

Muir (Mure) Cemetery

By Dave Halleman



This beautiful cemetery with its many fieldstones is located in T43 R3 S30 NW¹/₄.

38° 26' 20" N / 90° 43' 50" W

The cemetery is named for Severn Sylvester Muir, SR. who first entered this tract, where the cemetery is located, into record as Certificate #11080 on January 8th, 1839, containing 57.⁷⁶ acres,

encompassing the "...East ½ of the Northwest ¼..." as recorded in Original Entries Book 2 Page 192. He also pioneered the SW¹/₄ of the NW¹/₄, certificate #3016 entered the 9th of September 1835 "...SW¹/₄ of the NW¹/₄...", containing 28.⁸⁸ acres, also the NW¹/₄ of the SW¹/₄, certificate #4382 entered the 8th of October 1835 containing 27.⁸⁸ acres, and finally *Severn Mure assignee of George Travis*, Section 30, certificate #10722, entered the 1st of August 1844, containing 55.⁷⁶ acres, "...NE¹/₄ of the SW¹/₄ and the NW¹/₄ of the SW¹/₄ ...", all in Township 43 Range 3 Section 30, which compromises the acreage as seen in the 1876 Atlas below. All documents used the name Severn MURE, however Mure & Muir are used in various other documents.

Ownership of this tract is shown in the 1876 Historic Atlas, as still belonging to S. S. Muir Estate. Severin SR. died in December 1875, thus the 1876 Atlas listing the property as owned by the Estate.

Probate Case # 1224, Severn Muir SR., dated December 1875, heirs are listed as Martha, wife; Severn Muir Jr., son; Peter, son; James, son; Nancy, daughter; Martin, son deceased; Martha, daughter; Diego, son; Comfort, daughter; Baltimore, deceased; Caroline, daughter; William, son deceased; Andrew Jackson, son; Polly, daughter; Mary Ann, daughter; Onita Francis, daughter; and Ellen Josephine, daughter. Property owned was listed as "...E ½ of the W fractional ¼ and the SW ¼ of the NW ¼ and the SE ¼ of the NW ¼ and the W part of the SW ¼, Township 43 Range 3 Section 30..." There was no mention of the cemetery.

Probate Case # 6088, Severn Sylvester Muir, JR., dated 1938, heirs are listed as Julia E., Widow; Martha Ferney, daughter; Edward Muir, son; Severn Sylvester, son; Susie, daughter; Julia, daughter; James Muir, son; and Catherine Kobach, daughter. By 1938 the land had been sold down to 83+/- acres "...S ½ of the SW ¼ and NE ¼ of the SW ¼, Township 43 Range 3 Section 30..." Again no mention of the cemetery.

I could not locate a deed where the cemetery was excepted out. Nor could I locate any mention of it in the probate records. The current landowner's deed does not reflect this cemetery.

Herein lies the dilemma; the cemetery shows up on the 1876 and 1898 Atlas' yet as far as I can determine it was never "officially" excepted out. Either the compiler for the 1876 Atlas or someone in the office, a title company, or possibly someone in the courthouse knew of the existence of the cemetery when the work of putting together the 1876 Atlas was in progress. When the 1898 Atlas was done the compilers probably simply copied from the 1876 as the owners of this tract was the same family.

The 1880 Census show Martha B. Muir, white female, 60 years old, widowed, living with her sons Severn S. Muir, white male, 25 years old, single, farm hand; Peter Muir, white male, 20 years old, farm hand; and her daughter Ellen Muir, white female, 18 years old. Also Emma Muir, white female, 21 years old, was a hired servant girl, on the neighboring farm of John Howell.

Marie Rogers, great-great granddaughter of Severn Muir SR., related to me that this was a family cemetery. Severn SR. had 17 children, 3 step children, 3 wives and possibly more.

The Lawrences, current owners, are doing a wonderful job in restoring this cemetery, which was extremely overgrown when they purchased the property. As of the time I had visited it they had located 1 complete, 1 broken monument, and about 50 fieldstones, some with initials carved on them.

As with many small family cemeteries of pioneer days, neighboring families could have possibly buried members here also. And as with most family cemeteries those who are buried here are lost with time.

