

McDONNELL CEMETERY, 37 – 6

Summary Report



McDonnell Cemetery, Redstone Arsenal, Madison Co., AL, June, 2002.

This quiet cemetery is set back in the woods on the northeastern portion of the arsenal, at the end of a dirt and gravel road off HiPar Road.



McDonnell Cemetery, Redstone Arsenal, Madison Co., AL, June, 2002.

To the right is the access road, lightly gravelled, from Hipar Road. The access road goes about 175 yards from Hipar Road to the cemetery. Gate is at left of this view from within the cemetery. The cemetery is noted in Dorothy Scott Johnson's book CEMETERIES OF MADISON COUNTY, ALABAMA, VOL. I (1971) as a colored (former slave?) cemetery. She did not inventory it. It's location is NE/4, S22-T4S-R1W. It may hold around 500 graves.

Dorothy Scott Johnson would have had no way to inventory this cemetery, since it has no tombstones at all. It appears to be a very old cemetery, considering all of the deeply sunken grave depressions. There is no evidence of any recent burials. Therefore, it could well be an old slave cemetery. The Army has erected and maintained a good chain link fence around the cemetery and affixed a sign with the name, probably based upon old records from when the Army got the land to create the arsenal.



McDonnell Cemetery, Redstone Arsenal, Madison Co., AL, June, 2002.

The depth of the grave depressions is illustrated in the view along the northern edge of the fence, as shown below:



McDonnell Cemetery, Redstone Arsenal, Madison Co., AL, June, 2002.

The view below is along the eastern edge of the cemetery, which is very near the southern end of Triana Boulevard in Huntsville. There are numerous grave depressions beneath the trees and leaves.



McDonnell Cemetery, Redstone Arsenal, Madison Co., AL, June, 2002.

More deep grave depressions are seen in the foreground of the photo below:



McDonnell Cemetery, Redstone Arsenal, Madison Co., AL, June, 2002.

Some of the grave depressions are so deep that they have become filled with leaves, as seen below:



McDonnell Cemetery, Redstone Arsenal, Madison Co., AL, June, 2002.
There are many sunken graves evident within this cemetery. It lies on a small knoll in the woods, and hundreds of rectangular sinks are apparent. A few are child-sized, but most are adult-sized.

With no tombstones, old land records can lead to support for the namesake of the cemetery:

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 42 continued					4 Oct 1834		
NE $\frac{1}{4}$ of SE $\frac{1}{4}$	16	39.92 $\frac{1}{2}$		James Clemens	" " "		
NW $\frac{1}{4}$ of SE $\frac{1}{4}$	"	39.92 $\frac{1}{2}$		" "	" " "		
SE $\frac{1}{4}$ of SE $\frac{1}{4}$	"	39.92 $\frac{1}{2}$		" "	" " "		
SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of SE $\frac{1}{4}$	"	39.92 $\frac{1}{2}$		" "	" " "		
NE $\frac{1}{4}$ of SW $\frac{1}{4}$	"	39.92 $\frac{1}{2}$		" "	" " "		
NW $\frac{1}{4}$ of SW $\frac{1}{4}$	"	39.92 $\frac{1}{2}$		" "	" " "		
SE $\frac{1}{4}$ of SW $\frac{1}{4}$	"	39.92 $\frac{1}{2}$		" "	" " "		
SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of SW $\frac{1}{4}$	"	39.92 $\frac{1}{2}$		" "	" " "		
*Last 8 entries in Vol. C, pp 318-320							
	17	644.00					
North East $\frac{1}{4}$	"	161.00		Thomas Caines/Carnes, Asse	3 Nov 1815		1171
North West $\frac{1}{4}$	"	161.00		Spencer Ball & Isaac Wallingsford	21 Nov 1814		1013
South East $\frac{1}{4}$	"	161.00		William Weedon	15 Sep 1830		2863
South West $\frac{1}{4}$	"	161.00		James Manning, Asse	25 Jun 1831		865
	18	386.16		East of Boundary Line			
		284.14		West of Boundary Line			
Frac E of Bdy Line		386.16		James Manning, Asse	18 Sep 1809		381
Frac W of Bdy Line		284.14		James Manning, Asse	2 Feb 1818		857
Page 43	19	27.24		East of Indian Boundary Line			
		611.61		West of Indian Boundary Line			
Frac E of B Line	"	27.24		James Manning, Asse	13 Jan 1818		856
Frac W of B Line	"	611.61		Heirs of Frederick W. James & James Manning, Asse	2 Feb 1818		44
	20	544.44		East of Indian Boundary Line			
		99.45		West of Indian Boundary Line			
NE $\frac{1}{4}$ of NE $\frac{1}{4}$	"	40.00		blank	blank		blank
				David Dickey	4 Jul 1813		107
SE $\frac{1}{4}$ of NE $\frac{1}{4}$	"	40.00		Hugh Graham	22 May 1833		6219
W $\frac{1}{2}$ of NE $\frac{1}{4}$	"	80.00		John G. Jordan	27 Jun 1835		8325
NW frac	"	80.00		William Allison	2 Apr 1832		4833
NE $\frac{1}{4}$ of SE $\frac{1}{4}$	"	40.00		Thomas Allen Scott	5 Oct 1832		5478
NW $\frac{1}{4}$ of SE $\frac{1}{4}$	"	40.00		James J. Donegan	18 Apr 1855		24160
				John Cunningham	4 Jul 1814		107
				overwritten with: assigned to John Humphries 6 Aug 1811			569
SE $\frac{1}{4}$ of SE $\frac{1}{4}$	"	40.00		Hugh Graham	25 May 1878		blank
SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of SE $\frac{1}{4}$	"	40.00		George Mason	17 Feb 1834		7090
SW frac	"	144.44		John Rope Bolling; Eldridge	7 Apr 1832		4836
Frac W of Bdy	"	99.45		State	23 May 1828		
				*River Impts W.T. Bolling	23 Jul 1830		
	21	640.00					
North East $\frac{1}{4}$	"	160.00		Vincent Glass, Asse	17 Apr 1810		498
North West $\frac{1}{4}$	"	160.00		William Landmoird	10 Dec 1813		782
South East $\frac{1}{4}$	"	160.00		W. C. Dunn	29 Aug 1809	(no cert.)	
South West $\frac{1}{4}$	"	160.00		John McCutchen	24 Apr 1811		503
Page 44	22	642.80					
North East $\frac{1}{4}$	"	160.70		Archibald McDonnell, Asse	29 Aug 1809		86
North West $\frac{1}{4}$	"	160.70		Richard Elliott, Asse	29 Aug 1809		635
South East $\frac{1}{4}$	"	160.70		John Couch	29 Aug 1809		173
South West $\frac{1}{4}$	"	160.70		John Baker, Asse	19 May 1810		958
	23	642.80					
North East $\frac{1}{4}$	"	160.70		Joseph Acklin	29 Aug 1809		696
North West $\frac{1}{4}$	"	160.70		W. Pope, Jr., Asse	29 Aug 1809		686

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

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

The **OLD LAND RECORDS OF MADISON COUNTY, ALABAMA** book by Margaret Matthews Cowart shows that the NE/4 of Section 22, Township 4, Range 1 West, was purchased from the government in 1809 by Archibald McDonnell. In fact, this pioneer was the namesake for a creek that runs in the area, but as with so many other things, the spelling of the name varied from time to time, probably based upon phonetics and literacy levels of the clerks and map makers. The creek is now labeled as McDonald Creek, but Archibald McDonnell owned most of the land that the creek runs through. His descendants included several generations of Archibald McDonnells, as can be seen in the descendency list below that was found in Ancestry.com's Ancestry World Tree files:

Updated: 2004-10-22 18:47:45 UTC (Fri) Contact: larry brule

gr44@cableone.net

-
-
- 1 [ARCHIBALD MCDONNELL UNKNOWN](#) b: 1768 d: 15 Dec 1829
 - + [ELIZABETH DINSMORE](#) b: 1769 d: 1832
 - 2 [MARTHA MCDONNELL](#) b: 1798
 - 2 [MARGARET MCDONNELL](#) b: 20 Feb 1800 d: 1849
 - + [WILLIAM MATKIN](#) b: 1811 d: 14 Sep 1872
 - 3 [MARTHA J MATKIN](#) b: 1835
 - 3 [MARY PATTON MATKIN](#) b: 7 Aug 1836 d: 9 Oct 1840
 - 3 [CORNELIA MATKIN](#) b: 1838
 - 3 [ANN E MATKIN](#) b: 1840
 - 3 [WILLIAM ARCHIBALD MATKIN](#) b: 1842 d: Jul 1867
 - 2 [JANE MCDONNELL](#) b: 12 Feb 1802
 - + [DAVID ELLIOT](#) b: 1794
 - 3 [JOHN ELLIOT](#) b: 1825
 - + [SARAH UNKNOWN](#) b: 1839
 - 4 [WILLIAM ELLIOT](#) b: Jan 1860
 - 3 [WILLIAM ELLIOT](#) b: 1839
 - + [ELIZABETH UNKNOWN](#) b: 1837
 - 4 [MARGARET ELLIOT](#) b: 1851
 - 2 [CATHERINE MCDONNELL](#) b: 9 Nov 1804
 - + [JAMES L SMITH](#) b: 1 Jan 1804
 - 2 [ELIZABETH JACKSON MCDONNELL](#) b: 29 Apr 1810 d: 20 Jan 1866
 - + [GEORGE W STOVALL](#) b: 1809
 - 3 [MARY O STOVALL](#) b: 20 Dec 1831 d: 11 Jan 1917

- + [JACKSON STEWART MCGAUHEY](#) b: 26 Apr 1827
- 3 [ARCHIBALD STOVALL](#) b: 1836
- + [ELIZABETH J REED](#)
- 3 [ANASTASIA L STOVALL](#) b: 1838
- 3 [JAMES N M STOVALL](#) b: 1840
- 3 [FANNY S STOVALL](#) b: 1842
- 3 [GEORGE M D STOVALL](#) b: 1844
- 3 [ELIZABETH M STOVALL](#) b: 1844
- 3 [HENRY B STOVALL](#) b: 1847
- 3 [EMILY J STOVALL](#) b: 1850
- 2 [ARCHIBALD MCDONNELL](#) b: 24 Feb 1815 d: 1 Oct 1892
- + [MARY SOPHIA JONES](#) b: 26 Jul 1825
- 3 [INFANT MCDONNELL](#)
- 3 [SIDNEY MCDONNELL](#) b: 15 Feb 1847
- 3 [HENRY MCDONNELL](#) b: 18 May 1848
- 3 [ARCHIBALD MCDONNELL](#) b: 22 Feb 1850
- 3 [FREDERICK JONES MCDONNELL](#) b: 4 Mar 1852
- 3 [MARY ELIZABETH MCDONNELL](#) b: 25 Apr 1854
- 3 [LOUISA AUGUSTA MCDONNELL](#) b: 6 Aug 1855
- 3 [CATHERINE MCDONNELL](#) b: 10 Feb 1857
- 3 [JAMES SMITH MCDONNELL](#) b: 20 May 1859
- 3 [THOMAS MCDONNELL](#) b: 21 May 1862
- 3 [INFANT MCDONNELL](#) b: 18 Jun 1864
- 3 [EMMA PHILLIPS MCDONNELL](#) b: 4 Jan 1866

The descendency list also shows that Mary Patton Matkin (7th line from the top) was a grandchild of the first Archibald McDonnell in Madison County. Mary Patton Matkin's story and tombstone photos can be found in the Summary Report for the Matkin Cemetery (37-3).

The known family history of the McDonnells is shown in the Ahnentafel below, which was also downloaded from Ancestry.com's files:

Updated: 2005-03-29 01:46:13 UTC (Tue) Contact: larry brule

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Ahnentafel, Generation No. 1

1. [ARCHIBALD MCDONNELL](#) was born 22 FEB 1850 in MADISON CO,AL. He was the son of 2. [ARCHIBALD MCDONNELL](#) and 3. [MARY SOPHIA JONES](#).

