

Crow Cemetery Back area (Old Section)

Kensett, Arkansas



Unknown who took this picture

During a major cleanup of the cemetery in 2004, volunteers discovered this broken and buried headstone of Robert McRae, brother of General Dandridge McRae. Shown piecing it together are (from left) Bill Leach, Scott Akridge and Hugh Akridge, who directed the cleanup.

This Cemetery is also known as: Whitney/ Crow & Black Creek Cemetery.

GPS Location: 622508 - 3900094

Arkansas Archeological Survey site #: 3WH0727

Number of Marked Graves: About 75 in back section. 285 in front section.

Number of Unmarked Graves: Unknown

The last complete survey of this cemetery was: January 10, 2001 By Leroy Blair.

Current status of cemetery: Front section Active.

Point of contact for cemetery. Dotson Mount 501-724-3552 or Leon Adcock 501 556-5567 or James Hart 501-742-3538.

Also known as Whitney-Crow Cemetery and Black Creek Cemetery. After years of neglect, a major cleanup has been completed here and much additional new information has been obtained. The cemetery burial lists are now divided into a North Half and South Half (see map below). The four-acre South Half was first listed for the White County Historical Society in the fall of 1962 by Cloie Presley of Searcy, with the help of a Girl Scout troop. When Mrs. Presley visited she believed the north half of the cemetery was all black. This was correct and this half remains well cared for today. The South Half of the cemetery was heavily overgrown, and she believed only whites had been buried here. Discoveries in 2003 and 2004 have shown this to be incorrect. Additional information on the Crow and Whitney families may be found in the 1967 White County Heritage.

The South Half was in sad shape when Leroy and Ellen Blair of the Historical Society visited it January 10, 2001. Leroy found 12 marked graves in the south half that were not on the Presley list. Following is his report: "To reach this cemetery go northeast from Kensett on Kensett Road to Mobley Road. Go across the railroad tracks. The cemetery is a short distance on the right, in the woods back behind the black section, which is by the road. This is one of the most neglected cemeteries I have seen. The black section in front is nice and clean. Back in the white section it is so overgrown with brush and briars it is hard to get through. A lot of the beautiful old stones have fallen over. I went to this cemetery in the summer of 2000 but there were so many leaves on the weeds and brush I could not see much at that time. I thought this was a very small cemetery. But when the leaves were off I found that it is, in fact, a very large cemetery covering possibly two or more acres. There are row after row of sunken graves without markers, with a stone here and there. The grave of Helen Pope Owen is at the edge of the black section. It is enclosed with an old wrought iron fence. The stone has fallen over on the ground. Back farther in the woods is a fenced-in area containing the Whitney graves. There is a very large stone near the Whitney fenced area that has members of the Owen family on it. The top of the stone has fallen off and is lying near the part that has the names on it. It is a shame that this cemetery has gotten to this condition. My guess is that there are hundreds of unmarked graves in this cemetery."

Blair was unable to find the following graves which were on the old list: A. Carter, Druscilla Carter, J.B. Crow, Daisy Gaines, Della Gaines, William Jackson, Eld. William West. Also, Blair noted that the large Owen stone contains names of eight children that were listed on the original list with the last name of Burton. The only reference to Burton on the stone was Martha Burton Owen. "The ages of most of the names on this stone are five months to three years, except for Martha Burton Owen, who was 17. It is my belief that they are all children of Thomas Owen Jr. anHarodineOwen." They are listed on this update with the last name

The black North Half of Crow Cemetery was first listed for the White County Historical Society January 3, 1992, by Cloie Presley and her husband Leister. "This is the well-kept part in the front by the road," their report stated. "It has a good cover of grass that is well kept. There are no rocks there and many places show forms of graves but have nothing to mark them as graves. There are some graves marked with concrete blocks which have no names. All marked graves are listed. There were 12 graves with identical tombstones indicating they were all 'Faithful Members of the Silver Ring Circle #202.' All these only listed the date of death." When

Leroy and Ellen Blair visited the cemetery January 10, 2001, their update included 66 names that were not on the Presley list. Blair added 11 more names in December 2002. He visited the site again in January 2005 but made no changes in the list.

In the spring of 2004, Hugh Akridge of Kensett led and directed an effort to reclaim the overgrown portion of the cemetery. He was assisted by his son Scott Akridge of Bradford, and Bill Leach of Searcy. Leach, who directed Pioneer Village, succeeded in securing service workers under the supervision of Linda Rockwell, Work Program Advisor for the Department of Correction, to assist in the cleanup of the cemetery. From February through September 2004, the group worked each Saturday morning cutting timber, moving brush, killing weeds, filling sunken graves and resetting fallen and broken tombstones. The overgrown portion was indeed two acres in size as Blair had reported. The group found five markers not previously located. They also found all of the tombstones not found by Blair in his previous visit due to the dense growth. Additional assistance was provided by the Kensett Volunteer Fire Department, Woodmen of the World, Julian McFadden, and Jackie Rogers. Cemetery caretakers Alvin Mitchell and Dotson Mount visited the cleanup site almost every weekend to offer moral support.

