

SMITH SLAVE CEMETERY, 72 – 1

Summary Report



Smith Slave Cemetery (72-1), Redstone Arsenal, Madison County, Alabama, July 2002.

(Gate at SW corner of cemetery)



Smith Slave Cemetery (72-1), Redstone Arsenal, Madison County, Alabama, July 2002.

(View from gate at SE corner into shaded cemetery)



Smith Slave Cemetery (72-1), Redstone Arsenal, Madison County, Alabama, July 2002.

(View over fence into cemetery from SE corner at gate)

This shaded, quiet cemetery immediately appears as very old when visited in person. It is a couple of hundred yards north of the Smith Cemetery (72-2), which is firmly believed to be the burial place of Hughy Smith, the original landowner of the area. Considering the old plantation practice of putting the owner's cemetery within about 150 – 300 yards of the plantation main house, and then placing the supporting slave village and cemetery within about another 300 – 500 yards, the arrangement here certainly supports that this is the Smith Plantation slave cemetery. There are no grave markers at all to be found here, which further supports the conclusion that this is a slave cemetery.



**Smith Slave Cemetery (72-1), Redstone Arsenal, Madison County, Alabama, July 2002.
(Evidence of old fence in several tree trunks of SW corner)**

There was apparently an old fence in the southwest portion of the cemetery, as indicated by remnants of barbed wire embedded in several tree trunks. However, there was no particular pattern perceived regarding the route of the old fence, so it is not known whether it was part of a perimeter fence or perhaps an internally separated family plot.



Smith Slave Cemetery (72-1), Redstone Arsenal, Madison County, Alabama, July 2002.

(Close view of barbed wire in a cedar tree trunk)



**Smith Slave Cemetery (72-1), Redstone Arsenal, Madison County, Alabama, July 2002.
(View to south along east fence from north end)**



**Smith Slave Cemetery (72-1), Redstone Arsenal, Madison County, Alabama, July 2002.
(View to southwest from NE end)**

At the base of the oak tree to the right can be seen one of the few fieldstones found in this cemetery. The photos below enlarge on views of that fieldstone, which carries no inscribed information.



**Smith Slave Cemetery (72-1), Redstone Arsenal, Madison County, Alabama, July 2002.
(Top view of one of the few fieldstones found)**



**Smith Slave Cemetery (72-1), Redstone Arsenal, Madison County, Alabama, July 2002.
(Same fieldstone as above, flipped up to reveal other side)**

With no inscribed tombstones to provide names of those buried here, land records provide the only avenue of further investigation, beyond the oral history reports (if any, for this cemetery) that may have been collected by Beverly Curry. The original land record summary for this area is shown below, as published by Margaret Matthews Cowart in her book **OLD LAND RECORDS OF MADISON COUNTY, ALABAMA**. Of course, the lines of interest deal with the location of this cemetery, in the northwest corner of the **Southeast Quarter of Section 15**, Township 15, Range 1 West.

