

Town of Ossian Historical Society Newsletter

27th Edition

May 2018

A Little Cemetery History

By Cathy M. Saunders

Burying your loved one, in rural areas used to be done at home, near a favorite tree, up on a hill, or out in the back yard in a fenced in area. In towns there was a graveyard in the field on the far side of that town or in the typical church yard cemetery. Churches encouraged the towns people to bury their families in the churchyard cemetery and they recorded the death. Record keeping became important in the new America as Europe had already had a problem with improper burial practices. There were lost records or just no records kept and mass graves, disease and improper burials were common.

Ossian Cemeteries: We live in a small town and I for one am grateful for that. Our cemeteries aren't overfull, yet, however, many of the families buried their family in their yards or gardens. We have not found all those that are buried at home, but if you live in an old home, you may have graves on your property! For example, my father plowed up a child's headstone, last name of Canfield, behind School house #7 on Linzy Rd. Canfield's owned and operated a store/tavern right next to where the schoolhouse stands now. Although, according to early maps, the schoolhouse was on the opposite side of the road from where it sits now, at the time the store/tavern was in operation.

Wood Cemetery is located on Ossian Hill Rd. The Town of Ossian oversees this property which was donated to the town by Mr. Wood, a real estate agent of the Robert Troupe's, in the early 1800's and School house #1 sat beside it. The town was

beginning to get settled and record keeping was sparse, non-existent or destroyed.

Ossian had earlier settlers as early as 1804. Some of the earliest burials recorded are: Mary Clendenin Adams 1823, Latitia Thorn Price 1825 and Catherine F. Porter 1825.

The Wood Cemetery became incorporated in 1907 at the same time as the Ossian Center Cemetery.

West View Cemetery is located up on route 436, or old Telegraph Rd. This cemetery is overseen by The West View Cemetery Association. Lyle and Barb Moore explained that this cemetery was at one time three different family private cemeteries, the Bisbee, Denton and Consolas families. The three private cemeteries were made into one cemetery and was incorporated in 1929. The present Association consists of some diehard Bisbee town descendants, who have put a lot of their own blood, sweat and support in the care of it and still are. Some of the earliest recorded burials are: Charles Henry Rolison 1830 and Andrew Hampton 1838. We are unable to read many of the existing stones of the founding families.

Ossian Center Cemetery on Ossian Hill Rd. dates to 1860's and is overseen by the Ossian Center Cemetery Association, another group of dedicated caretakers. This is the typical church yard cemetery, except the church hasn't run it in many, many years. Our Historian has recovered some of the earliest recorded plots sold. There are early records of the land belonging to the Presbyterian Society at one point, however, an Association was formed in 1907 and that association was separate from the Church.

The earliest recorded burials: George Sharp 1812 and Mary Covert 1813.

All three of our cemeteries are very well taken care of and we should be proud and grateful for that. There are a lot of abandoned cemeteries that look, well, abandoned, unkept and broken. It is a fact that Wood and West View Cemeteries have and are now losing headstones. Mother earth is reclaiming the broken ones and many times the whole stone is sinking two or three inches a year, just lowering into the ground, never to be seen again. Cemetery Law prevents the Cemetery to take it upon themselves to "fix" this problem, without locating next of kin and getting permission as it is not their property. The cemetery has an obligation to the upkeep and maintenance and that is all they can do.

New Town Hall, 1932

By Rhea Walker, Historian

On May 26, 1932 the Teeter and Newton store in Ossian Center burned. The store was operated by Calvin Teeter and his father-in-law Jesse Newton who also used the same building as a residence. The family lost two children in the fire. The flames spread to the town hall, which was also used by the Grange and for public meetings. It was burned down to a heap of ashes. The town hall was located next to the store, on the corner of Ossian Hill Road and Sugar Creek Road.

A meeting was held on June 10, 1932 by the Town of Ossian town board. The meeting was called to discuss the building of a new town hall as this was the first meeting since the hall had burned. The board passed a motion that the town supervisor accept the \$1110.50 insurance for the town hall. The supervisor appointed Boyd Wilkins and Adelbert Luce to act as a committee to

locate some ground to build the town hall on as it was decided that it was not wise to build it on the old site.

