

ROGUE VALLEY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

3405 S. Pacific Hwy. Medford, OR 97501

The Rogue Digger is a publication of the Rogue Valley Genealogical Society (www.rvgsociety.org), a non-profit organization located in Medford, Oregon, which operates the Jackson County Genealogy Library (www.rvgslibrary.org). To submit an article, contact our editor caradavisjacobson@gmail.com and copy president@rvgslibrary.org. Cover images and design © RVGS, 2008.

Alcoe

Field of Vinca

headstone

Editor's Note:

In this special "all cemetery" issue, we present the recent efforts of the RVGS and JCGL Cemetery Committee Volunteers to locate and document little-known and forgotten local cemeteries. In addition to locating these cemeteries, the committee members have also used dowsing to locate burial plots. Information about dowsing and the committee can be found at the end of the issue. These cemetery reports were previously featured in our eNews publication and will appear in The Rogue Digger in the future. We hope you enjoy this very special issue!

FORGOTTEN CEMETERY

by Chuck Eccleston and Roger Roberts, JCGL Cemetery Committee Volunteers

Nestled in a thick bed of green vinca vine, and hidden behind a large blackberry growth, is the small white headstone of five-year-old Ollie Tucker. Little Ollie was born on June 3, 1896. She drowned on May 5, 1901, while playing nearby on the bank of the Rogue River. She left a large family to mourn her untimely death. Her parents were Jasper

Savannah Clay Tucker (1855-1937) and Mary Elizabeth Moore Tucker (1861-1944). Ollie's extended Tucker family invented and manufactured the famous Tucker Sno-Cat here in Medford.

A great niece of Ollie's was recently sent a copy of the headstone photo shown in this article. She had wondered for years where Ollie's last resting place might be.

Tucker

headstone

Alcoe - Tucker Cemetery

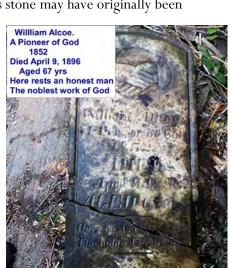
vic of the Rogue River

Nearby is the broken stone of William Alcoe (1829-1893). His headstone was found lying on top of a huge fallen oak tree. Evidence suggests that this stone may have originally been

located near the base of the old tree and dislocated and broken as the tree fell.

William Alcoe was apparently a well-known bachelor pioneer and cattleman with considerable holdings at the time of his death. His prominent stone, in the proximity of a large oak and in a field of vinca vine, suggests that additional graves may be present. A search was conducted using the dowsing rod method, which revealed the locations of 39 unmarked graves all located within the confines of the vinca vine field. (See the map on the next page.)

Due to privacy concerns, the general location of this site is recorded as Township 33 South Range 1 East of the Willamette Meridian.



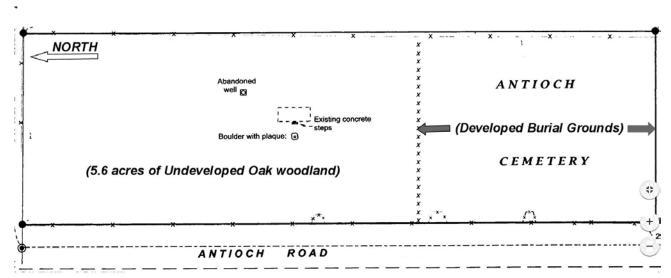
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ANTIOCH CEMETERY

Found Unmarked Graves by Roger Roberts

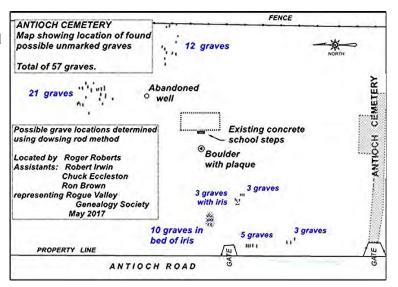
The Antioch Cemetery lies alongside Antioch Road in Sams Valley. As shown in the map below, only the most southerly portion of the property is an active cemetery. The northern 5.6 acres consists of undeveloped oak woodland. This was the location of the Antioch School, with only the concrete school steps still remaining. The federal government acquired this land and surrounding lands to develop Camp White in the 1940s, and the building was removed at that time. The school and cemetery land was acquired by the Antioch Cemetery Association after Camp White was closed.