TOWNSHIP 5 South		RANGE 1 West		HUNTSVILLE MERIDIAN				
DESCRIPTION OF THE TRACT		AREA		UNITED STATES TITLE		Date of Sale	Number of	Date of
PART OF SECTION	Section	Acres	100ths	TO WHOM SOLD OR GRANTED		Location or Grant	Certificate or Warrant	Military Act
Page 53 continued								
Frac W of Bdy	13	3.06		Richard Burdyne				
	14	206.45		East of Old Chickasaw Boundary		2 Feb 1818	799	
		470.38		West of Old Chickasaw Boundary				
Frac E of Bdy	"	206.45		Alexander G. Wall, Asse		15 Dec 1813	2815	
E Frac pt of W Bdy	"	97.00		Alexander G. Wall, Asse		4 Jul 1831	1452	
W $\frac{1}{2}$ of NW $\frac{1}{2}$	"	80.00		Thos. Owen Burton		17 Mar 1832	4816	
S Frac pt of W Bdy	"	293.38		Benjamin Patterson		4 Jul 1831	1453	
				Benjamin Patterson, Asse				
	15	642.70		Solomon Spence				
NE $\frac{1}{4}$ of NE $\frac{1}{4}$	"	40.17		Hughy Smith		11 Dec 1833	6835	
SE $\frac{1}{4}$ of NE $\frac{1}{4}$	"	40.17		Solomon Spence		12 Nov 1833	6676	
W $\frac{1}{2}$ of NE $\frac{1}{4}$	"	80.34		Hughy Smith		25 Jul 1831	4095	
E $\frac{1}{2}$ of NW $\frac{1}{4}$	"	80.34		James F. W. Smith		22 Jul 1835	8350	
W $\frac{1}{2}$ of NW $\frac{1}{4}$	"	80.34		Hughy Smith, Asse		13 Nov 1833	6683	
South East $\frac{1}{4}$	"	160.67 $\frac{1}{2}$		Hughy Smith, Asse		25 Mar 1818	2941	
E $\frac{1}{2}$ of SW $\frac{1}{4}$	"	80.34		Pleasant S. Austin, Asse		25 Jun 1831	876	
W $\frac{1}{2}$ of SW $\frac{1}{4}$	"	80.34				28 Apr 1818	3026	
Page 54 Entire	16	648.14		State		2 Mar 1819		
NE $\frac{1}{4}$ of NE $\frac{1}{4}$	"	40.50%		*School Arthur Jacobs 31 Jan 1942 Vol. G, p 558		31 Jan 1942		
				State of Ala 16th Section Patents - Letter Secretary of State dated 1/17/42.		31 Jan 1942		
NW $\frac{1}{4}$ of NE $\frac{1}{4}$	"	40.50%		State		2 Mar 1819		
				*School Arthur Jacobs 31 Jan 1942 Vol. G, p 560				
SE $\frac{1}{4}$ of NE $\frac{1}{4}$	"	40.50%		Same as above				
				State		2 Mar 1819		
				*School Arthur Jacobs 31 Jan 1942				
				*School Arthur Jacobs 31 Jan 1942 Vol. G, p 558				
				N $\frac{1}{2}$ of SE $\frac{1}{4}$ of NE $\frac{1}{4}$ and Wattie Timmons? 25 Feb 1942				
SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of NE $\frac{1}{4}$	"	40.50%		Vol. G, p 560-40 acres of S side of NE $\frac{1}{4}$		2 Mar 1819		
				State		2 Mar 1819		
				*School N $\frac{1}{2}$ Arthur Jacobs 31 Jan 1942, 40 acres evenly off side side of NE $\frac{1}{4}$ conveyed to Wattie Timmons by State on 2/25/42 conveyed recorded State of Ala. 16th Section Patents. Letter Secretary of State dated 1/17/42 . Vol. G, p 560.				
				*Same				
NE $\frac{1}{4}$ of NW $\frac{1}{4}$	"	40.50%		State		2 Mar 1819		
				*School N. T. Graham 8 Mar 1856 Vol. C, p 420				
NW $\frac{1}{4}$ of NW $\frac{1}{4}$	"	40.50%		State		2 Mar 1819		
				*School N. T. Graham 8 Mar 1856 Vol. C, p 420				
SE $\frac{1}{4}$ of NW $\frac{1}{4}$	"	40.50%		State		2 Mar 1819		
				*School N. T. Graham 8 Mar 1856 Vol. C, p 420				
SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of NW $\frac{1}{4}$	"	40.50%		State		2 Mar 1819		
				*School N. T. Graham 8 Mar 1856 Vol. C, p 420				
NE $\frac{1}{4}$ of SE $\frac{1}{4}$	"	40.50%		State		2 Mar 1819		
				*School H. H. Lea 20 Oct 1856 Vol. D, p 5				
NW $\frac{1}{4}$ of SE $\frac{1}{4}$	"	40.50%		State		2 Mar 1819		
				*School H. H. Lea 20 Oct 1856 Vol. D, p 5				
SE $\frac{1}{4}$ of SE $\frac{1}{4}$	"	40.50%		State		2 Mar 1819		
				*School H. H. Lea 20 Oct 1856 Vol. D, p 5				
SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of SE $\frac{1}{4}$	"	40.50%		State		2 Mar 1819		
				*School H. H. Lea 20 Oct 1856 Vol. D, p 5				

Information in script appears on the copy from the office of the Secretary of State of Alabama.

