

"Alabama" Plantation Graveyard

On August 15th, on their wedding anniversary, I had the pleasure of meeting one of our new members, Travis Turner and his wife, Andrea. A logging company timbering a farm in Croaker had asked me to flag the site of an abandoned graveyard on the property. I had mentioned to Fred Boelt about marking off the site since I had previously provided him with a list of those that I knew were buried there. Fred recalled that Travis's great-mother was on that list. Her name was not on a list of headstones that were compiled as a part of a WPA project in the 1930's but her husband's was though not on the list that I had done. So Fred got us together. Travis and Andrea came to Croaker to assist me in flagging the cemetery site on the old "Alabama Plantation" and to make sure it was Travis's kin that were buried there.

The cemetery, formerly able to be seen from a field road, was completely overgrown and hidden from view along the road side. So the three of us decided to go into the overgrowth about 75 to 100 feet and parallel the field road to find the graveyard from the back side. My first step into the overgrowth immediately reminded me of why I do these projects in the winter. I could see about 3 feet of a 2½ inch diameter king snake directly in front of me. Neither the head or the tail were visible. My second step was instantly backwards. I entered at another spot. After ten minutes or so Travis spotted a headstone. Mr. Harrison's brushaxes that he donated to our Camp were immediately put to use.

Now in my mind I had planned on marking the perimeter, letting Travis see if he could find anything, then get out of the 95 degree heat in an hour or so. Travis and Andrea were brushaxeing 3 inch diameter trees; chopping out 6 foot balls of briars, vines, and limbs; probing for and digging out buried headstones for 3½ hours. I sure hope to get these two down to Fort Magruder this January and February. They will help make short work of what's left to do down there.

Unearthed were three additional markers to add to Fred's list. Confederate Veteran Fletcher Davis, Travis's great-grandfather, was one of them. He joins Henry Warren and James Robert Warren as known Confederate Veterans buried in the "Alabama Plantation" Cemetery.

Travis and Andrea left Croaker all excited having found three more kinfolk. I was left in Croaker covered up with seed ticks and chiggers. Now I do know why I do these projects in the winter.

I will be contacting the property owner to see if our Camp could clean up the graveyard as one of our projects. I will report to the Camp on any results.

Also, the Veteran's Administration has sent Confederate Veteran Private (Pinkethman) Pink T. Garrett, Jr.'s headstone. The hole has been dug at Olive Branch Christian Church this past weekend and it will be set soon.

Respectfully submitted,

Steve White - Cemetery Liaison