

LOST CEMETERY

by Sharon Holley

On one of those unseasonably warm days in February I was taking a walk along a back road in Mount Olive Township and came upon a surprising sight: a gravestone right next to the road. I looked further down the slope and saw about a half a dozen more, most in very good condition. The surprise was not that there was a cemetery in this place, but that I had lived about two miles away for many years and had driven this road many times and had never seen these stones before. I know, or think I know, where all the other cemeteries in the area are.

After thinking about this oversight for a bit, I was able to make some excuses for myself: There was a bad curve on the road at this point, not a good place for sightseeing when driving. There was no church or small settlement nearby, likely places to spot a cemetery. The cemetery was not shown on the township engineer's map, or on the Department of the Interior Geological Survey maps. It was not shown on 19th century atlases of the area either. In winter the stones would be covered with snow. In summer the plot would be overgrown with ground cover and brambles (now, in May, it is). So I was perfectly within my rights to have missed it. I still felt guilty about it though, and wondered how many other little cemeteries have been "lost," even to the township and federal engineers.

This "lost" cemetery is located in Mount Olive Township, Morris County, New Jersey, approximately one-half mile southeast of the point where Interstate Route 80 crosses over U.S. Highway 46. The graveyard is located just east of the intersection of Netcong Flanders Road and Ledgewood Road (also known as Mountain Road). It is on the south side of Ledgewood Road. There is one dark grey four-sided stone located close to the road. The remainder of the stones are down the slope. The stones I saw are listed here.

1. one old, rude stone, no inscription legible
2. one marble base, no stone
3. Thomas Brady
A native of the Parish of Killmanen Co. Meath Ireland
died Feb 22, 1878 age 62 years
erected by his wife Mary Brady
4. Mary, wife of Thomas Brady
died Aug 10, 1892
age 82 years
a native of the Parish of Killmanem Co. made (sic) Ireland
erected by Mrs. McGillich
5. James Kinney 1857-1892

Margaret Kinney 1860 - 1891

John Kinney 1884-1884

Mary Kinney 1889 -1890

Thomas Kinney 1881 -1907

6. Eli Champi

NATA Apr 6 - 08

MORTA Aug 7-10

7. James J. Vance New Jersey

PVT 1 CL 309 INF

7 S DIV

January 2, 1937

8. James Cavanagh

died Jan 25, 1880

aged 24 years 6 mos

born in Oxford, Warren Co. New Jersey

erected by his father

James Cavanagh

9. P C

10. Peter Cavanagh

born June 27, 1848

died Nov. 8, 1880

erected by his wife Mary Ann Cavanagh

a native of the Parish Eniskeen (?)

Kingscourt

County Cavan Ireland

11. James Cavanaugh horn August 3. 1821

in Kings Court. County Cavan Ireland

died March 2. 1900

12. James Cavanaugh horn August 3. 1821

in Kings Court. County Cavan Ireland

died March 2. 1900

13. base of stone, top missing

(next to Peter Cavanagh)

14. Tierney

my husband

Austin Tierney

born July 1. 1871

died Feb 27, 1902

From the designs on the stones, the surnames and the Irish birthplace of some of these people, it was clear this was a Catholic cemetery, an assumption confirmed in later research. It seemed to me that this little lost group of ancestors was crying out for recognition so I did some preliminary investigation at the Morristown/Morris Township library.

Cavanagh

James Cavanaugh (11) died during Thursday night (March 2, 1900) at the residence of his son Thomas. The funeral was held Monday (March 5, 1900); his remains were laid beside those of his two sons (James and Peter) in the Catholic cemetery. When the war was over he commenced work for the late James Allen, at Washington, but afterward removed here. (*Stanhope Eagle*, March 7, 1900, page 3).

