

The Osborn Cemetery

Jesse Osborn was one of the earliest settlers in the mountains of north Georgia. He was born in North Carolina on August 27, 1799, the son of Jeremiah Osborn and Ann (Blythe) Osborn. Jesse married Cynthia Murray in 1826. When the Cherokees were moved out of the Georgia mountains, Jesse bought a large tract of land near the community of Macedonia a few miles east of Hiawassee. He farmed and served as postmaster of the Post Office in Macedonia.

When Cynthia Osborn died in 1885, she was buried at the top of a small knoll on Jesse's land. There were eight Osborn children. As Jesse and other family members died, they were buried near Cynthia. Soon, friends and neighbors asked to be buried there too. Before long it became known as the Osborn Graveyard. Not long after the Hiawassee Baptist Church was established, several Osborn family members moved their membership from the Macedonia church to the newer church at Hiawassee. Samuel Judson Osborn served as a deacon for many years.



In 1909 the Osborn family, seeking relief from the responsibility of maintaining the cemetery, deeded the two acre parcel to the Hiawassee Baptist Church. The deed was duly recorded on February 4th. The following is an excerpt from the deed:

“Witnesseth, that for and in consideration of the interest we ... have in the welfare of (the) church and community and in the further consideration which we have for the love of the Kingdom and cause of Christ our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, we ... do hereby give (the church)... the tract being known as the Osborn Graveyard. .. to be forever used as a cemetery .. for the use and benefit of the church and all Protestant denominations who want to bury their dead in said cemetery. “

Though the cemetery has been a part of the church for over 100 years the name remains -the Osborn Cemetery. The oldest grave is that of Cynthia Osborn. The largest grave marker is an obelisk monument to William R. McConnell, the father of Dr. F.C. McConnell for whom the church is now named.

When the Hiawassee River was dammed to form Lake Chatuge, the church voted to allow the remains of persons taken from graves soon to be submerged to be re-buried in the Osborn Cemetery. In 1962 as the grave sites filled, an additional acre of adjoining land was purchased from the TVA for \$400.

A walk through the cemetery is like a walk backward through time. If one could but call back time for just awhile to chat with the men and women whose names appear on the head stones, what stories could be told! The names Osborn, Hedden, Kimsey, Burch, McConnell, Corn, Carter, Greene, Lloyd, Berrong, Burns, Puett, Nicholson, Hutchings, Acree and others represent the men and women who have shaped the character of the church and the community.

