

Meet Prophetstown's

Mosher

Family

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by

Fred South
Prophetstown Area Historical Society
Prophetstown, IL
March 2025

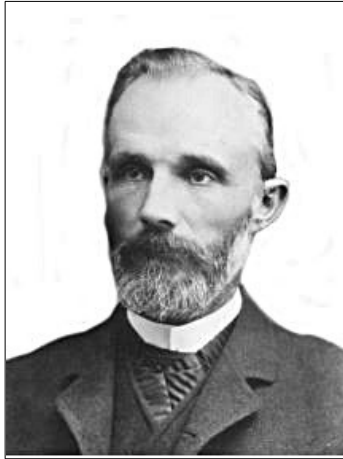
Introduction

The Mosher family is another of those who played an important part in the life of our community, beginning with Dr. James Henry Mosher, M.D. If you have been through our Riverside Cemetery, you might have noticed this large mausoleum belonging to that family.



Buried here are:

Dr. James Henry Mosher – born 1840 05 26; died 1929 01 06.
Florence Warner-Mosher – born 1852 08 24; died 1890 02 11 – first wife of Dr. James Mosher.
Nellie Barnes Mosher – born 1864 12 30; died 1935 04 22 – second wife of Dr. James. Mosher.
Maud Mosher – born 1873 12 17; died 1895 06 18 – child of Dr. James Mosher.
George Warner Mosher – born 1878 12 20; died 1925 03 17 – child of Dr. James Mosher.
James Barnes Mosher – born 1895 07 21; died 1980 10 31 – child of Dr. James Mosher.
Florence Phelps-Mosher – born 1896 05 04; died 1963 09 09 – wife of James Barnes Mosher.



James Henry Mosher, M. D.

Source - *History of Whiteside County, Illinois, from Its Earliest Settlement to 1908: Illustrated, with Biographical Sketches of Some Prominent Citizens of the County.*, Pioneer Publishing Company, by William Davis.

Dr. J. H. Mosher deserves mention among those whose lives have been eminently successful by reason of their own labors and intelligently directed energy. He is engaged in the practice of medicine at Prophetstown and at the same time is one of the most extensive landowners of this part of the state, having two thousand acres of income property, including some of the best farm land of Whiteside county.

He was born near Frankfort, Herkimer county, New York, April 26, 1840. The Mosher family is of English descent and traces its connection with American interests from the time of the burning of Saybrook, Connecticut, by the Indians. The parents of Dr. Mosher were George F. and Elizabeth (Tienan) Mosher, the former a native of Maine and the latter of New York city. Both died in Oswego County, New York, however. Their family numbered seven children: George R., who was a well-known merchant and wealthy business man of Oswego County, New York, who died several years ago; passed away in the same county, J. H., of this review, John who is connected with copper mines in Arizona; Hamilton A., who is living in Oswego County, New York; Elizabeth, who died in Herkimer County, New York; and Katherine, whose death occurred in Oswego County, that state.

Dr. Mosher was reared upon a farm to the age of thirteen years and remained with his parents in Oswego County, New York, through the period of his boyhood and youth. His time was divided between the work of the home farm and the duties of the schoolroom and his early education was supplemented by study in the academy in the village of Mexico. He left the east in 1863 and with big brother, John E., went to California, where he engaged in teaching, as principal of the school at Eureka, California, for three years. On the expiration of that period he made his way to New York City and entered the Bellevue Hospital Medical College. Later he continued his preparation for the profession as student in the Long Island College Hospital from which he received his degree in 1867.

Having thus qualified for the practice of medicine and surgery, Dr. Mosher came to Prophetstown, arriving in the month of October, following his graduation. He at once opened an office for general practice and throughout the intervening years has been accorded a liberal patronage. From 1871 until 1890 he conducted a drug store where he now has his office. He built the present business block and after carrying on the drug store with success for about nineteen years he disposed of his stock of goods, retaining only his office room here.

