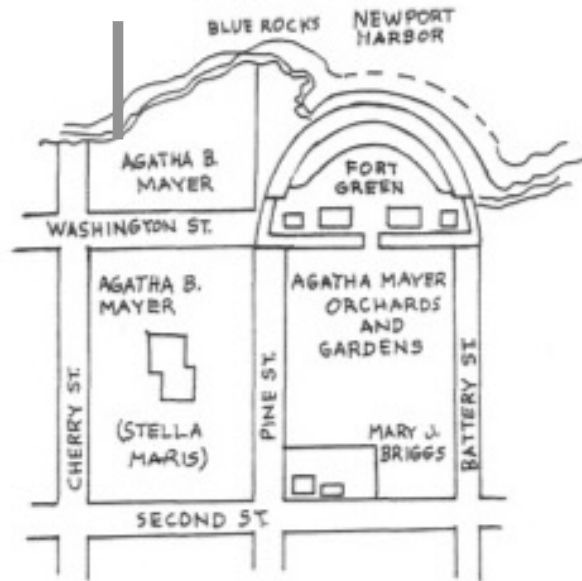


Agatha Mayer's Spirit

by Lisa Stuart



Edward Mayer, a successful Austrian businessman, built the Victorian house Blue Rocks/Stella Maris (91 Washington Street) in the 1850s for his wife Agatha Minturn. Agatha purchased the land and houses from Cherry Street to Battery Street and from the Bay to Second Street and made it into her garden. The estate included Battery Park (then Fort Greene) which she rented from the Quakers.

Sadly, Agatha suffered from depression. The day after Christmas in 1870, in a fit of melancholia, Agatha “felt the spirits calling her. She walked through her garden to end of the pier where she threw herself into the water.”

According to Ester Fisher Benson, Agatha may have taken part in a séance that evening conducted by her brother-in-law Thomas “Shepard Tom” Hazard (*Green Light*, December, 1986) Following the death of his wife Frances in 1854 Shepard Tom became a Spiritualist. He was obsessed with materialization, spirit life, mediums, and psychic photographs. He often conducted séances to communicate with the dead.

Although Agatha died that night, her spirit has still lingers with us. Ed Madden, the innkeeper and former owner of Stella Maris, had an eerie conversation with a female guest one morning at breakfast. (*Green Light*, Winter, 2012-13.) The guest asked if there was a ghost in the house. She

noted that since she was a child she had a sixth sense.

The guest went on to share that the previous evening, as she sat doing her hair at the vanity, she encountered a benign spirit. She didn't see anything but sensed a woman's spirit standing behind her in the room. The name "Agatha" came to her mind.

She wondered if the name had any meaning to Ed. Asked if she knew the history of Stella Maris, the guest replied "no." Ed told her the tale of Agatha Mayer and her suicide.

I also encountered odd occurrences in the house built by her son William on part of the estate (107 Washington Street). There was a wood framed standing mirror in the guest room. No matter how tightly I secured the mirror section so the mirror was vertical when I returned to the room it would be turned horizontal facing the floor.

Knowing the story of Agatha's suicide and finding no other deaths having occurred there, I started attributing the odd occurrences to Agatha's spirit. At the time I had no idea that her spirit had been seen at Stella Maris. I only stumbled upon Ed's article many years later.

Upon reading Ed's article I was intrigued that the encounters always involved mirrors. A quick Google search revealed that mirrors are a portal to the other world.

What happened that night in 1870? Was Agatha's spirit trapped here on earth or did Shepard Tom summons her back to earth at another time? Perhaps another séances is needed to find the answers!

Links to the Green Light Articles

Green Light, December 1986 <https://thepointassociation.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/1986-December.pdf>

Green Light, April 1991 <https://thepointassociation.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/1991-April.pdf>

Green Light, Winter 2012-13 <https://thepointassociation.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/2012-winter.pdf>

would not admit it point blank.

Suicide.—Fire.

Providence, R. I., Dec. 27.—In Newport, early yesterday morning, Mrs. Agatha B. Mayer, who had shown insane symptoms, drowned herself by jumping from the wharf. N. D. Calby's factory in Gloucester, on the