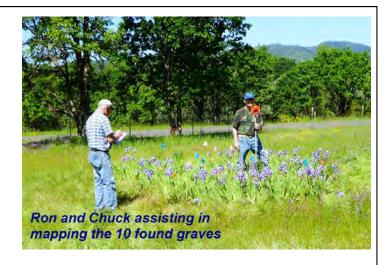
There have been rumors over the years of there being graves behind where the school building stood. Knowing that I am involved in searching for and locating unmarked graves, I was asked by a member of the Association if I had ever tried to locate them. I told him that I hadn't, but it might be interesting to have a look around.

I made numerous visits to the undeveloped portion of the cemetery land. Using my dowsing rods—and with the assistance of Chuck Eccleston, Ron Brown, and Robert Irwin—we did discover unmarked graves. Not only did we find them behind the school, but also in scattered areas among very large oak trees. The map to the right represents our findings. The final count was 57 possible graves found.

We have learned from experience to watch for certain plants growing where they wouldn't be expected. They are often used as markers for otherwise unmarked graves. For example, we have







found graves marked with domestic plants such as iris and daffodils. Above are two photos of a large well-established bed of iris that we found on this project. A thorough scan with the dowsing rods yielded 10 graves.

The Antioch Cemetery Association is now planning to mark the location of each of the 57 graves. A marker will consist of a rectangular concrete slab. The fresh concrete will be branded with the word *PIONEER*, *UNKNOWN*, or perhaps *UNKNOWN PIONEER*.

DUNKARD CEMETERY

by Roger Roberts

Drivers on South Highway 99 just north of its intersection with Culver Road are unaware they are passing the site of the Church of the Brethren and its abutting cemetery, which was established in 1890. The property was subsequently subdivided with the front parcel zoned for commercial use and the rear cemetery parcel remaining as a cemetery under the ownership of the Brethren Church. The church, with its current headquarters located in Washington State, has been gone for many years. Fortunately, this historic cemetery honoring the remains of many prominent pioneer families survives. Headstones read as follows: Bacon, Brower, Bush, Clevenger, Crawford, Crum, Firestone, Hanscom, Hankins, Lamb, Mason, Mast, Minear, Mow, Netherland, Nininger, Rhodes, Rogers, Settles, Spencer, Spitzer, and Springer.

Those pioneers rest here in a well-maintained setting thanks to years of care and maintenance by various family members, many loyal volunteers, and, most recently, Carl Shauger, a member of RVGS and its JCGL Cemetery Committee. Carl volunteered under the direction of Judith Minear Stanford, a Minear descendant and President of the



Friends of the Talent Church of the Brethren Cemetery.
Mr Shauger and Mrs. Stanford publish a quarterly magazine pertaining to the families buried in the cemetery. Copies are available at JCGL. The cemetery is currently maintained by volunteers of the Ashland Veterans

of Foreign Wars (VFW) Post 353.

In 2015, an Oregon Historic Cemetery Commission Grant funded a property line survey and map. The survey determined the actual cemetery boundaries were beyond the fenced portion of the cemetery, leading to the discovery of additional burials outside of the fenced area. Dowsing rods determined a total of 243 unmarked graves. The total number of known graves in the cemetery increased to 285. A copy of the map is on file at JCGL. (No map image is included here due to the size and easy accessibility of the cemetery.)



A flagpole was erected on the cemetery grounds by a local Boy Scout Troop as an Eagle Scout project. The flag pole with an American flag on display can be seen from Colver Road.

GEARY CEMETERY

by Chuck Eccleston

The small Geary Cemetery can be seen alongside Elk Creek Road several miles from its intersection with Crater Lake Highway. Four markers are located within the weather-worn split-rail fence. The most prominent is the tall stone for 13 year old James Lewis Geary. He was born on January 9, 1887, and died on Christmas Day, December 25, 1900. A second marker for "Jimmie Geary" is nearby. The remaining two markers are for 25 year old Erwin Shoemaker (1882 - 1907) and the "Day Hawk" infant girl (1926 - 1926). These three markers are short metal mortuary markers that include text in a small window listing name and dates of birth and death.

James was the oldest of eight children born to Samuel E. and Maggie J. Geary. James' father, Samuel, is listed as a seven-year-old son in the Jackson County 1870 census with six siblings, all born to Lewis C. And Maranda M. Geary. Lewis was a wagon maker from Pennsylvania, and his wife Maranda was from Tennessee. Land records indicate that this site is located in the vicinity of the Geary family farm.



Erwin Shoemaker and Day Hawk names did not appear in the Jackson County records searched for this article.

