

HISTORY OF THE NORTHFIELD-MACEDONIA CEMETERY

COMPILED BY

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1967

Unfortunately for the purpose of the modern historian, the early settlers of Summit County and especially Northfield Township left no written record of their experiences -- only meager accounts contained in letters and recorded in journals have been left to give succeeding generations an idea of what took place in the early settings of the Township. This we find

true in regard to the history of the Northfield-Macedonia Cemetery.

History tells us that the first settlers in Northfield Township were Isaac Bacon and family who came from Massachusetts in April, 1897. He built his log cabin on a spot that is now Route 631, about one mile west of County Highway 16.

The next family to arrive was that of Jeremiah Cranmer in June, 1810. Records show that Mr. Isaac Bacon died November, 1812, and was buried on the banks of Tinker's Creek¹.

There seems to be some disagreement as to when the first burial in the now present Northfield-Macedonia Cemetery took place and who it was. There are no records available. We find that the marker with the oldest date to be that of Abram Cranmer (9-8-1812). This was 35 years before the land was deeded for cemetery use. The record of transfer of deeds, Summit County volume 13, page 75, year 1847, shows that 1.5 acres were acquired for cemetery use on August 28, 1847, from William and June Lemmon. The Township Trustees at the time were David Bacon, Charles H. Johnson, and Elyah Stores. George Lille was J. P. The 1.5 acres were located in Northfield Township, Number 5 in the eleventh range of Township in the Connecticut Western Reserve, in the State of Ohio, and which is also in the County of Summit and is known as being a part of Lot 44. This spot

or place was selected because it was high and dry. It was given the name of Chestnut Hill Cemetery. It was known by this name until some time between July, 1918, and April 1919, when the name was changed to its present name of Northfield-Macedonia Cemetery².

In 1847, there were many other burial places in the Township. There was a cemetery at Brandywine, and, according to local residents, the bodies were moved from there to Northfield-Macedonia Cemetery in the latter part of the 1890's or early part of 1900. There were cemeteries at Little York as well as private plots on private farms. There were burial grounds on the Methodist Church land and also on the land owned by the Presbyterian Church at Boyden Road and Route 82. This was abandoned and the bodies were moved to the Northfield-Macedonia Cemetery because of the swampy conditions of the land.

On April 24, 1862, another piece of land, .38 acres were added to the cemetery from William M.

and Ellen J. Lemmon. The Township Trustees at that time were David C. Bacon, Parmenio Walcott, and William Nesbit, with John C. Wallace, J. P.³. Again in 1870, there were added 13 rods acquired from John Freeman. The Township Trustees were Parmenio Walcott, James Nesbit, and Summer Nash, with Henry Palmer, J.P. (Note: John Freeman made his mark before Henry W. Palmer and Betsy Lyons.)⁴.

William Lemmon in the year, 1881, sold to the Northfield Trustees -- W. Ranney, A.K. Richey, and G.L. Bishop, 0.67 acre. The J. P. was

2. Minutes book of Cemetery Trustees, 1908-1919.

3. Record of Transfer of Deeds, Summit County, Vol. 45, page 27, 1862.

4. Record of Transfer of Deeds, Summit County, Vol. 71, page 469-470.

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William L. Palmer⁵. In the same year, Betsy and James Lyons sold to the same trustees .048 acre of land.⁶

Harriet N., Charles L., Warner K., and Florence Wallace in 1882 sold to the Northfield Township Trustees 191/1000 acre or 3056/100 square rods in Lot 54 which is next to Lot 44.⁷

The first record we have of a Sexton to care for the Cemetery was in 1892 when H.T. Gilbert was hired by the Northfield Township Trustees for the sum of \$25 a year to care for the hearse, harness, vault, and tolling of the church bell.⁸ Let us pause here to state that the vault referred to here was located in the bank along the north part of the original Cemetery, and all that is left of it is the outline of the foundation. No records can be found to show when this vault was built or when it was taken down.

In the year, 1892, the Township Trustees ordered that the question of procuring more land for the Cemetery be submitted to a vote of the electors of the Township at the annual election to be held on the 3rd day of April, 1883. The results of this election were 133 voting Yes, 14 voting No. The total number of electors was 154. On April 7, 1893, a levy of \$1,500 for Cemetery

purpose was levied. Three acres of land was purchased from Andrew Graham in 1894. \$549.58 was spent to grade the addition.⁹

5. Record of transfer of Deed, Summit County, Vol. 127, pp. 508-509, 1891.
6. Ibid. Vol. 127, p. 510.
7. Ibid. Vol. 130, P. 425, 1882.
8. Minutes of the Northfield Township Trustees, 1892-1907.
9. Ibid., and Record of Transfer of Deed, Summit County, Vol. 209, p. 267, 1894.

