



In 1852, landowners Levi and Lucy Beebe, and their son Arsinæ Levi and his wife Eliza L., sold a small, wooded parcel of one-half acre to the Town of Dunn. The price was four dollars. The record of sale indicates the property was "...for the use of said district for a burying ground forever." As part of the agreement, the family retained the timber "to cut and use when we choose."

The document of sale was recorded June 14th, 1852. John A. Beebe, the infant son of Arsinæ and Eliza, had died four days earlier. The land was already used as a burial ground several years before the town purchase: Bradley and David, two grown sons of Harvey and Lydia Pritchard (the Beebe's closest neighbors to the east), both died on the same day in 1845. They share an obelisk monument with their parents.

As was the custom of the time, grave markers were not always carved marble or granite. Families who couldn't afford a carved stone often chose a wood cross or a selected field stone to mark a grave. The carved stones that remain today are all white marble, used extensively in the 1800s but extremely fragile and weathered now.

With such an varied assortment of markers, the Dunn Burying Ground during the latter part of the last century would have looked quite different. Early records mention the large oak trees and lilac bushes that remain today. Pink roses along the eastern fence line, mockorange and wildflowers including shooting stars, pussy toes, and trillium complete the picture of an early prairie cemetery.

Time and vandalism have reduced the number of memorials, but the remaining stones chronicle wars, epidemics, and the strength of family. Most of the people buried in the Dunn cemetery were Methodist; their names reveal English and Welsh ancestry. Other early settlers were from Norway and Ireland, but each settled in different areas of Dunn (Norwegians toward Stoughton and Lake Kegonsa; Irish near Fitchburg and Madison) and preferred to be buried in their own cemeteries. Unfortunately, all Dunn Burying Ground records were lost in 1932 when a fire destroyed the Dunn Town Hall.

By 1890, the cemetery was deemed full and subsequent burials made in Prairie Mound Cemetery in nearby Oregon. But the Town of Dunn no longer had a place for citizens to be buried—until the 1992 purchase of two adjacent acres. In 1993, the town will once again have a burying ground for its citizens.



Common Symbols on Gravestones

The Dunn Burying Ground contains stones that use these motifs, which portray the sentiments of the time.

The dove, (on the stone belonging to Robert Laws and shared by Alice Harper) symbolized purity and innocence, and along with the lamb, was often used on the stones of children.

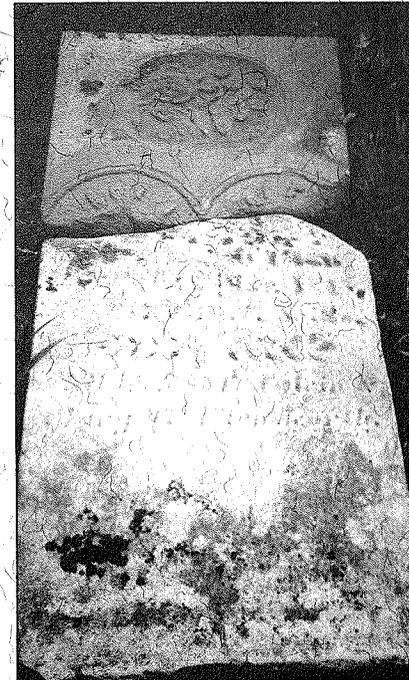
The flag, (used on the stone of Oliver Johnson, pictured overleaf) denoted a war veteran.

A willow tree, (on stones belonging to Samuel Shores and James Nesbitt) symbolized the continuity of everlasting life.