While he is widely recognized as an able physician and is accorded an extensive patronage, he has not confined his attention exclusively to his professional duties but has become recognized as an active business man in other lines. In connection with S. G. Baldwin he built the first brick block in this village in 1871. It was not built as a partnership affair, but by arrangements they erected the two buildings side by side at the same time. Dr. Mosher has always been interested to a greater or less extent in real estate since attaining his majority. He bought property in California and in 1873 made his first investment in farm land in Illinois, becoming owner of a half section in Whiteside County. He has since increased his holdings from time to time until he now has about two thousand acres, all lying in this county with exception of a tract of two hundred and forty acres in Iowa which has been in his possession for thirty-one years. He does not buy property for speculation but always improves it and retains it as a source of income. All of the land is cultivated and in the placing of his investments and in the supervision of his landed interests he shows sound judgment and keen discernment. He also owns town property and in connection with his brother Hamilton owns a cottage in the Thousand Islands, where he spends the summer seasons. [The Thousand Islands archipelago is at the outlet of Lake Ontario at the head of the Saint Lawrence River. From [Wikipedia](#).]

In 1871 Dr. Mosher was united in marriage to Miss Florence Warner, who was born in 1853, daughter of A. J. Warner. Mrs. Mosher died in 1890, leaving two children: Maude, who was born in 1873 and died in 1894, at the age of twenty-one years, and George, who was born in 1878 and is now a physician of Chicago, associated, as assistant, with E. Fletcher Ingals, a specialist of Rush Medical College in the treatment of diseases of the chest, nose throat. He is a graduate of the Madison University, of the Chicago University and the Rush Medical College, receiving the Doctor of Philosophy degree from the first named, the Bachelor of Science degree from the Chicago University, and his professional degree from Rush Medical College.

In 1894 Dr. J. H. Mosher was again married, his second union being with Nellie M. Barnes, a native of Turner Junction, now West Chicago. She came to Whiteside county at the age of thirteen years with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Charles C. Barnes, of Morrison. One son has been born of the second marriage, James B., now twelve years of age.

While Dr. Mosher has led a most busy and useful life in connection with his professional duties and his extensive business he is also well known as a leader in the ranks of the republican party in this county. He was a delegate to the republican national convention when U. S. Grant was defeated for the third nomination. He has frequently been a delegate to the district and state conventions and his opinions carry weight in the local councils of his party. He has been active in educational affairs, serving on the board of education of Prophetstown since 1876 with the exception of one year and acting as president of the board throughout the entire period. He assisted largely in erecting the present school building [The 1881 school which sat in what is now the elementary school playground.] and does everything in his power to further the cause of public instruction. He has served on the town board and for a long period has been its president, thus taking an active and helpful part in the management of community interests. He was also a member of the board of pension examiners for four years, beginning in 1891, his appointment coming to him unsolicited. Fraternally he is connected with Masons and holds membership with the Knight Templar Commandery of Sterling. He belongs to the State Medical Society and keeps in interested touch with the advancement of the profession although during the last six years he has confined his attention to office practice.

When ambition is satisfied every ultimate aim accomplished, satiety follows, effort languishes and industry becomes futile. It is the man who is not satisfied with present conditions who delights in doing, who finds pleasure in exerting his powers and in solving intricate problems that becomes a forceful factor in the world's development. From early youth Dr. Mosher has been one of the world's workers and his success, so great as to seem almost magical, is attributable entirely to his own labors, There have been difficulties and obstacles in his path but he has overcome these by determined purpose

and laudable endeavor, and by unflinching industry, integrity and wise investment has gradually advanced to the goal prosperity.

Dr. Mosher owned the first automobile in Prophetstown, a Reo.

