

Cemeteries

The Village of Chagrin Falls possesses two historic cemeteries, Grove Hill Cemetery and Evergreen Hill Cemetery. These two cemeteries serve as the burial grounds for a variety of prominent Chagrin residents and war veterans. The first burial was made in Grove Hill during the year Chagrin Falls was founded, in 1833. The Village of Chagrin Falls went on to establish the Evergreen cemetery in 1863 for residents of the village and township. Today, both cemeteries continue to serve as an important reflection of Chagrin's rich history and past.

In 1842, ensuing the first burial at Grove Hill Cemetery in 1833, Mr. George Stocking purchased the Grove Hill Cemetery lot for two hundred dollars. Stocking laid the land off into one-hundred lots, each eight by twenty-eight feet for burying purposes, and deeded the lots to private individuals for family burials. Among those buried at Grove Hill Cemetery are the victims of a viscous diphtheria epidemic that claimed the lives of roughly twenty to twenty-five children in Chagrin Falls during the 1840s. Grove Hill Cemetery additionally serves as the burial site of Josiah Rodgers, a Revolutionary War veteran who served roughly a year as a private in Captain Moses Huff's Company of Colonel Thaddeus Cook's Connecticut Regiment. Rodgers, who was born in Bradford, Connecticut, served three and one-half months in his first enlistment and about eight months in his second enlistment. After the war, in 1836, Rodgers became a physician and practiced in Chagrin. Rodgers is currently the only Revolutionary War veteran buried in Grove Hill Cemetery. This cemetery is also the resting place of numerous Chagrin settlers like Sturtevant, Hart, Bosworth, and Williams. Among the prominent Chagrin residents buried at this cemetery lies the grave of Dr. Justus Vincent. In 1841, Vincent led the way in the Ohio Legislature for the passage of an act that authorized Orange Township, which sits in Cuyahoga County, to annex 900 acres of land in the southwest corner of Russell Township, which lies in Geauga County. In return, Russell Township was awarded 900 acres of land in the Northeast corner of Orange Township. Russell Township was most unhappy due to its loss of arable farmland in exchange for hilly, unstable terrain. After Russell Township realized what happened, it successfully petitioned the Ohio Legislature to return the unusable Orange Township land to Orange. The petition, however, did not request that Orange township return the former Russell Township land to Russell. Once Vincent condensed all of Chagrin Falls into Cuyahoga county, he introduced an act in the Ohio Legislature to incorporate the town of Chagrin Falls. On March 12, 1844, the act to incorporate Chagrin Falls was passed and the Village of Chagrin Falls was officially created. The last burial in Grove Hill Cemetery took place in 1869. Today, the inscriptions on tombstones are nearly gone in some places due to their long exposure to unforgiving weather. Despite Grove Hill Cemetery's age, the township trustees



continue to maintain the cemetery's grounds by cleaning up fallen trees and keeping the grass mowed.

After the Evergreen Hill Cemetery opened in 1863, some families had their loved ones relocated from Grove Hill Cemetery to the Evergreen Hill Cemetery on South Franklin Street. The cemetery is divided up into 53 sections, and the first thirteen sections of the cemetery were platted with drives for horse and carriage accessibility. There are several patriotic sections in Evergreen Hill Cemetery: Veterans of Foreign Wars (section 30), American Legion (section 35), and Woman's Relief Corps (section 3). Within these sections of the cemetery lie five War of 1812 veterans (one is unknown in W.R.C. plot), over one hundred Civil War veterans, twelve 1895 Spanish American War veterans (one who also served in WWI), ninety World War One veterans, one hundred-fifty World War Two veterans, twenty one Korean War veterans, and five Vietnam veterans. To further honor the

twenty-one Chagrin Falls men who perished in the war between the states, A Civil War Memorial was erected at Evergreen Hill on September 10th, 1867. This memorial still serves today as the backdrop for Chagrin's annual Memorial Day ceremony that honors local veterans. The cemetery also contains a mausolean constructed by the Forsythe brothers for the purpose of winter burials, which currently stands in the oldest part of the cemetery. The names of old, notable Chagrin residents like Church, Ober, Stroud, Brewer, Huggett, Stoneman, and Pugsley appear on tombstones in the cemetery. The grave of Henry Church

Jr. also lies at Evergreen Hill, where a pedestal with a lion sculpture resting on top stands to mark his grave. The sculpture of a lion resting adjacent to a young child sits mounted atop his grave and is an illustration of the scripture Isaiah 11:6, which states "And the wolf will



The newly erected Civil War Memorial overlooking Chagrin in 1867 (above)

Gill Plavcan moderates the annual Memorial Day ceremony held in front of the Civil War Memorial at Evergreen Hill Cemetery (below)



Henry Church Jr.'s tombstone in Evergreen Hill Cemetery (below)



dwell with the lamb, And the leopard will lie down with the young goat, And the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; And a little boy will lead them.” The lots that these men and women occupy once cost as low as five dollars in 1863. In 1935, however, the price of a lot at Evergreen Hill rose to ninety dollars. Today, lots are still available for burial at this historic cemetery.

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