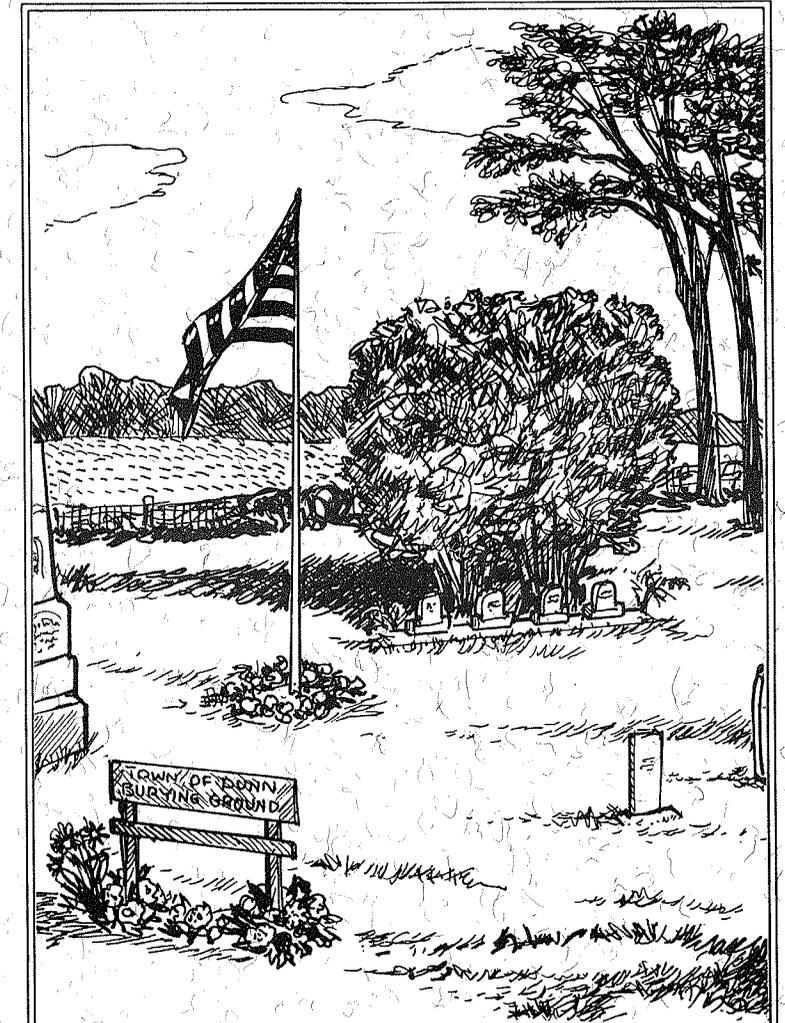
The rose, (shown at right on a stone for the children and Calvin and Mary Farnsworth) symbolized that the soul was attaining perfection.

This stone's broken top was found buried under several inches of topsoil in 1985, in excellent condition, when efforts were made to investigate if other stones existed which hadn't been documented.

The cemetery was restored after Halloween vandalism in 1987, with aluminum channels crafted to hold broken stones together. This process was determined to be less invasive than cement repairs on the face of the stones, but the bases use that material, which will ultimately erode the fragile marble.



Visitors to the Dunn Burying Ground are welcome during daylight hours. Inscriptions on the stones photograph best if the sun's angle casts a shadow overhead. If you wish to take rubbings of the stones, please register in the Dunn Town Hall, 4136 County Highway B at the corner of Keenan Road.



Town of Dunn Burying Ground

County Highway B and Sandhill Road
in Dane County, Wisconsin

Town of Dunn Burying Ground



Information on these pages is transcribed directly from the inscriptions on the gravestones, keeping the same abbreviations. Description of each stone or data of historic interest is in italics.

WILLIAMSON JOHN

Buried in NW front corner, with G.A.R. marker (bronze), but no headstone. Information obtained from local people (1930s). A soldier in the Civil War, he was uncle to Ed Dick, living near cemetery in 1933. Ellen Dick, John's wife, is buried in Oregon Prairie Mound Cemetery, died 1893 at age 89.

LINDSAY FATHER MOTHER JAMES

Three footstones existed (one missing by 1986) but no headstone. Local people (1930s) say this is a Lindsay family.

BEEBE LEVI b. 1788 d. March 1, 1858 age/70 years 11 mos.
wife of Levi Beebe
LUCY d. April 13, 1863 age 74 yrs. 4 mos. 27 days
JOSEPH E. d. July 1, 1885, age 1 yr. 7 mos. 8 days
JOHN A. son of A.L. [Arsinae Levi] and Eliza L. Beebe
 d. June 10, 1852 age 4 wks. 2 days

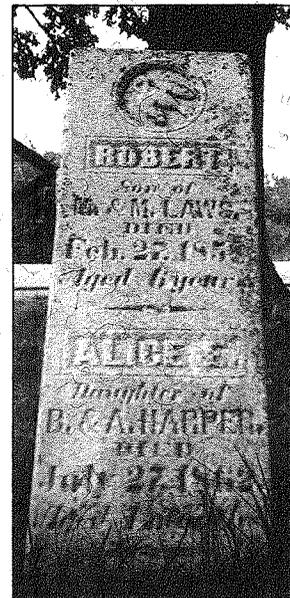
Marble obelisk with inscriptions on all four sides of base

SHORES SAMUEL C. d. Oct. 15, 1857 age 37 yrs. 4 mos.
Marble slab, broken and repaired in 1987, weeping willow carving.

