

Written In Stone

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Evergreen Courant ~ 30 August 2007

Garvin Family Cemetery

Traveling toward Evergreen from Brooklyn on CR 42 is a small, rural country church known as New Bethel Baptist Church. The recorded history of this church has its' origin as 1931; however, a 1928 Evergreen Courant refers to a revival at the church netting 18 new members, with 13 of them by baptism. The names of those who were baptized included many of those actively involved in the church in the 1930's through the remainder of the life of the church.

My memory of this church has little to do with its' founding members or origin; though I remembered calling it 'the little country church in the wildwood', as the first and only time I played for a congregation was in accompaniment to friends singing at a revival in the 1970's.

Adjacent to the church is a cemetery better known as the Garvin Family Cemetery; though the names of Adams, Barlow, Fountain, Hendrix, Moore, Padget, & Prater are also found here. The earliest known marked grave is that of Catherine Garvin, wife of Robert Garvin. She was born in SC and died in Conecuh in Jan. 1880. Another early grave for 1880 belongs to Henry Fountain. The next one belongs to Elizabeth Prater, of SC who died in 1886. Her husband, Joseph Prater, lies nearby. Catherine Garvin's husband's grave is not marked as to when he died, and there are a few unmarked graves that could predate all of the above. There are an additional 10 Garvin graves in this cemetery, marking the family members of Robert & Catherine. Also found here is their son, Millage Bonham, born ca. 1860's and died in 1934. He married one of the first families of Conecuh's daughters: Mamie Evelyn Johnston, daughter of Susan and Asa Johnston, Jr. When she died in 1927, she was interred in the family plot of the Asa Johnston Cemetery; however, when Millage passed away, he was interred in the Garvin Family Cemetery.

More research is being conducted, both on the church as well as the families who lived and worshipped in the community. Next week, we'll explore some of them and see how they came to call Conecuh County their home. If you have information on New Bethel and Garvin