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③ *The Fridley monument. 5-26-93*

First we'll tell the prestigious story, then the scandal: Abram M. Fridley was a frontier agent, a farmer and a Minnesota legislator who introduced the state's first women's suffrage bill. The city of Fridley is named for him. He had one of Lakewood's most extravagant monuments built; it shows a thoughtful, classically draped woman with book in hand.

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Fast forward to 1914, when Fridley's great-granddaughter, Mary Fridley Price, died after a fall from a steep bluff while trying to retrieve her dog near East River Rd. Her husband inherited her estate, valued at \$23,000 — big bucks at the time. A year later he sued the Minneapolis Park Board, alleging negligence because there was no guard rail where Mary fell. In preparing its defense, the park board found some fishy stuff. Mary's body had been found 27 feet beyond the cliff's edge. An expert testified that some propulsion, not a mere fall, would have been necessary to get her small (100-pound) body there. After these questions were raised, her widower abruptly dismissed his lawsuit.

In Lakewood Cemetery

But Mary's father got thinking. He hired a private investigator who quickly discovered that Price had never legally divorced his first wife and had been living with another woman since the night of Mary's death. Price's buddy, who supposedly had been tinkering under the hood of the Prices' 1913 touring car when Mary "fell," testified that he had witnessed the murder. Price was convicted of first-degree murder in 1916. He died in prison and was cremated at Lakewood. Don't look for his marker; his ashes went elsewhere.

You're welcome to walk the cemetery grounds and enjoy the scenery from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. all summer. Shorter hours are in effect after Labor Day. Cemetery officials ask that you not picnic, bike or drink alcohol on the grounds. They also would like you to check with the office if you want to take photos.