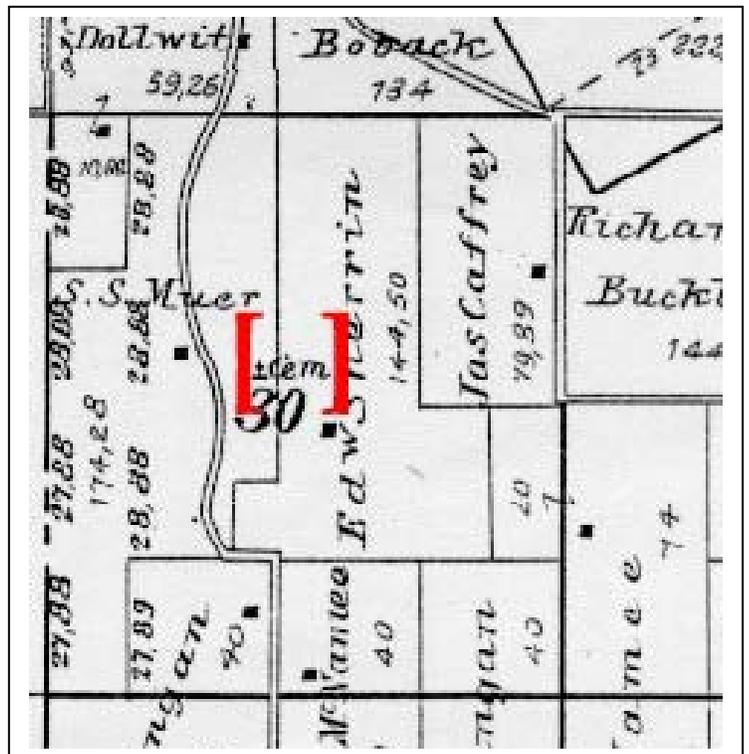
Without a deed naming this cemetery, and with the evidence I have presented, I feel the "official" name of this cemetery should be ***Muir Cemetery.***



As can be seen in the picture at left, in 1876 the Estate of Severn Muir is in possession of the property. The brackets I added to the photo to denote the location of this graveyard, which is shown on the original Atlas.

The School located in Section 29, was probably an early McNamee School. It is interesting to note that it does not appear on the 1898 Atlas.

By 1898 S(evern) S(ylvester) Muir JR. has become owner of this tract and adjoining lands. As before I added the brackets to show location of this graveyard that is denoted on the original Atlas.



The following persons are listed on the monument in this cemetery.

Severn Muir

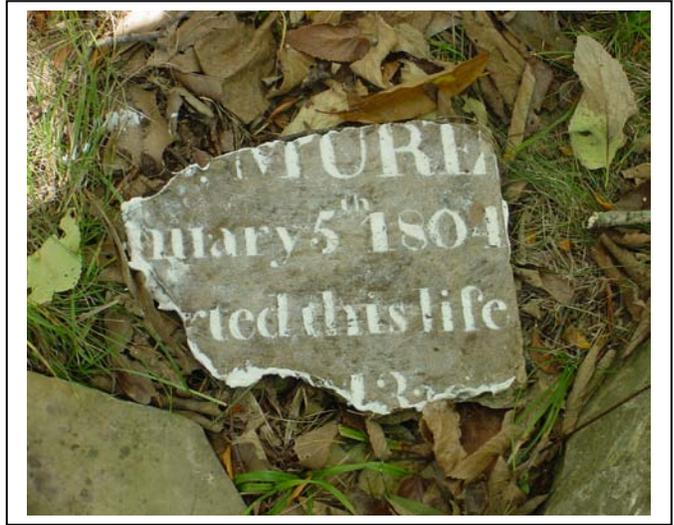
Born
November 21st, 1791
Died
November 24th, 1875
Aged 84y 3d



This was the original monument for Severn Muir.



This modern monument was placed in the cemetery by Marie Rogers, Great, Granddaughter of Severn Muir.



These two pieces go together.

IN
Memory of
?? Mure
January 5th, 1804
(Depa)rted this life
?3



JD
1851
June

Two Marked Fieldstones

HV

I would like to thank Marie Rogers, great, granddaughter of Severn Muir, for showing me this location and providing background for this article, and to the Ron and Julia Lawrence for their wonderful work in restoring what little remains of this once well known site.

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Update 2012

In 2010 Sean Pickett contacted me about doing a cleanup of this cemetery as a community service project for his Eagle Scout requirements. After meeting I advised him of what I knew and suggested he proceed. I wrote a letter to the Boy Scout Council expressing my view that this was not a private cemetery but now owned by the state as I interpret the laws.

The Council after seeking advisement gave Sean the go ahead. This was a win-win for everyone. His family, friends, and fellow Scouts assisted him in this endeavor. Not only did this instill a sense of respect for all cemeteries and history into this group but also into persons driving by and seeing this restored cemetery.

I personally would like to thank Sean for his wonderful work and Mrs. Lawrence who owns the adjoining property for her reassuring Sean that this was *HIS* project and he has our full support.

The following pictures are of the restored cemetery;



The above picture is looking from Mrs. Lawrence's driveway across the side yard. At right shows the new entranceway with sign.



Muir Cemetery



The above picture show the cleaned up inside with the wonderful new split rail fence.



The below picture shows the old and new Severn Muir monuments.



*Sean and I in front of the restored cemetery. **Great Job Sean!***