

# Wilson, John M. Cemetery

By Dave Hallemann



This beautiful cemetery with its fenced family plots, monuments, and fieldstones is located in T41 R3 S18 NE¼ of the SW¼ .

38° 17' 23" N / 90° 44' 13" W

Visited July 2000 by Dave Hallemann and Lynn McKay.

This cemetery is on land first set aside for use by the Pacific Railroad to promote development. When the railroad did not lay rails they were ordered to sell these parcels for the State of Missouri.

On October 7<sup>th</sup>, 1859, John M. Wilson purchased this tract, the SE¼ of Township 41 Range 3 Section 18 containing 160 acres, from the Pacific Railroad recorded in Book Q at Page 161, for \$192.40.

After the death of John M. Wilson the land was partitioned by his heirs, with his wife Adeline becoming the owner of the home place which the cemetery is located on.

The following deed, recorded on May 1<sup>st</sup>, 1890, signed by Adeline Wilson on April 28<sup>th</sup>;

“Whereas the Grantor herein, Adeline Wilson, desirous of securing a family burying ground or cemetery on her lands for the use of herself individually, and for the exclusive use of the descendants of Ephraim Wilson (*John M. Wilson's father*), deceased, doth by theses presents Grant, Bargain, and Sell, Convey and Confirm, unto the County Court of Jefferson County in the State of Missouri, one acre of land is situated in the County of Jefferson and State of Missouri, and is particularly described as follows to wit; Commencing on the west line of lot one of the south west quarter of Section 18 Township 41 Range 3 east of the 5<sup>th</sup> P. M. 5 chains and 25 links South of the Northwest corner, thence East 3 chains and 16¼ links, thence South 3 chains and 16¼ links, thence West 3 chains and 16¼ links to the place of the beginning containing one acre...”

In our records this cemetery is listed as John M. Wilson Cemetery. John M. was the first to purchase the land from the railroad, he lived on and farmed it until his death and is buried there. Adeline his wife “excepted out” the cemetery. She also lived on the tract and is buried there. She also however dedicated the cemetery to the descendants of Ephraim Wilson, John's father.

We would have called this cemetery the “Wilson Family Cemetery” instead of John M. Wilson Cemetery, as I have shown there are three “Wilson” involved, John M., Adeline, and Ephraim, however as there are other Wilson cemeteries in the county, to differentiate this one from the others, and not to confuse family researchers, we will put the “official name” of this cemetery as John M. Wilson Cemetery.



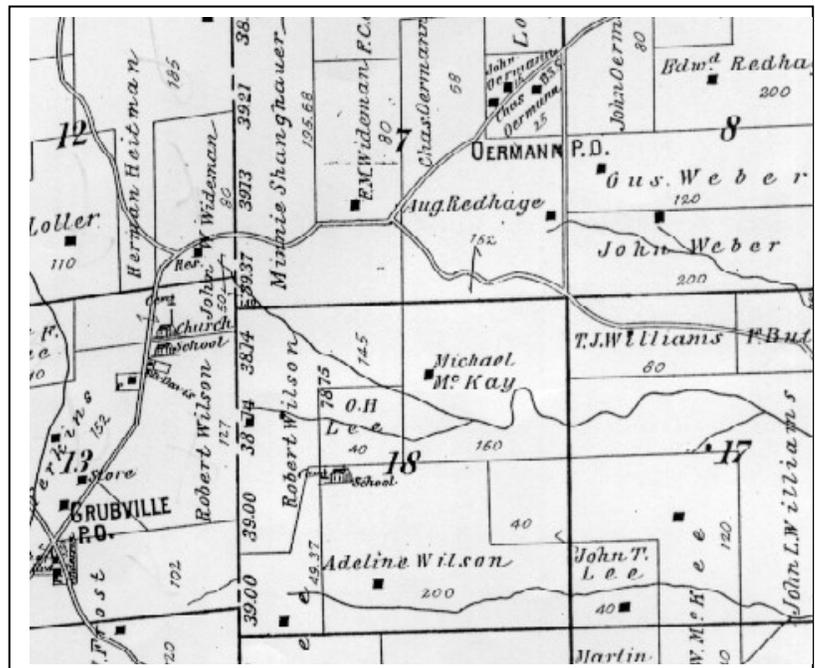
As can be seen in the picture at left, in 1876 John M. Wilson is in possession of the property. The cemetery, denoted by a cross, is shown next to a school in the corner of the Wilson tract in the SW¼ of Section 18.

Also we can see where neighbors, who are buried in this cemetery, lived.

In 1876, Grubville was yet to become a town and had no School, Church (1879), or Cemetery.

In 1898 John M. Wilson has passed and Adeline his wife has ownership of this tract. School and Cemetery are still shown together.

Grubville School, Church, and Cemetery are shown to the northwest.