The town board met again on June 23, 1932 to discuss plans for the new town hall. The grange had a committee of four members present to see if the grange and the town could go together and build a hall for both to use. After hearing from the grange committee the board decided to build the hall with town money only. The members of the board thought that it would never be satisfactory to the taxpayers to have the grange own any part of the building.

Boyd Wilkins and Adelbert Luce gave a report on the various sites they had been looking at for the new town hall. After hearing the different propositions it was decided to leave the decision until the next board meeting.

Mr. MacNaughton then showed the plans for the new town hall. It was decided that it would be 26 feet wide and 38 feet long with a porch 6' by 10' over the front door and the ceiling would be 12' high. Mr. MacNaughton was to make out the specifications and the blue prints and leave them with the town clerk. The town clerk was then to advertise in the paper for bids. There would be another board meeting called after the date for the bids to decide on the bid and location at the same time.

A meeting was called on July 5, 1932 to open the bids that were received by the town clerk for building the town hall.

The bids were the following:
J. H. Fuller, Dansville \$2084.00
N. C. Moose, Dansville \$1900.00
Bert Frost, Dansville \$1900.00
Frank Jamison, Dansville \$1548.20
O. J. Werdein, Dansville \$1537.00
D. M. George, Hornell \$1388.00
C. MacNaughton, Dansville \$1347.00

The Supervisor brought a copy of the property deed on which the town hall stood. The property was deeded to the Town of Ossian by William White as long as it was used for town purposes. When it ceased to be used for town purposes it was to go back to the heirs. This situation sort of puzzled the town board as what to do in regard to buying a new site for the town hall. It was decided to wait and have George Webster and the highway officials committee meet with the town board and also see what could be done in regard to getting a clear title to the property.

On July 9, 1932 the town board met with George Webster and the county highway officials at the center. Mr. Webster said that the county would not buy any property and pay money for it without a deed and clear title. Mr. Thomas Coyne of Avon stated that if the Town of Ossian could give a clear title to the county they would give \$100 for the site on the corner where the old town hall stood.

The town board thought that \$100 was a very small amount to allow the town to buy a new site and clear up the title. It was said Mr. White had eleven children in all parts of the globe and that it would take some time and a great sum of money to clear up such title.

The town board next met on July 19, 1932. A motion was made by Boyd Wilkins to build the new town hall on the old site, the same size and 12 feet studding. This was seconded by Frank Linzy. The roll was called by the supervisor and all voted yes and it was carried. It was also decided to stucco the outside if the cost was no more.

In a meeting on July 26, 1932 it was moved by A. J. Gruschow to side up the town hall with clap boards. The motion carried.

On August 2, 1932 the Ossian town board met and A. J. Gruschow made the motion to buy the site owned by John Linzy on which to build the town hall. The motion was seconded by Adelbert Luce. A roll called by the supervisor resulted in the following, 2 yes and 3 nos. The motion was lost so the town hall would be built on the old site.

A. J. Gruschow moved that the chimney be built on the last end on the outside and that asbestos shingles be used and cement blocks be used in the foundation. This was seconded by Frank Linzy and was carried. It was also moved by A. J. Gruschow that Mr. MacNaughton be let the contract of building the town hall for \$1220 less donation by MacNaughton of \$10. The second was made by Frank Linzy and was carried.

The new town hall was accepted during the August 24, 1932 meeting. It was also resolved that two dollars would be charged for dances or private affairs held in the town hall for the purpose of making money and that the basketball team will screen the windows with hardware mesh on frames hung on casings to pay for the use of the town hall for one year.

During the annual meeting of the town board on December 28, 1932 it was decided to cancel charges of two dances held by the basketball team and to not let Fred Schumacker have a dance in the town hall. It was also decided that the town clerk will see to the letting of the town hall for dances or other purposes and to collect the two dollar fee before the hall is opened.

The new town hall was used until 1992 when it was replaced by another town hall which was financed by the Saunders Foundation. The first meeting held in this town hall was held on December 28, 1992.

