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**Valleytown Cemetary Has A Long, Interesting Past**

**SPECIAL TO SCOUT**  
By Mrs. Edwin Bristol  
ANDREWS - Few towns can boast a more beautiful setting for their cemetery than can Andrews! Valleytown Cemetary has a long and interesting past, about which the people of the town should be informed.  
On January 8th, 1847, the

General Assembly of the State of North Carolina issued a land grant of approximately ten acres to Valleytown Township for the purpose of burial and reportedly, there is only one other such grant in the state of this kind. In 1901 the General Assembly amended the charter, naming trustees to care for the cemetery. Time went on and in 1920 the General Assembly again changed the charter, due to the fact that the trustees had no means of income for upkeep and a continuing system of organization, since Valleytown Township was not organized as such. At this time the important parts of the grant were written thus:

Section 2: "that all that tract of land containing ten acres, more or less, set apart as aforesaid by the General Assembly of 1847 as a public burial ground, is hereby added to and shall henceforth be a part of the corporate limits of the town of Andrews, to be used for burial purposes only.

Section 3: "that the present Mayor and Board of Aldermen of the Town of Andrews and their successors in office are hereby appointed as trustees of Valleytown Cemetary and are hereby vested with full power and authority for the protection, maintenance, and administration of all the affairs of said Cemetary and may for said purpose receive gifts, donations, etc., to be applied to the maintenance and upkeep of said grounds, and if such funds are found insufficient, then they shall have power and authority to use such portions of the public funds of the Town of Andrews as in their opinion may be proper."

Other sections follow which stipulate certain duties and responsibilities to be carried out by the town and may be found in the clerk's office if you wish to read them in full. The present cemetery committee appointed by the Town Board are Zeb Conley, Harold Jones, and Mrs. Olive Ellis. While not employed at present, Mr. Sam Best was custodian of the cemetery for years.

The original ten acres given by the state has long since been depleted and for expansion the town bought the property northeast of the original site. Later, Mr. Peyton Ivis purchased the land to the south or on the town side through which the new exit road runs.

During the past several years the Valley River Garden Club, as well as others in Andrews, has become increasingly aware of the great need for beautification and better upkeep of our cemetery as a whole. Through their efforts the state highway department was contacted as to the possibility of helping build an exit road, widen the entrance, and keep the triangle opposite the entrance mowed. This road was built last year with the cooperation of the town and donations. Jimmie Ferebee donated twenty loads of gravel toward this project for which we are grateful. Later the beautification department of

the highway, under Mr. Coggins of Sylva, built the rock base triangle at the entrance to be used for the sign and plantings later carried out by the Garden Club.

The cemetery beautification committee from the club are: Mrs. Olive Ellis, Mrs. Edwin Bristol, Mrs. Zeb Conley, Mrs. Al Brown, Sr., Mrs. Artie McConnell and as past club president, Mrs. Peter Hlobil.

The wrought iron sign pictured above and designed by Mrs. Bristol, was built for the club by Sam Kay's shop in Murphy. The material for the background was donated by Conditioning, Inc., of Greensboro, who were working on the buildings at Berkshire at the time the sign was made. Mr. Jim Cane of the Air Conditioning Co., cut out and painted the background. Later, Mr. S. J. Gernert, Cliff Huls, and Clyde Ellis came to the rescue by making and installing the brackets for the background. Recently, the beginning of shrubs was started around the sign and it is hoped that other improvements may be carried out as time goes on.

What can you do now to help beautify this historical cemetery? First of all, you can interest your church and civic group to this need and the urgency for all groups to take an interest and a project to help out with its improvement. As families, you can examine your own burial plot, is its appearance one that you can be proud of? Are you satisfied to have your family name on this little plot of ground and is it a place you feel would be a fitting memory to those dear ones you have placed there?

Many of our families received their plots as a gift from the state, others have purchased theirs; but regardless of how you obtained it, it is yours, your family name will be there if it is not already there. Many of our cemetery lots are beautiful tributes to those who are placed there, others are a picture of neglect for one reason or another --- stones need to be straightened and cleaned, soil needs leveling and grassing, old worn out shrubs need cutting down or replacing. In the true spirit of neighborliness, we might also examine our adjoining plots and lend a hand to help care for the family plot who no longer have relatives nearby, or who are physically unable to keep up their own lot. If you have a shrubbery you wish to donate for group plantings or some hours of labor to give, notify the town clerk or one of the committee members from either the town or the Garden Club. Make suggestions to our town board but most of all feel that it is your own responsibility since you have a lot there.

A beautiful cemetery can be a town's loving tribute to those dear ones buried there. Let us all work together to make Valleytown Cemetary the beautiful place it should be and can be with the help of all!



WROUGHT IRON SIGN pictured above is part of a program of beautification of the Valleytown Cemetary started in Andrews several years ago by interested citizens and civic groups. (Scout Photo)

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