*FACING PAGE	FUND	STATE TITLE	WHEN CONVEYED	Number of State Transfer or Conveyance	WHERE RECORDED	MEMORANDUM
		TO WHOM CONVEYED			VOL. PAGE	

Note that Pleasant S. Austin, Hughy Smith's son-in-law, purchased the adjoining land in the W/2 of the SW/4 of Section 15.

The **INDEX TO LANDS** compiled by G. W. Jones & Sons, Inc., shows the ownership changes via private deeds through the rest of the 1800s:

Section 15 Township 3 South of Range 1 East Madison County, Alabama																				
G. W. JONES & SONS																				
BOOK	PAGE	Kind of Instrument	Date	GRANTOR	GRANTEE	DATE OF INSTRUMENT	DATE FILED	N E 1/4				S E 1/4								
								NE	SE	SW	NW	NE	SE	SW	NW					
1	152	D		Smith, Jas F	Spence, William	1825														
1	577	D		Spence, Wm W by -self	Cain, Thomas	1826														
1	224	D of Trust		Cain, Thomas	Moore, Benjamin F Jr	1829														
1	14	D		Cain, Thomas by -self	Dorris, William	1830														
1	455	D of Trust		Austin, Pleasant & Mary	Hill, James F Jr	1830														
1	290	D of Trust		Snoddy, Nathaniel	Wheeler, William Jr Jr	1831														
1	300	D		Austin, Jn & M E by Tr	Otey, John	1834														
1	421	D		Turner, Henry & Sophia	Otey, John	1835														
1	59	D		Dorris, William	Horton, George	1832														
100	218	D		Smith, Henry by adm et al	Edwards, William	1837														
101	467	D		Edwards, Wm & Martha	Joiner, Wm & Misha	1836														
101	415	D		Springer, Josiah Adm et al	Edwards, William	1834														
101	571	D		Edwards, Wm & Martha	Grantland, Lisate F	1834														
111	130	D		Turner, Peter S by -self	Campbell & Bailey	1835														
111	262	Mtg		Bailey, Samuel	Campbell, Archibald	1838														
100	127	D		Grantland, H - adm et al	Pitney, Margaret	1839														
100	171	D		Horton, Alfred	Swann, William	1838														
100	177	D		Horton, John E	Swann, W F	1838														
100	175	D		Horton, Alfred & Nancy	Swann, William	1838														
100	353	D		Grantland, George	Rice, Paulish et al	1838														
111	1	Mtg		Beale, J H & Pauline G	Shaffrey, John H Jr	1841														
111	303	Mtg		Pitney, Margaret & Allan	Joiner, Thomas	1841														
111	421	D		Horton, Geo Paid by Reg et al	Beale, Joshua H	1834														
111	154	Mtg		Lacy, Thos H & Olive	Pitney, Margaret	1835														
111	509	D		Pitney, Margaret	Lacy, Thomas H	1835														
111	21	Mtg		Strode, J Henry & Mary	Land Mfg Invest & Agcy Co	1858														
111	172	Mtg		Strode, J Henry & Mary	Woods, J H	1858														
111	449	D		Rice, Paulish by Sds et al	Horton, James	1838														
111	351	D		Beale, Joshua H & Pauline	Strode, James H	1834														
111	31	Mtg		Horton, Jas H & Margaret	American Freshhold L A Co	1856														
111	163	Mtg		Horton, Jas H & Margaret	Woods, Joseph H	1856														
111	16	Agmt et al		Woods, J H	Horton, J H	1858														
111	541	D		Horton, M - by Reg	American Freshhold L A Co	1852														
111	144	D		Joiner, Misha et al	Joiner, William	1835														
111	150	D		Land Mfg Invest Co	Indiana Lumber Company	1858														
111	497	D		Joiner, Misha et al	Stimans, James	1835														