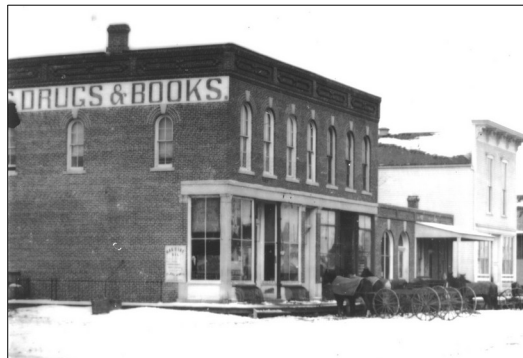
From Wikipedia:

*The **REO Motor Car Company** was a company based in Lansing, Michigan, which produced automobiles and trucks from 1905 to 1975. At one point, the company also manufactured buses on its truck platforms.*

Ransom E. Olds was an entrepreneur who founded multiple companies in the automobile industry. In 1897 Olds founded Oldsmobile. In 1905 Olds left Oldsmobile and established a new company, REO Motor Car Company, in Lansing, Michigan.



His purchase was a 1906 Reo for \$1,355, which would be about \$47,516 in 2025 money. That was a large amount of money in those days, far beyond what the average person could afford. His Reo would have looked something like this one.



Dr. Mosher built this building that once sat on the northwest corner of Washington and 3rd. There was a drug store on the first floor, with his office on the second floor. This particular block was called “the brick block,” since it contained the first brick business buildings on Washington St.. The building was demolished in the 1980s and is now where Shaw’s Market holds their cookouts.

DR. J. H. MOSHER BURIED TUESDAY

Had Been a Resident of Prophetstown
for More Than Sixty Years
From the *Echo*, January 9, 1929.

With the death of Dr. James H. Mosher early Sunday morning one of Prophetstown's best known figures and one of its oldest residents is lost. He had lived here for 61 years and was 89 years old at the time of his death.

Funeral services were held yesterday afternoon at the Methodist Church in charge of Rev. L. V. Sitler, and interment was made in Riverside cemetery.

Mosher was born in Herkimer County, N. Y., was a graduate of the Long Island College of Medicine and Surgery. During the Civil War he served as an intern in a hospital in San Francisco.

In 1867 he came to Prophetstown to settle here as one of the two doctors in the county at that time. In those days he was a familiar figure driving his sulky into the country on calls. When the roads got so bad that he couldn't drive the sulky he rode horseback, carrying his medicine in his saddle bags.

Raised Fine Horses

When he built the brick building on the corner of Third and Washington streets in 1871, he opened up a drug store there, which he operated for many years.

He was a breeder of blooded horses as well as racing stock. There were a number of winners in his stables as well as some pure bred Clydesdale and imported Norman horses.

The owner of a large amount of land in this vicinity, he quit the practice of medicine about 20 years ago to supervise his other business affairs. He has spent most of his winters away from Prophetstown since that time, going to California generally to escape the cold weather.

He had been confined to his bed since August, 1927, but it was not until he took the flu that his illness became serious. That developed into pneumonia which caused his death.

Active Here

Dr. Mosher has taken an active part in the life of the community, having served as president of the school board for 21 consecutive years and as a member of the village board. He was a member of the Methodist church, the Knights Templar, and the I.O.O.F. [International Order of the Odd Fellows, which met on the second floor of what became the Town Theater. It was Sholes' Hall at that time.]

