

HISTORIC RED HOOK

The Hall and Roosevelt Vault

Valentine Gill Hall

March 17, 1834 - July 17, 1880

Mary Livingston Ludlow Hall

April 24, 1843 - August 14, 1919

Elliott Roosevelt

February 28, 1860 - August 14, 1894

Anna Rebecca Hall Roosevelt

March 17, 1863 - December 7, 1892

Elliott Roosevelt, Jr.

September 29, 1889 - May 25, 1893

Gracie Hall Roosevelt

June 28, 1891 - September 26, 1941

St. Paul's and Trinity Parish Cemetery, Tivoli

Walking along the curved wall of vaults into the cemetery, to the right or west is a white building which has a gray peaked roof, two circular windows on its eastern side, and an arched doorway and circular slatted opening on its western side.

Kin of a First Lady and of a President

The vault at St. Paul's Episcopal Church Cemetery in Tivoli—fittingly near the small neighboring park containing a bust of First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt—is inscribed at the back V. G. Hall 1894. On its front is carved

ERECTED BY HIS WIFE
AND CHILDREN
1894
MARY L. HALL
ELIZABETH H. MORTIMER
VALENTINE G. HALL
EDITH L. HALL
MAUDE L. HALL.

Those who know the history of our nation will understand that people interred in the vault are related to First Lady Anna Eleanor (Roosevelt) Roosevelt and President Theodore Roosevelt. Those who know the history of Tivoli will understand Eleanor viewed the site as the resting place of her closest maternal family members. Valentine Gill Hall and his wife Mary Livingston (Ludlow) Hall were Eleanor Roosevelt's maternal grandparents. Their daughter Anna Rebecca (Hall) Roosevelt married Elliott Roosevelt, the younger brother of President Theodore Roosevelt. Also interred here are Eleanor's younger brothers Elliott Roosevelt, Jr., and Gracie Hall Roosevelt. Eleanor (Roosevelt) Roosevelt, herself, is

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laid to rest beside her husband President Franklin Delano Roosevelt at Springwood, their home in Hyde Park, New York. Other Hall family members including Eleanor's maternal uncles, aunts, and cousins are interred in the vault, but their stories remain for another time.

The patriarch of the family, named Valentine Gill Hall and born March 17, 1834, was a partner in Tonnele and Hall; he married Mary Livingston (Ludlow) Hall who was born April 24, 1843. The couple lived in New York City and in Tivoli at the estate Oak Terrace. They had seven children. He died July 17, 1880.

Their eldest child Anna Rebecca Hall was born March 17, 1863, and in December 1883, she married Elliott Roosevelt, the son of Theodore Roosevelt and Mary Stewart (Bulloch) Roosevelt and the younger brother of President Theodore Roosevelt.. "By all accounts, Elliott was the most favored of the Roosevelt children," writes Blanche Wiesen Cook in *Eleanor Roosevelt: Volume One 1884-1933*. He was "called Nell, after the understanding, compassionate, and long-suffering little girl in Charles Dickens's *Old Curiosity Shop*, Wiesen Cook continues, and adds, "Neither overbearing nor strident, he seemed always capable and charming." That equilibrium was not to last, however, as Elliott left his childhood years and entered adulthood.

Anna and Elliott's marriage was difficult. Elliott dealt with mental health issues and alcoholism and was an unfaithful husband; he often was living away from the family in sanitariums attempting to be cured even as he was facing lawsuits, and many of his escapades were fodder for the newspapers. Nonetheless, a year after their wedding, their firstborn Anna, widely known as Eleanor, was born in 1884 (and called Eleanor as a combination of her father's given name Elliott and nickname Nell, according to *Eleanor* by David Michaelis). Eleanor adored her father. A second child and her younger brother, Elliott Roosevelt, Jr., was born September 29, 1889, to Anna and Elliott, and their youngest son Gracie Hall Roosevelt, known as Hall, was born June 28, 1891. Separated from her husband due to his erratic behavior and depending upon her family, Anna died of diphtheria on December 7, 1892. News of her death was covered in the newspaper for days, due to her position in society and her connections to the Hall and Roosevelt families.

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A year later, son Elliott, Jr., died of scarlet fever and diphtheria, writes Wiesen Cook, quoting a letter that Eleanor's father wrote to his firstborn. Eleanor was staying with her mother's family as her father was unable to care for her or her younger brother Hall. Eleanor's father wrote, as quoted by Wiesen Cook, "My little Nell—We bury little Ellie tomorrow up at Tivoli by Mother's side. He is happy in Heaven with her now so you must not grieve or sorrow. And you will have to be doubly a good Daughter to your Father and good sister to our little Brudie boy [Hall] who is left to us. I know you will my own little Heart...Your affectionate Father."

In 1894, Eleanor's father Elliott died, reports *The New York Times*, of heart disease, continuing "Mr. Roosevelt's death was unexpected although he had been somewhat ailing for more than a year...Mr. Roosevelt was severely afflicted by the death of his wife eighteen months ago....The blow was added to by the death of a son in May, 1893." Initially, at the insistence of his elder brother Theodore Roosevelt, Elliott was buried in the Roosevelt vault at Brooklyn's Greenwood Cemetery, but he was re-interred in Tivoli two years later, according to Anthony Musso's *Poughkeepsie Journal* article "Tivoli vault houses Roosevelt kin" of June 17, 2015.

Eleanor's grandmother Mary (Ludlow) Hall became the caretaker of her grandchildren Eleanor and Hall. She died in 1919 at Oak Hill. An announcement in *The New York Times* notes, "She had been ill for several months. Upon the death of her husband, who was a prominent banker and merchant...Mrs. Hall gradually withdrew from social life. Before that she had been noted for her entertainments, especially those given for the younger set and for charity." Twenty-five years after her father's death and an adult when her grandmother died, Eleanor reflected of her grandmother, "Her life was a sad one in many ways, and yet those who were closest to her mourned her deeply and sincerely," writes Wiesen Cook. Both Eleanor and Franklin Roosevelt were present at her grandmother's funeral.

Eleanor looked out for her youngest brother Gracie Hall Roosevelt throughout his life. Sadly, he too had problems with alcohol addiction. He passed away at the age of 50 at Walter Reed Army Hospital with his sister Eleanor by his side, according to *The Berkshire*

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Eagle of September 25, 1941, which states, “The relationship between big bluff Gracie Hall Roosevelt and his only sister, the First Lady, was extremely close. Orphaned as children, they were tied by a strong and never-ending bond.” Both First Lady and President Roosevelt attended Hall’s funeral services held in Tivoli.”