

Written In Stone

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Crary Memorial Cemetery – Part II

Studying the migratory routes families followed has led me to the Florida panhandle. In doing so, I've traveled back to an earlier time when Bluff Springs, Whiting and other areas of the panhandle were teeming with families, flourishing settlements, and timber industries along with the ever abundant supply of hospitality.

Visiting the cemetery at Bluff Springs is like looking at a kaleidoscope of colors on a pieced quilt—the families represented by the various colors of the pieced quilt—which reminds me of a poem I've stitched: Families are like quilts, lives pieced together, stitched with memories and bound with love.

Mr. Crary's daughter suggests the earliest known settlement at Bluff Springs were Scotch Presbyterians from NC who camped on the Escambia River about 1820, trading with the Indians for a large body of farm lands east of the river. From some of the names found in the old cemetery, it would appear many were of Scotch and Native American descent. Walking among the stone museums one finds elaborate stones, simple markers, metal filigree, native stones and mortar, wooden markers, old brick perhaps of the Crary brick making firm; inscriptions long and flowing, or carved by hand; rough or smooth textured stone; all telling a story of who they were, where they came from, and what kind of life they might have led.

One of the first ones I noted was that of Miss Lizzie Joyner, born at Evergreen, Ala. Died 17 Jun 1906 aged 65 years. Beside her is that of Horace S. Joyner, born 19 Sep 1876 and died 31 Oct 1934, a Woodmen of the World marker. Trying to discover who 'Miss Lizzie' was is difficult, since the name can be a variant of several popular ones. Many of the descendants of the Elisha Joiner family ended up in Santa Rosa and Escambia Counties of Florida. I found Horace and wife, Mattie, along with a nephew in the 1930 census at Molino, Fla. and in the 1920 census, however, prior to that nothing for a Miss Lizzie or Horace Joyner.

Another connection I found was the Pritchett line to our Brown family of Brownville, Ala. In researching Pritchett because of my own research, living in the old Pritchett home in Evergreen, I found that Jesse Pritchett, co-developer of Bluff Springs was a brother-in-law to John W. Crary, Sr. His line is followed in Conecuh thru the ancestors of William H. Baker, of which our Braxtons, Browns, Gladwell, Knight, Peacock, Ward and Weaver lines all connect of Brownville, Flat Rock, Owassa and Evergreen.