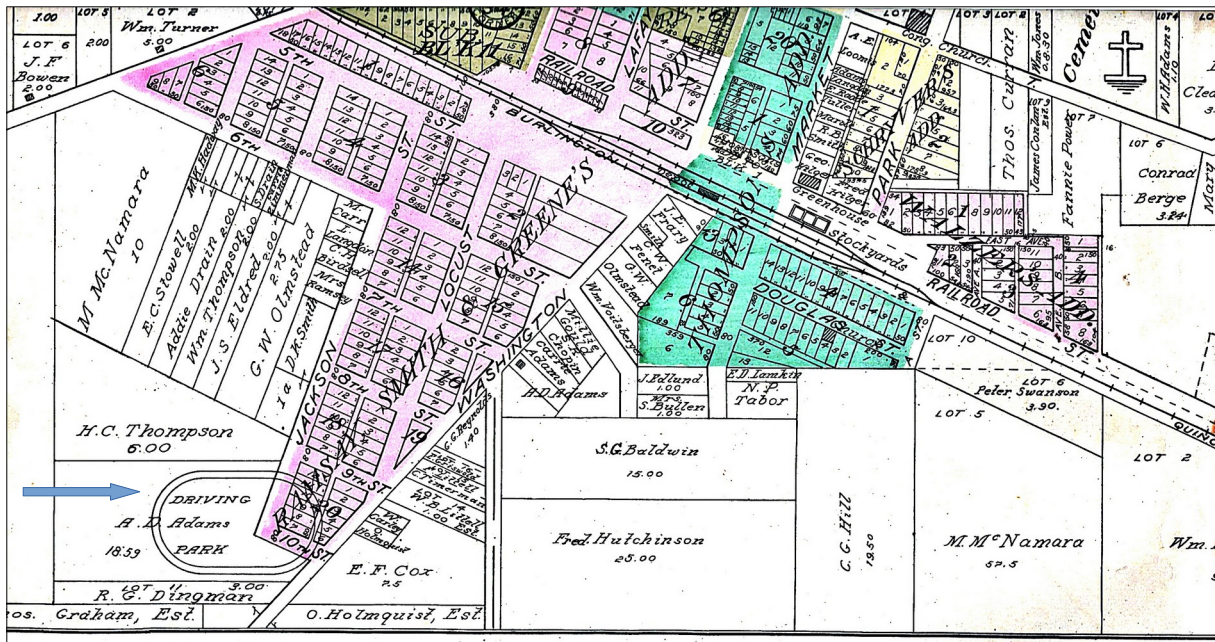
He was married to Florence Warner, daughter of Andrew J. and Elvira Rowe Warner, who were among the oldest settlers here. She died in 1890. Their two children are both dead, Maude having died in 1893 and Dr. George W. Mosher in 1925.

In 1893 he was married to Miss Nellie M. Barnes who with their son, James B. Mosher, survives. There are two grandchildren, Janet and James P. Mosher.

Among those who were here from out-of-town for the funeral were C. P. Barnes of Chicago, R. C. Mosher of Parish, N. Y., and Misses Jassic and Mary Barnes of Morrison.

Pall bearers at the services were Dr. A. L. Johnson, Dr. F. O. Kershner of Clinton, C. W. Fenn, C. J. Warner, Frank Cleaveland, and George K. Richmond of Moline.

Dr. Mosher was also in the sport of racing horses. There was a very popular race track in Prophetstown located about where the water tower is now. Dr. Mosher, as well as other Prophetstown horse owners raced their horses at the Adams Race Track, as well as at other tracks.



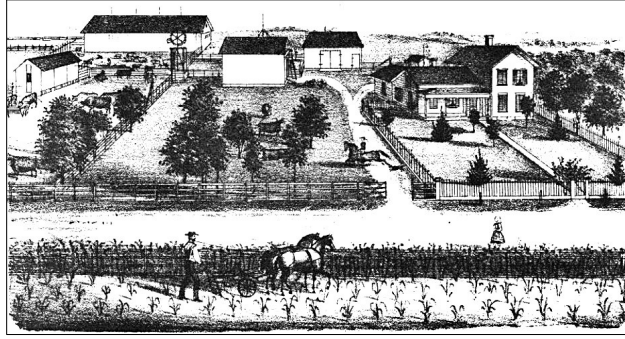
Driving Park Association

The Prophetstown Driving Park Association was organized in 1875. It was a tract of around 20 acres lying west and adjoining Washington Street along the 900 block. A half-mile race track was laid out and properly finished with all necessary buildings. This was considered a very fast track, due to the texture of the soil which was of a cushion nature rather than the hard packed clay in most tracks. Sherman Baldwin was one of the more prominent mentioned starters.

