LACEY CEMETERY, 75-2

Summary Report

The name "Lacey" is a variant spelling of "Lacy". It appears that after the Civil War, there may have been a deliberate action taken by court clerks or census enumerators to vary the spellings of a given surname to show a distinction between the white slave owners and the liberated former slave population who took their new surnames from their previous white owners. The spelling variation happened too frequently to be simply random, and the new variations were consistently used for the black population. However, the Lacy name was also changed in a sense for the white family that settled around Lacey's Spring in Morgan County. The story is told that a postal clerk changed the spelling soon after the Civil War to add the "e" to the post office name, even though the white family who settled there and owned land and slaves in Madison County consistently spelled the name without the "e". Perhaps the postal clerk was himself a freed former slave, given the job during the post-war Reconstruction period in the South, when many blacks had jobs formerly reserved for the white population. In any event, the name of this cemetery is without doubt connected to the land and slave owner **Theophilus Lacy**, who lived from 1804 to 1876.

This particular cemetery is located in the extreme southeastern corner of the southeastern quarter of Section 14, Township 5, Range 1 West. History of the ownership of the land can be reviewed in the Summary Report of the Lacy Cemetery, 75 - 1, which is named for Theophilus' family and is about a quarter mile north-northeast of the Lacey Cemetery, 75 - 2. The history of the two cemeteries is closely linked until after the 1890s, about when the land is thought to have passed into black ownership.

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1840 Madison County AL Federal Census, page 163 excerpt

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1840 Federal Census, Madison County, Alabama, page 163, Slaves and Summary Sheet.

The top line above shows the slave count (41 of the 43 household total were slaves) by age brackets for the household of Alexander H. Lacy, one of the white Lacy plantation owners in the 1800s in southern half of Madison County, around the cemetery. His slave holdings were second only to those of Hughy Smith on this sheet. Alexander's brother Theophilus Lacy had fewer slaves, only 11. Others of the Lacy family, most of whom actually resided across the river at Lacey's Spring in Morgan County, no doubt owned additional slaves in the pre-Civil War days.

The Lacy slave cemetery (Lacey Cemetery, 75 - 2) is now peacefully set in a wooded area just north of Buxton Road, which in the 1800s was known as the Whitesburg – Triana Road in this area.



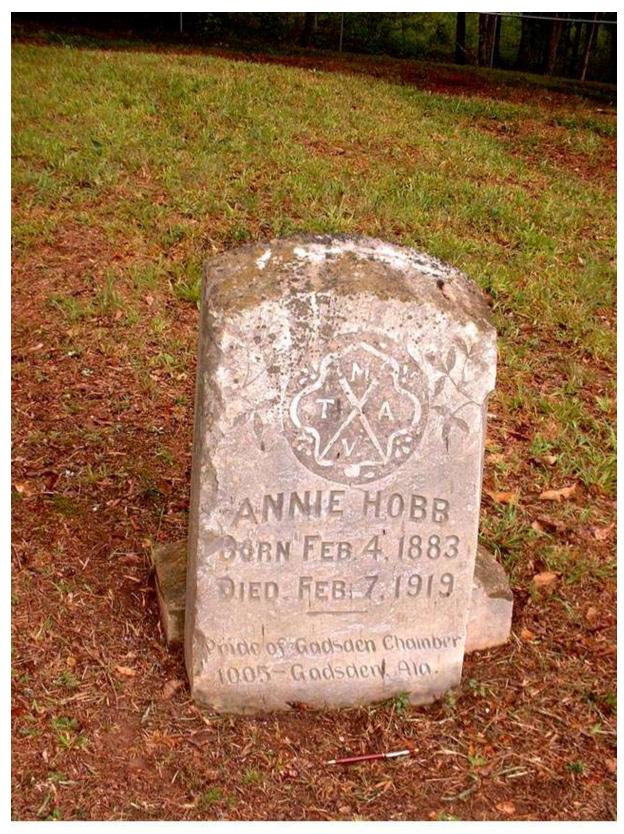
Lacy Cemetery (75-2), Redstone Arsenal, Madison County, Alabama, July 2002.



Lacy Cemetery (75-2), Redstone Arsenal, Madison County, Alabama, July 2002.