Ahnentafel, Generation No. 2

2. [ARCHIBALD MCDONNELL](#) was born 24 FEB 1815 in HUNTSVILLE,AL, and died 1 OCT 1892 in MADISON CO,AL. He was the son of 4. [ARCHIBALD MCDONNELL](#) and 5. [ELIZABETH DINSMORE](#).
3. [MARY SOPHIA JONES](#) was born 26 JUL 1825.

Children of MARY SOPHIA JONES and ARCHIBALD MCDONNELL are:

- i. [INFANT MCDONNELL](#).
- ii. [SIDNEY MCDONNELL](#) was born 15 FEB 1847 in MADISON CO,AL.
- iii. [HENRY MCDONNELL](#) was born 18 MAY 1848 in MADISON CO,AL.
1. iv. [ARCHIBALD MCDONNELL](#) was born 22 FEB 1850 in MADISON CO,AL.
- v. [FREDERICK JONES MCDONNELL](#) was born 4 MAR 1852 in MADISON CO,AL.
- vi. [MARY ELIZABETH MCDONNELL](#) was born 25 APR 1854 in MADISON CO,AL.
- vii. [LOUISA AUGUSTA MCDONNELL](#) was born 6 AUG 1855 in MADISON CO,AL.
- viii. [CATHERINE MCDONNELL](#) was born 10 FEB 1857 in MADISON CO,AL.
- ix. [JAMES SMITH MCDONNELL](#) was born 20 MAY 1859 in MADISON CO,AL.
- x. [THOMAS MCDONNELL](#) was born 21 MAY 1862 in MADISON CO,AL.
- xi. [INFANT MCDONNELL](#) was born 18 JUN 1864 in MADISON CO,AL.
- xii. [EMMA PHILLIPS MCDONNELL](#) was born 4 JAN 1866 in MADISON CO,AL.

Ahnentafel, Generation No. 3

4. [ARCHIBALD McDONNELL](#) was born 1768 in ENNISKILLEN,IRELAND, and died 15 DEC 1829 in HUNTSVILLE,AL.
5. [ELIZABETH DINSMORE](#) was born 1769 in IRELAND, and died 1832 in HUNTSVILLE,AL. She was the daughter of 10. [ADAM DINSMORE](#) and 11. [ELIZABETH JACKSON](#).

Children of ELIZABETH DINSMORE and ARCHIBALD McDONNELL are:

- i. [MARTHA MCDONNELL](#) was born 1798 in TN.
- ii. [MARGARET MCDONNELL](#) was born 20 FEB 1800 in TN, and died 1849 in MADISON CO,AL. She married [WILLIAM MATKIN](#) 8 MAR 1834 in MADISON CO,AL. He was born 1811 in SC, and died 14 SEP 1872 in MADISON CO,AL.
- iii. [JANE MCDONNELL](#) was born 12 FEB 1802 in GA. She married [DAVID ELLIOT](#) in AL. He was born 1794 in SC.
- iv. [CATHERINE MCDONNELL](#) was born 9 NOV 1804 in NC. She married [JAMES L SMITH](#) 13 FEB 1823 in MADISON CO,AL. He was born 1 JAN 1804 in MORGAN CO,AL.
- v. [ELIZABETH JACKSON MCDONNELL](#) was born 29 APR 1810 in MADISON CO,AL, and died 20 JAN 1866 in ITAWANBA CO,MS. She married [GEORGE W STOVALL](#) 25 NOV 1830 in MADISON CO,AL. He was born 1809 in GA.
2. vi. [ARCHIBALD MCDONNELL](#) was born 24 FEB 1815 in HUNTSVILLE,AL, and died 1 OCT 1892 in MADISON CO,AL. He married [MARY SOPHIA JONES](#) 25 MAR 1846 in MADISON CO,AL. She was born 26 JUL 1825.