The school that appears on the 1876 and 1898 Atlas I could find little information on it. It is my *guess* that it was one of the first "Grubville" schools in this part of the county, possibly erected by the Wilson family. It was probably discontinued when Grubville School and Church were built about 1 mile to the west in the 1870s. The stones from the foundation of this school line the southern side of the cemetery. As I could find no record of a deed setting aside land for this school, church and cemetery. It is also my *guess* that this is the reason it was later excepted out by Adeline for a family cemetery. The Wilsons *may* have allowed the property to be used for school purposes with the understanding if it ceased being used for such purpose it would revert back to them.

In *HISTORY OF JEFFERSON COUNTY, MISSOURI AND HISTORY OF THE LEE FAMILY* by Mr. Charles Oliver Lee, we find some clues and can establish that Ephraim and Fannie (Link) Wilson, Warren & Martha Whitsett, are buried here but no markers were found.

"...The mother, Fanny Link Wilson, seems to have been rather better educated and more refined than her husband and the average pioneer of her time. It is said she worried because her children could not have better educational advantages. She seems to have taken a great interest in the school and church. The *first* schoolhouse built in this community was built a 1/2-mile north of the Ephraim Wilson residence. The *Grubville School* from the beginning has been considered one of the best, especially during the first half century of its existence...Shortly after the middle of the 19th century, surrounded by a highly respected and loyal family of children and grandchildren, Fanny Link Wilson passed to her eternal reward and was laid to rest on a beautiful knoll, *near the school house, (this cemetery is on a knoll)*, overlooking the old residence. Let us say of her: "She hath done what she could, and that her virtues have been visited upon her children unto the third and fourth generation." After her death, her husband married Mrs. Henderson from near Robertsville, Franklin County, and continued to live on the old farm until his death in 1862 when he was *laid to rest beside his first wife by the old school house*, where John M. and wife, Martha and husband, several grandchildren and great-grandchildren, and Robert and his wife were buried. The other children were buried in the *new cemetery at the church*...Uncle Warren (*Whitsett married to Martha daughter and youngest child of Ephraim and Fannie (nee Link) Wilson*) died in 1877 and was laid to rest in the *old family cemetery by the schoolhouse*... Martha was laid to rest beside her first husband (*Warren Whitsett*)."

*These excerpts are from Feb 1997, compiled by among others, Maxine Williams Carter, a descendant of Ephraim's brother Jacob Wilson, and graciously supplied by Lynn McKay.*

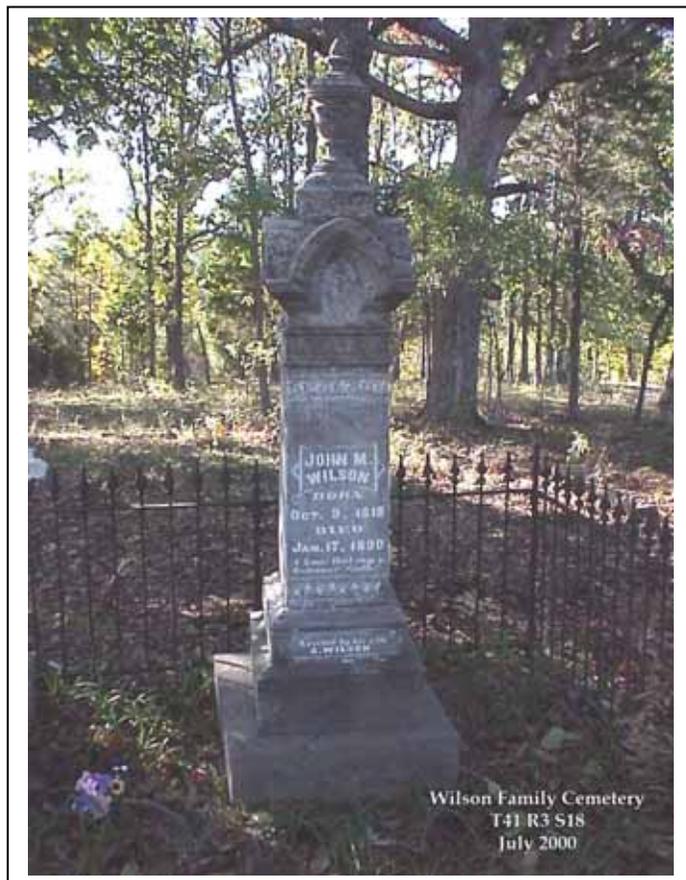
"On the *west side* of the cemetery a school house which *also served as a church* was built. This building is gone, but portions of the foundation are still there. The schoolhouse and cemetery are shown in the Jefferson County Atlas' of 1876 & 1898. Ephraim and his wife were members of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Ann Eliza [Wilson] - *beloved freed slave*, B1840 Died 1922. She has no tombstone, two rocks, a head and foot stone mark her grave. She was the second to last person buried in this

cemetery. Eliza Wilson's grave *had a marker as late as 1962* with the above dates recorded on it, according to Myrtle Williams Gunderson's record. Ann Eliza Wilson was a slave who was acquired first by Madison Martin and Nancy Baker Graham, grandparents of Fred Alexander Harbison. She was purchased on the court house steps in St Louis when she was about 12 years old to take care of Madison and Nancy Graham's baby, Amanda. [John M's wife was Adeline Graham, and a sister of Madison's I believe] Eliza placed the baby in a tub on a pond. The parents did not approve and she was either given or sold to John M and Adeline when she was thirteen or fourteen. John M and Adeline built her a two-room log cabin near their home. She never stayed at the cabin, preferring to stay with the Wilsons, Millers or Harbisons. The Will of Adeline states that Eliza was to be paid \$100 per year from the proceeds of the farm. Eliza was a well-trained horsewoman also. It is told how she would ride out into the fields with the men looking for stray animals, always riding a large sorrel horse sidesaddle.

