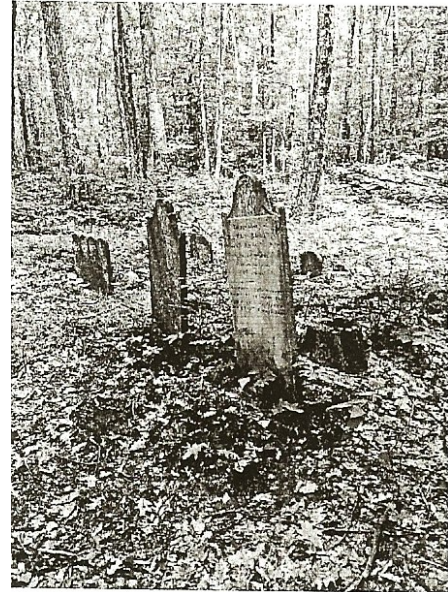


Waters Hill Cemetery

From Woodford Town Report

Waters Hill Cemetery or as some called it Eddy Cemetery, is located on Waters Hill (so-called). It is about 2 miles in from Route 9, just inside the township of Woodford from Bennington. The old cemetery is about 20 yards off an old logging road. It is not easy to find, unless you know when to look for it. As described in the Bennington county Gazetteer and Business Directory for 1880-1881, "An old cemetery established about one hundred years ago by the side of this road on the hill surrounded by a stone wall, is thickly grown up with trees and shrubbery, and one has to look sharply to find the many headstones. On a visit to this neglected resting place of Woodford's pioneers, the oldest inscription found on a plain marble slab, was as follows:



In Memory of Mr. Otis Eddy, Who died Oct. 22nd, 1794 In the 22d year of his age.
Death, like an overthrowing stream,
sweeps us away, our life a dream.

As you hike up the hill towards the cemetery, if you look closely, you will find several old cellar holes from buildings or homes that must have once been there. I often wonder how difficult life must have been for those families that lived, worked and died there. If you notice the names and ages on the gravestones, you will find many children buried there. How sad that must have been for our early settlers

Below are the inscriptions on the headstones located at that cemetery Inscriptions

In memory of Mr. Otis Eddy who died Oct 22, 1794 in the 22 year of his age
In memory of Mr. Obediah Eddy who departed this life May 4, 1826, aged 75 years
In memory of Mrs. Phebe Eddy who departed this life May 27, 1821, aged 75 years

Two inscriptions on one stone -

Anna wife of Ebenezer Temple died May 9, 1806 in the 47th year of her age
Amy, dau of Ebenezer & Anna Temple died Oct 29, 1840 in the 51 year of her age
In memory of Mr. Nathan Taft who died January 21 1809 aged 54 years 9 months and 26 days

In memory of Mr. Spencer Lyon who died Dec 26, 1827 aged 70 years & months §18 days

Mrs. Mary Lyon, widow of Spencer Lyon died Nov 7, 1840 aged 82 years

In memory of Mrs. Rhoda Lyon wife of Mr. Elisha Lyon who died June 30th 1829 aged 33 years 28 days

Four inscriptions on one stone -

Sophronia died August 8, aged 14 months and 2 days

Emely died April 30th 1822, aged 1 year & 8 months

Proper died October, 1825, aged 6 months

Truman R. died Nov 24, 1827 aged 6 months and 6 days

The children of Elisha & Rhoda Lyon Two inscriptions on one stone-

Zadock E. son of Elisha and Sally Lyon, died June 21, 1835 aged 1 year § 8 mon

Mary A dau of Elisha & Sally Lyon died June 23, 1855, aged 3 mon.

Rachel, dau Of Wm. § Susan Wood died April 1830 age 12 years 3 mon

Susan, wife of William wood died Dec. 6, 1832 age 27 years

Joseph Bickford died Feb 22, 1837 in the 38th year of his age

Harriette. Daughter of Cyrus § Phebe Knapp; died May 27, 1838; age 1 yr. 9 mo., 6 days

Amy c. wife of Joseph Bickford died Oct 31, 1839 age 44

Eunice E, Daughter of Philites & Sally Knapp, died Nov 15, 1839 age 2 years, 1 mon. & 6

days.

Two inscriptions on one stone-

George W. Knapp: died May 11, 1841; aged 3 yr. 8 mon

Charlotte Maria Knapp died May 13, 1841; aged 1 years, 10 mon, &9 dys

The children of Charles and Mancy Knapp

Joseph Knapp, Esq.-died May 9, 1854; age 78

Martha A. Wife of S.B. Cotton died Feb 13, 1856. Age 35 years

Caroline E, daughter of Wm § Polly Knap; died Apr. 11, 1861. Age 21 years & 6 mon

Samuel Harris died July 19, 1868; Age 85 years, 5 m's 9 d's

The early settlers of Woodford lived up there because they worked as loggers. I imagine that life must have been very hard there. The snow can be very deep at times and the temperatures extremely cold. I think of the conveniences we have now and wonder how they survived. Gardening must have been difficult in Woodford's rocky soil, but they could have raised sheep and cows. There probably weren't many trips to Bennington for supplies as the trek on foot or horseback would have been long

What life could have looked like living on Waters Hill in the 1800's



It is reported that by the late 1800s all of Vermont was 80% deforested due to logging and land clearing for farms. That section of Woodford became deserted probably because a particular logging outfit closed

Here are some interesting facts found from reading the inscriptions on the gravestones:

- The first person buried there was Otis Eddy. Or maybe he wasn't buried there at all. His tombstone says "In Memory of " So maybe the tombstone was only a stone in remembrance.
- The cemetery is sometimes referred to as Eddy cemetery probably because he was the first person remembered there.
- Samuel Harris was the oldest person at age 85 years, 5 months, 9 days and he was the last person buried there in 1868 according to the gravestones.
- George, ages, and Charlotte, age 1 died 2 days apart. They were children of Charles and Nancy Knapp
- There are a total of 27 inscriptions described here, but I did notice on a recent hike there were some other unreadable tombstones. So, there is no way to determine how many people were actually buried there with or even without a gravestone.
- According to the inscriptions we have, the average life expectancy was 29 years.
- Looking at only the adults, ages 21 - 85, the median age at time of death was 44 years
- Of the 27 total inscriptions, 11 of them were children. 10 of the 11 were age 3 and under.
- Of the adults ages 21 - 85, 7 were men and 9 were women

Waters Hill Cemetery is the resting place of many of the early founders of Woodford. I'm grateful to them for providing headstones for us to remember them by. Unfortunately, due to difficulties in maintaining this remote cemetery, the area is being taken over by foliage and trees. However, I encourage you to take a hike up there someday, read the inscriptions and try to imagine the life our founding fathers and mothers had living on the side of Waters Hill.