



Harrington Cemetery

By Frances James (1922 – 2019)

The Harrington Cemetery in Irving is near the intersection of Valley View and Walnut Hill Lane West. This area is very near the Dallas/Ft. Worth International Airport. Adjacent to the Harrington Cemetery is a rare find of the remains of foundations of the buildings in the Estelle Community. These have been carefully identified and preserved by the City of Irving Park Department. A large marker has been placed explaining the 19th century history of the small farming and ranching community that began about 1853 when Henry Burgoon and William Borah both got land in this same vicinity. Here they raised oats, wheat, corn and cattle.

Enclosed within the fence of the Harrington Cemetery are nine marked graves, the oldest remaining headstone marks that of a baby in 1891.

Kentucky native Bryant Harrington (1829-1895) came to this section of Dallas County in 1866 and purchased 660 acres of land. He donated the land for a lodge hall, a church for the community and in 1879 the cemetery. Harrington was described as being a man of large frame and a strong voice. He was a member of Estelle Lodge No. 570 and the Christian Church. It has been said that he had anecdotes and stories to tell; that he was a sensible, jovial, and generous hearted man of the plains!

Harrington was born in Hardin County. His father died while he was a boy and he stayed with his mother until 1849 when he and his twin brother, Ryan, and other young men heard about the gold rush in California. Traveling with ox-teams they finally arrived in Sacramento five months later. They spent two and one half years and gave up gold mining, cashed in their ninety-eight ounces of gold at \$17.38 per ounce, and took a steamer to Kentucky to visit their mother. He worked on a farm for a year and went to school for a year.

In 1855 he came to Dallas and purchased a small building and became a photographer. This did not last long as he sold his business and moved to Palo Pinto County where another brother and a brother-in-law lived.

Harrington was gathering supplies to go gold mining again in 1859; this time he was going to Pike's Peak. He met Ed Graham, whom he had known in Kentucky, a representative of Peters Colony. Ed Graham's father was quite wealthy and was willing to back an opportunity to go to Mexico and set up a business. The three men, Bryant, his twin, and Ed Graham, purchased a yoke of oxen each and set out for Guaymas, Mexico via El Paso. By the time they arrived in El Paso three months later, they heard about the conflict between church and state in Mexico and found it would be unsafe and gave up those plans.

They thought about going back to California but the Apache Indians were on the warpath and they abandoned this idea. By this time Bryant Harrington was broke and started a chuck-a-luck game on \$1.10 and won \$60.00. He quit the game and hired on with Butterfield Stage Lines as a guard where he worked for a while before returning to Palo Pinto where kin folks were.

In February 1860, he and his twin brother with one pack animal walked to Mexico to buy horses and came back to Palo Pinto with forty horses. There was too much trouble with the Indians in this vicinity, so they moved back to Dallas County with their stock. Their mother was now in Grayson County. Bryant now went to work for a rancher who had land in Weatherford and Oklahoma.

In 1861 he was conscripted in the Confederate Army and entered James Loving's regiment. His time was spent mostly on frontier duty and he also taught school. He spent time driving cattle, fighting Indians, and teaching school. Harrington married Mary Ann Waugh in 1863 but she only lived eleven months, leaving a baby girl, Sarah Alice.

In the spring of 1865 he settled on Bear Creek in the Grapevine Prairie area of Tarrant County where he purchased 320 acres. One year later he sold this tract of land and moved to Dallas County to the community of Estelle where he purchased 660 acres.

He was married for the second time in 1871 to Lucetta Woods, a neighbor in the Grapevine area and they had four children. Lucetta's brother, S. A. Woods was a member of the same Lodge as Bryant and was also a cattle dealer.

Just a short walk behind this marker is the preservation of the small Estell community that is adjacent to the Harrington Cemetery. This is a visual reminder of the history of Texas and the people who made this great State of Texas.

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