In the fall of 1894, a meeting of the citizens was called to meet in the Town Hall to discuss the matter of forming an association for the Improvement of the Cemetery as it had been overgrown with weeds and brush. Initial steps were taken, and Mrs. George Bliss was elected president. Miss Mary Darling was elected secretary. On October 18, 1894, another meeting was called in the Town Hall for the completing of this organization and to plan ways and means. At this meeting, 16 women were enrolled as members and paid of fee of 25 cents each. It was decided at this meeting to enroll men as honorary members by having them pay a fee of 50 cents. Thus was born the Ladies' Cemetery Association and have in the past, as now in the present, been a great influence in the improvements in the Cemetery. In 1913, this group was incorporated as an organization but not for profit. This group became responsible for the money entrusted to them for endowment purposes.¹⁰

On May 9, 1896, it was resolved by the Township Trustees that a well be drilled and a pump be purchased for it. This resolution was carried out. At this time, L. Holtzhauer was appointed to hire men to clear the weeds from the Cemetery.¹¹

In 1896, a deed book was purchased and from this book is found the first record of cemetery lots.

In 1897, Elmer Truby was hired to toll the bell for each death for the sum of 50 cents each. H.T. Gilert was engaged to care for the hearse, vault, and to see to the selling of lots. He was appointed Sexton for the Cemetery.

10. Minutes book of the Ladies' Cemetery Association.

11. Minutes book of the Northfield Township Trustees, 1892-1907.

He was to dig all graves at \$3 per grave, make his own collections, clear all dirt and rubbish, and remove same at the sum of \$25 per year, plus \$5 per grave. A tool house -- 10 x 12 was built during this same year.¹² This building was taken down in 1962. A new concrete service building was erected in its place and room was provide for the present parking lot.

Bids were received and a contract was awarded to W. P. Thompson of Macedonia in 1898 to build a receiving vault according to plans and specifications drawn by architects Lehman and Schmidt. This contract was in the amount of \$1,400 (the lowest bid). A committee was appointed consisting of H.H. Sage, A.K. Spafford, and M.W. Stanley to oversee the construction of this building. This building was built of Northfield stone and is still standing. It was remodeled into an office and meeting room for the Township Trustees in 1959.¹³

In 1898, it was decided to clear the rubbish and have a board fence built "beginning at the end of the board and wire on the east side of the cemetery, thence running North to corner slope, then west to stone, thence southwest to stone at north line of the old cemetery grounds".

The Township Trustees appropriated \$50 to the Ladies' Cemetery Association to be used to purchase a windmill and equipment for well.

On August 27, 1906, bids were accepted and a contract awarded to M.A. Dempsey for drilling a well at the Cemetery at a price of \$1.25 per foot and furnishing 3 5/8 pipes. The well was drilled at a depth of 20 feet.

The hearse house was moved in 1908 from its site in the village to the Cemetery. The hearse was disposed of in 1924 by order of the Township Trustees¹⁶.

The first record of a Cemetery Board of Trustees elected by the officials of the townships and villages that can be found are in the minutes of a meeting called to order on January 15, 1908, with Charles W. Fell, president; L.M. Dalrymple, secretary; and H.E. Chamberlain, treasurer¹⁶.

In 1910, land was again purchased to add to the Cemetery. At this time 1.37 acres were bought from James Lyons.¹⁸

In 1918, 8.516 acres was acquired from Martha Graham bringing the Cemetery to its present size of 14 3/4 acres.¹⁹

The road was put back in from the Northeast corner of the Cemetery to connect with the drive back of the present office in 1914.²⁰

Mr. and Mrs. George T. Bishop presented to the Cemetery Trustees in 1919 a plan for improving the Cemetery. This plan was accepted by the Trustees and they raised a fund of money and labor in the amount of \$3,000 which was matched by Mr. and Mrs. Bishop. The improvements were made. The Bishops also paid for half of the iron fence which now encloses the Cemetery on two sides. The large iron gate with the stone posts at the corner of Route 631 and County Highway 16, and

which is the front gate, was given by Mrs. Bishop. It is a replica of one of the gates at Arlington National Cemetery.²¹

