

Written In Stone

By: Sherry Johnston

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Bull Hill Cemetery, Texas ~ Part I

Assisting folks in their genealogical research covers a lot of ground, both literally and figuratively, especially when these folks live long distances from Conecuh County. We discuss the migratory routes their ancestors traveled to get to and from here; the life they led; where they attended church or school and their professions; as well as where they might be buried. We talk about census records, birth, marriage and death records, looking at families that migrated with them as well as those who connect by marriage or in some cases: master-slave ownership.

Recently, a query came to me by way of California in regard to a plantation owner named Churchill Jones, from Conecuh County, and the slave families who migrated to Falls County, Texas with his family circa 1853 or so. A descendant is working with the Texas Historical Commission on restoring a slave cemetery on the property where Churchill Jones set up his plantation in Falls County, TX and contacted me to see if there are any remaining descendants here in Conecuh. We had recently obtained a manuscript on Churchill Jones, so using that manuscript as a guide, and working with census records, birth, marriage and death records, we are discovering some connecting lines from Conecuh to Texas.

Sharon Styles has been researching her ancestral line in Falls County, Texas who were brought from Conecuh County as part of the slave holdings of the Churchill Jones, Stallworth, Tomlinson and possibly Travis/Dean and Barnett families. In doing so, she has re-discovered her roots in a historical slave cemetery near Marlin in Falls County called "Bull Hill Cemetery". Saturday, July 10, 2010, along with the Texas Historical Commission, they will be re-dedicating this cemetery. The cemetery began as a cemetery for enslaved workers and their descendants used it up until about 1961. The original cemetery was allotted by Churchill Jones, a slave owner from Conecuh County, AL. A large number of families in the Marlin/Lott/Tomlinson Hill portion of Falls County Texas migrated from Conecuh County—these being both black and white families. If anyone is researching names of families migrating to Texas, they are encouraged to contact Sharon Styles at her email address which you can get by contacting me at 251.578.2670.

