

John Buford, Unknown, Neal, Esslinger & Lee Cemeteries

JOHN BUFORD CEMETERY

Location: Section 26-4-1E. Approximate SE NW. This cemetery is in a field of Old Big Cove Road.

The remains of the original Buford log home is nearby but falling in. There is a fallen-in brick wall partially surrounding the graveyard. A Buford descendant took me to this cemetery but there were no stones to be found. A tornado went through here and if there were any stones, they may have been damaged by the tornado. It is my understanding, however, that the stones were destroyed during the ownership of **Elijah Drake**.

John Buford is buried here along with his wife. The Madison County marriage records show that **Elizabeth Wills Buford** married Elijah Drake on 31 May 1822. Elijah was the son of **John Drake** and **Jean Neely**. Elizabeth Wills Buford was the daughter of John Buford.

UNKNOWN CEMETERY

Location: Section 26-4-1E. Approximate S/2 SE/4. In a grove of trees near intersection of Hartsdale Drive and Victoria Hill.

There were no stones and it is unknown who is buried here. There were once tomb stones but they were dumped in a ravine somewhere.

NEAL CEMETERY (Probably?)

Location: Section 35-4-1E. W/2 W/2 SW/4. On Old Big Cove Road on east side of road.

There were approximately 68 to 73 graves here but no tombstones. The late **William Drake** told me that once when he was a youngster, some people from North Carolina came to this cemetery (ca late 1930's) to locate some of their ancestors. The first owner of the property was **John Neal** and this may be his cemetery. Glovers and **Charley Grayson** also once owned it.

In this cemetery, we noticed a fairly recent, tiny sink of a baby's grave. A jar with new artificial flowers in it has been set at the head of the grave. Visited in 1970's. In 2005 this cemetery was moved in preparation for building 242 homes on this 130 acre plot called Hampton Ridge. The cemetery was moved to Valley View Memorial Gardens in Meridianville by May 21, 2005. According to the *Huntsville Times* the cemetery measured 80 by 100 feet with graves "aligned neatly in an east-west configuration." The remains were to be placed in individual "containers" and reburied in the same order in which they rested before the removal.

Archeologists determined the burials dated from 1880 to the 1920's. There were 34 adults, 13 children and 21 infants buried here.

ESSLINGER CEMETERY

Location: Section 28-4-1E. North half of section. Probably in the S/2 S/2 SE NW

Mrs. Jack Roy Cochran (Ann) wrote me the following letter regarding the **A. J. Esslinger** cemetery on 15 Sept 1968. A. J. Esslinger (brother of **William Wright Esslinger** who married **Sarah Hunt**) was the son of **Elizabeth Wright**. Mrs. Cochran says:

"**Walter Esslinger**, a descendant of A. J. Esslinger, told Jack [Cochran] that A. J. was buried on the land where he had lived off Bailey Cove Road between "the barn and the old

orchard." Mrs. Joe Hymer lives in this location now [Ed: That was in 1968. She has since died.]

Mrs. Joe Hymer lives with her son and his wife in the fourth house on the left on Blevins Gap Road. The son's name is **William Hymer**. I met Mrs. Hymer and William's wife. Mrs. Joe Hymer is in her eighties but her mind seems quite bright and clear. The house in which she lives was constructed on the site of the