

# Written In Stone

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## **Melrose Cemetery – Part I**

Melrose is a small community on County Road # 43 in Southeast Conecuh County where old-time hospitality still abounds. Many of the present day residents are descendants of older generations of pioneer homesteaders. These settlers possibly came primarily because of access to the rich soils surrounding the Sepulga River with farming and timber as the means of their earlier occupations. Cattle farming, cotton and peanuts became popular in the mid to late 1900's, and still today, many small farms are located in and around the Melrose, Paul, and Brooklyn communities.

Melrose Plantation was started in the early 1800's by Abram Jones, of SC. He appears in the 1820 Conecuh Census, and also in the Land Records for Conecuh; his first land purchase was in 1823. He also had a deed recorded in 1826 where he sold land to a son, James; and again in 1828, he's a witness to a land transaction between another son and a Mr. Amos, an African American man in the community.

According to the family history of the Abram Jones Family, their old place had a family cemetery that was on land located along the old road that led from Sparta, in Conecuh County, to Montezuma in Covington County. Along the same area is another cemetery called Melrose Cemetery, an African American cemetery where many of those who once were residents on the Melrose Plantation, are buried.

Transcribing the Melrose Cemetery a few weeks ago, we found about 30 to 40 graves, but only about 17 marked graves. There were pine trees towering overhead, with some hardwoods like pecan, hickory, and the scent of sweet-gum with oak and dogwoods. Old rose bushes marked many of the graves of those who passed away so many years before us. There are family names like Amos, Bryer, Holmes, Jones, Parker, Samuel and Thomas interred here; many are young children who lived just a short time, and others who lived thru an entire lifetime. Next week, we'll explore some of the families who have loved ones buried here in this old cemetery tucked into a grove not far from the Sepulga River in SE Conecuh County.