

Denton Record 10-24-74

Gravestones Vandalized At Mount Ebal Church

Extensive vandalism to gravestones at historic Mount Ebal Church has been traced to three young Randolph County boys, according to Charles Wade Jr., Davison County sheriff's deputy.

Wade said the boys — age 11, 12, and 8 — have been turned over to the custody of their parents. He added that the parents have been extremely cooperative in the matter.

The deputy said Pete Sexton, who is in charge of looking after the grounds for the Mount Ebal Memorial Association, reported the damage which apparently happened either last Monday or Wednesday. Several other people also called to report the incident, he said.

Mount Ebal is located in Davidson County off Sexton Road east of Denton.

Wade said in questioning residents of the area, he determined that several people had seen boys riding minibikes and bicycles in the vicinity of the

church. He failed to locate anyone owning minibikes except in Randolph County, and he found minibike tracks on a woods road leading to the church.

Wade inspected the damage Friday morning, and received another call about 5:30 Friday evening, reporting that the boys were back in the area. He went to the church and while he was there, two boys came into the church yard on a small motorcycle.

Since juveniles may not be questioned without the presence of parents, Wade brought the two boys (age 11 and 12) to the County Building and contacted their parents. Although the eight-year-old was not with them at the time, he was implicated in the earlier incident.

The boys were turned over to the custody of their parents. No date has been set for the case in court.

Wade said 52 gravestones were overturned and 12 were

broken. Most of those broken (some in three pieces) were old marble stones which cannot be repaired. Bob Slack, a local monument dealer, told Wade that he estimated the damage at between \$1,500 and \$2,000 if it were possible to repair or replace the stones.

Mount Ebal is the mother church of all Methodist Churches in the Denton area, and once had five roads leading to it. Stones in the cemetery date back into the 1870's. The church no longer has an active congregation, but the building and grounds are maintained by the Mount Ebal Memorial Association.

Bombay Reunion Set for Sunday

Bombay School reunion will be held Sunday at the Farmer Grange Hall. A picnic lunch will be spread at noon.





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(Record photo)

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GEOGRAPHIC DATA