

One of the hardest parts about doing all this research about the people in the cemetery is realizing that many of the resting places are for those people I can't find a story or obituary about. There is absolutely nothing or dang close to nothing and it makes me more determined to find something, anything. Sometimes, I just have to throw in the towel.

Then there are those I actually find something about but get distracted by records, especially population census records. Did you know the census has been taken every 10 years since 1790? And every time it has been taken, what it asks for is different. The columns for information are what has the most changes. I've learned to pay attention to that.

Eldridge York, or Yorkie was a miner at Hassel for 50 years. Born in Tennessee in 1852, he somehow made it out here and died in January 1933 of a cerebral hemorrhage and cardiac arrest. Ouch. He was one of 8 children according to the 1860 census. This census record was one of the most interesting ones I've ever looked at. At the top of the page is the language for Tennessee in 1860 and it's called 'Free Inhabitants'. As with all census records, there are columns the census taker asks like Surname, First Name, etc. This time there was one column that caught my eye. It asks 'whether deaf, dumb, blind, insane, idiotic, pauper, or convict'. Wow. It is a check box but it doesn't require which of those things someone might be and I think it should. Actually, I was surprised this was even on there.

Anyway, Eldridge shows up in the 1900 census record as living in Hassel, 1910 in Radersburg, 1920 in Toston, and 1930 in Confederate. That guy got around. He was also single and listed as a quartz miner in all records. So, he went from being a farmer in Tennessee to a quartz miner until he died. I wish I could have found out more about his character or life but his obituary just gave a short blurb about being laid to rest in Centerville. He has one of the stamped cement markers.

Larry Reed lived to the age of 62. He was born in Missouri in 1856 and died at the poor farm in 1918 from pneumonia. Somehow, he had or made enough money to own a building in Hassel that was a merchandise store but he lost it when it was set on fire by someone 'to plunder the merchandise in the store'. In 1901, a line in the newspaper made me pause because it said 'Larry Reed of Hassel cast his shadow on the town today'. What does that mean? He rented a cabin in 1915 behind the State Bank of Townsend and tried to burn the cabin down by dumping ashes next to it. Fire seems to be a theme in his life. He was buried with no headstone but could be one of the graves with a metal marker that is no longer readable.

On the opposite side of the spectrum, I found absolutely nothing about Henry Maltly. You would think someone who lived to 87 years old would make a mark in some way and it begs a lot of questions in my brain. Was he just passing through, died and was buried at Centerville? Where did he mine? Where did he live? Why doesn't he show up in any of the census records? The

state death list shows him as single and a miner. He was born in 1835 and died in 1922. No headstone. That just makes me sad.

I got some work done this past week out at the cemetery. Sprinkled some native flower seeds on some of the finished graves so hopefully we get some flowers out there that aren't plastic. Thanks to the Broadwater Conservation District Pollinator Initiative for a quarter pound that will hopefully bear beauty. Started resetting some of the crooked headstones. More thanks go out to Nate Brown at Badger Materials for a few bags of sand for leveling. At over 100 years old, I don't want any more headstones falling over and breaking. That reminds me, does anyone have that I could borrow or would be willing to make me a block and tackle setup that I could use to lift the headstone pieces and re-epoxy them? I'm too old to lift most of them. Those things are heavy! And that is it from here for now.