The **INDEX TO LANDS** reveals that Hughy Smith retained title to the SE/4 of Section 15 until his death, when it passed to his son Stanhope Smith. Stanhope was a physician, who apparently did not want to be a plantation “farmer”. He allowed the land to eventually go to auction, and William B. Edwards purchased it in 1867 – after the slaves had been emancipated during the Civil War, which ended in 1865. (See details of the Smith family

SCHEDULE 2.—Slave Inhabitants in 3d District in the County of Madison of Alabama, enumerated by me, on the 15th day of November, 1850. C. M. Howard

NAMES OF SLAVE OWNERS.	Number of Slaves.	DESCRIPTION.			Fugitives from the State.	Number manumitted.	Deaf & dumb, blind, insane, or idiotic.				NAMES OF SLAVE OWNERS.	Number of Slaves.	DESCRIPTION.			Fugitives from the State.										
		Age.	Sex.	Colour.									Age.	Sex.	Colour.											
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
<u>Wiley Smith</u>	1	13	f	B				1	1	<u>Thomas O. Benton</u>	1	2	m	B				2	2							
	1	1	f	B				2	2		1	1	m	B				3	3							
	1	7	f	B				3	3		1	1	m	B				4	4							
	1	45	m	B				4	4		1	37	f	B				5	5							
	1	41	m	B				5	5		1	14	f	B				6	6							
	1	34	f	B				6	6		1	11	f	B				7	7							
	1	15	m	B				7	7		1	40	f	B				8	8							
	1	11	f	B				8	8		1	6	f	B				9	9							
	1	9	m	B				9	9		1	80	f	B				10	10							
	1	7	m	B				10	10		1	15	f	B				11	11							
	1	6	m	B				11	11		1	6	f	B				12	12							
	1	4	f	B				12	12		1	6	f	B				13	13							
	1	1/2	f	B				13	13		1	5	f	B				14	14							
	1	21	m	m				14	14		1	23	f	B				15	15							
	1	40	m	m	-			15	15		1	5	f	B				16	16							
	1	35	m	m	-			16	16		1	21	f	B				17	17							
	1	35	m	B				17	17		1	30	f	B				18	18							
	1	20	f	B				18	18		1	13	f	B				19	19							
	1	3	f	B				19	19		1	10	f	B				20	20							
	1	7/12	m	B				20	20		1	26	f	B				21	21							
<u>Thomas O. Benton</u>	1	85	f	B				21	21		1	5	f	B				22	22							
	1	76	f	B				22	22		1	3	f	B				23	23							
	1	85	f	B				23	23		1	11	f	B				24	24							
	1	55	f	B				24	24		1	12	f	B				25	25							
	1	32	m	B				25	25		<u>William S. Turner</u>	1	16	f	B			26	26							
	1	53	m	B				26	26			1	48	m	B			27	27							
	1	37	m	B				27	27			1	34	m	B											