The relatively young ages of the persons buried in this plot suggest the possibility of additional unmarked graves. A survey using the dowsing rod method located 13 unmarked graves within and around the cemetery fence. A map of the cemetery follows this article. A paper copy of the map is filed in the cemetery records at the Jackson County Genealogy Library.

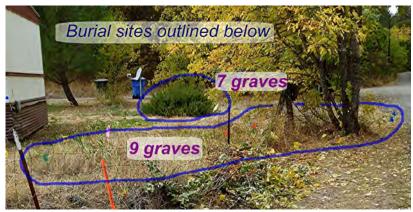
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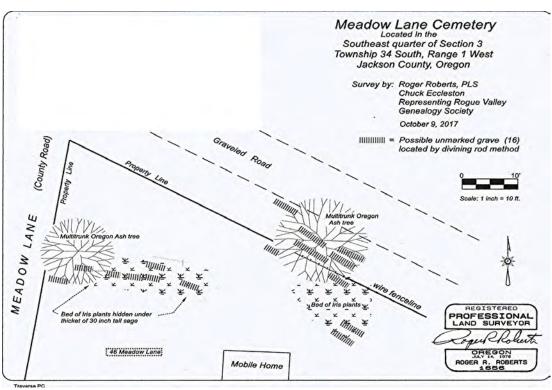
MEADOW LANE CEMETERY

by Roger Roberts

In October of 2017, I did a small property boundary survey near the community of Trail, Oregon. During the process of the survey, I noticed a bed of neglected iris growing alongside Meadow Lane, a graveled county road. After completing the survey, and as we were putting equipment back into the truck, I pointed out the iris to my assistant, Chuck Eccleston. I said to him that the iris bed looked very old and out of place, as it was growing on both private property and into the county road right of way, and that we should take a closer look at it. Iris was commonly used many years ago to mark burials, and this has proved helpful in the recent past in locating unmarked graves. So I grabbed my divining rods and we proceeded to search the area.

As indicated in the photo below, we found unmarked graves in two groups. The first group of nine graves was marked with iris only. The second group (seen in the background) was found to contain 7 graves, and they were marked not only with iris but also a 30-inch-high growth of sage. A total of 16 graves was detected with the divining rods. They are shown on the map below.





MILLER FAMILY CEMETERY

by Chuck Eccleston and Roger Roberts

The Miller Family Cemetery is located near the Brownsboro-Meridian Road. We first visited this site in June of 2010. The cemetery is located on an eastern slope, has a very large and old white oak tree, a dilapidated perimeter fence, and a green field of vinca ground cover. A classic example of an early pioneer burial site.

James I. Miller was born in 1822 in Coshocton, Ohio. He married Sarah Verlinda Dewitt in 1852 in Lee, White County, Indiana. They settled on a land claim in the Butte Creek Precinct of Jackson County, near Brownsboro, in the mid 1850s. James and Verlinda received the government patent deed for their 320 acres,



Donation Land Claim Certificate No. 983, in 1866. Records indicate that eight of their ten children were born on this claim. James died at age 62, leaving Verlinda to raise the children, the youngest being Lula, age four.





Miller Cemetery (Vicinity of Brownsboro and Hwy 140)

Headstone for

* VerLinda Miller
Died 1899
and

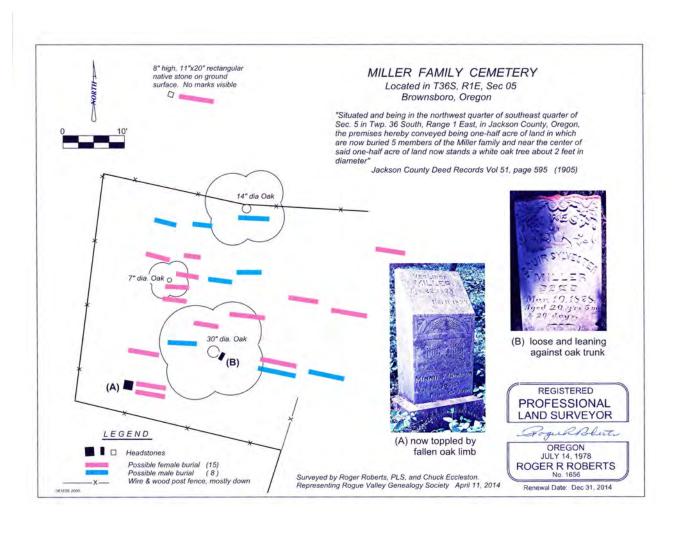
* Minnie V Compton
Died 1901

Headstone toppled by fallen oak limb, but not damaged This half-acre cemetery is on the original claim. There are two headstones. The headstone on the left of the above photo memorializes Verlinda and buried alongside of her is daughter Minnie.

