the presence of each of us, and at the same time, in our presence and hearing, declared the same to be his last will and testament, and

requested us, and each of us, to sign our names thereto as witnesses to the execution thereof, which we hereby do in the presence of the testator and of each other, on the said date, and write opposite our names our respective places of residence.

CHARLES P. NORTON, residing at Buffalo, N. Y.
WILLIAM M. WHEELER, residing at Buffalo, N. Y.

Farm Leases.

Upon the termination of Mr. Letchworth's life tenancy on December 1, 1910, the American Scenic and Historic Preservation Society, by the terms of chapter 1 of the Laws of 1907, became custodian of Letchworth Park and assumed charge of the real estate; but owing to the fact that Mr. Letchworth's personal estate has not yet been settled, the Society deemed it advisable to extend for one year from March 1, 1911, the farm leases of Andrew Swyers and Herbert L. Weidright, at rentals of \$575 and \$260 respectively, payable one-half in money and one-half in labor.

Proposed Arboretum.

Until Mr. Letchworth's estate is settled, the Society will not be able to formulate definitely its plans for the future administration of the park.

It is contemplating, however, making an arboretum an important feature of the park. At the regular meeting of the board of trustees on December 28, 1910, the Hon. Charles M. Dow, chairman of our Letchworth Park Committee, referred to this subject in the following words:

"It will be recalled by the members of the Letchworth Park Committee that at an early conference with Dr. Letchworth the project of establishment an arboretum at Letchworth Park was discussed in an indefinite way and that a proposition for something of that kind was regarded as one of the possible outcomes of his gift. This conference was before it had been determined that the gift should be to the State of New York and not to our Society directly. Since that time I have had several conversations with Mr. Letchworth on the subject and have been led to make personal visits to some of the great arboretums of the world, notably that at Buitenzorg, Java, Singapore and Penang on the Strait settlements, and at Hong Kong, all tropical gardens and arboretums;

also the Kow Gardens in England, and a few days ago, the Arnold Arboretum at Harvard, where I had a very satisfactory interview with Prof. C. S. Sargent, the director, touching directly on our possible activities at Letchworth Park.

"I believe that the Arboretums above described are the principal ones in the world. The location of the Kew Gardens, with its poor soil and the smoke conditions, makes the work there unsatisfactory. Aside from that there are some small collections in England and on the continent.

"In this country the Arboretum connected with the Rochester Park system stands second to the Arnold, they having the second best collection of trees in America, and after that there is nothing of importance.

"Through my observation I believe it to be entirely practical and desirable for us to establish either a New York State or a General Arboretum, at Letchworth Park, the soil and other conditions there being very favorable. Western New York is recognized as one of the best tree sections of the United States.

"In the event of our establishing a New York State collection (that is, trees and shrubs that grow naturally in the State of New York) we would have the only collection of its kind where it is possible to study the trees and shrubs of New York growing together, planted under a systematic botanical arrangement, in order to facilitate their study and comparison. It would not be difficult or expensive to establish and maintain such a collection, as the number of these trees is not very large.

"If a General Arboretum, the purpose would be to have the principal timber trees likely to be hardy in New York and going to be really valuable here. They should be planted in forests of such trees, in masses of not less than ten to fifteen acres. For instance, our beeches, the European beech, and the Japanese beech could be planted side by side in such a group. Such an experiment in sylviculture has never been made in this country in any comprehensive way, and the results in view of such an experiment cannot fail to be of great value in influencing the future composition of the forests which must be planted in the northern states. The expense of either of these two enterprises need not necessarily be great—say \$10,000 a year and ten years will practically accomplish the foundation work; after that, only care and maintenance.

"The value of the work would be great in twenty years; and in one hundred years will have been shown to be tremendous, it