



Cala Smoldt
Compiler

75 years ago
Feb. 21, 1934

*Only a few residents of Mercer County may have noticed the low wall of buff-colored sandstone perhaps 60 feet long and four feet high standing along the north side of the highway a few hundred yards east of the Sugar Grove tourist camp. It was once a private burying ground, known as the Artz family cemetery; the blocks of sandstone used in the wall were once a part of the old Artz Mill. One of the oldest in Mercer County, it stood farther east on the Edwards river, so many years ago that only a few can point out the location. One and possibly two veterans of the Civil war are buried there. This alone, will prevent it from ever ceasing to be a cemetery, for the law forbids a cemetery containing the grave of a veteran from ever being abandoned.

Every Memorial day, Albert McCreight, of Aledo, American Legion graves recorder, places a small flag beside the rusty G.A.R. marker where it flutters for a few days, giving a touch of life to a spot entirely consecrated to death. Without the aid of official records, a visitor would have difficulty in making out the name "Wm. H. Ashbaugh" on the stone, for it is broken in two across the words. It is not difficult to read that he died in July 1868, at the age of 27 years and a few months. In all there are possibly 14 or 15 graves in the plot. Apparently there have been no burials there for over half a century. For one of the most recent dates appears on the stone marking the grave of "Sarah Lambert, wife of John Artz" who died Feb. 3, 1880. At the time the cemetery was established, the Artz family owned more than 1,000 acres of land in that community, according to Dan W. Twelftree, himself an old resident of the Sugar Grove neighborhood.

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