

WARD MOUNTAIN CEMETERY, 20 – 2

Summary Report



Ward Mountain Cemetery, Redstone Arsenal, Madison Co., AL, June, 2002.

Gate is near southwest corner of cemetery, at end of about 80-yard trail through woods at eastern edge of golf course. The cemetery is found by going to the end of Golf Course Road, taking the paved path north about 150 yards, and turning to the woods on the east after crossing a drainage ditch at the bottom of the slope. The trail (heading SE from the fairway area) is well maintained through the woods.



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View showing large white oak tree on east side of cemetery. Several large limbs are dead and could fall at any time. This cemetery has no obvious rectangular grave depressions, no markers, and no definite fieldstones. Several stones are located in the cemetery, but they may well be natural outcroppings of the mountain rocks.



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(Stones within the cemetery – not likely to be grave fieldstones)



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Cemetery is located in the west half of Section 8, Township 4S, Range 1W. The stones outside the fence (and inside also) are likely just outcroppings of the mountain rocks, rather than fieldstones for graves.

The stone pictured here is outside the gate of the cemetery. The cemetery seems to lie on the line between the NW/4 and the SW/4 of S8-T4-R1W. It is about a quarter mile south-southwest of the cemetery on the grounds of the U. S. Space & Rocket Center. It is just beyond the north end of Golf Course Road, which runs north from Goss Road, as shown on Sheet 2 of the October 1986 General Site Map series. The cemetery is on the east of the greenway, into the wooded area about 35 yards.

With no inscribed tombstones for guidance regarding burials, the land records remain the only realistic avenue of learning of the cemetery's past. The insert below shows the **OLD LAND RECORDS OF MADISON COUNTY, ALABAMA** page by Margaret M. Cowart that addresses this location:

DESCRIPTION OF THE TRACT		AREA		UNITED STATES TITLE	Date of Sale Location or Grant	Number of Certificate or Warrant	Date of Military Act
PART OF SECTION	Section	Acres	100ths	TO WHOM SOLD OR GRANTED			
Page 37	1	639.60					
North East 7/8	"	159.90		LeRoy Pope, Asse	26 Aug 1809		5
North West 7/8	"	159.90		LeRoy Pope, Asse	26 Aug 1809		8
South East 7/8	"	159.90		David Moore, Asse	26 Aug 1809		6
South West 7/8	"	159.90		David Moore, Asse	26 Aug 1809		7
	2	640.40					
North East 7/8	"	160.10		John Brahan, Asse	18 Sep 1809		756
North West 7/8	"	160.10		John Brahan, Asse	18 Sep 1809		755
South East 7/8	"	160.10		William Lientz	18 Sep 1809		514
South West 7/8	"	160.10		Peter Bass, Asse	17 Oct 1809		224
	3	640.40					
North East 7/8	"	160.10		Thomas Bibb, Asse	2 Nov 1809		527
North West 7/8	"	160.10		Leroy Pope, Asse	26 Aug 1809		659
South East 7/8	"	160.10		Robert Lanford, Asse	17 Feb 1810		250
South West 7/8	"	160.10		Robert Lanford, Asse	18 Sep 1809		133
				*Patent #1128733, Certificate #250 issued Robert Lanford Same-spelled Lankford. *New & perfect patent Robert Lankford Assignee of Robert Beaty April 19, 1950. Patent #1128733 Cert. No. 250 (prior)			
				*Also by US Gov't to Robert Lanford, assignee of James R. Rodgers, on 2 Oct 1957, Patent #1175477.			
Page 38	4	640.00					
North East 7/8	"	160.00		Leroy Pope, Asse	26 Aug 1809		661
North West 7/8	"	160.00		Leroy Pope, Asse	26 Aug 1809		660
South East 7/8	"	160.00		Hugh Rogers	12 Jan 1811		232
South West 7/8	"	160.00		Mary McCain, Asse	8 Jan 1811		442
	5	642.80					
North East 7/8	"	160.70		Vincent Glass, Asse	28 Oct 1811		651
North West 7/8	"	160.70		John Craig, Jr.	12 Jul 1813		712
South East 7/8	"	160.70		Samuel Ward, Asse	13 Feb 1813		1503
				Same-also Samuel Ward assn of John Ward (assn of C. Denale?) Apr 19, 1963 1231644			
South West 7/8	"	160.70		John Silvers & Benjamin Fox, Asse	18 Mar 1811		562
	6	642.72					
North East 7/8	"	160.68		David Spigle	12 Dec 1814		459
				Same-also David Spigle 13 Oct 1961 1223364			
North West 7/8	"	160.68		Egbert Harris, Asse	18 Sep 1809		423
South East 7/8	"	160.68		Henry W. Rhodes, Asse	3 Jul 1811		1161
				Same-also Henry W. Rhodes assignee of David Maxwell 13 Oct 1961 1223365			
South West 7/8	"	160.68		Egbert Harris, Asse	18 Sep 1809		422
Page 39	7	639.60		East of Indian Boundary Line			
		.32		West of Indian Boundary Line			
North East 7/8	"	159.90		David Maxwell	19 Sep 1809		94
North West 7/8	"	159.90		William Thompson, Asse	18 Sep 1809		810
South East 7/8	"	159.90		William Gray, Asse	26 Aug 1809		80
South West 7/8	"	159.90		William Thompson, Asse	18 Sep 1809		809
Entire frc W. of Bdy.		.32		James Manning, Asse	2 Feb 1818		857
	8	645.60					
North East 7/8	"	161.40		James Crip (Criss?), Asse	6 Feb 1811		465
North West 7/8	"	161.40		William Gray, Asse	18 Mar 1810		177
South East 7/8	"	161.40		James Dunsmore	15 Oct 1810		19
South West 7/8	"	161.40		Wiatt & Bolling Collier, Asse	11 Mar 1811		540