Within this cemetery are two inner fenced areas, which are probably small family plots, as neither would hold many graves. The Lacey Cemetery is large enough to hold perhaps many hundreds of graves, and there is obvious grave depression evidence for over a hundred. Some of the depressions are quite deep, indicating that adult-sized coffins were used.

There are only two inscribed tombstones in the cemetery, and neither of those is inside of the two separately fenced inner family plots.

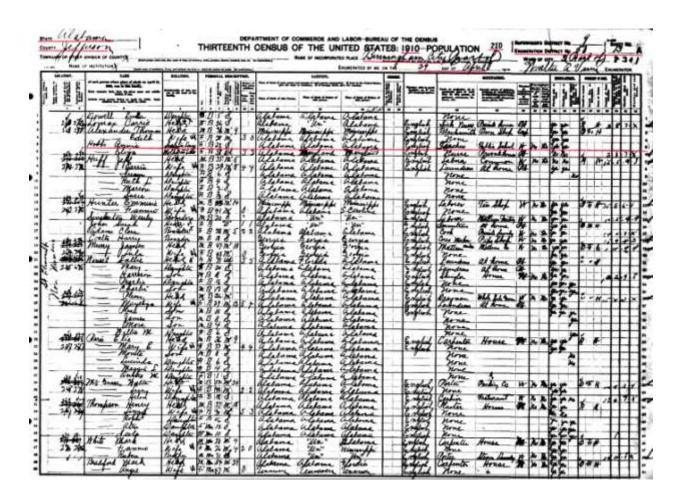


Lacy Cemetery (75-2), Redstone Arsenal, Madison County, AL, July 2002

The "Gadsden Chamber" inscription on this tombstone may mean that Annie was a schoolteacher in Gadsden, Etowah County, Alabama. Census records indicate that she may have lived in Birmingham (Jefferson County) in 1910, when she was listed as a "School Teacher" by occupation. Gadsden is somewhat between Huntsville (Madison County) and Birmingham.

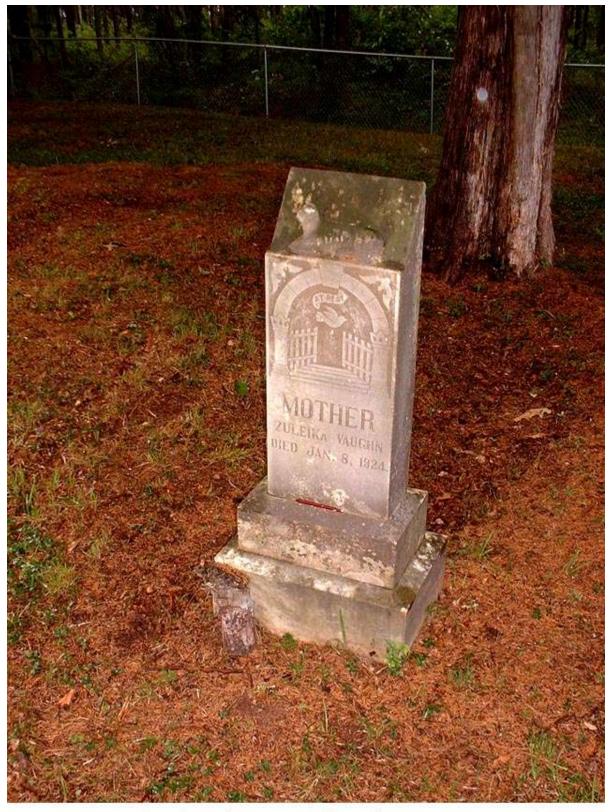
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1900 Colbert County, Alabama, Census: Annie Hobbs at age 19, in school. This was the only "close fit" found for name Annie Hobb(s) in the 1900 census records.



1910 Jefferson County, Alabama, Census (Birmingham), showing Annie Hobbs as age 22, with occupation as School Teacher. This was the only "close fit" found in census records for 1910 for the name Annie Hobb(s).

The other inscribed tombstone in the Lacey Cemetery is for Zuleika Vaughn, as shown below. The inclusion of the word "MOTHER" reveals that she had children, so it indicates that she lived to adulthood and was probably married. With those clues, census records confirmed the deductions, as illustrated in subsequent photo insertions.



