
Chapter 4 - Hillsburgh Cemeteries

Pioneer Cemetery

The early settlers developed a good community where God was the centre of the home life, and the church the centre of the community, so naturally they looked for a peaceful quiet place to bury their dead.

The first record we have of a cemetery in Hillsburgh was about 1831, on a piece of land about the centre of the village which was then called Howville, where the Union Church was situated. Many of the earliest settlers of Erin Twp. lie buried in this old plot. For years these old grave stones had been neglected and over grown with grass and weeds.

In 1954 Mr. Dan Gray and Mr. R.D. Nodwell were instrumental in having God's Acre restored. All headstones were uncovered from the grass and were embedded together at the front of the cemetery in a single, solid block of concrete.

Flowers were planted by the Hillsburgh Horticultural Society. Trees were plantd to the rear. The actual graves remain at the rear of the stones that used to mark those graves.

Of main interest is the one in memory of Hillsburgh's founder Mr. William How, who died February 21, 1854 at the age of eighty years. Another marks that of his wife Betsey, who died in 1858, age eighty - six years. Other headstones in the preserved collection were, Alexander Gray died in 1880, his wife Isabella, died in 1887; Richard Davis, 1862, his wife Jane died in 1858; the grandparents of Mr. John McFees; the wife of Rev. Donald Strachan, first minister of St. Andrew's Church who died in 1871 and many others.

We find there was a small cemetery on the lot where the Old Methodist Church stood on Church street, Mr. and Mrs. Arthur McConnell and Mrs. John McFee now live, in the church building which was converted to a double house.

Huxley Cemetery 1884-1967

About 1854 Thomas Huxley obtained a crown deed of lot 29, seventh line Erin Twp. Later he purchased lot 28. In 1884 his seventeen year old son was stricken with a fatal illness. The lad had expressed a wish to be buried on a small hill on the farm.

The land was seeded to peas at the time. To grant his son's wish, Thomas Huxley took his scythe, pulled a small plot of peas and dug a grave for his son.

Many residents realizing the beauty of the site, expressed a wish to use the same spot for the burial of their dead. So Thomas Huxley gave one acre of land for burial purposes.

So popular has become this burial place, that since 1900 no burial has been made in the original cemetery in the centre of the village of Hillsburgh.

In 1906 in the Town Hall, Hillsburgh, a meeting of the plot holders elected trustees, namely - Messrs. R.C.Nodwell, R.W.Tarzwel, and A. G. Parry.

In 1908 the plot holders were assessed three dollars for a large plot and one dollar and fifty cents for a small plot to raise operating funds.

The Hillsburgh Pioneer Cemetary

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This cemetary was the first one in the Hillsburgh area and was started about 1831, on a piece of donated land to the West of Main Street about the centre of town. At this time the town was called Howville after the first settler in town, a Mr. William How. Mr. Nathen Hill came later and having better political connections was successful in having the town registered as Hillsburgh. Many of the earliest settlers of Erin Township lie buried in this old site. The graves over the years had been neglected and in 1954 Mr. Dan Gray and Mr. R.D. Nodwell moved all the stones from the graves and set them in cement. As some of the stones have been broken they have been removed to the Township yard below town. Some have also been broken and lost as a result of vandals. The lot is surrounded by coniferous trees.

The cemetary stones were recorded about 1979 by Helena Gillick and at a later date reread and transcribed by Helena Gillick, Norma Huber, Marjory Kholi, E.A. Robertson and Ryan Taylor.

- #1. In memory of sons of Stephen and Ann McKenzie : Marquis A. died 25 May 1875 aged 5 years, 5 mo's 22 days Edwin J. died 23 May 1875 aged 3 years 22 days
- # 2. Betsey Brown / stone broken.
- # 3. In memory of Neil, son of Duncan and Margaret McDougald. stone broken.
- # 4. Mary, daughter of William and Jane Gemlo, died Oct. 29, 1871. aged 1 year, 9 months
- # 5. Lilly daughter of Duncan and Lucy McArthur, died Aug. 29, 1871. aged 5 years 5 mo's 2 days
- # 6. Susan Warr. daughter of John and Mary Berry. died Mar. ? 8, 1871. aged 5 years 10 mo's
- # 7. Sarah, beloved child of John and Nancy Everdell. died April 9, 1881. aged 3 years.
- # 8. George, son of J. and M. Watts. Died Jan. 16, 1850 aged 4 years.
- # 9. Mary A. died Mar. 19 1856 aged 15 years, 9 mo's and 14 days. Sarah died Sept. 4, 1857 aged 15 years, 11 mo's and 14 days daughters of Alexander and Isabella Gray
- # 10 In memory of Henry Everdell died April 8, 1874. Aged 1 year 27 days.
- # 11. Katie, daughter of Archie and Jessie Taylor died Jan. 1, 1859 aged 21 months.
- # 12 Joseph Collans died Aug. 21, 187? aged 39 years.
- # 13. In memory of Hugh Watts. Died 7th Dec. 1902 aged 18 years.
- # 14. In memory of Janet. beloved daughter of Archibold and [illegible] Reid died 1, Dec. 1871 aged 1 year 11 mo's 15 days
- # 15. Nancy, wife of Hector McVannel died May 28, 1863. Aged 56 years. verse illegible
- # 16. Isabella wife of Alexander Gray who died May 18, 1877. Aged 79 years 1 mo and 4 days a native of County Antrim, Ireland
- # 17. Duncan McDougall died May 1867 aged 62? 82? stone broken can't read verse
- # 18. In memory of Isabella Roberts, wife of Donald McKinnon, died Oct. 16, 1888 aged 88? years and 5 mo's native of Islay Scotland

