

## History of Caddo Mills IOOF Cemetery

IOOF Cemetery in southwest Hunt County, Texas about one mile southwest of Caddo Mills, Texas on State Highway 6 is proof of the existence of settlers in this area during the late 1800's and early 1900's. It is thought that family members were buried on the site in 1893.

IOOF Cemetery is situated in Hunt County, Texas about 9 miles southwest of Greenville and being a part of the Garland Greer Headright Survey. The IOOF Cemetery originated with the purchase of 4.55 acres of land by J.S. Stidham, C.J. Howard, and R.B. McAdams, Trustees of Caddo Lodge, No. 416, Independent Order of Odd Fellows from G.H. Dugan and wife, Julia S. Dugan, Mollie Gray(formerly Mollie Dugan) joined by husband William Gray, J.C. Dugan, Fannie Long(formerly Fannie Long) joined by her husband, Thomas Long, Carrie Tucker(formerly Carrie Dugan) joined by her husband, James Tucker, George B. Dugan, heirs of land of Collin Dugan October 6, 1902.(1) On October 24,1916 Trustees of the Lodge No. 416 purchased an additional tract of land, situated in Hunt County, Texas, a part of the Garland Greer Survey and beginning at the SW corner of the present lot; thence South 155.5 feet; thence East 450 feet; thence North 542 feet; thence west some degree as road 33 feet; thence South 534 feet; thence west 418 feet to place of beginning from R.A. Long and wife Fannie Dugan.(2)

A warranty deed dated February 24, 1914 in which Mollie E. Gray (formerly Mollie Dugan) joined with her husband, William Gray conveys one fifth interest in the D.H. Dugan farm to R.A. Long states that 8 <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> acres had been sold off for lots and 62/100 acre tract had been reserved for the Dugan family cemetery.(3) The first marked burial in the IOOF Cemetery was Nancy Gary, wife of A. A. Gary born 25 December 1839 and died January 1893. (4)

The Caddo Mills Cemetery Association (now known as the IOOF Cemetery Association) was formally organized December 11, 1925 when the IOOF Lodge formally turned their cemetery one mile south of Caddo Mills to lot owners and citizenship of Caddo Mills and vicinity. The Grand Master and Grand Lodge IOOF of Texas, Caddo Mills Lodge No. 416 and Fred Ende Lodge No. 87 both of the Independent Order of Odd Fellow of Texas, heretofore consolidated under the name of the latter lodge, resolved to transfer the cemetery ground to W. E. Drake, R. O. Parker, E. L. Foster, A. Fagg and J. A. Harper, trustees for the Caddo Mills Cemetery Association and their successors as long as the grantees and their successors kept and maintained it in a fit and proper condition February 11, 1926 with H. L. Carpenter, T. T. Herndon and W. H. Blalack, IOOF trustees, preparing transfer and conveyance April 11, 1930. (5) Article V111 of the Caddo Mills Cemetery Association By-Laws states that the name of the cemetery shall be IOOF Cemetery. (6)

An irrevocable trust agreement was made between William R. Nunn, Jr. of Alexandria, Virginia and the IOOF Cemetery Association October 8, 1979 making the Dugan-Clark Cemetery a part of the IOOF Cemetery. The family cemetery is located across the road, Highway 6, from the IOOF Cemetery. (7)

The IOOF Cemetery Association officers for 1926 were E. L. Foster, president, C. B. Briscoe, secretary, E. C. Fagg, assistant secretary, W. E. Drake, superintendent of lots

and directors were A. Fagg, Dr. W. C. Welch, Jas, R. Bass, R. O. Parker, J. A. Harper, W. F. Strawn and C. F. Stevenson. Entertainment and decorating committee members were Frank Drake, John T. Watson, Roy Johnson, Earl Fagg, Mrs. M. D. Shuler, Mrs. Allie Bass, Mrs. H. F. Royce, Mrs. Vera Foster, Mrs. E. C. Fagg, Mrs. C. F. Stevenson, Mrs. C. B. Briscoe, Mrs. A. H. Moore, Mrs. Nellie Welch, and Mrs. Pearl Foster. (8)

The first memorial and homecoming service was May 1937. In the early years, funds were raised with ice cream suppers and bake sales. Later, lot owners paid yearly \$2.50 to pay for the upkeep of the cemetery. Today, the cost of the lot includes monies to be used for the upkeep of the cemetery. (9)

In the early 1900's, the IOOF Cemetery Ladies Auxiliary was formed. A tabernacle/gazebo was erected with bois d'arc post to support the roof. In 1997, the IOOF Cemetery Ladies Auxiliary was reorganized under the direction of Linda Hess. The members were Linda Hess, president, Rheda Davis, Vivian Hess, Marilyn Rentfrow, Joan Bentley, Marie Bentley, Marsha Nelson, June Jordan, Katherine Griffis, Evelyn Newman and Mozzelle Bearding. With the help of the IOOF Cemetery Association, the auxiliary was able to erect a new tabernacle/gazebo with Ionic columns and balustrades roofed with slate to replace the aged one.

The IOOF Cemetery Association presently is very active and works to continue to beautify the cemetery and make it as serene as possible.

There have been approximately 2,205 burials in the cemetery. Of those burials are a number of soldiers. The oldest soldiers buried in the cemetery were Confederate soldiers who fought in the Civil War. The Confederate soldiers were Jessie Bledsoe, J. W. Griffis, Joseph R. Bass and B. F. Hill. Those who fought in the Spanish American War who are buried in the cemetery are Tom Long, Richard M. Nesbitt, Jim Bell and Ed Rogers. Many others who served our country in World War 1, World War 11, the Korean War and the Vietnam War are also buried in the cemetery. (10)

The cemetery is well kept with grass covered graves. Tombstones marking burials vary with tree stumps, marble, pink and gray granite. Curbing marks the site of some family plots. The cemetery continues to serve the Caddo Mills, Josephine and surrounding areas.

The cemetery was marked with a State Historical Marker in October 2001. Future generations will be able to reflect and experience a part of the area's history.