As seen in the photo to the left, a large limb from the old oak tree has fallen across the headstone and toppled it off of its base. Fortunately, it did not damage the stone. But this demonstrates the fact that this cemetery, as with many pioneer cemeteries that we have visited, is in need of someone or a group to provide periodic maintenance.

Verlinda's son, Squire Sylvester Miller, died at 20 years of age. His headstone was found leaning against the large oak tree, as can be seen in the photo at left.

The map on the next page is the result of our graves search. The map is on file in the cemetery records at the Jackson County Genealogy Library.



MT. VERNON PIONEER CEMETERY

by Roger Roberts and Chuck Eccleston

In 2011, the Cemetery Committee received a letter signed by local residents expressing concern regarding the condition of an old neighborhood cemetery northwest of Ashland. A search of a fenced area near the residents' homes disclosed the remains of several broken and three standing headstones. Subsequent records research determined this historic cemetery was established by the descendants of the Nathaniel and Mary Myer family. The family, including sons Benjamin Franklin Myer and William Curtis Myer and daughter Mary Ann Myer, arrived in the Ashland area with the 1853 Preacher Wagon Train. The father and sons took adjacent Donation Land Claims totaling 960 acres, which later became known as Mt Vernon. Their cabins were located near the present intersection of North and East Valley View Roads.



The first burial in this one-third-acre cemetery was of Margaret Barrett who died on December 24, 1853. She and her husband John had taken a nearby land claim, as had several other pioneers, namely Anderson, Bunyard, Newhouse, Rev. Brown, Rockfellow, Taylor, and Woolen. The burial of a Mrs. Hendrix was described by Wellborn Beeson in his 1861 diary. Research by various historians and diarists over the years has identified the names of many early pioneers buried in this cemetery, including references to a number of soldier graves.

In later years, there were concerns that the cemetery had become an attractive nuisance, which apparently led to the gradual disappearance of most of the features identifying the site as a cemetery. The headstones on the easterly portion of the cemetery went missing and broken segments in the westerly portion were found partially buried.

Following several years of tree trimming, poison oak removal, and mowing (by local neighbors, historians and genealogy volunteers), the cemetery was again searched for evidence of unmarked graves.

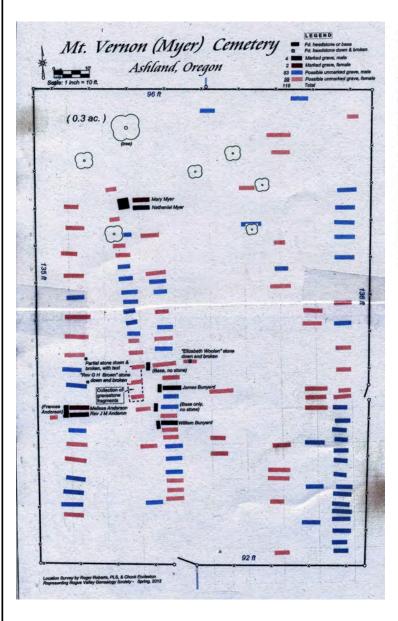


Initially, ground penetrating radar technology was used in an attempt to detect burials, but with little success. This was followed by the use of metal dowsing rods. The dowsing rod method provided convincing evidence of the location of 116 previously unknown graves including the row of military graves referred to in a newspaper article and known to a neighbor who lived on adjacent property. With the site cleared and cleaned, donations from area residents and volunteers were used to purchase and install concrete "PIONEER" plaques on each unmarked grave.

Local residents now continue to maintain the cemetery and have plans for improvements in signage and fence upgrades. The names of known pioneers buried in this historic cemetery are recorded in the JCGL database for researchers and historians.



This final map of existing graves (below) and found graves is on file at the JCGL library.





OLD STAGE ROAD CEMETERY

by Roger Roberts

I had been working on a property boundary survey all day. The weather was warm, so after packing my equipment into the truck, I sat down on the rear bumper, took my cap off, wiped the sweat off my brow, and took a long drink of cool water. Ezra, my client, saw me there and came over to talk.