One of the reasons for the downfall of this cemetery, school, church and roads could be because of the following as told by Helen B (Harbison) Weber “Flowing down the valley about 150 feet from the south side of the Wilson home is Jones Creek. At one time people living on the opposite side of the creek wanted to change the location of the schoolhouse while those on the side of the creek where the schoolhouse stood wanted it to remain. Prior to the date to vote for this cause there was a heavy rain and the creek became so swollen the persons wishing to retain the schoolhouse could not cross over the creek to vote so their opposition won out. Some of the stones from the old school house are still in a pile at one corner of the cemetery.”

The following persons are listed on the monuments in this cemetery;



## John M. Wilson

Born  
October 9<sup>th</sup>, 1818

Died  
January 17<sup>th</sup>, 1890

I know that my redeemer liveth

Erected by his wife A. Wilson

*Aged 71 Years 3 Months 8 Days*

---

*Goodspeed has this to say;*

John M. Wilson, farmer and stock-raiser of Jefferson County, is a native of Abbeville County, S.C., born in 1818, and is the eldest of eight children born to Ephraim and Fannie (Link) Wilson, natives of South

Carolina, where they were reared, and married about 1816. About 1820 they came to Jefferson County and were the first to settle on James Creek. After living there for about ten or twelve years they removed to McNairy County, Tenn. where they remained for about four years, and then returned to Jefferson County, Mo., where, with the exception of a few years spent in Arkansas, they made their home. The father was a farmer and mechanic, and was in good circumstances at the time of his death, which occurred in 1862. His father, John Wilson, was of Irish descent, and came to Jefferson County about 1820, where he died, after making several trips between Missouri and South Carolina. Both parents of John M. were members of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The subject of this sketch was reared at home and educated in the primitive log schoolhouses of early times. In February 1839, he was united in marriage to Miss Adaline Graham, daughter of William and Margaret Graham, who were formerly of Tennessee, but pioneers of Jefferson County. Immediately after marriage Mr. Wilson located twelve miles west of Hillsboro, where he has lived for nearly fifty years. He has about 1,300 acres of choice land, and is one of the largest landholders of Jefferson County. He has no children of his own, but has reared four and partly reared others. He is taking considerable pains in improving the stock of the community, especially cattle and horses of the Durham and Norman breeds, respectively. In politics Mr. Wilson is a life-long and stanch Democrat, and has voted for every Democratic president since attaining his majority. He and wife are members of the Missionary Baptist Church.

Coxwell Funeral Parlor Record says John died of Typhoid Fever.

## Adaline Wilson

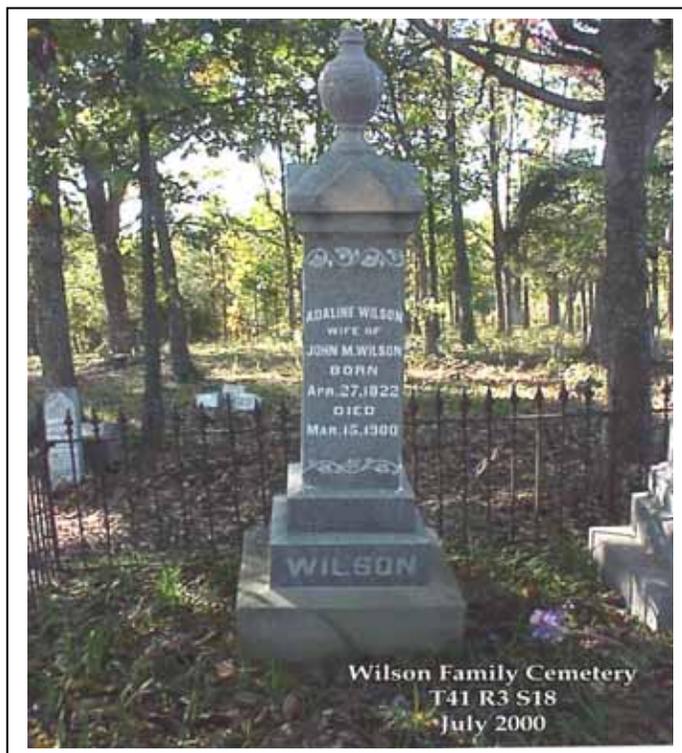
Wife of  
John Wilson

Born  
April 27<sup>th</sup>, 1822  
Died  
March 15<sup>th</sup>, 1900

*Aged 77 years 10 Months 17 days*

*John M. Wilson and Adeline Graham  
were married on 7 February 1839 by  
W. Frissell, Justice of the Peace for  
Big River Township in Jefferson Co.,  
Mo*