Peter Cavanaugh (10) was the engineer of a heavily loaded coal train running into Hobokon on Monday morning (November 8, 1880). The engine and several cars jumped the rails, the fireman leaped off the train, but Cavanaugh stayed at this post until he had reversed the level of the engine, when he too sprang out of the cab. Just as his feet struck the ground, the coal cars fell on him, crushing him to the ground with great force. The body was taken to Crane's Morgue in Washington Street, Hoboken, by order of Coroner Wiggins who will hold the inquest The dead engineer lived at Port Morris (Roxbury Township, Morris Co.); his family consists of a wife and five small children (*Jersey-man*, November 12, 1880, page 2). In the 1880 census there was a Peter Cavanaugh living in Port Morris. His father, James Cavanaugh Sr., was living with him. Both Peter and his father had been born in Ireland. Peter's wife Mary was 30 years old, born in New York. Peter's children were Mary age 7, James age 5, Peter W. age 3, Thomas age 2, and John M. age 5/12. Also living with them was Martha Bradley age 14, no relation. (1880 Soundex card, C152. Cavanaugh Peter, Vol 17, ED 132, sheet 29, line 13.) Also living in Port Morris at the same time was a William Cavanugh, age 35, born in Ireland. He had a wife Mary age 28, and a daughter Mary E. age 2. (1880 Soundex Card. CI 52. Cavanugh. William, Vol 17, ED 132, sheet 27, line 26).

From the information gathered I concluded the following: James Cavanagh was born in Ireland in 1821. He immigrated to the United States sometime between 1848 (son Peter born in Ireland) and 1855 (son James born in U.S.) during the "potato famine" in Ireland. He lived first at Oxford, Warren County, NJ. The area around Oxford was studded with iron mines and blast furnaces, so it is likely James was involved in this industry. The area around Stanhope is also an iron mine area. James' wife probably died before 1880, as by then he was living with his son Peter. Two of his sons, James and Peter, died while still young men. The story of Peter's railroad accident is related above. James (8) may also have died as the result of an industrial accident of some sort, though information on his cause of death has not yet been found. James Sr. had at least one more son, Thomas, who was living in 1900. The William who lived in Port Morris was also very likely his son.

Tiemey

Like the two Cavanaugh men buried nearby, Austin Tierney (13) also met an early death. Tierney was an employee of the Musconetcong Iron Works and was instantly killed by a fall of forty feet on Thursday of last week (February 27, 1902). He was standing near the elevator shaft and either lost his balance or was struck by something and fell to the bottom of the shaft. He leaves a wife and three small children, his mother, several brothers and a sister. The funeral was held Monday (March 3, 1902) and interment was in the Catholic cemetery at Netcong. (*Iron Era*, Dover, New Jersey,

March 7, 1902, page 6.) In the 1900 census Austin Tierney was living in Netcong with his wife Susie age 23, and his daughter Florence age 1. All family members were born in New Jersey. (1900 Soundex card, T650, Tierney, Austin, Vol 53, ED 71, sheet 5, line 58.)

Obviously other sources should be consulted for more information on these families. The map index for Roxbury on page 7 of this issue lists a T. Brady. This man lived just around the corner from the cemetery and may be Thomas Brady (3). There are also a number of Kinney's listed. No attempt was made to obtain death certificates, marriage or birth records for any of the people listed. Nor was any research of their immigration or origins in Ireland attempted.

The Port Morris of Peter Cavanaugh's day was a booming railroad center. The round house completed in 1873 held 23 engines. There was a half-mile-long trestle for loading coal and company housing for 340 workers. (*History of Morris County New Jersey*, W. W. Munsell & Co., New York, 1882, page 366) Today almost nothing remains of this bustling transportation center. The same is true of Oxford Furnace. Now a sleepy rural town, there were 3,000 people living in the area in the 1870's. Many of the mines had been working since the 1740's. (*History of Sussex and Warren Counties, New Jersey*, James P. Snell, Philadelphia, 1881, pages 609-613). The little cemetery in the woods has served as a reminder, not only of the people who have gone before, but of the towns and industries long gone as well. The descendants of the workers who lived and died in towns like these may now be scattered all over the country. So, take a few extra minutes to look around your area for those "lost" cemeteries or other evidence of times gone by. You may be surprised about the stories you can find in your own backyard.