We talked about the weather, his family, my family, etc. Being one who is always on the lookout for evidence of graves and burial sites, I gradually brought the conversation around to that subject. I told Ezra about the Rogue Valley Genealogical Society's cemeteries project, and that I was on a committee of three to do the field searches for possible grave sites. Then I asked Ezra if he knew of, or heard rumors of, any graves in the area. He said he didn't know of any.



I then explained how we go about searching for burial sites, and that we have found enough of them that we are beginning to see a pattern. I said to Ezra, "We now watch for a small rounded hilltop, kind of like that one over there behind your house. And with a large tree, usually an oak, on top of it. Kind of like that hill behind your house." Then I stopped to think about what I just said and what I was pointing to. I looked at Ezra, he looked at me, and he said, "Do you want to go over there and look?" I responded "Yes, I think I would."

I drove my Trooper over to the base of the hill, parked, got out my dowsing rods (I never leave home without them), and proceeded to the top of the hill. Within 10 minutes, using the dowsing rods, I found what I thought might be an unmarked grave, amongst a grove of black walnut trees. Then I found several more. Hmmm, time to bring in reinforcements, which meant I brought the rest of the cemetery search committee—Chuck Eccleston and Ron Brown—to the site a few days later to help me work the area. When we were done, we had found and flagged 29 possible unmarked graves. Two more graves had a native-stone marker at the head of the grave, and yet another one had a hand-molded 8-inch-square cement marker at both the head and foot of the grave.

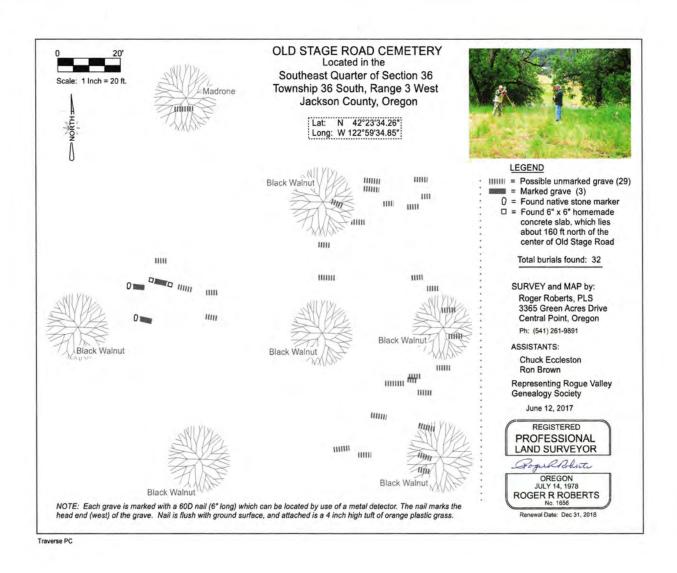


In order to preserve the location of each grave, we placed a 6 inch nail in the ground with a tuft of bright red plastic imitation grass at the head of each grave. They can now be located in the future with the use of a metal detector.

We named the burial site "Old Stage Road Cemetery," due to its proximity to that county road. In the photo at the top of the article you can see vehicle traffic on Old Stage Road.



On the next page is the map that was prepared and is now on file in the cemetery records at the Jackson County Genealogy Library.



PERSIST CEMETERY

by Roger Roberts

In the hills of the upper Elk Creek drainage, there was a small community called Persist. The Persist post office operated from 1902 until 1935. The map here indicates that Persist was located about six miles west of Prospect.



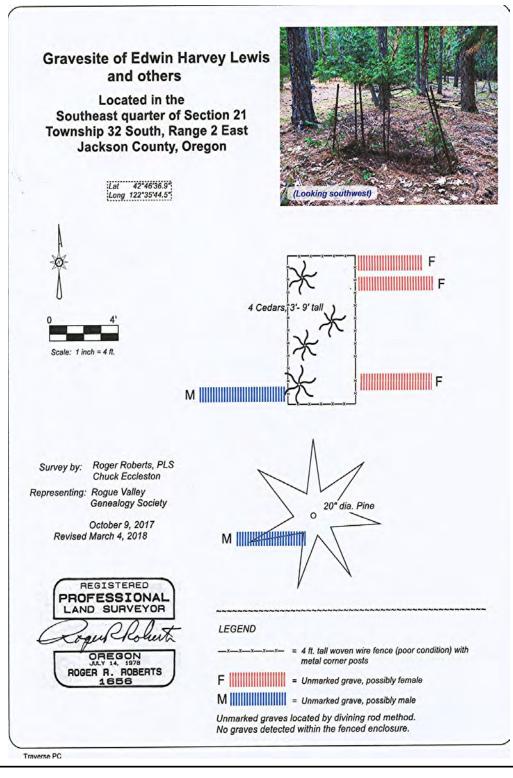
In 1902, Robert Harvey Lewis received a Homestead Entry patent deed for 160 acres, located in Township 32 South,



Range 2 East, in Section 21. Information available indicates that the land had been occupied at an earlier time by Robert's parents, his father being Edwin Harvey Lewis. At the time of his death, Edwin was living on the homestead with Robert's family. His death certificate indicates that he was born in 1832, and died in 1917, and he was buried at Persist.

