

WCGS volunteers have spent many hours documenting these burials, and researching and writing the histories of the cemeteries. We appreciate you visiting our website and are happy that we may be able to help you in your research. We only ask that you cite the WCGS as your source when you enter this information in another website or when you publish it in any other way.

Rock House Creek Cemetery [2010]

Latitude 30° 13' 28.9" - Longitude 96° 33' 31.0"

On FM 390 west of Long Point

This cemetery is located on private property. Former landowner indicated that there was a slave cemetery here, and there had been wooden markers on some of the graves. There is also an indication of a mass grave at this site; this was usually due to an epidemic. Research indicates it was possibly used for the slaves of the Armistead and Matson Families.

The Armistead Family:

Robert Starke Armistead was born November 5, 1800, in North Carolina, and married Ann Sylvesta Carney in 1826. She was born March 8, 1804. Robert & Ann moved to Texas in 1835 and purchased this property on July 9, 1840. On May 11, 1850, Armistead sold his land to Diadama (sic) Fuller. In that year, Robert owned 29 slaves. Robert served in the Republic of Texas Army in 1836, and was a charter trustee of Baylor University in 1845. In 1851 and 1852, he purchased property in the James Clark League. He and Ann adopted a daughter, Sallie, in 1863. Robert died June 14, 1866 and Ann died March 22, 1880; they are both buried on the Clark League.

The Matson Family:

Richard T. Matson of Ralls County, Missouri, purchased property from Asa Mitchell in the Clokey League west of Long Point sometime between 1835 and 1838. On August 31, 1839, the Texas Emigrant reported: "Col. Richard Matson. On Sunday morning, August 25, 1839, about 20 miles from Washington, Texas, an encounter took place between Mr. Asa Mitchell and Col. Richard Matson, which resulted in the death of Col. Matson from wounds, as is supposed, inflicted by Mr. Mitchell. Mr. Mitchell was one of the first emigrants to this county. Himself and the deceased were regarded as good citizens."

The conflict was apparently over a promissory note and Mitchell brought suit against the family after the murder. The case was tried several times and either ended in a hung jury or for the defendants. In 1852, it was brought to the Texas Supreme Court, which upheld the previous verdicts. It is unknown whether Asa Mitchell was ever charged with the murder itself.

At the time of Richard's death, he owned 19 slaves and his will stipulated that half of them go to his wife, Diadema, and the other half to their two sons. On January 4, 1840, Diadema married Samuel Fuller. On May 11, 1850, she purchased the property where this cemetery is located. When Diadema died on October 26, 1857, she willed all of her property except one slave girl to her two sons. The two sons of Richard and Diadema were:

(1) James, born April 8, 1824, married Mary Lincecum in 1848. In 1850, James owned 9 slaves and in 1860, he owned 32 slaves and had 4 slave houses. He and his family were still living in Washington County in 1880. James died February 15, 1895, and is buried in Fairview Cemetery, in Hubbard, Hill County, Texas.

(2) Richard T., born September 21, 1826, married Sarah Cheek in 1851. In 1850, Richard owned 14 slaves. Although it is not known how many slaves he owned in 1860, he did own the same amount of personal property as his brother James, so its likely that he owned approximately 32 slaves. Richard was killed in battle at Pine Bluff, Ark., on October 25, 1863. Sarah died January 1, 1865. They are both buried in Mt. Zion Cemetery, Burton, in Washington County.

Sources:

Austin Colony Pioneers, by Worth S. Ray, The Pemberton Press, Jenkins Publishing Company, Austin and New York, 1970;

Milam County Early Court Records, <http://www.geocities.com/milamco/milam-925d.htm>, accessed July 8, 2009;

Robert Stark Armistead Historical Marker, Texas Historical Commission, <http://atlas.thc.state.tx.us/shell-county.htm>, accessed July 26, 2009;

U.S. Federal Census;

Washington County Texas Deed Records;

Washington County Texas Probate Records.