Some of the outstanding local horses and owners were Gregory Boy - David Adams; Lula McCurdy - George P. Richmond; Judge Crabtree - Sherman Baldwin; **Molock - J. H. Mosher**; Harry B. - Jack Bracken; Bum - Swan Swanson; Billie Wonder - Jim Middleton, and Pete Johnson - Ort Chamberlain. Gregory Boy was killed racing in Iowa. A gray mare owned by Adams established a record on the Galesburg, Ill., track by being the first to circle the half-mile track in one minute. While Richmond owned Lula McCurdy, she was considered the greatest racer in these parts.

Richmond was a breeder of fine horses and often had 50 head at one time. There was an excellent training track on the Richmond farm east of town on Jackson St. Road, now State Route 172, where horses were put in shape for the local race track. If these horses did not prove fast enough, they would be sold for private driving horses.

So far as is known the driving park was discontinued soon after the turn of the century.



*Geo. Richmond was famous for raising race horses.
His ranch lay just east of Prophetstown along what is now Star Rd.
Some of the buildings are still there, where Felton Rd. ends at Star Rd.*



*Old Jackson Street School.
Now a residence.*



Prophetstown High School Class of 1890.
Maud Mosher is second from the right in the middle row.

Misses Maud Mosher and Nellie Barnes left town Thursday morning, bound for the west, where Miss Maud hopes to find a more healthful climate.

From the *Sterling Standard* 1893 07 20.

Maude Mosher died of consumption (TB).
1895 06 18



From the *Echo*, November 3, 1980.

PROPHETSTOWN —James B. Mosher, 85, a lifelong resident of Prophetstown, died Friday at Bethany Hospital, Chicago.

Funeral services will be held Wednesday at 1 p.m. at United Methodist Church in Prophetstown. The Rev. Marshall Esty, pastor, will officiate. Entombment will be in the Riverside Cemetery. Visitation is from 7-9 p.m. Tuesday at the Gardner Chapel.

Memorials may be made to the Prophets Riverview Good Samaritan Center.

Mr. Mosher was born July 21, 1895, in Prophetstown, the son of Dr. James H. and Nellie (Barnes) Mosher. He was educated in the Prophetstown schools and graduated from the University of Wisconsin in 1917. He was united in marriage to Florence Phelps in DeKalb on Jan. 3, 1918. She preceded him in death in 1963.

He served in the U.S. Army during World War I as a lieutenant in the Field Artillery. He was past chairman of the board of Rock River Lumber and Grain Company in Prophetstown. He was First Commander of Prophetstown American Legion Post 522, former vice-president of the All American Life and Casualty Company and president of the Mosher Farm Incorporate, Prophetstown.

He is survived by one daughter, Mrs. Edward B. (Janet) Rasmussen of San Antonio, Texas; one son, James P. of Clearwater, Florida; eight grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by his wife in 1963 and one brother.



When Florence Angelica Phelps was born on 4 May 1896, in Oregon, Ogle, Illinois, United States. Her father, James Manley Phelps, was 38 and her mother, Olive M. Billig, was 30. She married James Barnes Mosher on 3 January 1918. They were the parents of Janet Irene Mosher and James Phelps Mosher. She died on 9 September 1963, in Chicago, Cook, Illinois, United States, at the age of 67.

**DR. GEORGE MOSHER
DEAD IN CHICAGO**

Former Prophetstown Boy Passed Away Suddenly Yesterday
Funeral Friday

Dr. George W. Mosher, 46, of Chicago died there yesterday after a short illness, according to a telegram received by relatives here last night.

Dr. Mosher is a son of Dr. J. H. Mosher of Prophetstown, who is spending the winter in California. The latter has been in poor health recently and a telegram received from him this morning indicated that he would not make the trip back here for the funeral, which is to be held in Chicago Friday.

No particulars concerning Dr. Mosher's illness and death have reached here. J. B. Mosher, his half brother, drove to Chicago yesterday on business, expecting to visit Dr. Mosher today. Word of the death was telephoned to him from Prophetstown late last night. He is coming home tonight and will probably return to Chicago for the funeral.