**Ladies Guild of
the Presbyterian Church of Ossian**

By Cathy Moulton Saunders

The Ladies Guild, although very similar, must not be mistaken for the present-day Ladies Aid. This group, twenty-eight to start, formed in September of 1901. I don't have the minutes of the meetings, but I have a detailed treasurer's book.

Monies received:

The meetings took in a dime for each member as dues. They sold bed quilts, comfortables (lap quilt), sample sale, handmade clothing, maple sugar, they put on Socials and thanksgivings suppers and bake sales.

Monies Expended:

Gas and oil for the Church Lamps.
Church Library was created.
Printing of the Church Constitution and Bylaws.
Muslin, calico, gingham, thread, buttons, cotton batting, cheesecloth and thimbles
Carpet & carpet lining for the Church.
Wallpaper on Parsonage.
Postage Stamps.
Mission to the South.
To Mr. Denton for repairs to Parsonage.
Advertising
candy for Sample Sale
Mason work & painting the Church
Syrup for making candy
Mr. Nice for fixing the Church seats.
Foreign Missions
groceries for Socials
Crockery and Glasses for Church
for Pastors Salary
Singing Books
carpet wash

The list goes on in similar fashion, I suspect you get the gist of the reason these ladies did what they did. They were the great supporters of the Church and the parsonage. They saw a need and fulfilled it the best they knew how.

The Guild closed in 1911, with this note pinned to the final page of the ledger.

“Guild closed 1911, the Woman's Guild
Treasure book & money to date June 14,
1912. Funds in Canaseraga Bank-\$15.00
Home mission money on hand 57cents
Foreign mission money on hand \$1.73

All debts paid, book unbalanced

Last money paid out-Foreign money \$2.32
Home, mission money paid out \$1.18
remaining funds to the Ossian Church. This
closes the Woman's Guild all but one rag-
carpet on hand.”

The following is a list of women who
were members:

Mrs. E.C. Luce	Mrs. Joel Weidman
Mrs. Riley Linzy	Mrs. Fred Bonner
Mrs. Ada Kysor	Mrs. Jennie Thompson
Mrs. Arvilla Hunt	Mrs. Mary Dunn
Mrs. Grace Linzy	Mrs. Addie Shay
Mrs. Arthur Covert	Miss Dora Nichols
Miss Grace McNinch	Miss May Covert
Mrs. Grace Scott	Mrs. A.B. Clendenin
Mrs. Charles Shay	Miss Flora Hoteling
Mrs. John Hubbard	Mrs. Ed Baker
Mrs. Riley Shay	Mrs. Charles Higgins
Miss Mary Baker	Mrs. Jay Knapp
Mrs. Myrla Sample	Mrs. Gwen Chittendin
Miss Maude Perrine	Miss Nellie Shay
Mrs. Beckes	Mrs. John Kennedy
Miss Lizzie Linzy	Mrs. John Linzy
Mrs. James Denton	Mrs. John McKay
Mrs. Blanche Linzy	Mrs. Johnson
Mrs. H. Wilkins	Mrs. James McCartney

Dansville Express

Thursday, May 1, 1897

The Canaseraga Murder and Suicide

From the Canaseraga Times we take the following in regards to the attempted murder and suicide, mention of which we made last week:

Alonzo Luce, a young man who has resided in and near this village most of his life, a carpenter by trade, had been paying his address to Martha Wyman, who has resided more or less for a long time in the family of Seneca Locey in this village, and on the evening in question, between seven and eight o'clock he met her on the street and they together walked down to Locey's place, which is located on lower or East Main Street. Arrived at the gate they remained awhile before Miss Wyman entered the house, and Mr. Locey's little girl, Cora, who was with them said they were quarreling. When Miss W. went in, Luce went on to his father's where he resided. He soon afterward returned to Mr. Locey's, and being admitted sat for a number of minutes with his eyes fastened on Miss Wyman, his manner indicating that desperate thoughts were passing in his mind. He at last arose, and walking towards her, asked, "Will you marry me?" to which she replied "No, I will not." He immediately raised his revolver and fired and she fell at his feet. His next act was to rush from the house, which he did just as Mr. Locey entered, and ran to his father's house, a distance of 15 to 20 rods. Entering the sitting room and slamming the door behind him he wrung his hands a moment, evidencing the wildest excitement, and on Mrs. Luce's (who was in the room) attempting to rise, he motioned her to remain seated. His next act was to raise the revolver to his head and fire. He dropped

instantly, brushing her clothes as he fell close at her feet. Mrs. Luce was the only occupant of the room at the time, although her little boy, Alpha, saw him perform the act through the open door, from the adjoining kitchen.