- # 19. In memory of Sarah, beloved wife of Archibald McFee who died Aug. 10, 1878 aged 83 years, native of Argyleshire, Scotland.
- # 20 In memory of Mary Wheeler, wife of Patrick Reilly stone broken
- # 21. Rest in hope, Ann Viner, died Sept. 10, 1898, aged 81 years. John Viner born April 9, 1809. natives of Street, Somerset, England.
- # 22. In memory of James Smith, son of ? [stone broken] and Elizabeth Smith, who died August 6, 1877 aged 19 years⁶
- # 23. In memory of Charles Toby who died June 17, 1856, aged 53 years.
- # 24. Our mother Lydia, wife of Charles Toby died Oct. 2, 1873 aged 69 years, 9 mo's.
- # 25. In memory of Lilly McDonald, wife of Donald Robertson, who died Feb. 15, 1880 aged 79 years 6 mo's and 15 days. native of Islay, Argyleshire, Scotland. erected by her daughter Isabella.
- # 26. In memory of Donald Robertson, who died Oct. 19 -5 ? 3 ? [1853?] aged 86 years native of Islay, Argylshire, Scotland. erected by his wife.
- # 27. In memory of Margaret, beloved wife of the Rev. Donald Strachan who died Mar. 21, 1871 aged 44 years, 8 mo's and 6 days.
- #28. In memory of John Dolmer { stone broken }
- #29. In memory of Mary, wife of { stone broken } # s 28 and 29 are two halves of the same stone.
- #30. In memory of Wm. Green who died May 27, 1875 aged 66 years Native of Somersetshire [broken]
- #31. In memory of Mary Ann beloved wife of William Green who died Feb. 19, 1874 aged 59 years. native of Somersetshire England.
- #32. John Baxter died Aug.15, 1853 aged 85 years.
- #33. John Watts died June 16, 1856 aged 56 years
- #34. In memory of Elizabeth Till who died Dec. 18, ? 1877 aged 78 years
The dust returns to the earth as it was and the spirit to God who gave it.
- #35. Geo. Son of ? Morgan and Janett died Feb 28, 1860 at 9 mo's
- # 36 In memory of Thomas Elliot native of Lestershire England who died Nov.30, 1866 at 40 years
- # 37. Erected by Gilbert to the memory of his father Dougald Gillies [stone broken]
- #38. In memory of Elizabeth wife of John Kirk who died Sept. 20, 1868 aged 45 years
- #39 In memory of John Kirk who died Oct.8, 1883 aged 60 years 1 mo and 4 days.

