



Green Historical Society

Landmark No. 8—Greensburg Cemetery



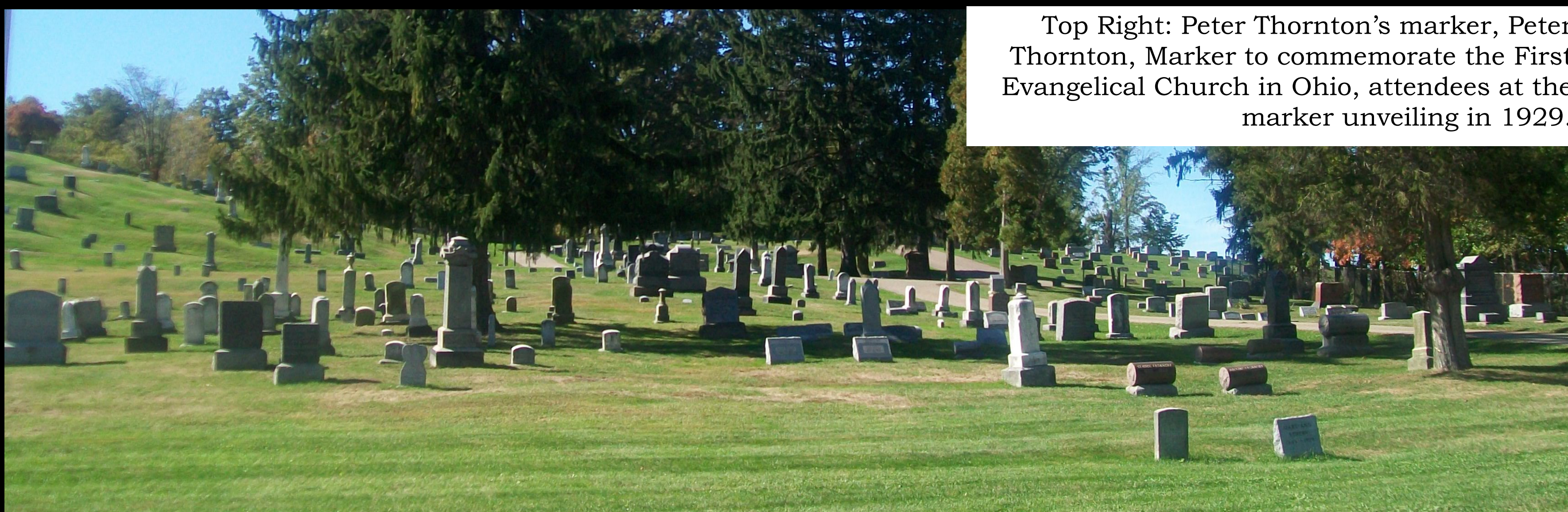
Greensburg Cemetery began when Peter Thornton, one of Green's early settlers, donated an acre of land to Adam Klinefelter, Henry Swartz, and Peter Thornton as Trustees of the Evangelical Association on November 15, 1838. This one acre may have been the burying ground for his son George, who died in 1836 at 10 years of age. A second parcel was added to the cemetery on April 1, 1874, when George Gougler transferred an additional acre of land to Trustees of Evangelical Church of Greensburgh (Greensburg). Jacob F. Boettler & Emma Boettler transferred the third parcel to Trustees of the Evangelical Association of North America on October 13, 1908. The cemetery was originally accessed via the Old Portage Road running diagonal across Green Township. However, by 1874 Thursby Road connected to Greensburg Road and provided access to the cemetery and Old Portage Road no longer ran continuously across Green Township.

Greensburg Cemetery is the final resting place of many of Green's earliest settlers and veterans. As of 1979, seventy (70) veterans of the War of 1812, the Mexican War, the Civil War, the Spanish War, and World War I have been buried in Greensburg Cemetery. More veterans have been laid to rest in Greensburg Cemetery from later wars since 1979. According to Sarah Haring, Community Development Director for the City of Green, "The grave markers created for those buried within the grounds of Greensburg Cemetery provide the earliest written local history of our city. Not only does the information inscribed on the gravestones provide the simple facts of life and death, often they give insight into the cultural and architectural landscape of an earlier time and provide an invaluable resource for those researching family history."

Greensburg Cemetery also contains the site of the first Evangelical Church in Ohio, which was also the first Evangelical Church built west of Pennsylvania. As early as 1816, Methodist and Evangelical circuit riders from Pennsylvania were following settlers west to spread the gospel in Green Township. By 1822 the Evangelical Association had a congregation holding regular meetings at the home of Conrad Dillman (today the St. John farm on Greensburg Road). The circuit riders returned word to Pennsylvania of the good land and devote settlers in Green Township and more Pennsylvanians migrated to Green Township. By 1838 the Congregation of the Evangelical Association in Greensburg built a meeting house or church at the front of Greensburg Cemetery near Thursby Road. The meetinghouse is described in *The Evangelical Church in Ohio*, by Roy B. Leedy, page 67 as follows,

"The site of the first Evangelical Church building was three-quarters of a mile west of the village of Greensburg. Here on the west side of the road is located a beautiful cemetery on the hillside, sloping toward the east. Between the road and the cemetery is a vacant lot where the church stood. It was a plain 28x40 "Versammlungshause" (meeting house) without Cornish and with neither tower nor bell. It faced eastward with a double door entrance in the front, a side door opening to the south, and three windows on each side".

A marker stone was placed in the Greensburg Cemetery at the location of the first Evangelical Church by the Evangelical Association during their Centennial Celebration in 1929. According to *Id.*, page 331, "A centennial and home-coming was sponsored August 6-11, 1929, under the faithful labors of Merle A. Hayes.... On Saturday a large congregation witnessed the unveiling of a monument erected at the site of the first Evangelical Church building in Ohio." Today, the marker stone and the slight change in the appearance of the grass where the old church foundation was filled are the only remaining indication of the First Evangelical Church in Ohio.



Top Right: Peter Thornton's marker, Peter Thornton, Marker to commemorate the First Evangelical Church in Ohio, attendees at the marker unveiling in 1929.