In October of 2017, Chuck Eccleston and I drove to the Persist area in an attempt to locate the Lewis homestead and possibly locate the burial site. Upon arriving in the area, we came across a couple of longtime residents, brothers Don and Ed McWhorter. They were very accommodating and told us that they could take us to the burial site. We were surprised to find that the only thing visible there was an old wire fence built in a 4 ft.-by-8 ft. rectangle, held up with steel fence posts. There are four small cedar trees growing within the enclosure. I made use of dowsing rods to check the fenced area, but there was no indication of a burial there.

I then proceeded to dowse the area in the vicinity of the enclosure. I did detect five possible burials. They are shown on the map below.



SATTERFIELD CEMETERY

By Roger Roberts

Located on a small knoll surrounded on three sides by a wheat field is a small group of headstones marking the last resting place of several early settlers. The large oak trees and rich bed of vinca vines were easily recognized by searchers Roger Roberts and Chuck Eccleston as yet another early pioneer cemetery. As seen in the photo, this cemetery has long been neglected. Most of the headstones were hidden in the vinca, scrub brush,

and under huge limbs that had fallen from the overhead canopy of mature oaks.

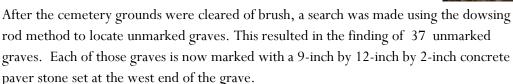


Many volunteers over recent years have helped to clean and restore the cemetery grounds and maintain this historic site.

Eight headstones were found, representing the Clark, Morrison, Raimy, Satterfield, and Scott families. A particularly

poignant marker for eight day old Freddie Raimy was uncovered during one of the clearing and cleaning sessions

These families lived and farmed in the vicinity of the forgotten community of Beagle. The most prominent stone in this small unfenced cemetery is a memorial to Zilpha Peele Satterfield, wife of Joseph W. Satterfield. This eight-foot-tall stone was in imminent danger of collapse when Jacksonville Cemetery volunteer Dirk Siedlicki and his brother Lee volunteered to repair it. Additional stone repair work was done by Roger Roberts, Ron Brown, and Chuck Eccleston.

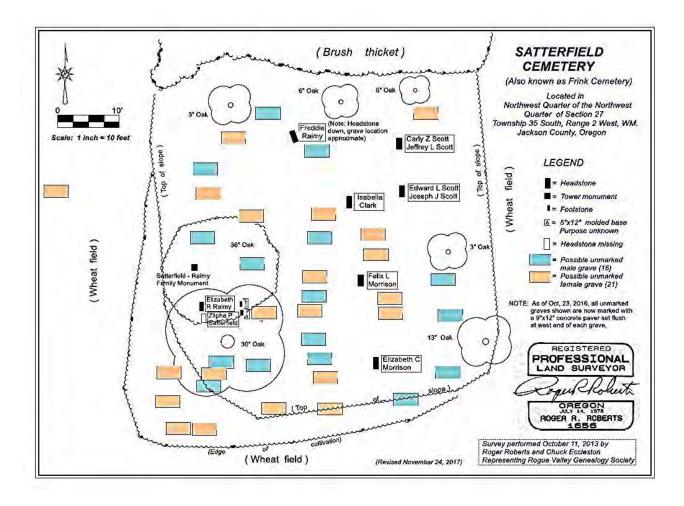


Volunteer vehicles are permitted access across the field only after the crop is harvested.

The following map shows the location of both the marked graves and the 37 found and unmarked graves. The map is on file in the cemetery records at the Jackson County



Genealogy Library.



SNOOK FAMILY CEMETERY

by Roger Roberts and Chuck Eccleston

Pat Snook was seven years old when she and her older brothers Gene and Stanley and sister Esther walked down the hill along Cascade Gorge Road every morning to catch the Prospect school bus. But there was something along the way that always frightened her and she would go out of her way to avoid going near it.

