

Genealogy in the Cemeteries

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GENEALOGY IN THE CEMETERIES.

BY COL. G. W. CROSLY.

Among the many beautiful cemeteries in Iowa there are few that for beauty of location will surpass or equal the one so appropriately named Graceland at Webster City. The grounds, streets, alleys and lots are well cared for and it contains many beautiful and some costly monuments. In this respect, however, it does not differ much from a great many others, but it has occurred to the writer that in so far as the keeping of its records is concerned it deserves to be mentioned as an example to others that have not been so careful in this regard.

The cemetery is the property of the city. The records are kept at the City Hall in a large leather bound book entitled "Cemetery Lot and Grave Record, City of Webster City." This book contains: First, names indexed in alphabetical order of all persons buried in this cemetery, giving lot, division and block and location on lot: Second, plats of all blocks and lots in each section of the cemetery, showing names of persons buried, and the location of each grave upon lot; these plats also show shape and size of each lot. Third, a complete record of all soldiers of the War of the Rebellion and other wars buried in this cemetery, with the number of lot, division and block, company, regiment, State, arm of service to which they belonged and metal markers placed at each soldier's grave.

In addition to this a large plot of ground has been set apart for use on Memorial Day, shaded by fine trees and containing an open space in the center upon which stands a flagstaff. I may add that there is no place where Memorial Day is more faithfully and religiously observed than here. Many years ago the city authorities took charge of these exer-

cises, and each year the members of the local Grand Army Post and other old soldiers and the members of the Woman's Relief Corps are the honored guests of the city, the Grand Army Post conducting the services at the cemetery according to their ritual, but being relieved of all care as to looking after the details for the observance of the day, and all expense connected therewith. The local military company and the children of the public schools always participate in these exercises, and the business houses are closed.

The records above referred to were compiled by Levi Cottington, an old soldier, and the work of getting all the names and locating them involved long and patient effort and took over one year for its completion. The indexing, platting and drafting was done by Capt. Frank E. Landers, another old soldier, who has for long years been the voluntary keeper of the death record of old soldiers in Webster City and Hamilton county. To these two men is due the whole credit of making up and providing for the perpetual keeping up of these invaluable records. Each burial is promptly reported to the city clerk by the sexton and at once added to the record, so for all time it will be kept complete if faithful and capable men like those now occupying these positions succeed them.

Such a record will prove of value to collectors of genealogical facts and compilers of local history, necrology and biography, and to throw light on the general history of the town, county and State. It also appeals to the best and holiest sentiment of the human heart in keeping the dead in memory and is evidence of a high state of civilization in the community.

A TEN DOLLAR BILL on the State Bank of Iowa has just come into our hands for the first time. It is beautifully executed, and contains a good likeness of Gov. Lowe, a view of the State House at Des Moines, a map of Iowa with all the counties distinctly marked, a Train of Cars, Steamer, Agricultural Implements and Products, a Factory, picture of a pretty woman, and, better than all, it promises to be good for ten dollars.—*St. Charles City Intelligencer, March 17, 1859.*

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