Dr. Mosher was born in Prophetstown Dec. 20, 1878. He was graduated from the Prophetstown high school in 1893 and entered Northwestern University, taking a degree there and then securing his medical degree at Rush Medical college. He has always practiced in Chicago and was an eye, ear, nose, and throat

He was the first of the six of the of the class of 1893 in Prophetstown to die.

**Dr. G. W. Mosher
Writes Good-By Notes
Ends Life**

March 1925

Dr. George W. Mosher, athlete and clubman, wrote several farewell letters yesterday after noon to his wife, father, mother, and two faithful servants, then went into a bathroom of his home at 1218 Madison Park, and shot himself. The wound was fatal.

Ill health as a result of an attack of ptomaine poisoning a month ago is ascribed as reason for the suicide. Mrs. Mosher refused to give the letters to the police.

Dr. Mosher was reported to be well to do. He was the son of J. P. [H.] Mosher of Pasadena, Val; member of the Illinois Athletic Club, and champion golfer of the South Shore Country Club. He was 47 years old and graduate of the University of Illinois.

The servants found the body, but in the absence of Mrs. Mosher, down town shopping, they didn't dare notify the police. The body lay three hours before Mrs. Mosher returned and called in a physician, who summoned detectives.

Dr. Mosher was an eye, ear, and nose specialist with offices in the Marshall Field building, and his is said to have built up a large fortune.



Left To Right, Top Row	
May Fee Lane.	
W. S. Ellison, Supt	D.
Carl Erickson	
Jessie Baird	D.
Lower Row.	
Hallie G. Hotchkiss	D.
George W. Mosher (Dr)	D.
Jessie Paddock Petty.	



Mary Isabell Lewis-Fixen-Mosher.
 wife of Dr. George Mosher.

STANDARD CERTIFICATE OF DEATH

FILE NO. 1941

STATE OF WYOMING
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
BUREAU OF VITAL STATISTICS

LOCAL REGISTRAR'S NO. 60

REGISTERED NO. 838

1. PLACE OF DEATH:
(A) COUNTY Sheridan
(B) CITY OR TOWN Rural Parkman, Wyo.
(If outside city or town limits, write RURAL)
(C) NAME OF HOSPITAL OR INSTITUTION:
X-X Ranch Pass Creek.
(If not in hospital or institution write street number or location)
(D) LENGTH OF STAY: (Specify whether years, months or days)
IN HOSPITAL OR INSTITUTION _____
IN COMMUNITY WHERE DEATH OCCURRED Six years

2. USUAL RESIDENCE OF DECEASED:
(A) STATE Wyoming (B) COUNTY Sheridan
(C) CITY OR TOWN X-X Ranch Pass Creek
(If outside city or town limits, write RURAL)
(D) STREET NO. Parkman, Wyo.
(If rural give location with respect to the nearest town)
(E) IF FOREIGN BORN, HOW LONG IN U. S. A. _____ YEARS.

3. (A) FULL NAME Mary L. MOSHER

3 (B) IF VETERAN, NAME WAR NONE 3 (C) SOCIAL SECURITY NO. NONE

4. SEX Female 5. COLOR OR RACE White 6. (A) SINGLE, WIDOWED, MARRIED, DIVORCED Widowed
6. (B) NAME OF HUSBAND OR WIFE George W. Mosher 6. (C) AGE OF HUSBAND OR WIFE IF ALIVE _____ YRS.
7. BIRTH DATE OF DECEASED November 18, 1864
(Month) (Day) (Year)

8. AGE: YEARS MONTHS DAYS IF LESS THAN ONE DAY
76 5 19 HR. _____ MIN. _____

9. BIRTHPLACE Racine Wisconsin
(City, town, or county) (State or foreign country)

10. USUAL OCCUPATION House Wife

11. INDUSTRY OR BUSINESS _____

FATHER { 12. NAME Wm. Tumor Lewis
13. BIRTHPLACE New York
(City, town, or county) (State or foreign country)

MOTHER { 14. MAIDEN NAME Mary I. Mitchell
15. BIRTHPLACE South Port Wisconsin
(City, town, or county) (State or foreign country)