*Their graves are enclosed with an  
iron fence.*



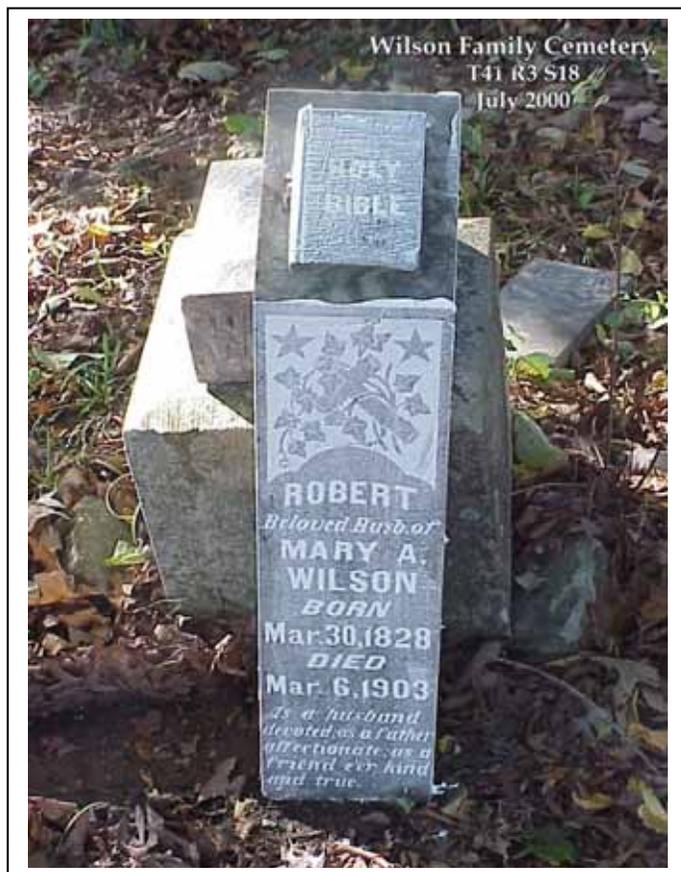
## Ann Eliza (Wilson)

Born 1840 Died 1922

Ex slave who dedicated her life to the service of the Wilson family. She was so well loved that she is buried inside the family cemetery.

Adeline Wilson's Will states; "...the colored woman Ann Eliza, commonly known as Ann Eliza Wilson, who was at one time a slave of John M Wilson, my deceased husband..." Family legend relates "...John M., bought her from Madison Graham of Morse Mill, a brother of Adeline. She was bought when she was 12-15 years old in the early 1850's for \$600 and then later freed her, and she stayed with them until Adeline's death, and was then cared for by the Harbisons'..." She was the second to last person buried in cemetery. She has no monument; two rocks, a head and footstone mark her grave.





## Robert

Beloved Husband of  
Mary A. **Wilson**

Born  
March 30<sup>th</sup>, 1828

Died  
March 6<sup>th</sup>, 1903

*As a husband devoted, as a father  
affectionate, as a friend e'er kind and  
true*

*Aged 74 years 4 months 11 days*

*(Brother to John M. Wilson)*

In 1849, Robert Wilson son of Ephraim Wilson was married to Mary Frost of Crawford County. They settled northeast of his father near where the Grubville Church now stands. To them 6 children were born: Martha Jane 1852, John F. 1854, Josephine 1856, Fannie 1859, R. B. 1862, and Lucy 1866.

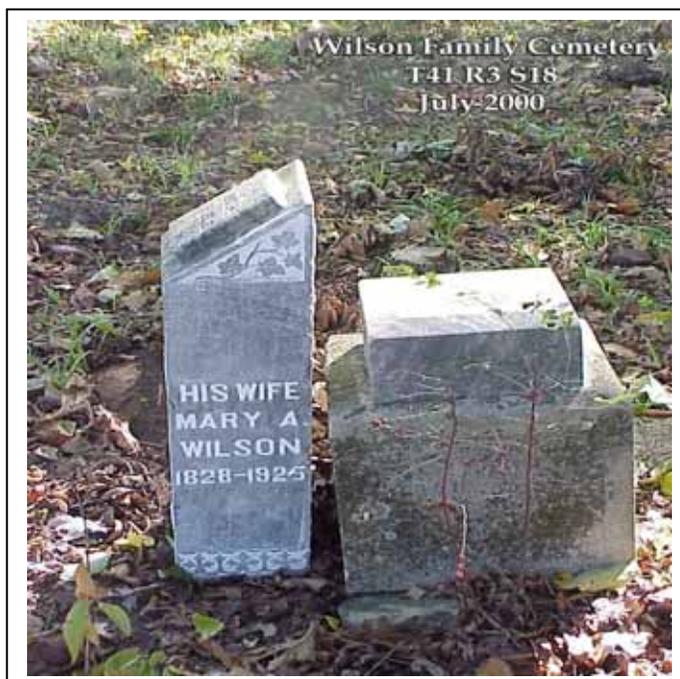
His wife

## Mary A. (Frost) Wilson

Born  
1828

Died  
1925

*On side of monument with Robert Wilson*





This is the George Richard and Jennie FROST family plot, enclosed with an ornamental fence, within Wilson Cemetery.

