



Ambrose Chiaroni (junior) is buried in the Southern Cemetery and was the nephew of Ambrogio (Ambrose) Chiaroni in the Northern Cemetery, who was the subject of an earlier article in this series. Both men ran a business in Dunedin as a fine art dealer with gallery.

Uncle Ambrose opened his shop in George St, in the first block north of the Octagon where the Civic Centre is now. Harnett's Dunedin Directory for 1864 had him listed there as a "looking glass manufacturer" while in 1875-6 he was listed as a "picture frame maker."

An advertisement in the *Otago Daily Times* on 4 August 1874 stated: "A. Chiaroni begs to inform his friends and the public that he has opened his new premises in George Street. AC would respectfully draw the attention of his customers to the fact that the whole of his stock is entirely new, having been recently selected by himself in the best markets in the Home Country." It listed items, including "drawing and dining room Gilt Pier Glasses, Cheval Glasses, in walnut and mahogany frames, oil paintings, oleographs and sporting pictures by the best English and Italian artists."

Ambrose Jr took over the business before his uncle died in 1911. In 1908 he advertised that the "City Art Depot" was now in the Empire Buildings, Princes St ("next to the Union Bank") boasting that it had a gallery with "the finest assortment of pictures in Dominion."

In 1914 the young Ambrose bought for the reserve price of £4,250 the Pollock St, Maori Hill house "The Rest" and its surrounding property, previously owned by Judge Dudley Ward who died the previous year.

In a pre-sale advertisement the auctioneers Park, Reynolds Ltd described the property: "For a retired person this affords one of the very best chances. For the man in business it is a property where all cares and worries can be cast to the winds, and for subdivision... Well, we only ask the speculator to take one look at this magnificent block and its amenities. The residence is a good, old-fashioned, single-storey dwelling of 10 rooms, with electric lighting and conveniences, and there are in addition other dwellings, gardeners' cottages, etc., all that is necessary for the comfort and convenience of the owner. . ."

"The house grounds, comprising 1.5 acres, are laid out as a quaint Old English Garden , with terraces and winding walks, amongst a profusion of flowering shrubs, and in spring and summer a profusion the various English wild flowers and rare varieties make this one of the show places." There was almost 10 acres of land, including eight acres of paddocks.

Like the Judge before him, Ambrose kept a large private gallery of paintings in the home and lived there until his death in 1924 when he was buried in the Southern Cemetery (No.1713). Later much of the land was subdivided and Como Street below the house was formed, named after the Chiaronis' home town near Lake Como in Italy.

Prepared by the Historic Cemeteries Conservation Trust of New Zealand (www.cemeteries.org.nz) from information supplied by Geoff Adams of Dunedin from his book "*Judge Ward*," by Geoff Adams (Amazon Books).