16. (A) INFORMANT'S OWN SIGNATURE Lewis M Fixen
(B) ADDRESS Parkman Wyo

17. (A) Removal (B) DATE THEREOF May 20 1941
(Burial, cremation, or removal) (Month) (Day) (Year)

(C) PLACE: BURIAL OR CREMATION Great Falls, Montana

18. (A) SIGNATURE OF FUNERAL DIRECTOR Eldon Wilson 239
Chas. A. Champion & Son #1

(B) ADDRESS Sheridan, Wyoming

19. (A) 5-19-41 (B) J. G. [Signature]
(Date received local registrar) (Registrar's signature)
REGISTRAR VITAL STATISTICS

MEDICAL CERTIFICATION

20. DATE OF DEATH: MONTH May DAY 17
YEAR 1941 HOUR 8 p.m. MINUTE _____

21. I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT I ATTENDED THE DECEASED FROM Mar
_____, 1935, TO 17 May 1941;
THAT I LAST SAW Her ALIVE ON May 17 1941;
AND THAT DEATH OCCURRED ON THE DATE AND HOUR STATED ABOVE.

IMMEDIATE CAUSE OF DEATH _____ DURATION _____

Acute Myocarditis - death instant.

DUE TO Hypertension 1935

DUE TO Asthma 2-3 yrs.

OTHER CONDITIONS (Include pregnancy within 3 months of death) _____

MAJOR FINDINGS: OF OPERATIONS _____ DATE OF OP. _____

OF AUTOPSY _____

22. IF DEATH WAS DUE TO EXTERNAL CAUSES, FILL IN THE FOLLOWING:

(A) ACCIDENT, SUICIDE, OR HOMICIDE (SPECIFY) _____

(B) DATE OF OCCURRENCE _____

(C) WHERE DID INJURY OCCUR? _____ (City or town) (County) (State)

(D) DID INJURY OCCUR IN OR ABOUT HOME, ON FARM, IN INDUSTRIAL PLACE, IN PUBLIC PLACE? _____ WHILE AT WORK? _____ (Specify type of place)

(E) MEANS OF INJURY _____

23. SIGNATURE Wrschunh (M.D. OR OTHER) _____

ADDRESS Sheridan Wyo DATE SIGNED 5/19/41

932
PHYSICIAN
Underline the cause to which death should be charged statistically.

Death certificate of Mary Isabelle Lewis-Fixen-Mosher.
Wife of Dr. George Mosher.



*Dr.
mosher
house
now torn
down*

WE HAVE NO IDEA when this picture was taken but we do know who is in the picture and where the house is. The house is located across from the Farmers National Bank and presently belongs to Larry Majeski. The dog is one owned by Brace Baldwin and the young boy in the picture is none other than Jim Mosher.

Dr. James Henry Mosher home.
It sat on the northwest corner of W. 3rd and Lafayette
in what is now the Farmers National Bank parking lot.
His son, James Barnes Mosher, is in the foreground.



The old James Barnes Mosher home.
It sat where the Farmers National Bank is now.
The Cal Schuneman family once lived here.



The former home of James Barnes Mosher – 709 E. 3rd Street.
 Now the home of Jerry and Cheryl Thede.



Dr. James Mosher purchased many acres of land.
 Some of it was donated to the high school,
 now known as “Mosher Field.”

Mosher Field Is Back

10:49 AM September 18, 2018, from aroundptown.com

After a few weeks wait, Mosher Field is once again adorned with its iconic sign. Sterling Fence Company installed the new look entrance sign on Tuesday morning. The entrance sign to Mosher Field has been given a much needed makeover.

The previous entrance was demolished in August after it was determined that it was too expensive to replace the brick columns that had seriously deteriorated. The new entrance features black metal columns that support the original sign.

Mosher Field is named after Dr. James Henry Mosher who was local physician and died at the age of 88 in 1929. His family donated the land for the field.

He and his family are laid to rest in the only mausoleum in Prophetstown's Riverside Cemetery.