Scott Akridge reconstructed a brief history of the cemetery with the assistance of the abstract of nearby property owner Jimmy Mobley. The date of the first burial is unknown but the property was acquired by J.B. Crow in 1851. The earliest marked burial is 1852. At that time the Searcy to West Point Road ran in a northwest to southeast direction across the southern boundary of the cemetery. A portion of this wagon road is still visible today and has a cut nearly four feet deep. In 1872, the Cairo and Fulton Railroad was built west of the cemetery and the Searcy to West Point Road was shifted north of the cemetery to run west to east. The town of Kensett began to grow after the railroad was built and the Kensett Cemetery became the preferred location for most white burials. In 1882, Wilshire Riley sold to Joseph White all the land surrounding the cemetery except for a half-acre in section 16, which is south of the original cemetery. This half-acre was set aside as an addition to the cemetery. Markers and burials were literally being placed in the old wagon roadbed by the turn of the century. In 1909, U.S. Davenport sold to the Colored Cemetery Trustees the two acres of land north of the original part of the cemetery. This is the graveyard where most blacks from the Kensett area are interred. The earliest marked grave is 1913. It is likely no more internments are made in the south half of the cemetery and the only internments made in the original part of the cemetery are those with long family connections to the area--like the Hardys, one of whom is the last marked burial in the original section and dates to 1935.

This cemetery is significant for several reasons. It is unique in that whites are buried in the middle with blacks on the north and south. The old wagon road is an interesting feature. Many of the names in the original section are names of slaveowners, including Thomas Owen Jr., J.B. Crow, and Elijah Whitney. It is believed the earliest birthdate, 1775, on a tombstone in White County belongs to Elder William West who is buried here. Also Robert and John McRae, brothers of Confederate Brigadier General Dandridge McRae are buried in this cemetery. Each grave is covered by a 3'x6' concrete slab. Both of these markers are now broken into many pieces. Robert McRae's tombstone is the only one in the cemetery inscribed in Latin. Curiously, the whites appear to be buried in the west half of the original section because almost all tombstones are located there. In the east half of the original section are many depressions, obviously graves that are not even marked with rocks. These could be graves of slaves or poor whites. There is no other known candidate in the area for the location of slave graves.

The 1882 addition to the south appears to be all blacks but this is not a certainty. The most significant marked burial in this area is of Nicholas Owens, Co. E, 113th U.S. Colored Troops. This is the only known marker in White County of a black Civil War soldier. It is possible that Owens was a former slave of Thomas Owen Jr. but this cannot currently be confirmed. Nicholas Owens served in the Union Army at Little Rock from 1863 until he was discharged at the end of the war in 1865. Many graves in the 1882 addition are marked with rocks. An estimated 300 to 400 graves have no tombstones marking them in the south half of the cemetery. Crow Cemetery was the largest overgrown cemetery in White County until it was cleared in 2003 and 2004.

In the well-kept post-1913 part of the cemetery there are 13 markers bearing the symbolism of the Supreme Royal Circle of Friends of the World, Silver Ring Circle #202. Some of these markers have "09" inscribed at the top center. 1909 was also the year the Colored Cemetery Trustees purchased the land for the north addition. An Internet search in September 2004 found four other cemeteries in Arkansas with Supreme Royal Circle of Friends of the World markers but no information on the origin or activities of this organization could be located. There were no SRCFW marker "hits" in other states. There are an estimated 60 to 100 unmarked graves in this north section. Numerous graves have unreadable funeral home markers. Scott Akridge revised this listing in September 2004.

If you have corrections or additions to this list or other information on this Cemetery, Contact the White County Historical Society, P.O. Box 537, Searcy, AR 72145. Or phone 501- 278- 5010

Following is a list of known burials in this cemetery. Back section (Old section)

Barber, Martha – July 2, 1817 – July 21, 1878 – Wife of Pete Barber - Crow Cemetery

Barber, Pete –November 7, 1815 died March 8, 1880– Husband of Martha Barber - Unmarked grave beside Martha Barber - Crow Cemetery

Black, D. Ila – No dates listed – Age 11 years, 11 mos.– Son of W.D. & L.L. Black - Crow Cemetery

Black, Ernest H.– May 14, 1872 – March 14, 1873 – Son of W.D. & L.L. Black - Crow Cemetery