"Lon" Luce as he was familiarly known was 29 years of age, and was the son of O. C. Luce, one of our best citizens and an influential member of the M. E. Church of Canaseraga. He was a carpenter by trade, and a good workman. The ball which killed him entered the right side of his head, just in the edge of the hair, an inch and a half above and to the front of the ear. Martha Wyman, is about 28 years of age, is the daughter of Ford Wyman, who lives on a farm owned by Tom Mitchell in the town of Ossian. She was once married to a man named Howe, but as they did not live together for any great length of time, she has not borne his name. She has lived with Mr. and Mrs. Locey, of this place, at intervals, for a considerable time.

The wound is near the bridge of the nose on the right side. By probing the wound, it was ascertained that the ball took a slightly upward and backward course, and was lodged in the back part of the head.

At last accounts the girl was alive. Luce's funeral took place on Friday.

Elias Geiger

Dansville Express January 24, 1878

Elias Geiger is building a residence near his mill in Ossian. The Wheatons of this village are doing the work.

Dansville Express March 7, 1878

Elias Geiger's new dwelling house at the pine sawmill three miles south – east of this village, is prospering finely. He intends to make it his future home.

Dansville Express June 20, 1878

Elias Geiger of Ossian lost a valuable horse Tuesday by its breaking its leg while at work in the woods.

Saubier and Hartley have just built a wall in front of Elias Geiger's new house in Ossian that is 281 feet long, 5 feet thick and 5 feet high. Saubier calls it "Geiger's Fort".

From the Journals of Russell Kenney

1838

The Town of Ossian Minutes shows the following bounties set:

Every old wolf caught and killed \$10.00
Every whelp caught and killed \$ 5.00
Every fox caught and killed \$ 1.00

1839

The Town voted to add \$5.00 to the bounty on wolves, added \$1.00 to the fox bounty, added 12-1/2 cents for each crow killed in the months of May and June, and added \$1.00 for each wild cat killed.



**Teeter and Newton Store and Town Hall
Before it burned May 26, 1932**

TOWN OF OSSIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY EVENTS

June 2, 2018 – Community Yard Sale – Held at the Ossian Community Center, 8am – 1pm. Bring your treasures to sell in the yard. Must be a historical society member or a resident of Ossian to participate. Members please consider donating items for the historical society to sell. Also the historical society will be selling cookies, beverages and hot dogs. Call Rhea at 585 335 5312 or Cathy at 585 519 6897 for further information. We will do the advertising.

June 9, 2018 – Baked Ziti Dinner – Benefit for the Town of Ossian Cemeteries – Ossian Center Cemetery, West View Cemetery and Wood Cemetery. Dinner includes ziti, salad, fresh rolls, beverage and homemade pie all for \$8. Held at the Ossian Community Center starting at 4:30. **BASKET RAFFLE** - \$1 for one ticket, \$5 for 10 tickets or \$10 for 25 tickets. Do not need to be present to win. Our older headstones need repair. Any questions call Cathy, 585 519 6897.

Ossian Summer Recreation Application – No Charge

Ages 5 to 12

July 23 – July 27, 2018 9:00AM to Noon

At Ossian Community Center

Name Parent/Guardian: _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian giving permission: _____

Address: _____

Emergency Phone Numbers: _____

If you have a special needs child, please have someone stay with him/her to attend to their needs.

Child One Name:	Age:	Child Two Name:	Age:
Child Three Name:	Age:	Child Three Name:	Age:

Place this form in a sealed envelope marked Rhea Walker, Historian and place in the mailbox by the door in front of the Ossian Town Hall.