

IN MEMORY OF GEORGE R. TUCKER

As this is the thirty-first annual meeting of the Spears' Cemetery Association, our President, Mr. Benjamin Eddy, suggested it would be fitting that my mother and I write a few words in memory of my mother's uncle, George R. Tucker.

When first this was mentioned, our mutual impulse was to decline, as we knew very little of him until he came to live with my grandmother and grandfather; but with the kind assistance of our dear friend, Mrs. Walter Drowne, we have assembled a few facts which might be of interest.

Mr. Tucker was born on February 20, 1852, a son of the late William and Lucretia (Tripp) Tucker. He married Phoebe Alsina Brown and spent most of his 78 years in the Town of Foster. A farmer by occupation, he also served for some time as a rural mail carrier.

As the years went on, Mr. Tucker gave some thought to purchasing a burial lot, but the choice of location was not easy, as he was desirous of obtaining a lot that would be cared for long after his decease. At this time the Spears' Cemetery was in its infancy. It was originally part of the Thomas Phillips farm on which was located a family cemetery. After the farm was purchased by Mr. George Spears, he platted a section of land, which included the Phillips burial lot, for a community cemetery. It was not long before many lots were sold in this new section.

The care of each lot was left to the discretion of the owner, and many lots, for some reason or other, were very much neglected. Thus it was that Mrs. Ray Howard and Mr. George Tucker began to formulate plans whereby a fund might be procured, the interest of which could be used for perpetual care. Mrs. Ray Howard wrote to different owners with the hope of getting them interested in what was proposed; and as they were fully in accord with the plan, they contributed various sums toward a fund.

The first meeting was held on April 20, 1922, at which time Mr. Ben Eddy was elected president and Mr. Ernest Nye, secretary--offices they have held continuously until the present time.

On May 21, 1922, Mr. Tucker purchased a lot in the cemetery and contributed \$100 to the fund. Later, through the efforts of Mr. Eddy, the cemetery was incorporated, and from the nucleus of that first meeting, we now have a society known as the Spears Cemetery Association.

Through the years various "Bees" were held to paint the fence, grade lots, and make various necessary repairs. These meetings were always attended by Mr. Tucker who was ever willing to help in any way he could.

It was in 1924 that my grandmother, while reading the Evening paper, learned her brother had been struck by an automobile in front of his home. Naturally she was very much concerned and contacted the hospital and found he had a fractured limb and would be there for several weeks. Upon his discharge, she brought him to her home in Woonsocket, where he lived the remainder of his life.

In April of 1929 my grandfather died and the very next year, my grandmother contracted pneumonia. As she had been a domestic nurse the greater part of her life, she realized the seriousness of her illness and knew she would not recover. Her greatest concern was that she would pass on and leave Mr. Tucker, who had now long been bedridden. Only two days before she died she asked, "What will become of George?"

How proud she would have been to know how well my mother and aunt (the later Mrs. Etta Knight) rose to the responsibility left them--they were untiring in their devotion to their uncle. Six months later, however, he was released from all suffering, and was laid to rest in the Spears Cemetery.

Knowing my uncle's interest in the improvement of the cemetery, my mother and aunt thought it would be appropriate to perpetuate it. As a result, they purchased the pines in the rear of the cemetery as a memorial to Mr. George Tucker and his sister, Mrs. Lydia Tucker Smith. Unfortunately, the hurricane played great havoc with the grove, but it is our earnest hope that the new growth will one day form as beautiful a background as the pines once did.

In the years to come, may we have added membership to our Association, each one as devoted as were Mrs. Ray Howard and George R. Tucker.

Read by M. Leone St. Sauveur at the thirty-first annual meeting of the Spears' Cemetery Association, April 25, 1953.
