

Written In Stone

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Pyburn Cemetery

Old home-place cemeteries abound in the woods, fields, creek banks all throughout Conecuh and Alabama. Many of these lands, once owned by families, now are leased to timber companies, hunting organizations and/or private individuals. Remnants of ancient crepe myrtles, daffodils, old-fashioned roses, crumbly brick or limestone are all that remain of the forgotten home sites and/or final resting places of those who once tended the garden and home.

The Pyburn Family Cemetery is located in T7, R11, and S23 of Conecuh County in the Fork of the Sepulga River. A Pyburn family appears on the earliest Tensasaw Settlement Census, in the area of the infamous Ft. Mims Massacre area—many of those slaughtered in this massacre were part Creek or Native American ancestry, some mixed, and many families will never know the exact kinships of their ancestors. There was a Benjamin Jacob Pyburn in the Conecuh Census and he married Mary Jane Chitty, daughter of James Chitty and Mary Brown Chitty. Benjamin and Mary Jane lived in the vicinity of the old Pyburn Cemetery; however, according to family records, they are not buried there. If interested in the Pyburn families of Santa Rosa, FL and Conecuh County, AL, go to this site at <http://jenniferhsrn2.homestead.com/pyburn.html> and see the kinship of this family to others in Conecuh, AL.

Hurricane Ivan left its' mark on this ancient burial ground with uprooted trees nearly destroying the only marker left; that of Confederate soldier, William Stephens, CSA, Co. "G", 23rd AL Inf. Others known to be buried here include two infant children of George and Henrietti Hawsey Stephens. Their parents married on Christmas Day, 1904 and lost two infants, a daughter in 1911 and a son in 1913. The parents are buried in the Mt. Zion Methodist Church Cemetery on AL83N. John Henry Stephens married first, Margaret Ward in 1880; had a son in 1883 and both the son, Henry and his mother, are buried in the Pyburn Cemetery. John H. remarried in 1888 to Emeline Joyner. In 1900, Henry W. Stephens is 19 years old, living at Gravella (Owassa) with his father and step-mother, along with his grandmother, Melvina (Vina/Viny) Chitty Stephens. In the 1900 Census, she is 60 years old, and in the same household is younger son, and brother to John Henry is William M., age 28. Richard T. Hammonds, (1824-1885) and his wife, Elizabeth Chitty Hammonds (1834-1881) are also buried here. Elizabeth was the daughter of James Chitty and Mary Jane Brown. In the 1870 Census, they're listed in Beat #1, Sepulga with six children—3 boys and 3 girls. Right next door to them is Vina Stephens, and 2 children, John H. & William. Three others known to be buried here; yet little is known about them would be a Mrs., Johnson, who died in the Old Folks Home; Mrs. Elsie Hopkins; and Mrs. Martha Brown. There are no known death dates for any of these folks. If you have information to share about the Pyburn or any other family cemetery, please contact me at canebrakesociety@yahoo.com