Barberry hedges were planted in trenches on both sides of the drive from Route 631 to the office, but were removed in 1928. In 1928, the Ladies' Cemetery Association rested a tablet in memory of the soldiers of the War of 1812

16. *ibid*

17. Minutes Book of the Chestnut Hill Cemetery Trustees 1908-1919.

18. Record of Transferral of Deed, Summit County, 1997, Volume 387, page 149.

19. Minutes Book of Cemetery Trustees, 1908-1919.

20. Minutes Book of Northfield-Macedonia Cemetery Trustees, 1919-1948.

and can be seen today just east of the office at a point of a triangular memorial bed between the two driveways.²²

The grade on Route 631 was changed in 1947, doing away with the west drive and moving the fence and front gate to their present locations.

A resolution in 1953 was passed by the Cemetery Board that all future burials in the Northfield-Macedonia Cemetery had to be made in a concrete box or vault.²³

A tornado hit the Cemetery in 1956 and uprooted several large trees and toppled several tall monuments. It took several weeks to clear away the debris and right the monuments. Some of the scars show to this day.

Electric service was run into the Cemetery under ground along the drive from Route 631 to the office. This replaced older lines and service. This was done in 1959 and, at the same time, the vault was remodeled into a modern office and meeting room for the trustees.²⁴

On September 3, 1960, a contract was entered into with Weldo Product Company to repair 840 feet or 105 sections of the iron fence along County Highway 16. This fence was taken down and all new rails, top and bottom, were put into place.

Robert Karle Construction Company was given the contract on July 29, 1961, to build a service building of concrete block for the sum of \$4,200.25.²⁵

The oldest rules and regulations for Chestnut Hill Cemetery were printed by N.R. Brown of Macedonia and adopted by the Northfield Township Trustees on June 5, 1897. Some of the highlights of this booklet were as follows:

22. Minutes book of the Northfield-Macedonia Cemetery Trustees, 1919-1948.

23. Ibid

24. Minutes book of the Northfield-Macedonia Cemetery Trustees, 1948-1961.

25. Minutes book of the Northfield-Macedonia Cemetery Trustees, 1961-1967.

"A Sexton be employed beginning the third Monday of each April, and who shall have charge of the receiving vault, open and close all graves, collecting \$3 from such parties for compensation for said graves, and removing surplus dirt to the dumping grounds. The price of lots shall be \$10 for a double lot, and \$4 for a single lot to the residents of the Township and double price to non-residents. All graves shall not be less than five feet deep. The Trustees desiring to discourage "Sunday funerals" as much as possible will not permit the removal of bodies from the receiving vault for internment on Sundays, unless for good and sufficient reasons. No rapid driving will be allowed and vehicles must be kept strictly within limits of the driveway. Drivers of carriages at funerals will be required to remain quietly with their teams during the ceremonies. No horse may be left in the Cemetery unhitched or without an attendant.

I wish to thank all who helped me in any way in getting this little history of Northfield-Macedonia Cemetery. I hope that the Cemetery may continue to have the support of the citizens of this community and retain the standing that it now holds in the Cemeteries of this State of Ohio.

