

Exploring the Cemetery: Tuberculosis strikes again.

Unsure of what to write this month, I opened a copy (I have two – one from each grandparent!) of the 1921 *Bubbles*, the Rothsville High School yearbook. Out fell a yellowed newspaper clipping, an obituary for Miss Edna May Leed. As with most of these clippings, the clipper didn't note the date or newspaper. Here is the obituary:

“Lived Here Some Years Ago – Miss Edna May Leed, daughter of the late Jacob and Mary Leed, died Saturday afternoon at the home of her grandmother, Mrs. Rose Uhlig, at Rothsville, of the effects of a hemorrhage of the lungs, after an illness of six weeks, aged seventeen years. She is survived by the following brothers and sisters: Ralph, of Chester; Elwood and Mary, of the Lutheran Orphanage, Topton. Funeral services were held Wednesday afternoon at the home of her grandmother, with further services at the Lutheran church, Rothsville, of which she was a member, at 2 o'clock. Interment was made in the adjoining cemetery.”



It turns out that Edna was born August 16, 1904 and died April 24, 1920. She was 16, going on 17, and was probably a member, at some point, of that class of 1921. On her death certificate Dr. Walter stated that she “probably” had tuberculosis. After delving into this family, I would say that TB was a certainty. Her father, Jacob, died March 21, 1916, at age 42 of TB. He was a cigarmaker and the son of Michael and Sarah Eitnier Leed. Her mother, Mary Bender, daughter of George and Rosie (Luft) Bender, died a month after her father, on April 23, 1916, also of TB.



Jacob and Mary Bender Leed were married in 1895. Son Ralph was born in the same year. Another son, Harvey, was born in 1898 but lived only until 1902 when he died of “brain fever.” Then came Edna. After that a set of twins were born in 1911, Jacob Elwood and Mary Elizabeth. These twins were the siblings in the Lutheran orphanage.

Oldest brother Ralph lived until 1971. Ralph worked for Westinghouse in Lester, Pa., outside of Philadelphia. He retired in 1960 and returned to the area to live with his sister, Mary Elizabeth.



Twin Jacob Elwood Leed died in 1974, having lived most of his life in Lititz. He served in the Army's 190th Field Artillery during WWII. Twin Mary Elizabeth also lived in Lititz and worked at both the General Sutter as a waitress and at Woodstream. According to her obituary, she had one son, Stephen.

Jacob, Mary and all of their children, Ralph, Harvey, Edna, Jacob Elwood and Mary Elizabeth are buried in the cemetery. So are Jacob's parents and Mary's mother, Rosa, who after the death of her husband George Bender, married Frederick Uhlig.