

In old pioneer Michigan cemeteries there are often many more burials than visible stones.

One old caretaker admitted that there were a huge number of graves with no marker visible and that they actually had to probe with a rod before they dared dig a new grave. In the old days markers would fall down in the depression made when the old wood caskets caved in and in time were covered over. Many volunteer and underpaid mowers were pressed into service and the fewer the markers that were in the way the faster they could get the mowing done. St Clement had about 1,500 burials prior to 1943. The above is verifiable. But this is an under count as they have several years without records.

Looking at Warren's sister cemetery there were between 1.5-2 child burials per adult burial prior to 1900. The infant mortality rate back then was very high sometimes over 200 per 1000 per annum so this over years indicate a few hundred.

Old county death records of Warren show there are 500 registered child deaths per 1000 deaths average but this is probably about 1/12 of the true number since only a small percentage of stillborns, infants and children were even registered. An examination of county records shows that of the 150 stones with children's names only 12 were recorded.

The sister cemetery with good records indicates 1500-2000 per 1000. And it is known that virtually no stillborns and very few babies were marked by stones. Only a very few even have a surviving grave stone now.

Researchers have done the math of all of the above and say that there is high probability that hundreds of children are buried at Warren Union Cemetery without markers.

And we know that many adults in the very old families were buried there without markers because they did not have money for markers and there were no stone cutters around. The area was rural and a few small stones piled on grave sufficed. Also many believed in a resurrection soon so felt there was no need.

A beautiful memorial was donated (without cost to the city) in memory of our pioneer pioneer families and children who were buried there and now have no markers and it was stolen. According to Macomb Daily July 2011 officers of the Warren Historical Society were behind the stealing of at least 5 expensive memorials. This was not an act of the historical society itself rather two people. They did this secretly without vote of membership and without just cause because in their minds this was an old folks cemetery and there are no markers for these folks and their children. Duh! They have no right to steal expensive granite memorials which do not belong to them from a cemetery they don't own. Another expensive granite memorial listed soldiers buried there and was the only memorial that displayed their names. Now future generations will not even be able to see their names. They have effectively stolen the history of these soldiers who died, We veterans feel they have disrespected our soldiers, veterans and pioneers and children who suffered in many cases terrible deaths.

Most Cemeteries in the world including those of Macomb County Michigan have many unmarked graves. Many old ones like Millar (Miller/Cady's Corners) - Section 30 Metropolitan Parkway & Utica Rd, Clinton Township, have almost no readable stones left. (around 54 actual stones) We could also state the fact that most burials of past years were not in cemeteries at all rather were in locations close to the site of death and are virtually unmarked. In Europe catacombs abound underground with thousands of unmarked bones. I have been there and seen them. Macabre to say the least but true facts nevertheless. Creepy isn't it.

Warren Union Cemetery is located between the Red Run River and Chicago Road East of Ryan. Pioneer farmer Peter Gillette sold a parcel of land in 1845 to eighteen families for burial ground reserving a large lot for his kin. It has 1200-3000 possible graves after subtracting aisles and drives but less than 800 stones are readable out of about 1000 known burials. It appears there are more unmarked graves than marked now.

Consider that the old section was considered full by 1945. Proof of that is in the fact that many of those old families had to buy plots in other cemeteries because their local lots were full, even if markers had not been placed on them. Even township officials had to go elsewhere to buy graves as they were sold out. Township records, newspaper articles and stories indicate that pauper burials were also done there.