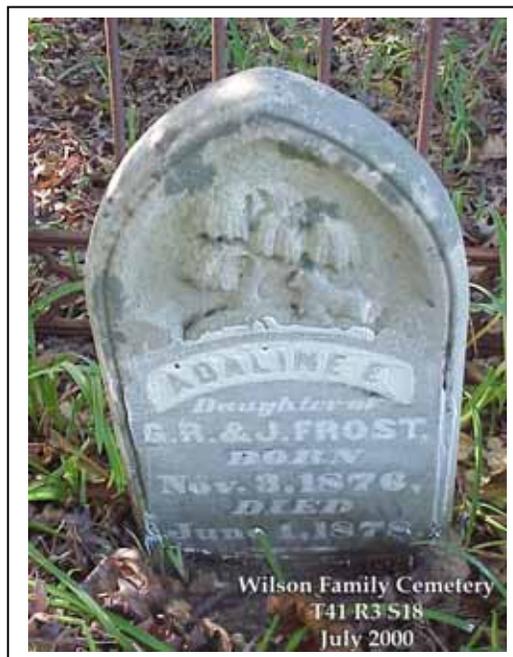
The four graves are the children of George Richard [Dick], son of Frank and Catherine Malinda (*nee Wilson, daughter of Ephraim and sister of John M*), Frost, and Jennie (*Sullens*) Frost.

The small one is a fieldstone, unreadable.

**Adeline E.**  
Daughter of  
**G. R. & J. Frost**

Born  
November 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1876  
Died  
June 1<sup>st</sup>, 1878

*Aged 1 year 6 months 29 days*  
*Weeping Willow with Lamb at top of monument*

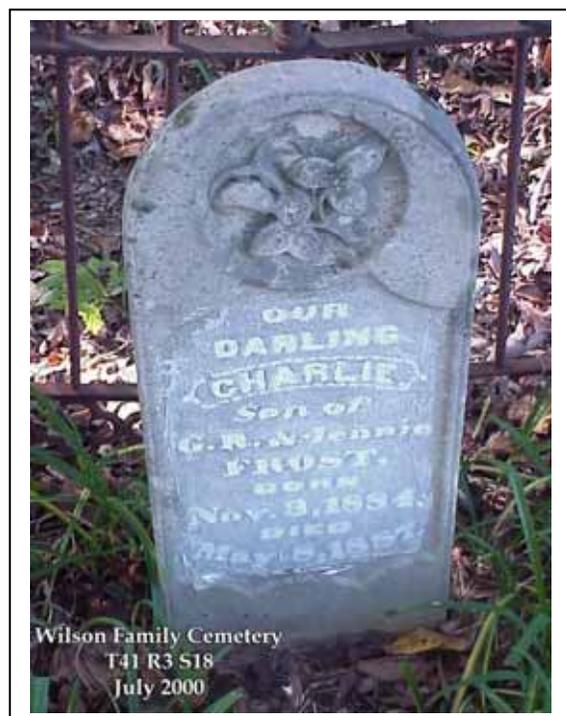


Our  
Darling

**Charlie**  
Son of  
G. R. & Jennie  
**Frost**

Born  
November 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1884  
Died  
May 8<sup>th</sup>, 1887

*Aged 2 year 6 months 5 days*  
*Flower in circle at top of monument*



To Bloom In Heaven

## Lillie Octava

Infant Daughter of  
G. R. & Jennie **Frost**

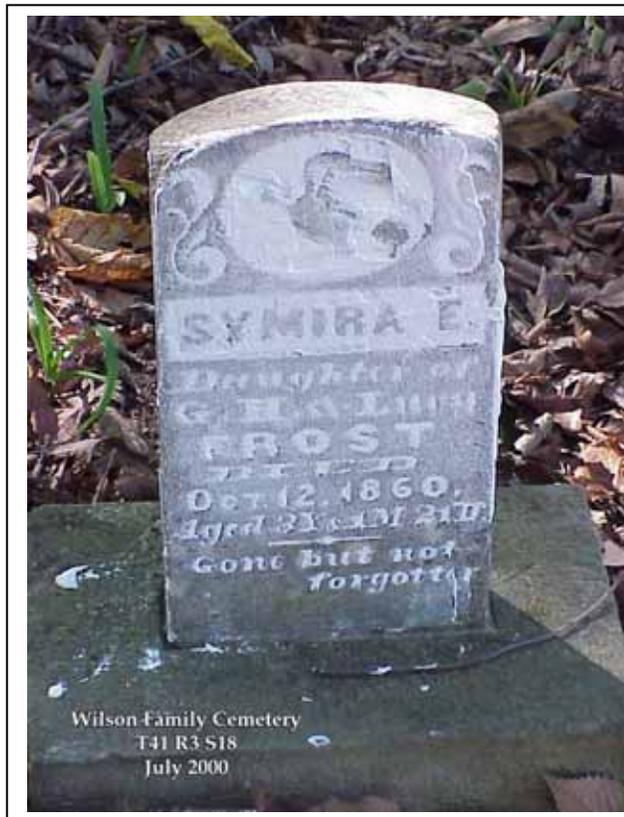
Born  
October 26<sup>th</sup>, 1880

Died  
August 4<sup>th</sup>, 1881

*Aged 9 months 9 days  
Dove in circle at top of monument*



Wilson Family Cemetery  
T41 R3 S18  
July 2000



Wilson Family Cemetery  
T41 R3 S18  
July 2000

## Symira E.

Daughter of  
G(eorge). H. & Lucy (Lucinda Wilson)