- # 40 . [stone broken] Jan 20 1886 aged 73 years
- # 41. [stone broken] June 24, 1884 aged 68 years #'s 40 and 41 are joined together as a pair.
- # 42. Margaret Watts beloved wife of Wm. C, Blackwood died May 30, 1891 aged 37 years 10 mo's.
Nettie and Guy died June 10, 1981 aged 23 days.
- # 43. Norman died July 20, 187 / aged 11 mo's 2 days. Eva died Sept. 25, 1875 aged 8 mo's 26 days.
- # 44. Ella died Jan. 9, 1881 aged 3 mo's 9 days
- #45. William Blackwood died July 26, 1879 aged 65 years his wife Jane died Nov. 29, 1901 aged 89 years.
- # 46. In memory of William Wheeler who died May 2, 1886 aged 83 years and 9 mo's native of
Somersetshire England.
- # 47 In memory of Harriet Wheeler died Oct.2, 1882 aged 81 years. native of Somersetshire England
- # 48 Farewell dear father in memory of William Reid who died July 9, 1893 aged 84 years 6 mo's and 21 d
- # 49. In memory of Mary Dolmer wife of William Reid died Aug. 18, 1880 aged 72 years 3 m's & 15 days
- # 50 In memory of Alexander Gray who died March 26, 1880 aged 88 years & 7 mo's native of Antrim
Ireland
- # 51. In memory of James Collins died Sept. 27, 1900 aged 83 years 8 mo's
- # 52 In memory of Eliza Kerr beloved wife of James Collins who died Nov. 11, 1888 aged 66 years
- # 53. ? who died Feb 12, 1870 aged 64 years 11 mo's a native of Yorkshire England
- # 54. Rebecca beloved wife of John Close died Feb. 24, 1868 aged 47 years.
- # 55. Annie beloved daughter of John and Elizabeth Barnes who died Jan. 8, 1872 aged 2 years & 24 days.
- # 56. William Otto son of John & Elizabeth Barnes died Oct. 20, 1878 Aged 6 years & 26 days verse
- # 57. George Rufus son of John & Elizabeth Barnes died Oct. 21, 1878 aged 10 years 4 mo's & 17 days
- # 58. Mary Manley died May 28, 1868 aged 76 years 6 mo's
- # 59. Thomas Manley died Feb. 15, 1856 aged 63 years native of Wicklow County, Ireland verse on stone
- # 60. John son of William and Margaret Moore died May 12, 1865 aged 24 years.
. Weep not for me my parents dear, nor mourn for me that's gone, I was not yours but God's alone,
he loved me best and called me home.
- # 61. William Moore died July 16, 1866 aged 66 years verse on stone
- # 62. God is our guide Alexander White died July 21, 1864 77 years native of Isley Argylishire Scotland
emigrated to Canada 1848

- # 63. Richard Davis died April 22, 1862 aged 74 years native of Somersetshire England Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord.
- # 64 . In memory of Jane wife of Richard Davis who died May 19, 1858 aged 67 years & 2 mo's
A faithful friend, a companion dear, a tender parent lieth here, great is the loss we here sustain, but hope in heaven to meet again.
- # 65. In memory of Eliza Henshaw who died June 10, 18 ? 3 [stone broken] aged 65 years 7 mo's
[earlier reading says 1876]
- # 66. In memory of William Lang who died 20th Ma ? aged 48 years a native of Somersetshire England
- # 67. Mary Jane Lang wife of George Gibbs who died Jan 25 1857 aged 27 years Her end was peace.
- # 68. ? son of George and Susanna Berry who died April 19, 1867 aged 30 years 5 mo's.
Dearest brother, thou has left us, hear thy loss we deeply feel, but tis God that hath bereft us, he can all our sorrow heal. Erected by his affectionate sister Alice Berry.
- # 69. Sacred to the memory of Elizabeth May Everdell who died February 11, 1870 aged 57 years 9 mo's native of Kent England.
- # 70. In memory of William Everdell who died Jan. 17, 1882 aged 76 years 1 mo & 12 days native of Somersetshire England.
- #71. Fairwell in memory of Eliza daughter of William and Elizabeth M Everdell who died Oct.7, 1894 aged 55 years 9 mo's & 5 days.
- # 72. Fairwell sacred to the memory of Nancy Nodwell beloved wife of William Wansbrough who departed this life Feb. 7, 1876 aged 53 years 1 mo & 5 days
- # 73 James How 1st settler in Hillsburgh native of Kent England died Feb. 21, 1854. Aged 80 years Betsy wife of the above died Dec. 2, 1858 aged 86 years
- # 74. In memory of George Berry who departed this life Feb. 15, 1869 aged 69 years 11 mo.
A faithful friend , a companion dear, a tender parent lieth here, great is the loss we here sustain, but hope in heaven to meet again.
- # 75. Susanna wife of George Berry born in Netherly Dorsetshire England 13th May 1795 died May 14, 1863.
- # 76. In memory of Archibald McFee who died Sept. 15, 1868 aged 79 years & 4 mo's native of Argyleshire Scotland.
- # 77. In memory of Mary beloved wife of Dougald McFee who died Aug 1, 1875 aged 43 years
- # 78 In memory of Dougald McFee who died Sept. [stone broken] aged 63 years

The following were not included in the earlier reading.

- # 79. In memory of Sarah Hurd Wife of John Hurd [stone broken]
- # 80. [stone broken] remainder reads / ove / ril 8, 1853 aged 29 years
- # 81. [stone broken] March 1862 age 31 years