

The Masters Cemetery

When James Masters came to Schaghticoke in 1783, there was but one church, the Dutch Reformed, and no established cemetery. When his daughter-in-law Eunice died in 1789, James must have decided he would establish a family cemetery on his vast estate. It is just behind where he built his "Mansion House" a few years later. Masters had a slate stone wall built around it, and planted some trees. Today the cemetery is over-grown, though it has been tended off and on over the years.

The first interments there were of the infant son of Josiah Masters, the Congressman, and his first wife, Eunice, and of Eunice herself in 1789. Eunice has the only table-top, or horizontal, grave stone I know of in town.

Unfortunately the tombstone of Josiah Masters is too worn to read, but fortunately its inscription was recorded some years ago. The inscription reads "To the memory of the Hon. Josiah Masters: Late a Representative in the Congress of the United States and for many years the first judge of the County of Rensselaer, who died June 30 AD 1822, aged 58 years, 7 mos & 8 days. Shade of our jurist, ashes of our Statesman, Relics of our Sire; in thy death thy country mourns a loss and thy family weep their bereavement; the tears of thy countrymen moisten thy tomb. Sic transit gloria mundi. So sleep the great, who sink to rest by all their country's honours blessed."

There are about 60 graves in the cemetery in all, including those of the patriarch of the Masters family, James, and his wife, Eunice. The tombstone of James reads "In memory of James Masters who was born in Fairfield, Connecticut and died at Schaghticoke, New York the 9 of February 1820 aged 89 years and 8 mos." The last interment was of Josiah Rising Masters in 1895. He was a grandson of Josiah's brother Nicholas.