## Frost

Died  
October 12<sup>th</sup>, 1860

Aged  
3 years 1 month 21 days

Gone but not forgotten

*Born August 21, 1857  
Dove in circle at top of monument*

**Alonzo Webster  
Ramey**

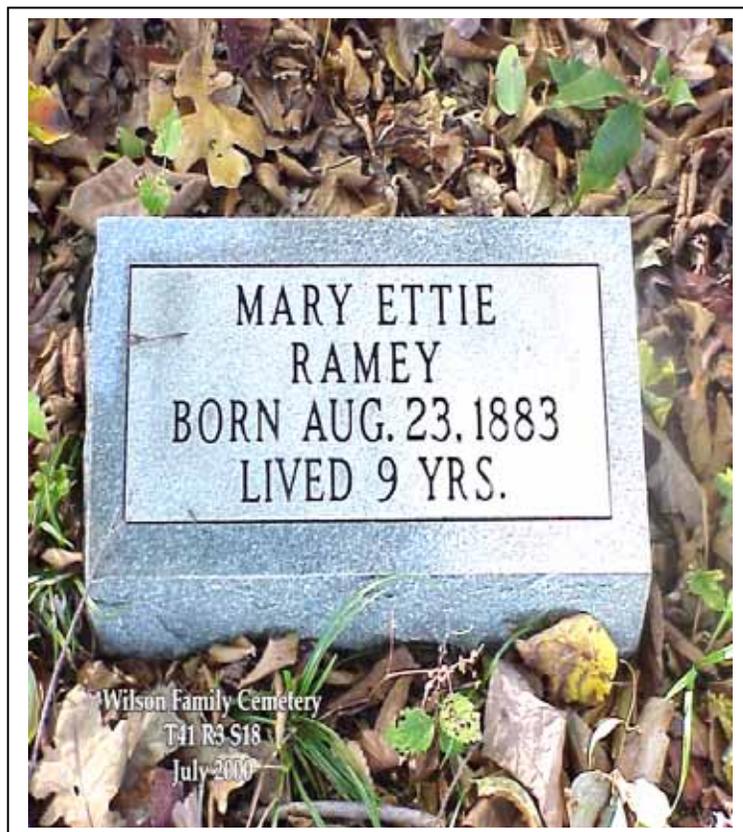
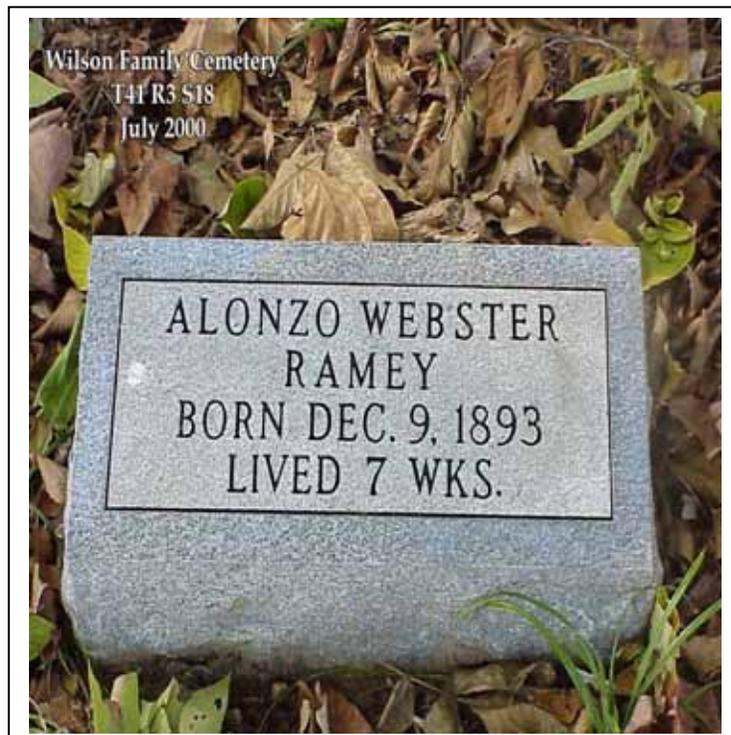
Born