What was it? Well, there was a little picket fence on the hill alongside the road. The fence with the vines growing on it, the vines bearing yellow rose blossoms in the spring. But what bothered Pat was knowing that the little picket fence surrounded two graves. Oh so spooky for a little girl of her age.

Pat is now Mrs. Vern Parent, and currently lives in the Central Point area. The two graves are of her relatives. One of the burials is of Thaddeus Snook, Pat's great uncle. The other burial is her uncle, 12 year old Lewis Snook. Lewis bled to death from an accidental gunshot in the foot.

Having no permanent markers, evidence of the graves eventually became obliterated. Pat had made a promise to the Snook family many years ago that she would have proper grave markers made and put in place to memorialize the

burials. However, over time, she and her siblings had forgotten the exact location of the graves.

I volunteered to try to locate the graves using the dowsing rod method, sometimes referred to as the divining rod method, which I had been successfully using for many years. On July 6, 2017, Pat, Vern and I drove up Cascade Gorge Road to see if we could locate the burials.

Chuck Eccleston and I have been searching for forgotten pioneer cemeteries since 2011. We soon noticed some similarities that were common to a number of found pioneer cemeteries. They are often found on the top of a small mounded hill,



with a view to the East, and on the top of the hill is a very large, old oak tree, with the burials in proximity to the tree. This is what we found in this situation.

The photo above right shows the results of my search with the dowsing rods. I located seven burials

ing rods. I located seven burials and, guess what! They were all in the shade of a 36-inch-diameter black oak tree.

36"On.

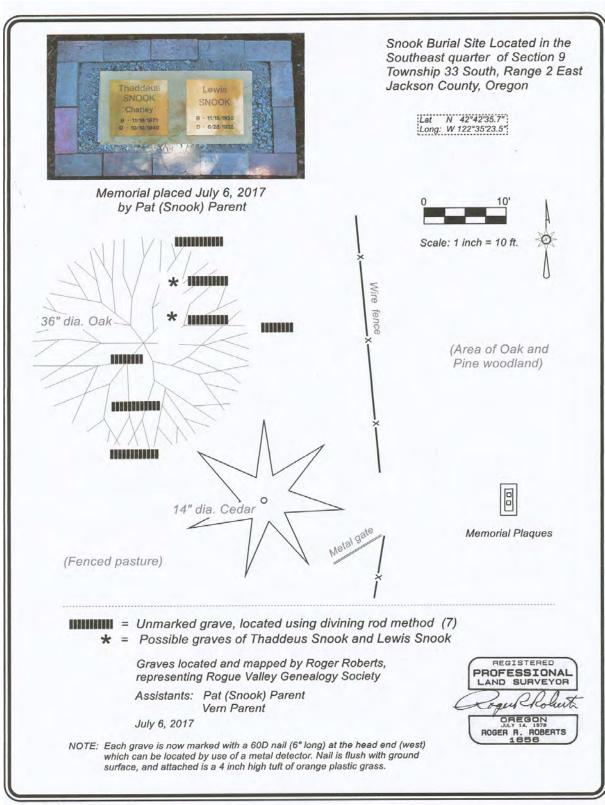


So we think we have found the graves of Thaddeus and Lewis. The only problem is that we now have seven burials, so we don't know which graves are the ones we were looking for.

We brought a granite slab with a memorial plaque for each of the two burials that Pat had purchased for the occasion. After deciding on an appropriate spot to place the memorial near the found graves, I assisted Vern in preparing a loose granite and brick base for the granite to rest on.

Pat had the honor of placing the granite slab and plaques in their final resting place. This is something that Pat had been wanting to do for years, and she is both relieved and happy that the job has now been completed.

On the next page is the map of the location of the seven found burials. A paper copy of the map is on file in the cemetery records at the Jackson County Genealogy Library.



Traverse Pr

DOWSING FOR UNMARKED GRAVES

by Roger Roberts

If you have been following this series of cemetery articles, you probably have been wondering how using dowsing rods work for finding unmarked graves. When I first heard of that, I was really skeptical. In fact, I thought it to be impossible. What a ridiculous idea! But as I kept thinking about it, I finally decided to give it a try.

I created two simple dowsing rods from two wire coat hangers, cutting off the hook and bending the wire into an L-shape. Chuck Eccleston and I then went to the Jacksonville Cemetery to try them out on graves with a headstone, so we would know that there should be a burial there. I held the short ends in my fists, letting the long ends extend forward. Holding them out in front of me, I slowly walked up to the broad side of a grave and, as I crossed the grave, the rods would turn inward and point to the opposite hand. Then, as I proceeded forward beyond the grave, the rods would return to pointing ahead in the direction I was walking. Wow! What is going on here? I tried it several times over other graves, and the rods reacted the same way every time! This is demonstrated in the photos below.







