

HISTORY OF OAK HILL CEMETERY

29 May 1908

Twelve years ago Oak Hill Cemetery was a wilderness of weeds and briars, a number of little pens dotted here and there, and a few strands of barbwire marked the outside fence but down at intervals, in fact it was nothing less than a pasture for the town cow, a disgrace to Johnson City. A committee of ladies from each of the churches of the cit met at the home of Mrs. C.K. Lide, talked and planned of how to raise money to fence the cemetery. With an oyster supper, a lecture from Senator R.L. Taylor, another from Hon. A.A. Taylor, sufficient money was raised to put a substantial fence around the cemetery. The good work commenced, the ladies were not prone to lay it down, so what is now known as "The Oak Hill Cemetery Association" was organized Nov. 1896 with Mrs. C.K. Lide as President, holding their meetings once a month in the homes of the different members giving now and then an ice cream and strawberry supper, concert, musical or something of the kind, managing to keep the weeds and briars cut down and a drive way made, but interest began to flag. Our president moved away and our meetings were discontinued until Oct. the 28th 1904. The ladies were called together again in the home of Mrs. C. Faw and the Cemetery Association reorganized with Mrs. W.J. Exum as President. We met with discouragement many times, have been criticized and censured but kept right on until now, the ladies feel real proud of their work. They have engaged J.C. Mumpower as Sexton for another season and he too has had to bear his part of the censure. Did you ever stop to think that the Sexton couldn't mow the whole cemetery in a day, get down and clip the grass from the graves, around the corner stones and such places as could not be reached with the mower and perhaps stop to dig three or four graves in the mean time? By the time he gets over all this ground that part of the cemetery where he commenced to now is needing mowing again, and needing it badly, especially if it has been a rainy time (for grass and weeds will grow in wet weather.) You make a visit to the cemetery and perhaps your loved ones are sleeping in this particular spot, where the mowing commenced, you go away feeling hurt and think he doesn't keep your square mowed, the other part of the cemetery looks nice and clean. You make it convenient to see the president or some officer of the association to tell them your square in not being kept as it should be that you pay your \$1.20 per year the same as others and they can just take your name off the books and you will look after your square yourself or hire some one else to do it. We would just ask you to visit the cemetery oftener and perhaps you will happen there just when your square has been mowed and you will go away feeling better and make others feel better.

Saturday May the 30th is Decoration day and the sexton is especially anxious to have you come to the cemetery on that day, he expects to do his best to have it in good condition. Give him an encouraging word and he will do you better work. All work better when we feel that our efforts are appreciated.

**Mrs. J.A. Martin President
Mrs. Frank McNees, Vice-Pres.
Miss Sallie Faw, Treasurer,
Miss Mollie Kitzmiller, Sec.**

Officers, Oak Hill Cemetery Association, "History of Oak Hill Cemetery." The Johnson City Staff 29 May 1908, Twice-A-Week ed.: ND.