

More than a Tombstone

by Albert Oldroyd

She was an only child. Her mother died within hours of her birth and she was to be raised by her grandparents until the age of nine. When they were no longer able to care for her due to death or infirmity, she was placed in the care of foster parents – the Tewksbury family of Shakespeare Springs in Catawissa Township. She was married at the age of 18, but died four months later of diphtheria after having exhausted herself nursing her husband back to health. She was buried in the McIntyre Cemetery near her grandparents. Only her maiden name is inscribed on her tombstone – *Anna Matilda Zimmerman 1874-1893*.

Mercy Gotshall (1873-1949) was born and raised in Franklin Township (the present site of Rohrbach Farms). She was a school teacher – first at the McIntyre one-room school in Catawissa Township and later at the high school in Aristes. She never married. In her photo album are many pictures of her brothers and sisters and their families. The only photograph in the album that is not of a family member is that of Anna Matilda “Gypsy” Zimmerman. Her photo is accompanied by two newspaper accounts of her death – the only newspaper articles in the entire album. Clearly, “Gypsy” was a very dear childhood friend.

In early December, a gentleman now living in California contacted the CCHGS. He was planning on returning to the Wilkes-Barre area for the holidays and was seeking information on the William Scott family of the Roaring Creek Valley. Since my wife is related to the Scott family through both the Miller family and the Fahringer family, I met with him to share any information I might have compiled – the male lines of the Scott family having moved from Columbia County in the last half of the nineteenth century.

Anna Matilda Zimmerman’s husband of four months was Harry Scott. He would move to Plymouth, where he would become a prominent real estate agent and insurance salesman. He would remarry, but they would have no children. His second wife would live to age 99 and in her later years would come to live with the parents of our visitor from California. She would talk of her husband’s rise from telegrapher with the railroad to businessman – made possible only because he survived his bout with diphtheria. Our visitor from California remembers the family visiting the McIntyre Cemetery and *Anna Matilda Zimmerman 1874-1893*.

“...The altar was draped in mourning, and the “seat made vacant” draped, with name in flowers inscribed thereon. The altar table was laden with roses...” *1893 newspaper clipping*



Anna Matilda "Gypsy" Zimmerman Scott
1874-1893
(notice the brooch at her collar)

Sources:

Columbia County Will (Volume 4, page 470)

Columbia County Orphans Court (Volume 10, page 102, Volume 11, page 36)

Newspaper Clippings (Anna Matilda Zimmerman Scott's obituary and funeral announcement)