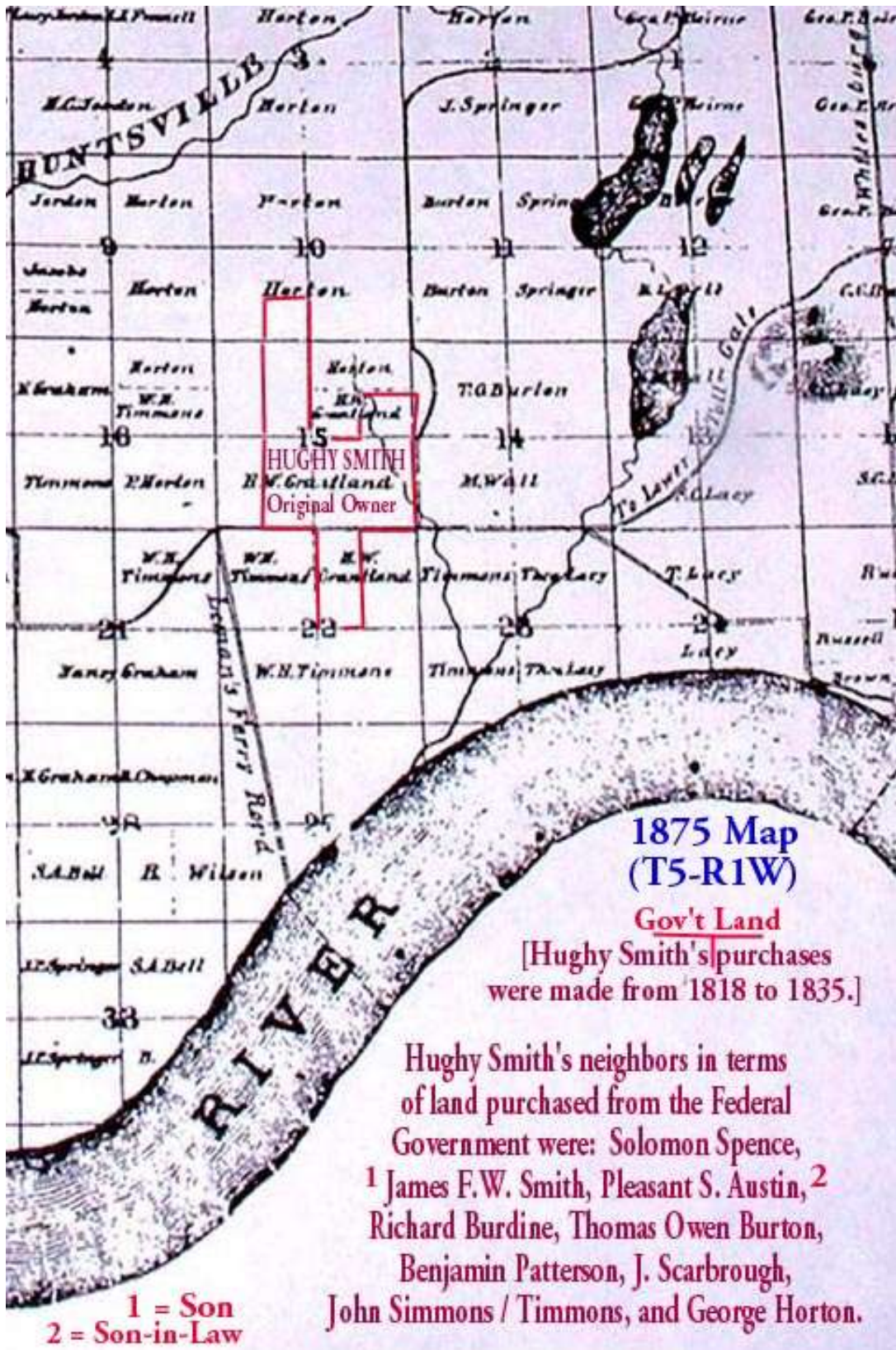
The land of the Smith Plantation is shown on the map below, outlined in red lines:



1875 Map showing landowners of record in Madison County, AL (Redstone Arsenal Portion)

[Zoomed segment shown below]

(Hughy Smith did indeed buy additional lands privately.)



William B. Edwards gave the “Smith Plantation” to his daughter Lizzie when she married Henry Grantland. Henry and Lizzie had a daughter named Beulah, who married a Rice, and from that marriage was produced Grantland Rice. For those too young to recall, Grantland Rice was the foremost sportscaster and sportswriter in America during the 1930s and 1940s. The annual collegiate championship trophy for many years was known as the known as the Grantland Rice trophy, in his honor.

While the slaves in the little cemetery would not have had any knowledge of the national prominence that would come later to owners of the land that they worked, it was their effort that made the land ultimately productive and supportive of such families. The cemetery remains as a silent witness to the lives of the black families who labored and enabled this area to produce prominent persons who were influential across the entire country in future generations. Today, we can only surmise that black people from the slave populations of the Smith, Austin, and other nearby families are interred here.

Prepared by John P. Rankin, September 5, 2005