

History

Greenlawn is the Afton city cemetery. Afton was incorporated in 1854; it was the population center and early county seat in the formative years of Union County. The earliest grave marker is that of Abram Myers, died October 22, 1851.

Following is an excerpt from the Ide history of Union County, 1908: "We would not fail to mention the Afton cemetery. It is under the care of the Afton Cemetery Association, an organization of women. No more lovely spot can be found among god's fair acres. It is kept like a city lawn...The crowning glory of this beautiful spot is a soldier's monument of massive proportions, erected by the Woman's Relief Corps, as a token of respect and love for the memory of the brave soldiers who lie buried in these fair acres".

"The first cemetery of Afton was located directly north of the village, but in the early eighteen sixties was moved to its present location three-fourths of a mile northeast of the town. Among the first to be buried there were two soldiers of the Twenty-ninth Regiment, Iowa Volunteer Infantry, M.A. Day and J.H. Dual. In May, 1901, the ladies of Afton formed a cemetery association, the object being to care for and beautify the cemetery. The cemetery was named Greenlawn, and after a few years of anxiety and hard work, they have succeeded in making it a beautiful and restful spot. Besides being clean and well kept, a new fence and a handsome iron gate bearing the name of the cemetery has been added. Lovely flower beds with urns and vases, which through the summer are constantly full of bloom, with well kept driveways, make such a change from the old regime that the ladies may feel a commendable pride in their work."

It is not known when the First Addition, Second Addition, and Third Addition were opened. Garden of Devotion, Garden of Meditation, and Woodland sections were added in the 1950's. Westland opened in the early 1980's. More land to the south is available for expansion. "Potter's Field" in the northwest corner of the cemetery is no longer used. There are no records of its burials.

In 1977, a bequest of approximately \$250,000 was received from the Forrest Huss estate. Most was invested in CD's and interest was used for maintenance of the cemetery. Huss Estate funds were used to erect a brick building in 1980, which has an office, caretaker's workshop, and meeting room.

In 1984, the Afton V.F.W. post established an "Avenue of Flags", which flies each Memorial Day. Flags were donated honoring service veterans of the community.

Currently, the cemetery is funded by the City of Afton and governed by a Volunteer Board of Trustees of 5 members appointed by the Afton City Council. Spaces are \$300 which includes perpetual care. There is a full time caretaker. To date there have been approximately 4000 burials.



Plaques on both sides of the wrought iron gate pictured above say: West side - "In memory of Forrest M. Huss, Florence Huss; East side - In memory of Arthur H. Wohllaib, Irene M. Wohllaib, Harvey H. Thompson