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	

The following insert shows the land deed transactions that subsequently track the changes of ownership for this location through 1879:

INDEX TO LANDS											
Section 8		Township 4		South of Range 1 West		Madison County, Alabama.					
G. W. JONES & SONS											
TRACT	ACRES	Kind of Land	SEC No	GRANTOR	GRANTEE	DATE OF INSTRUMENT	1811	1812	1813	1814	1815
1	1	D		Grice, Jas & Jane	Jordan, Seth	1816					
2	90	D		United States of America	Dunmore, James	1811					
1A7	149	D		Collier, Wyatt	Collier, Bolling	1822					
3	451	D		Dunmore, Jas & Jane	Jordan, Seth	1815					
4	618	D		Collier, Bolling	Tillinghast, Daniel B	1822					
1A7	501	D		Tillinghast, Daniel B & S	Phillips, William B	1824					
5	771	D		Gray, William Sr	Gray, William Jr	1824					
1A7	598	D of Trust		Phillips, William B	Tillinghast, Daniel B	1824					
6	46	D of Trust		Woods, Richard B	Woods, Henry Jr et al	1815					
7	125	D		Phillips, Wm B & Miss	Woods, Richard B	1810					
8	127	D		Woods, Richard & Frances	Manning, James	1810					
9	599	D		Gray, Thomas & Mary A	Gray, William	1823					
10	655	D		Gray, Wm B & Miss by Adm	Gray, William Jr	1820					
11	121	D		Waring, Jas Sr & Daphie	Low, Bartley W	1826					
12	144	D		Jordan, Bartholomew	Jordan, Henry	1820					
13	543	D		Jordan, Bartholomew	Jordan, James D	1827					
14	66	D		Gray, Wm B & Jane	Low, Bartley W	1828					
15	66	D		Gray, Catherine	Gray, William	1820					
16	397	D		Horton, George & Mary	Jordan, James D	1847					
17	490	D of Trust		Jordan, James D & Margaret	Moore, Benjamin T Jr	1847					
18	178	D of Tr & Ad		Jordan, James D & Mary M	Holding, Richard	1846					
19	303	D		Seed, John	Seed, John T	1841					
20	501	D		Woods, Wm by Adm	Seed, John D	1841					
21	425	D		Jordan, James D	Jordan, Samuel B	1847					
22	443	Wtg		Cummings, Chas B & Miss	Fordyce, Samuel B	1870					
23	374	D		Fordyce, Samuel B & Susan	Synn, Alexander B	1871					
24	376	D		Jordan, Margaret - by Adm	Fordyce, Samuel B	1872					
25	328	D		Fordyce, Samuel B & Susan	Bradley, William J	1873					
26	481	Wtg		Bradley, Margaret B & Wm	Fordyce, Samuel B	1873					
27	312	Wtg		Bradley, W J & S	Bradley, Thomas	1877					
28	180	Wtg		Woods, David	Bradley, William J	1879					

These land records show that the NW/4 of S8-T4-R1W was first purchased from the government in 1810 by William Gray. The SW/4 was first purchased from the government by Wyatt (Wyatt) & Bolling Collier. William Gray is not buried here, as his grave is known to be in the Gray Cemetery in Madison, on the east side of Balch Road and south of Gillespie Road. He was a Revolutionary War soldier who married Lady Eleanor Wardrobe of Scottish nobility before coming to America.

