

INTRODUCTION TO BRADBURN HILL (UNITED METHODIST CHURCH) CEMETERY

Bradburn Hill Cemetery is located on the Kingsport Highway, almost exactly one mile from the Greeneville city limits. The Cemetery has operated as a Community Cemetery for some years, but at inception it was affiliated with the Bradburn Hill UM Church. The original Church was a wooden structure built in 1916 amidst a grove of chestnut trees. The cemetery was adjacent to the Church. Today's brick Church built in 1966 is across the road from the cemetery.

The Church and Cemetery began with a donation of one quarter of an acre of land and \$300 by David Franklin Bradburn (1837-1927), who came to Greeneville from Madison County, North Carolina. His daughter, "Augie" (1870-1954), wished to establish a Church and Sunday School for the local children and, she asked her Father to assist by deeding some of his farm to begin the Congregation. Members of the Church Congregation remember "Augie" quite fondly and say she was a kind and generous woman. Augie Bradburn Lauderdale's descendants continue to be buried in Bradburn Hill Cemetery, with the latest burial in 2010 of Augie's granddaughter.

At the start of the Civil War, David Franklin Bradburn enlisted with the Confederate Army in Madison County, North Carolina, and served with the 64th Regiment (Allen's) North Carolina Infantry, Company C. He was captured at Cumberland Gap, and he then joined the Union Army, serving with the 2nd Regiment North Carolina Mounted Infantry, Company C. After the War, he married Nancy Anna Green, who died in North Carolina of "milkleg fever" (then associated with childbirth) in 1904. After his relocation to Greeneville, David Franklin Bradburn remarried on September 19, 1919, to Florence Banks, who was about fifty years younger than he. David Franklin Bradburn died on January 15, 1927, and he is interred in the Church cemetery he founded through his generosity.

For a relatively "new" Cemetery, there are a significant number of unmarked graves at Bradburn Hill. There are several reasons for this.

In the early 20th century, the Bradburn farm was very near, if not adjacent to, one of the Poor Farms operated by the County. An unknown number of these unfortunate souls who ranged in age from mere infants to the very elderly, were likely interred in the Church Cemetery. The Ministry of Miss Elsie Gass (1882-1980, buried Oak Grove Cemetery) also played a role. Called an "Angel of Mercy" by many, Miss Elsie ministered to the poor. It is well remembered by today's Church members when Miss Elsie brought these unfortunate souls to Bradburn Hill for burial. Several death certificates contain her name as "informant". Lastly, a significant number of original Funeral Home Markers ("FHM") appear in this cemetery. These, flat concrete markers were not well constructed and have deteriorated over time to become unreadable, broken or displaced.

Many hours of research were expended to attempt to identify unmarked graves; however, there are surely many burials in this Cemetery that have not been identified.