

# Written In Stone

*By Sherry Johnston*

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## **Brown-Beasley Family Cemetery**

The Brown-Beasley Family Cemetery is located in the Brownville Community. The unpaved road directly across from the Brownville Volunteer Fire Department will lead you straight by this old family burial ground of some of the First Families of Conecuh: Beasley, Brown, Griffin, Minshew, Northcutt and other allied families. The families interred in this cemetery all lived in the Brownville-Owassa areas; leading Sunday Schools; serving as Justices of the Peace; Town Clerks; and serving in the military for their country. There are mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters, and the like memorialized here in this old family cemetery—mounds of stone or brick in an island of green, surrounded by a perimeter of tall pines, stately oaks, and scrubby shrubbery. As you drive down the road toward homes, one might not actually notice it until you've gone past, as it lies just on a little knoll, that one would think was an old home place that someone keeps mowed.

In the Alabama Atlas of Cemeteries, it is Number 61-NE, Section 20 of Township 6 North, Range 12 East. There are approximately 30 graves with the earliest to be known as Frances Roberta Beasley, born 1875 and died 1883. She was the daughter of Stephen Madison Beasley and Mary Eliza Huggins Beasley. According to the Atlas, the last known interment was that of N.J. Griffin in 1926; however, I have a record to state that it would be Sarah P. Brown, wife of W.E. Brown, who died last in 1943. There are several unmarked graves, and possibly many of those would pre-date some of those we know more about.

Brown Family researchers have contacted me regarding earlier burials from 1857 & 1866; and some of those unknown ones possibly buried between 1866 and 1887. The Brown-Beasley Cemetery is on property once owned by Joel Brown.

Many of the descendants of these same families still call Brownville and Owassa home, and oversee the maintenance of this family plot today, coming to mow, weed-eat, clean the headstones, and make sure that everything is okay. One of the most remarkable headstones out in this cemetery is actually a Sample Headstone—no engraving at all. The story goes that a Headstone Marker Salesman died while showing off his wares, and he was buried in the Brown-Beasley Cemetery with one of his own samples.