CEMETERY TRUSTEES SINCE THE FOUNDING OF THE BOARD IN 1908

Charles W. Felt, president

1/15/08 - 3/9/12

L.M. Dalrymple, secretary

1/15/08 - 5/15/13

A.S. Neal, president

3/9/12 - 5/17/13

W. Beamey, president

3/9/13 - 5/6/16

6/1/18 - 5/4/20

M.A. Van Horn, secretary

5/17/13 - 3/19/24

E. W. Saxe, president,

5/6/16 - 6/1/18

H. A. Cochran, treasurer

5/6/16 - 6/1/18

J. M. McKea, treasurer

6/1/18 - 5/4/20

E. H. Carter, president

5/4/20 - 5/12/22

Thomas F. Lasher, treasurer

5/4/20 - 5/14/24

Frank Townsend, president

5/12/22 - 5/14/24

Ed. Carter

5/14/24 - 6/21/26

L. J. Wright, secretary

3/14/24 - 5/14/24

C. F. Sentar, secretary

5/14/24 - 7/13/25

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Miss Bradley, treasurer

5/14/24 - 4/4/27

J. V. Pajan, secretary

7/13/25 - 8/21/26

David L. Grimm, president

6/21/26 - 10/23/28

F. H. Carter, secretary

6/21/26 - 10/23/28

Mrs. Cuyler, treasurer

4/14/27 - 10/23/28

and

secretary

10/23/28-4/14/32

A. Hufner, president

10/23/28 - 6/2/30

E. G. Smith, president

6/2/30 - 5/9/32

A. T. Collin, treasurer

6/2/30 - 5/9/32

Mr. Honey, president

5/9/32 - 10/10/34

T. B. Burroughs, treasurer

5/9/32 - 5/8/36

A. R. Nesbit, secretary

4/14/32 - 6/10/37

Howard Graham, president

10/10/34 - 7/1/35

Frank Wiltshire, president

7/1/35 - 6/10/37

and secretary

6/10/37 - 6/4/40

A. A. McConnel, treasurer

5/8/36 - 1/23/46

E. M. Fell, president

6/10/37 - 6/4/40

W. A. McDowell, president

6/4/40 - 3/28/44

Samuel Ayars, secretary

6/4/40 - 6/5/47

Elwood Waters, president

3/28/44 - 6/5/52

Glen Wright, treasurer

1/23/46 - 6/5/47

and secretary

6/5/47 - 1/18/54

Cyrus Eaton, Jr. treasurer

6/5/47 - 9/16/47

J. Bank, treasurer

9/16/47 - 5/23/50

Archie Milani, treasurer

5/23/50 - 8/20/51

Edward Hunt, treasurer

8/20/51 - 1/18/54

Edward Hunt, treasurer

8/20/51 - 1/18/54

Herbert O. Holbrook

2/26/52 - 1/18/54

Mr. Keaver, president

1/18/54 - 5/25/55

Mr. Hayams, treasurer

1/18/54 - 3/31/54

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Mr. Lowry, treasurer

3/31/54 - 5/25/55

and president

5/25/55 - 1/12/58

Jack E. Chambers, Sr, Clerk-Treasurer

5/25/55

Oliver Ocasek, chairman

1/12/58 - 3/2/55

1/1/50 - 1/1/61

Earl F. Smith, chairman

1/2/59 - 1/28/59

George O. Pnychon, chairman

1/28/59 - 1/1/66

Paul Grims, chairman

1/1/61 - 1/1/64

Harold Knepper, chairman

1/1/62 - 1/1/64

John Barron, chairman

1/1/64 - 1/1/65

Lewis Wilcox, chairman

1/17/65 - 9/25/65

Lorn Ash, chairman

1/1/65 - 1/1/67

SEXTONS THAT HAVE SERVED FROM 1892 TO 1967

Please note: This is not the complete list compiled by John Hudgeon. The text which was copied to produce this Internet document was very faded. Ten Sextons are missing.

H. T. Gilber, 1892 thru 1908

Florin Seidel, 1909 thru 1912

W. E. Martin, 1912

J. L. Ritche, 1913, 1914, 1917 thru 1920

William Grossman, 1915, 1916

Please note: In his 1967 history of the Northfield Macedonia Cemetery, John Hudgeon compiled a list of Northfield Veterans of wars from the War of 1812 through the Korean War. Since 1967, Ronald Seidel, through a great deal of research, has updated that list of veterans. Mr. Seidel's list is also on this web site, and therefore in the interests of completeness and accuracy, the 1967 veteran's list of Mr. Hudgeon is respectfully omitted from our web site.

REFERENCES

Record of transfer of deeds, Summit County Court House, Akron, Ohio:

Volume 14, page 75, 1847

Volume 45, page 27, 1862

Volume 71, pages 469-470, 1870

Volume 127, page 508, 1881

Volume 127, page 510, 1881

Volume 130, page 244, 1882

Volume 209, page 167, 1894

Probate Court Docket #5487, #20 Real, 1918

Minutes Book of Northfield Township Trustees, 1892-1907

Minutes Book of Chestnut Hill Cemetery Trustees, 1908-1919

Minutes Books of Northfield-Macedonia Cemetery Trustees: 1919-1948; 1948-1961; 1961-1967

Minutes Book of Ladies' Cemetery Association

Northfield-Macedonia Cemetery Records

Rules and Regulations for Chestnut Hills Cemetery, printed by N. R. Brown, June 5, 1897

History of Summit County Ohio, 1881, edited by William Perrin

Volume 397, page 147, 1910