A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE WITHROW CEMETERY

The first Board of Trustees meeting of the newly organized Withrow Cemetery Association was held November 10, 1927. They met at the home of William and Annie Heifort in the village of Withrow, Grant Twp., Washington County, Minnesota.

Their Articles of Incorporation had been registered at the County the previous August and the new stockholders were ready to take over the care and management of the community cemetery from the previous Bennett Cemetery Association.

They elected Lulie (Lucretia) Withrow as president and treasurer, Annie Heifort as vice president and Annie Connors as secretary and actuary. These women held those positions for twenty years and more.

That 1927 meeting was attended by representatives from the families that had loved ones buried in Withrow. The land which had been originally owned by George W. Bennett Sr. had been a burying ground since 1858. Many of the children of these early settlers had short lives. By 1889, there had been 11 burials, the latest being Jane Bennett.

In October 1883, (but not registered at Washington County until October 1889) after the Soo Line Railroad cut through his land, George Bennett Sr. deeded over a 1.17 acre piece of land that was between the railroad tracks and the road to George Bennett Jr. and Winfield S. Soule, trustees of the Bennett Cemetery Association. The cost was $50.00 and was for the exclusive use of a cemetery. By 1927, George Bennett Sr., George Bennett Jr., and Winfield Soule had passed away. It was time to reorganize.

Between 1927 and 1954, the association sold shares of stock to fund the cemetery and most families maintained their own lots. By 1955, they realized that a fee for perpetual care was necessary, so they changed to a lot owner's

trustee organization. The newly elected officers for 1955 were Ira Hodnett, president, Bert Bennett, vice president and Ben Zahler, secretary-treasurer.

In 2002-2003 the WCA acquired an additional 1.78 acres of property from May Twp. They cleaned it up, fenced it, planted trees and had it surveyed to provide hundreds of additional burial lots. At present we have 283 burials in the Cemetery (that we know of).

As I pause to think about our Cemetery, it's about those early settlers and their children buried there – the Kinyons, the Bennetts, Rogers, Soules, Jeans, Connors and the Withrows.

Thomas Withrow and his wife Catherine Clary Withrow were both from Nova Scotia.They married in Boston, MA.In 1853 and by 1856 had 2 daughters, Mary and Lily. They then came to Washington County where Frank, Isabelle, Lizzie, Hattie, Lulie and Morrill were born. Thomas bought 40 acres and eventually owned 120 acres of land in what was part of Marine Twp. at the time. In 1893, Marine was divided to form May, Oneka, Forest Lake and Scandia Townships, and the town of Marine on St.Croix. Thomas' land was partly in May and partly in Oneka. The Withrow Elementary School is on what was Thomas Withrow's farm. I've heard that the Withrow Depot was also on his land, hence the naming of the town. I like to think he was a good citizen, a man of good character, a hard working husband and father. All the Withrow children are buried in the Withrow Cemetery except the youngest child, Morrill, who became a physician in International Falls, Minnesota. He and his wife Agatha are buried there.

The Withrow Cemetery is located on county Rd. 7 or 122nd St. N. in May Township, about ½ mile west off Manning Avenue in Washington County, Minnesota.

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