December 9<sup>th</sup>, 1893

Lived 7 weeks

*Monument probably placed after 1980s survey*

---



**Mary Ettie  
Ramey**

Born  
August 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1883

Lived 9 years

*Monument probably placed after 1980s survey*

---

## A. W. Whitsett

Departed  
This Life

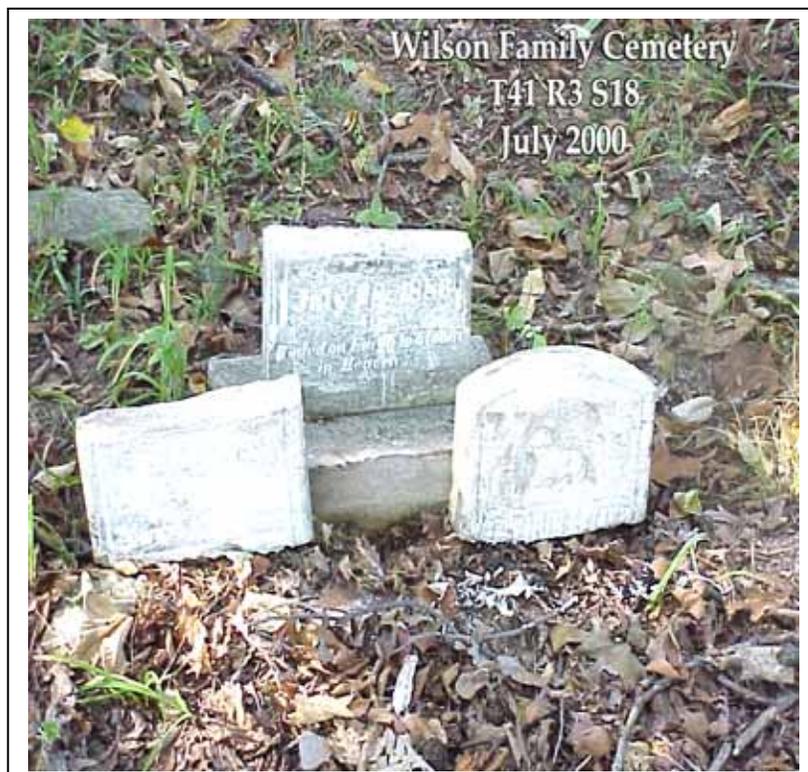
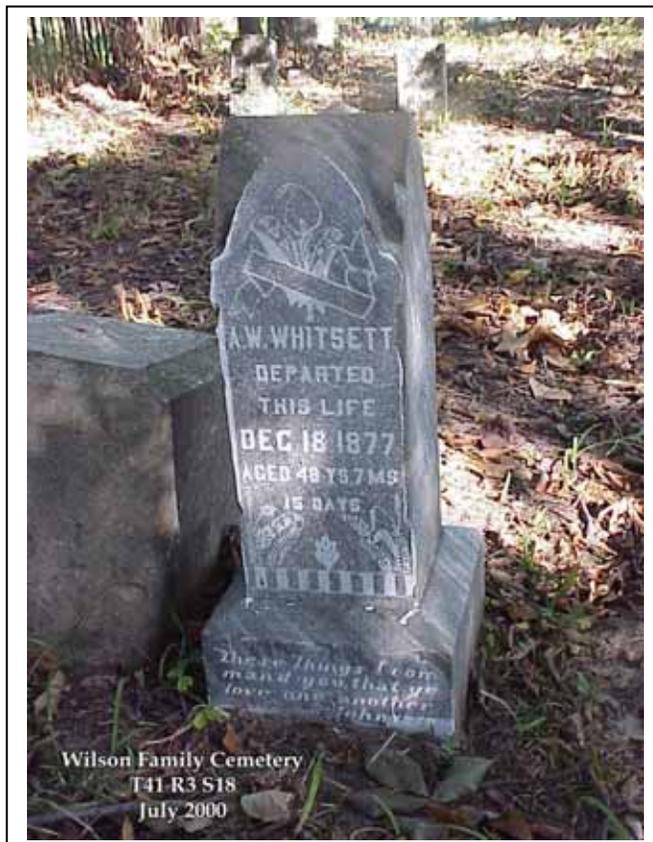
December 18<sup>th</sup>, 1877

Aged 48 years 7 months  
15 days

These things I command you, that ye love  
one another.  
John 15, 17

*Born May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1829*  
*Ornamental carvings on monument*  
*Monument off base*

*Martha Ann Wilson, youngest daughter of  
Ephraim, married twice - - **First husband was  
Alfred Warren Whitsett.** Second husband was  
Oliver Henry Lee.*



## Authur Elmer Perkins

Born  
November 15<sup>th</sup>, 1877  
Died  
July 28<sup>th</sup>, 1886

Budded on earth to bloom in  
heaven.

*Aged 8 years 8 months 13 days*  
*Lamb in circle at top of monument*

*George Richard Frost's sister, Kansas  
Virginia Frost, married David Anderson  
Perkins, and Arthur Elmer Perkins was  
their first child.*

Coxwell Funeral Parlor Record says  
Elmer died of Spinal Dease.