Ahnentafel, Generation No. 4

10. [ADAM DINSMORE](#) was born 1730 in TEMPLEMORE PARRISH,IRELAND, and died 1815 in MADISON,MS TERRITORY. He was the son of 20. [ADAM DINSMORE](#).
11. [ELIZABETH JACKSON](#) was born 1730 in TEMPLEMORE PARISH,IRELAND.

Children of ELIZABETH JACKSON and ADAM DINSMORE are:

5.
 - i. [ELIZABETH DINSMORE](#) was born 1769 in IRELAND, and died 1832 in HUNTSVILLE,AL. She married [ARCHIBALD McDONNELL](#) 1797 in SULLIVAN CO,TN. He was born 1768 in ENNISKILLEN,IRELAND, and died 15 DEC 1829 in HUNTSVILLE,AL.
 - ii. [JAMES DINSMORE](#) was born 15 AUG 1760 in BALLEYMONEY,DONEGAL,IRELAND, and died 23 SEP 1837 in MORGAN CO,AL. He married [JANE McDONALD](#) 24 JAN 1794 in NC/TN. She was born 1 JAN 1770 in LOCK ERNE,IRELAND, and died 23 AUG 1857 in MORGAN CO,AL.
 - iii. [MARTHA DINSMORE](#) was born 1765 in BALLEYMONEY,DONEGAL,IRELAND, and died 1844. She married [THOMAS HUGHES](#) 1 FEB 1780 in SULLIVAN CO,TN, son of SAMUEL HUGHES. He was born 1755 in IRELAND.
 - iv. [SAMUEL DINSMORE](#) was born 1765 in IRELAND, and died MAR 1818 in GREENE CO,TN. He married [ELIZABETH NICHOLS KING](#) 1788 in GREENE CO,TN. She was born 1764 in PA, and died AFT 1850 in GREENE CO,TN.
 - v. [DAVID DINSMORE](#) was born 18 JAN 1775 in BURKE CO,NC. He married [UNKNOWN](#) 1802 in BUNCOMBE CO,NC. He married [SARAH HAYES](#) 1802 in BUNCOMBE CO,NC. She was born 27 FEB 1779 in BUNCOMBE CO,NC, and died APR 1809 in BUNCOMBE CO,NC.

