

Exploring the Cemetery: Trust but Verify.

There are two women buried in the cemetery described as the wife of Henry Stricker. The first is Clara Stricker who died in 1893, and the second is Mary Stricker who died in 1898. This is a story of how you can't believe everything you read in the newspaper (or online).

Clara's obituary states that her maiden name was "Arehart." And that she was married first to a man named Buch. This led me to a fruitless search through records of the Earhart and Buch families. No luck. As for Henry Stricker? No luck there, either.

The second wife was Mary Odermeal. Mary was the widow of Jacob Young, who was depressed and committed suicide in 1895 at age 45. Mary then married the widower Henry Stricker.

All of these people lived in the Millport area. Oh! What a tangled web we weave when we intermarry in a small community. So this little puzzle got pushed to the back burner.

Lititz Record (Lititz, Pa.), Friday, October 27, 1893, p. 3, col. 3:

"Death at Millport

Clara, wife of Henry Stricker, of Millport, died on Sunday of consumption, aged 36 years. Her maiden name was Arehart. She was twice married, the first time to a man named Buch. Two children were born with the first union and two with the second husband. The funeral took place on Wednesday, when the remains were interred at the Rothsville Lutheran cemetery. Rev. B. G. Welder of Reamstown officiated."



But then one day a woman contacted me to say that Clara's maiden name was actually Ravegum! Really? Another one? A little more research proved that to be true. Clara was the daughter of John and Eliza Huss Ravegum, It was right there in the records of Rev. Benjamin Welder all along. In fact two other people contacted me the same week with the same information.

All of which led to the discovery that Clara's first husband was not Buch, but rather, Buchen.

In summary, Clara Ravegum married Abraham Buchen, who died in 1879 at 33 of a broken leg. In 1887 she married Henry Stricker, 26, a mason. Six years later, Clara died of consumption, and Henry married the widow Mary Odermeal Young. Mary died in 1898 of "mortification." Henry left for Iowa where he married yet again and lived until 1931.

Clara is buried in Section 1 of the cemetery with her daughter, Viola Frank, and family. Mary is in the old cemetery with the Youngs.

There are two lessons to take from this saga. First, genealogy requires one to look in many places, trust none completely, and verify. Second, the mortality rate during this time was impressive. Today we could treat depression, fix a badly broken leg, cure consumption and probably address "mortification," whatever that was.