## Infant

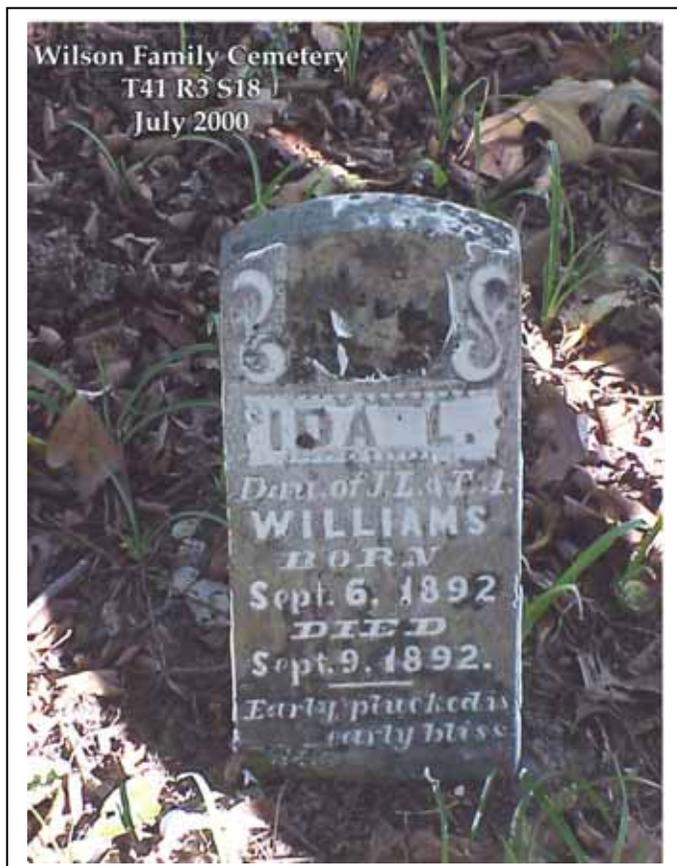
Daughter of  
J. L. & T. A. **Williams**

Born & Died  
July 4<sup>th</sup>, 1884

The lovely flower has faded

*Unknown at top of monument  
Footstone*

---



## Ida L.

Daughter of J. L. & T. A.

## Williams

Born  
September 6<sup>th</sup>, 1892  
Died  
September 9<sup>th</sup>, 1892

Early plucked is early bliss.

*Unknown at top of monument  
Footstone*

*Martha Ann Wilson, youngest daughter of  
Ephraim, married twice - - First husband was  
Alfred Warren Whitsett. Second husband was  
Oliver Henry Lee*

---

**Martha A.  
Lee**

Born 1837

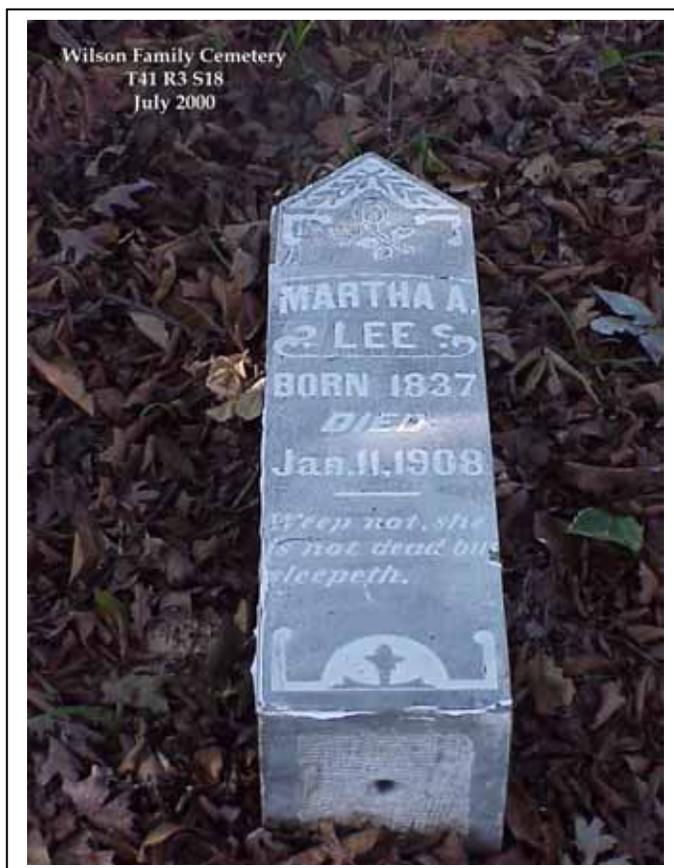
Died  
January 11<sup>th</sup>, 1908

Weep not, she is not dead but sleepeth.

*Footstone*

*Martha Ann Wilson, youngest daughter of Ephraim, married twice - - First husband was Alfred Warren Whitsett. **Second husband was Oliver Henry Lee.***

---



It is not known who occupies this walled grave. The letters on the footstone read D. A. F. Possibly a Frost.

---



*I would like to express my sincere thanks to Lynn McKay, whose ancestors are buried in this cemetery, and the Weber Family who have owned the land for a long time, in helping me locate this cemetery and supplying background information for this article.*

*Copyright © 2000 Dave Hallemann  
This article may be distributed in any form as long as there  
are no fees charged, and the author is given credit.*