It is believed that the two Collier men who purchased the SW/4 of Section 8 were sons of the James Collier who founded Myrtle Grove Plantation along the river west of Triana in 1818. According to the book “**THE LURE AND LORE OF LIMESTONE COUNTY (Alabama)**”, by Chris Edwards and Faye Axford (1978), James and his wife Elizabeth **Bouldin** had sons named Wyatt and Bouldin, which could have been mistaken as “Bolling” Collier. The firstborn of James and Elizabeth was Bouldin Collier, born in 1789 in Virginia. Their second child was Wyatt, born in 1791 and married Janet Walker, a daughter of James Walker. In fact, her father James Walker is thought to have been the father of the William Walker who served as President of Nicaragua in 1856.

The third child of James and Elizabeth Collier was Martha, who married **William Alexander Slaughter**, from whose descendants we have today Slaughter Road and the Lanford – Slaughter House on Old Madison Pike. James Collier himself was also a Revolutionary War soldier, having received a sabre wound at the Battle of Eutaw Springs. The name Wyatt was given to his firstborn son in honor of his ancestor Sir Thomas Wyatt, an Elizabethan poet. Other children of James and Elizabeth Collier included **Henry Watkins Collier**, a Chief Justice of the Alabama Supreme Court and Governor of the State, plus Thomas Bouldin Collier, who married **Mary Harrison Dent**. Mary Dent Collier was **a close relative of Julia Dent Grant, wife of General Ulysses S. Grant, who became 18th President of the United States (1869 – 1877)**. One of the grandchildren of James and Elizabeth Collier married **Dr. Samuel Jordan Withers**, who was of the family of John Withers (nearby prominent landowner to the west, in Section 12 of T4-R2W, who had a daughter that married Clement Comer Clay, 8th Governor of Alabama) and of the prominent pioneer family of Bartholomew Jordan (another Revolutionary War patriot), for whom Jordan’s Chapel and its cemetery were named.

Bolling / Bouldin Collier acquired Wyatt / Wiatt Collier’s share of the land of the SW/4 in 1813. However, he did not keep it long, as it passed through several intermediate owners until it became the property of James Manning in 1828. James Manning and his sons Peyton and George held the land of the SW/4 of Section 8 until 1835, when it passed into the hands of Bartley M. Lowe. Bartley Lowe was the owner of Lowe’s Mill (a cotton textile firm), and he was a General of the Militia, as well as being owner of extensive lands. He is buried in Maple Hill Cemetery, along with his wife, who was a daughter of James Manning.

Other owners of record for the land around the cemetery to the time of the Civil War included William Weeden (of Huntsville's Weeden House fame), John and William Read (partners in business with James Clemens, the Founder of the nearby town of Madison, plus father of U. S. Senator Jeremiah Clemens), and the relatively unknown Phillips, Meade, and Tillinghast families.

If the little cemetery is a slave cemetery, then slaves owned by any or all of these men could have been buried there through time. Another theory is that the larger cemetery to the northeast (on the grounds of the U. S. Space & Rocket Center) could be the slave cemetery, and this smaller one could well have been used by some of the pre-Civil War property owners. If they were abusive slave holders, then after emancipation and subsequent black ownership of the land, the former slaves could have destroyed all reminders of their owners by removing or shattering any tombstones for them.

Of course, it is not at all known that such an event ever occurred, but it is theoretically plausible. For example, it is known that according to wording in Madison County Deed Book R, page 12, John Withers had a family cemetery in Section 12 of T4-R2W, just about a mile and a half west of this cemetery. Today no signs of such a cemetery have been found on old maps or by observation when touring the land. All indications of the family cemetery for this very prominent pre-Civil War landowner of the area and father-in-law of the 8th Governor of Alabama are gone. It would not be at all reasonable that the wealthy and influential Withers family never erected any monuments to John Withers. However, it would make sense if such monuments were deliberately removed or destroyed well after the Civil War, when former slaves acquired control of the property.

That is the way the story of the Ward Mountain Cemetery ends today – with only conjecture. Nothing definitive is found in the old deed records to prove the origins of the cemetery or its subsequent usage. However, it is definitely known that the land was owned at various times by many who were historically quite prominent in the area and even in national politics.