Chuck and I returned to the Mt. Vernon Cemetery, where we had previously spent many hours grave searching, to find out if we could actually find unmarked graves with these two pieces of wire. We began finding possible graves almost immediately. Once we found a possible grave, we would put down a temporary marker. Then I would proceed at 90 degrees to the grave and I found that the rods would cross at each of the two ends of the grave. We put down a yellow wire flag to mark each end of the possible grave, and then proceeded to look for the next grave. In about 90 minutes, we had found and flagged 18 graves, all in a row (see photo below right), and evenly spaced. As we got to the end of the row, I turned around to look at what we had just done, and I got a chill up my spine and the hairs

stood up on the back of my neck! It was really spooky! It seemed to be working. But how? By the time we had searched the entire fenced cemetery, we had flagged a possible 116 unmarked burials, laid out in rows and evenly spaced within the rows. And they were oriented in an east-west direction, following the Christian method of burial with the body facing to the east.

At the time I was told about finding unmarked graves by dowsing, I was also told that it can be used to determine the gender of the person buried there. Now that is really stretching the imagination! It was demonstrated to me how to go about doing that. Eventually, my curiosity got the best of



me, and I gave it a try. I would approach the broad side of a known grave, with the rods held out in front of me as before, except with a longer distance separating the rods. As I would move slowly across the grave, the rods would both swing simultaneously either to my left, or both to my right. A swing to my left, I was told, indicated a female burial, and a swing to the right would indicate a male burial. I have tested this in several cemeteries with graves marked with headstones. Only after I have made a run across a row of graves to get an indication of gender do I read the names on the headstones. And to my surprise, it seems to work. I have a rate of accuracy of about 80%.

I've searched the Internet for an explanation of how dowsing could work for finding unmarked graves and determining gender. The following is the best answer I found. There is an academic thesis paper online, prepared by a graduate student in electrical engineering at Kuala Lumpur University in Malaysia. The research paper is titled "Frequency Radiation Characteristics Around the Human Body." The student's name is Siti Zura Jahil. Jahil's research confirmed the following:

- 1. Each human body contains an electromagnetic pattern around the body
- 2. This electromagnetic body gives off a radiation frequency
- 3. The human radiation frequencies differ among gender of males and females
- 4. Human radiation frequency can be used to classify gender

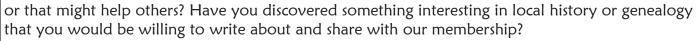
Using this information and relating it to the way the dowsing rods react, my theory is that the human burial has imprinted into the soil the electromagnetic pattern and the radiation pattern. The metal rods being held in the enclosed fists are acting as a conductor between the electromagnetic pattern in and around the body of the user and that pattern in the soil. Also, the rods are reacting to the radiation pattern difference between female and male genders. The radiation pattern for a female burial would cause the rods to swing to the left, whereas the radiation pattern for the male would cause the rods to swing to the right.

Editor's Note: On Historic Cemetery Preservation and the Committee

Several years ago volunteers of the Jackson County Genealogy Library became aware that records of many unknown and/or forgotten burial grounds throughout the county were not represented in the Library's massive cemetery records collection. Currently, approximately 96,000 names and 40 some cemeteries are listed in the website database. Another 30-40 burial sites have been reported and many located. Efforts continue to add these records to the collection. Persons with information of burial sites are encouraged to contact the volunteer team currently consisting of Roger Roberts, Ron Brown, and Chuck Eccleston. Tips on possible burial sites can be sent to the team by calling 541-776-0778 or via email at cgecc@juno.com.

Help Keep The Rogue Digger Publishing!

Do you have an interesting story about researching your ancestors? Unexpected DNA results that changed your research goals? The story of an object (e.g., a quilt, a ring, a photo) that led you on a search or shed light on your family or local history? Have you found a technique or resource that has helped you in your research



If so, our publication, *The Rogue Digger*, needs you! *The Rogue Digger* is a genealogical periodical that reports information helpful to members and researchers by sharing the results of genealogical investigations, especially those related to the Rogue Valley or to our membership. Submissions can be a mere page long or up to 10 pages long, with or without photos or illustrations. If you have an idea but don't quite know how to pull it together, our editor can advise and help; contact her at caradavisjacobson@gmail.com.

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