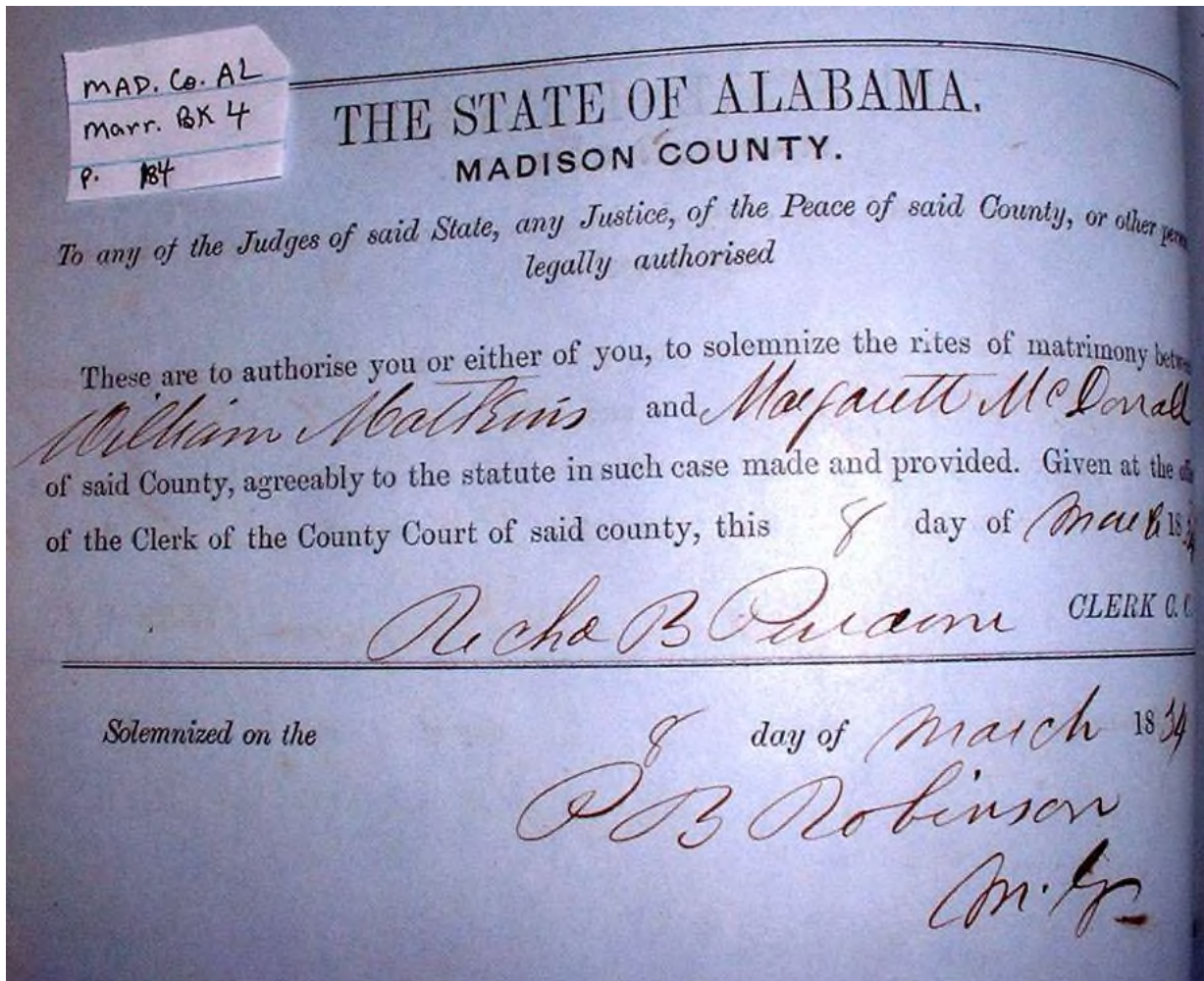
Ahnentafel, Generation No. 5

20. [ADAM DINSMORE](#) was born 1675 in COUNTY AMTRIM,IRELAND.

Child of ADAM DINSMORE is:

10.
 - i. [ADAM DINSMORE](#) was born 1730 in TEMPLEMORE PARRISH,IRELAND, and died 1815 in MADISON,MS TERRITORY. He married [ELIZABETH JACKSON](#) 1758 in BALLEYMONEY,DONEGAL,IRELAND. She was born 1730 in TEMPLEMORE PARISH,IRELAND.

The 1821 deed by Robert and Ann C. Lanford to the Methodist Episcopal Church was for the initial location of what became known a few years later as Jordan's Chapel. The name was given when the church abandoned the site in the NW/4 of this land section to move to a site donated by church trustee Bartholomew Jordan, near the current Botanical Gardens on Bob Wallace Avenue in Huntsville. However, for the few years that the church met on the Lanford lands, it was very near the McDonnell Cemetery (as well as the Matkin and the Madkin Cemeteries), so if the church had black members, it is possible that the cemetery was also used as a church cemetery for the time. One of the connections of the McDonnell family to the nearby Matkin family is shown in the marriage license below:



While the names of the people buried in the McDonnell Cemetery are unknown, it is known that some of the burials of the McDonnell family were in Maple Hill Cemetery in Huntsville. Indexes to Maple Hill burials include Archibald McDonnell, who died at age 77 on 1 October 1892, and Archie McDonnell, who died at age 75 on 13 June 1925. Some of the other family members are commemorated by the Fennell Monument in the Fennell family plot of Maple Hill, as shown below:



Maple Hill Cemetery (Huntsville, AL), September 7, 2004



Maple Hill Cemetery (Huntsville, AL), September 7, 2004



Maple Hill Cemetery (Huntsville, AL), September 7, 2004



Maple Hill Cemetery (Huntsville, AL), September 7, 2004

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