Black, G.A. – March 20, 1861 – March 15, 1898 - Crow Cemetery

Black, Jake – Died February 13, 1894 – Age 59 – Husband of Malinda Black - Crow Cemetery

Black, Luther – No dates listed – Age 2 years, 5 mos. – Son of W.D. & L.L. Black - Crow Cemetery

Black, Malinda – Died May 29, 1905 – Age 86 – Wife of Jake Black - Crow Cemetery

Black, S.H. – Died January 2, 1859 – Age 50 years 8 mos, 28 days - Crow Cemetery

Black, W.D. – June 10, 1834 – December 15, 1893 - Crow Cemetery

Black, Walter – No dates listed – Age 5 years, 3 months – Son of W.D. & L.L. Black - Crow Cemetery

Black, Willie J. – February 12, 1860 – May 7, 1860 – Son of W.D. & L.L. Black - Crow Cemetery

Brown, Annie Mae – Died September 2, 1964 – Age 53 years – (Unmarked grave) - Crow Cemetery – (Obit September 4, 1964 paper)

Carter, A. – September 7, 1812 – November 23, 1878 – Husband of Nancy A. Carter - Crow Cemetery – (Pioneer Obit)

Carter, Druscilla – November 30, 1812 – February 27, 1871 – Wife of A. Carter - Crow Cemetery

Crow, ? – Broken stone south of Robert Crow – July 25, 1862 – November 27, 1875 - Crow Cemetery

Crow, C.M. – September 10, 1847 – February 14, 1867 - Crow Cemetery

Crow, Carlie E. – October 4, 1852 – April 17, 1878 – Wife of Jessie H. Crow - Crow Cemetery

Crow, Elizabeth J. – April 10, 1820 – December 27, 1876 – Wife of Joseph W.W. Crow - Crow Cemetery

Crow, J.B. – November 10, 1810 – August 14, 1866 – Husband of Lavina Crow - Crow Cemetery

Crow, Joseph W.W. – February 7, 1813 – November 9, 1866 – Husband of Elizabeth J. Crow - Crow Cemetery

Crow, Lavenia H. – No dates listed - Crow Cemetery

Crow, Lavina – September 30, 1813 – April 4, 1866 – Wife of J.B. Crow - Crow Cemetery

Crow, Robert T. – November 20, 1851 – September 12, 1882 - Crow Cemetery

Crow, Sophronia E. – August 5, 1851 – September 8, 1856 - Crow Cemetery

Crow, Will Byron – No dates listed – Age 8 months – Son of J.J. & E.J. Crow - Crow Cemetery

Dodd, Virginia Bell – October 18, 1860 – June 2, 1861 - Crow Cemetery

Elrod, Jinnie – April 15, 1846 – May 3, 1867 – Wife of W.P. Elrod - Crow Cemetery

Gaines, Daisy – November 6, 1885 – September 28, 1904 - Crow Cemetery

Gaines, Della – January 9, 1884 – April 28, 1887 - Crow Cemetery

Gains, Columbus – March 11, 1805 – April 10, 1888 - Crow Cemetery

Garett, Charlie – No dates listed – Age 49 - Crow Cemetery

Hamilton, Jennie – April 15, 1846 – May 3, 1867 – Daughter of J.M. & R. Hamilton - Crow Cemetery

Hamilton, Mary – September 22, 1888 – June 30, 1905 – Wife of Leslie Hamilton - Crow Cemetery

Hardy, Clarence – March 31, 1861 – August 20, 1861 – Son of T.D. & M.H Hardy - Crow Cemetery

Hardy, Dean W. – July 16, 1862 – April 17, 1880 - Crow Cemetery

Hardy, Lelia M. – December 24, 1855 – December 23, 1935 - Crow Cemetery

Hardy, Mary H. – August 31, 1834 – September 11, 1923 –DS with Thomas D. Hardy - Crow Cemetery

Hardy, Thomas D. – January 14, 1829 – August 26, 1916 – DS with Mary H. Hardy - Crow Cemetery

Hart, Willie – March 11, 1897 – October 30, 1916 - Crow Cemetery

Hawkins, Winnie – Died February 22, 1910 – Age 60 – Wife of William Hawkins - Crow Cemetery

Jackson, infant – November 12, 1885 – September 10, 1886 – Son of T.J. & Tamer Jackson - Crow Cemetery

Jackson, Ritta – July 12, 1882 – September 23, 1908 – Wife of Andrew Jackson - Crow Cemetery

Jackson, William – February 22, 1883 – November 28, 1883 - Crow Cemetery

Jones, ? – July 25, 1862 – November 27, 1875 - Crow Cemetery

Jones, Bobbie H. – May 31, 1868 – November 6, 1873 – Son of A.T. & A. Jones - Crow Cemetery