SPENCER HENRY D. d. Nov. 18, 1857 age 28 yrs. 9 mos. 2 days
Marble monument - N. Greenbank, Shebogyan; footstone

BRADSHAW JOHN son of H. and J. Bradshaw
 d. Sept. 22, 1858 age 10 years
Marble slab with carved rose bouquet; footstone

MAINE or MAINS JOHN d. Sept. 10, 1863 or 8
 age (not totally legible—est. at) 80 years
Stone broken and down 1933, repaired 1987



DAY ALVIN L. Co. B. 11th Wisconsin Infantry
 Civil War; enlisted Aug. 16, 1862
 — G.A.R. marker and flag 1933.
Marble slab only 1986

SCOTT ALMER son of J. and M. Scott
 d. Aug. 6, 1864 age 4 mos.
Stone missing - base only; recorded down 1933.

LAWS MARY daughter of ? and Alice Laws
 d. Oct. 19, 1858 age 6 yrs.
*Marble stone broken and very weathered.
 Footstone inscribed M.A. directly behind.*

LAWS ROBERT son of M. and M. Laws
 d. Feb. 27, 1858 age 6 yrs.

*and on same marble stone,
 below Robert Laws inscription:*

HARPER ALICE E. daughter of B. and H. Harper
 d. July 27, 1862 age 4 mos.

Both children's initials are on footstone.

NIXON ADAM d. April 27, 1861 age 46 yrs.
Marble slab and footstone.

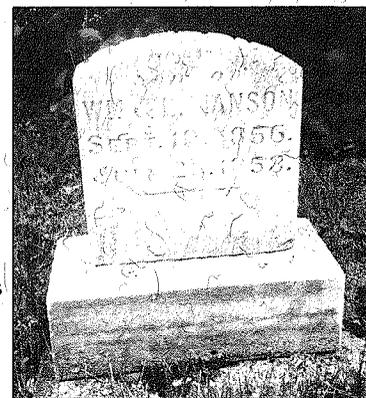
The following 4 small marble stones with arched tops are the same style and use one common base. One stone (Henry) replaced (was missing) in 1989—carved by a Manson family descendant.

MANSON FREDDIE son of Wm. and
 Lucinda Manson
 b. Sept. 9, 1856
 d. July 29, 1858

MANSON HENRY son of Wm. and
 Lucinda Manson
 b. March 31, 1859
 d. April 17, 1859

DICKEY CHARLOTTE daughter of James
 and Rachel Dickey
 d. April 18, 1861
 age 18 yrs.

DICKEY RACHEL wife of James Dickey
 b. March 18, 1803 d. June 5, 1881



NESBITT JAMES J. d. Nov. 17, 1853 age 62 yrs. 8 mos.
Marble slab with weeping willow motif

NESBITT ELIZABETH M. daughter of Wm. O. and N. Nesbitt
 d. May 28, 1854 age 5 yrs. 8 mos. 12 days
Marble slab

FARNSWORTH MARY C. (Cramer) wife of Calvin Farnsworth
 d. Oct. 2, 1856 age 34 yrs.
Marble slab, very worn inscription; footstone
Both Calvin and Mary Farnsworth have stones in Prairie Mound Cemetery in Oregon. No documentation why Mary has a stone in both cemeteries. Her death came six days after the death of one of her children, below.

FARNSWORTH children of Calvin and Mary Farnsworth
 names illegible
 September 26, 1856
 March ?, 1848

Broken marble slab, restored in 1987. Well-preserved top with rose motif found buried in 1985.

ALLISON JAMES D. Jan 6, 1860 age 25 yrs.
*Marble slab, top missing. Signed A. Abbott, Madison;
 footstone.*

PENEWELL ROBERT b. 1835 d. 1864 age
 28 yrs. 7 mos. 3 days
G.A.R. marker and flag 1933. Civil War veteran.

JOHNSON OLIVER son of Ingerbert
 and Hellen Johnson
 died at Adams U.S.
 Hospital, Memphis, Tenn.
 March 1, 1865 age 21
 years 2 mos. 7 days

*Marble slab—"He Died for His Country" inscription.
 G.A.R. marker and flag seen 1933.
 Civil War veteran.*

PRITCHARD HARVEY d. Dec. 1, 1871 age 85 yrs.
War of 1812 veteran—G.A.R. marker and flag recorded 1933.

LYDIA wife of Harvey Pritchard
 d. Nov. 11, 1860 age 78 yrs.

BRADLEY son of H. and L. Pritchard
 d. Nov. 21, 1845 age 38 yrs.

DANIEL son of Harvey and Lydia Pritchard
 d. Nov. 21, 1845 age 39 yrs.

*Marble obelisk with inscriptions for each Pritchard on separate sides.
 Inscription on north side worn smooth but known to be Daniel—recorded 1933.
 Footstones for Bradley and Mother.*

TIPPLE EMMA ROSE daughter of Richard and Martha Atwood Tipple
 d. September 24, 1882 age 3 months

The notice of this child's burial was found in the county records. No stone exists.