Lacy Cemetery (75-2), Redstone Arsenal, Madison County, AL, July 2002

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	1910 Madison County Al. Census Excerpt showing details for				

The above census record shows that Zuleika Vaughn gave birth to 6 children, but only 2 of them (listed above) were still living in 1910. It also shows that Frank and Zuleika had been married for 18 years as of 1910, that marriage being the second for each of them.

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1910 Madison County AL Census, excerpt showing occupations of Frank & Zuleika Vaughn

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The above is a complete page of the 1910 census for Madison County, Alabama, showing Zuleika Vaughn and her husband Frank living on Madison Street in Huntsville. Frank's occupation was listed as "Cook" for the "Railroad". Zuleika was also listed with an occupation as "Merchant" in a "Retail Grocery". There was no record found for either Frank or Zuleika in the 1920 census, but the tombstone reports that Zuleika died in 1924, so she should appear somewhere in the census records.

Several of the deepest grave depressions are very close to Zuleika's tombstone, as shown in the photo below:



Lacy Cemetery (75-2), Redstone Arsenal, Madison County, Alabama, July 2002.

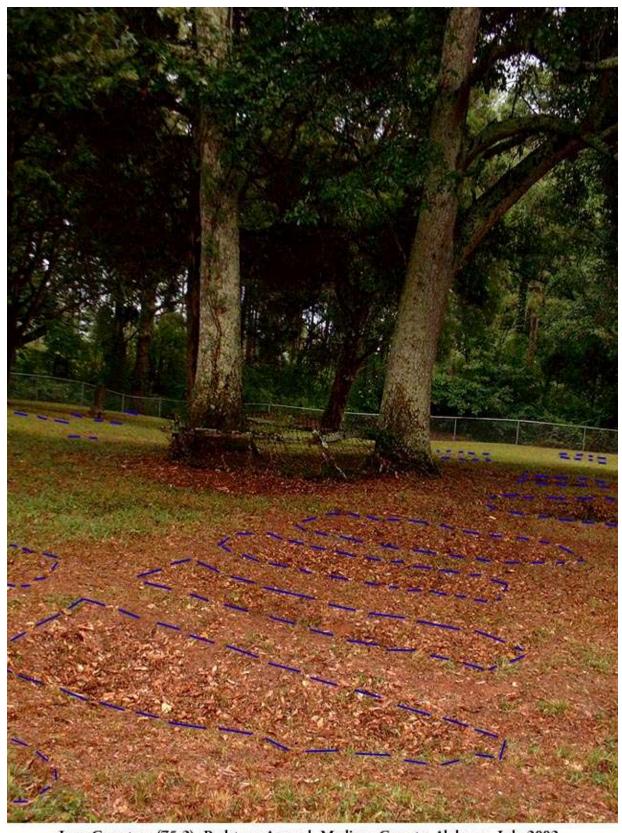
Grave depression (marked with blue) in foreground, view toward east from south end of cemetery. Marker for Zuleika Vaughn in background (before cleaning & polishing).

Some of the deep grave depressions at the other end of the cemetery are shown in the photo below:



Lacy Cemetery (75-2), Redstone Arsenal, Madison County, Alabama, July 2002. View of several grave depressions (marked with blue dotted lines) in foreground, looking west from gate area.

Some of the deeper grave depressions near the center of the cemetery are shown below. In the background, between the large trees, is one of the two separately fenced family plots.



Lacy Cemetery (75-2), Redstone Arsenal, Madison County, Alabama, July 2002.

Grave depressions (marked with blue) in foreground, view toward SE from center of cemetery.

The photo below shows the other separately fenced family plot. This one is near the entrance gate of the cemetery.



Lacy Cemetery (75-2), Redstone Arsenal, Madison County, AL, July 2002

Obviously, this cemetery was used for a long time by a large number of families, which would be typical of a community or large church. Of course, it may well be that it was used for about a century by the slaves of the Lacy and other surrounding plantations. Either way, it is impressive for its size and the number of graves evidenced by the depressions. Beverly Curry's interviews with Lacy / Lacey black descendants no doubt have significantly more "living memory" data about the cemetery and the families represented therein, so the serious researcher is referred to her report. It is known that there is an annual family reunion and visit to the Lacey Cemetery conducted by the descendants, so current contacts with them may be possible.

Prepared by John P. Rankin, August 10, 2005.