

Written In Stone

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Bowman Cemetery – Part I

Through time, the pioneers of our country have been admired and respected for their spirit as they braved the unknown dangers in just getting to this place; the known dangers for staying; and the hopes they had for a better future. Conecuh County was one such beautiful place, and home to many of these pioneers; and those of us who have had a deep root in Conecuh soil for several generations can appreciate what these pioneers had to do in order to settle the territory and raise families, creating communities; establishing churches; schools; businesses; and cemeteries. Because of boundary changes and the WBTS, several had feet in two or more counties. Many of the families you find in Conecuh, you will also find in Escambia, Monroe, Butler, and Covington Counties AL as well as in Escambia and Santa Rosa, FL counties. I visited an old community this past weekend known once as “Miles’ Crossing” or “Evansville” in Escambia County, AL. Two cemeteries that clamored for my attention were the Bowman and Sardis Cemeteries; and in both, you would find the names of the same ancestors and their descendants.

Bowman Cemetery is located where the town of Evansville or Miles Crossing was in the mid to late 1800’s. The community was named for an early settler’s family: Miles. Several of these families have ties to the Bowman, Brooks, Bryars, Cooper, Creamer, Evans, Horn, Kendrick, Mathis, Moye, and Mullins family groups. In present day Escambia County, the community is located about 2 miles east of Wawbeek; and according to a local resident, many descendants of these families still call the community home.

The Alabama Historical Atlas of Cemeteries list the first burial as A.M. Lowery, Sr. (1833-1871). Andrew Madison Lowery was born of Scottish immigrant parents in GA 1833; married Kesiah Jane Mathis about 1851; served in Finnegan’s FL Regiment in the WBTS; lived in GA at the end of the war; and brought his family by oxcart to Evansville, AL. The census records show A.M. Lowery, wife Kesiah and 10 children. Most of the family is buried in the old Bowman Graveyard, as are others that lived and worked in the town which had about 200 residents, the first telegraph office for Escambia County, a sawmill, stores, post office, and a fine spring. Read next weeks’ column about the pioneer spirit of Kesiah Jane, her sons, the families that lie in the graveyard and more about Wawbeek, Escambia County, AL and the ties to Conecuh County.