

Today we can be fairly sure that the unknown deceased who are buried in the McDonnell Cemetery were participants either directly or indirectly with the white pioneers who are recorded as having made the early history of north Alabama. It was their labor that allowed the prominence and affluence of the plantation owners, and it took both parts of the social spectrum to realize the achievements of the old days. Without some degree of management by educated persons, the slaves could do little except manual labor. The real failing of the old plantation society was that it did not educate the slaves or treat them as indentured servants with rights. That could have led to earlier freedom and economic prosperity for all.

Prepared by John P. Rankin, August 31, 2005