

Written In Stone

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Pleasant Grove Primitive Baptist Cemetery – Part II

Paul, AL is a small agricultural community situated near the Sepulga River in South Conecuh County. Settlers from the nearby community of Brooklyn began to branch out and settle farms in the outlying woods surrounding the creeks and along the banks of the Sepulga River in the mid to late 1800's. It was about the early 1900's that enough families requested a post office to be established in their community, and their request was granted. The community was given the honor of naming their post office, and they requested that it be given a Biblical name. 'Paul' was chosen, and if you read about the Apostle Paul, you see that he traveled a great deal, delivering his messages to the peoples.

Just as in Paul traveling to new places, the majority of those who settled in Paul had traveled great distances to settle and raise their families in a strange land.

Between 1875 & 1877, the family of John Jordan Pate and Rebecca Lee Pate moved from Pike County, AL with their 7 children to the Brooklyn/Paul Community. They bought land after the war, farming in the Paul community, and 2 more children were born in Conecuh. According to family history, this family became the forebears of the known Pate families of Conecuh County. This family first came from Muscogee County, GA to Barbour County, then to Pike and on to Conecuh where they obviously fell in love with the surroundings, settling here for the remainder of their lives, raising their children as well as their crops. The land for Pleasant Grove Primitive Baptist Church and the adjoining cemetery was given by this Pate family, and John, Rebecca and all 9 children who survived to adulthood and their spouses are all interred here in this cemetery. Each Sunday before the Labor Day Weekend, descendants of this family meet for a family reunion at Pleasant Grove Primitive Baptist Church.

Walking through this cemetery on a lazy, rainy Sunday afternoon, I was struck by the many military markers and insignias—one can see the dedication of the local boys to the defense of our country. From the WBTS to Korea, to Viet Nam, I identified markers attesting to their service to their country. Browsing through the marriage records of these same names, I saw where many got married during war-time, and wondered about the struggle of such a small farm community getting along without their fathers and sons. Gladly, I saw where many returned home to raise their families and upon death, they rest now in a 'pleasant grove of memories'.