

TOUR

*Historic Allegheny Cemetery
To Visit Famous Gravesites*

Stanley William Turrentine

"Rosey" Rowsell

Lillian Russell

Harry Kendall Thaw

Charles Avery

General John Neville

General James O'Hara

Commodore Joshua Barney

and

More of Pittsburgh's History



Allegheny Cemetery Historical Association

4734 Butler Street

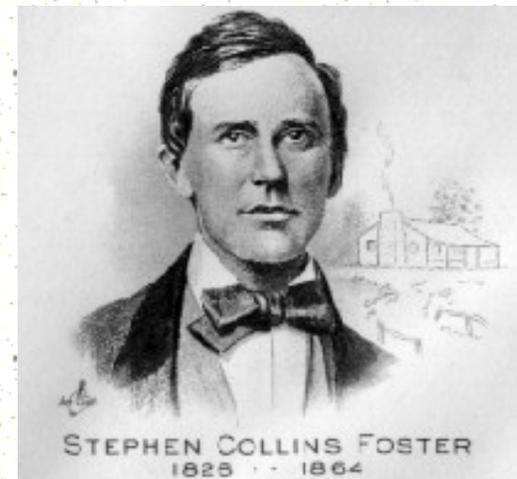
Pittsburgh PA 15201-2999

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Stephen Collins Foster

"Finder of Many Melodies"



Pittsburgh's Legendary Composer

Section 21—Lot 30

ALLEGHENY CEMETERY

PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA



Stephen Foster's youth was molded by Pittsburgh people and experiences. He lived here the greater part of his maturity and accomplished his best work during this period. In his biography of Foster, Stephen's brother, **Morrison**, described early Pittsburgh and named some of its first settlers (*and also friends and neighbors to the Foster family.*) Many of these names are familiar to Pittsburgher's and are also interred in Allegheny Cemetery.....**John Neville, Stephen Bayard, Isaac Craig, Ebenezer Denny, James O'Hara** and many more—too numerous to list.

"The White Cottage" at 3600 Penn Avenue—Pittsburgh PA

Stephen lived in many parts of Pittsburgh during his life. He was born in the Foster family home at 3600 Penn Avenue, **"The White Cottage."** In 1935, a dispute arose regarding Stephen's actual birthplace. Henry Ford, a Michigan auto manufacturer, dedicated an ancient cottage in his early American exhibition, Greenfield Village as the **"Birthplace of Stephen C. Foster."** This was corroborated by several Foster relatives, the Columbia Broadcasting System and the newspapers. However, it was actually the old William Toman (3414 Penn Avenue) homestead which was built at least two or more years after Foster was born. As a result of the widespread publicity, sent out by the Ford Motor Company, the historic reputation of the actual *White Cottage* was tarnished.

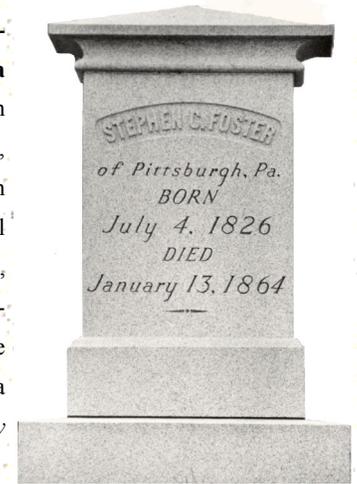
Stephen's education was consistent with that of the sons of other leading Scotch-Irish families in the community. At five, he was sent to an "infant school" and later attended Allegheny Academy. In 1840 and 1841 he was a student at two Bradford County institutions and while attending one of these schools, at only age 14, Stephen composed his first musical work, *The Tioga Waltz.* He attended Jefferson College at Canonsburg (Washington & Jefferson) but stayed only a week and did not return. At age 17 he composed *Open Thy Lattice Love* which was published one year later (1844). *Oh! Susanna* was published in 1848, just after gold was discovered in California. The six years from early 1850 through 1855 were the most successful of Foster's life with songs, compositions, arrangements and translations—more than one hundred and sixty works in all. Each year, at least one new song was published which added to his permanent fame: *Camptown Races* and *Nelly Bly* (1850); *Old Folks at Home* (1851); *Massa's in de Cold Ground* (1852); *My Old Kentucky Home* and *Old Dog Tray* (1853); *Jeanie with the Light Brown Hair* (1854); *Come Where My Love Lies Dreaming* (1855).

Two of the greatest years of Foster's life were 1850 and 1851. He was a successful professional composer; fell in love and married **Jane Denny McDowell**, the daughter of Pittsburgh physician Dr. Andrew McDowell; his only daughter **Marion** was born and his finest song was composed. The year 1860 was a definite turning point in Stephen's life when he moved to New York and his wife and daughter returned to Pennsylvania. He lived on the Bowery, had little income and verged on alcoholism, however, it was during this time that he made a supreme effort and created one of his truly great works, *Old Black Joe.* There was still a spark remaining in his dying genius. In the summer of 1863, he summoned his waning strength to write *Beautiful Dreamer* which was evident that Stephen was seeking an escape from the bitter realities of the Bowery and Broadway and the failure of his life in New York. The song was not published until March 1864—two months after Stephen's death.

*"Sounds of the rude world, heard in the day,
Lulled by the moonlight, have all passed away."*

*References: "Pittsburgh Composer and his Memorial" by Fletcher Hodges, Jr., published 1951, 4th printing
"The Birthplace of Stephen C. Foster as recorded by his Father, Mother and Brother" compiled by Evelyn Foster Morneweck (daughter of brother, Morrison), published 1936*

Stephen Collins Foster was born in the community of Lawrenceville, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania on July 4, 1826. He died at age 37 on January 13, 1864 in New York after a severe fall. At the request of his family, his body was taken to an undertaker and placed in an iron coffin. On the arrival of his wife, Jane Denny McDowell and brothers Henry Baldwin Foster and Morrison Foster, Stephen's remains were taken to Trinity Cathedral in Pittsburgh where throngs of people came to visit. At the gate of Allegheny Cemetery, the funeral cortege was met by a company of musicians who played *"Come Where My Love Lies Dreaming"* and *"Old Folks at Home."*



Foster's parents, **William Barclay Foster** and **Elizabeth Clayland Tomlinson Foster** are also interred in the Foster family lot. **Marion Foster Welch**, Stephen Foster's only daughter, died at the age of 84 and is interred in Section 39, Lot 579 (Rose family lot). Foster's widow, **Jane McDowell**, married again in later years to Matthew Wiley, died on January 9, 1903 and is interred in the Dr. Andrew McDowell lot, Section 12, Lot 14.

***Allegheny Cemetery Invites the public to attend the annual
Stephen Collins Foster Memorial Service on January 13th of each year
at the Foster Memorial Window in the Temple of Memories Mausoleum.
Call Allegheny Cemetery for details***



Other Sources for Stephen Foster information.....

Stephen Foster Memorial—University of Pittsburgh—Center for American Music—Pgh PA
A collection of more than 10,000 items relating to the composer and his era, including facsimiles of the first editions of his music.

Stephen Foster Memorial—White Springs—Florida

In this famous Foster Museum, designed to represent an ante-bellum mansion, are eight dioramas of favorite Foster songs, many interesting old musical instruments, two valuable Foster paintings by Howard Chandler Christy, copies of original Foster manuscripts and other priceless exhibits. There is a 200-foot Carillon Tower with daily concerts.