Martin, Alice Mariah (Fisher) – January 19, 1849 – April 3, 1923 – Crow Cemetery

McAdams, Sallie – March 18, 1838 – December 17, 1864 – Wife of J.T. McAdams - Crow Cemetery

McRae, John D. – No dates listed – 3'x6' slab broken in many pieces – inscription in English - Crow Cemetery

McRae, Robert – No dates listed – 3'x6' slab broken in many pieces – inscription in Latin - Crow Cemetery

Michell, Helen – April 22, 1865 – February 23, 1912 - Crow Cemetery

Owen, Alice Virgilia – August 15, 1856 – February 1, 1858 - Crow Cemetery

Owen, Clarence Bright – November 15, 1850 – April 17, 1852 – Listed on Thomas Owen Jr.'s stone - Crow Cemetery

Owen, Emma Cornelia – January 3, 1854 – July 8, 1855 – Listed on Thomas Owen Jr.'s stone - Crow Cemetery

Owen, Harodine M. Anderson – August 29, 1824 – December 10, 1891 – Listed on Thomas Owen Jr. - Crow Cemetery

Owen, Helen Pope – October 18, 1866 – July 8, 1888 – Wife of C.M. Owen - Crow Cemetery

Owen, Marcia Burton – June 14, 1847 – March 6, 1864 – Listed on Thomas Owen Jr.'s stone - Crow Cemetery

Owen, Roland – January 29, 1860 – June 29, 1860 – Son of T. & H.M. Owen - Crow Cemetery

Owen, Rosa Linda – April 6, 1858 – March 18, 1861 – On same stone with M. & Thomas Owen Jr. – Crow Cemetery

Owen, Thomas Jr. – November 2, 1820 – December 4, 1885 - Crow Cemetery

Owen, Thomas Lee – March 28, 1863 – September 23, 1863 – Child of T. & H.M. Owen - Crow Cemetery

Owens, Nicholas – No dates listed – Co. E 113th U.S.C.T. [United States Colored Troops] – Military marker - Crow Cemetery

Pryor, Infant – Died 1925 – Son of Houston & Estelle Pryor (Unmarked grave) - Crow Cemetery

Skellern, Ernest – October 7, 1868 – February 8, 1887 - Crow Cemetery

Smith, Rachel – March 17, 1873 – January 28, 1908 – Wife of Frank Smith - Crow Cemetery

West, William, Elder – April 18, 1775 – July 1859 [May be earliest birthdate on a stone in County] - Crow Cemetery

Whitney, Demetra A. – June 1, 1844 – January 18, 1866 - Crow Cemetery

Whitney, Elijah – April 22, 1814 – January 15, 1873 – DS with Mary Whitney - Crow Cemetery

Whitney, Elijah – June 6, 1826 – December 12, 1872 - Crow Cemetery

Whitney, Elizabeth – June 9, 1900 – January 10, 1902 – Daughter of Levi Whitney - Crow Cemetery

Whitney, Ella T. – March 17, 1858 – November 15, 1922 - Crow Cemetery

Whitney, Infant son – No dates listed – In the Whitney fenced-in area - Crow Cemetery

Whitney, Infant son – No dates listed - South of Leslie E. & Winnie L. Whitney -- Crow Cemetery

Whitney, James K. – January 27, 1846 – May 7, 1907 – Civil War Veteran - Crow Cemetery – (Pioneer Obit)

Whitney, Leslie E. – September 13, 1877 – February 21, 1903 – DS with Winnie L. Whitney - Crow Cemetery

Whitney, Mary – June 6, 1821 – December 12, 1872 – DS with Elijah Whitney - Crow Cemetery

Whitney, Wesley – December 25, 1848 – October 5, 1904 - Crow Cemetery

Whitney, Winnie L. – March 7, 1887 – April 8, 1887 – DS with Leslie E. Whitney - Crow Cemetery

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Most of the cemetery information listed was collected by Leroy “Lee” Blair Former member of the White County Historical Society Board of Directors. Now working at the White County Historical Society office

If you have any additions or corrections to the burial listing please contact the Historical Society. Phone 501-278-5010 or Email me at lblblair74@gmail.com or wchs1962@gmail.com

I will be posting more burials later. The Searcy Daily Citizen donated all their Micro Film and Ledgers dating back to 1953. After reviewing them, if I find a death of a person that we do not have I will to add to the cemetery listings.

There are some graves listed as unmarked that may have had a tombstone set since the listing was made.

I may have missed some graves when I prepared the listing. Some cemeteries are very hard to get an accurate listing due to how some graves are scattered

The following Abbreviations are used in the listings.

FM-Funeral home marker DS-Double tombstone TS-Triple tombstone

(Obit)-means that the Historical Society has, or has access to the Obituary for this person.