

Willis F. Martin Gravesite

By Dave Hallemann



This previously unknown gravesite with its like new monument is located in T39 R3 S2 SE/SW.

38° 7' 55" N / 90° 40' 24" W

Visited 8th October 2006 by Dave Hallemann and Carole Goggin.

This cemetery is on land first entered by Willis F. Martin of Jefferson County Missouri on September 25th, 1835, recorded 7th November 1837 as certificate number 5576, for the E½ of the SW¼ of T39 R3 S2 containing 85.⁶⁶ acres.

Willis F. Martin, a farmer, born 1806 in Georgia, came to Missouri in 1812 per Whitaker A. Martin's biography on page 1049 in *Goodspeed's History of Franklin, Jefferson, Washington, Crawford, and Gasconade Counties of Missouri*. His wife Lucy N. (Mothershead) born in Kentucky was still alive at the time of this history, 1888, at the age of 78. It is not known if she or any children are buried along side Willis as no other monuments were located. In his biography Whitaker states that his parents raised a family of seven children.

1830 Census show a W. F. L. Martin in Jefferson County. A male 20-30 years old, probably Willis; a boy 0-5 years old; and 2 females 15-20 years old.

1840 Census we find; Martin, Willis F., 1 male 30-40, 1 male 10-15, 1 male 5-10, 2 males 0-5; 1 female 30-40, and 1 female 5-10.

1850 Census list; Martin Willis F. 45 year old farmer; Lucy 39 years old; Margaret A. 16; Whitaker A. 14; Louis C. 12; Stephen D. 9; and Susan E. 7. Whitaker, Louis, and Stephen all being in school.

1860 Census; Martin, Willis S. 55 year old farmer; Lucy N. 50; Whitaker 25 year old clerk; Stephen D. 18 year old farm hand; Susan E. 16 year old Spin stress; and S. E. Mothershead, 10 year old female. (*It should be noted here that Willis became guardian of some of the Mothershead children. This could explain Whitaker stating his parents raised seven children.*)

Willis F. Martin dies on May 28th, 1863 per monument.

1870 Census list no Martins from this family in Jefferson County.

Probate # 784 for Martin, Willis F. states the following; Lucy N. Martin appointed Administratrix of Estate; Personal property appraised at over \$ 1400.⁰⁰ (*this is a large amount in 1864*), Willis owned the following land at the time of his death; E2/SW S2 T39 R3, 85.⁶⁶ acres,

NE/NW S11 T39 R3, 42.⁹⁷ acres, one tract purchased of Luther Johnson and wife part of W2/SW S11 T39 R3, also N2/W2/NW S14 T39 R3.

Heirs are listed as Lucy N. Martin widow, Margaret, Whitaker, Lewis, Stephen, and Susan.

The Will of Willis Martin states that he “owes no man”, gives his wife the farm and all personal property, Margaret H. Maudwell oldest daughter “...no more than her share unless I recover all my Negro property; Whitaker A. and Lewis C. \$ 500⁰⁰, Stephen D. and Susan E. my two youngest children \$ 500⁰⁰, and in case my Negro property is not recovered...”

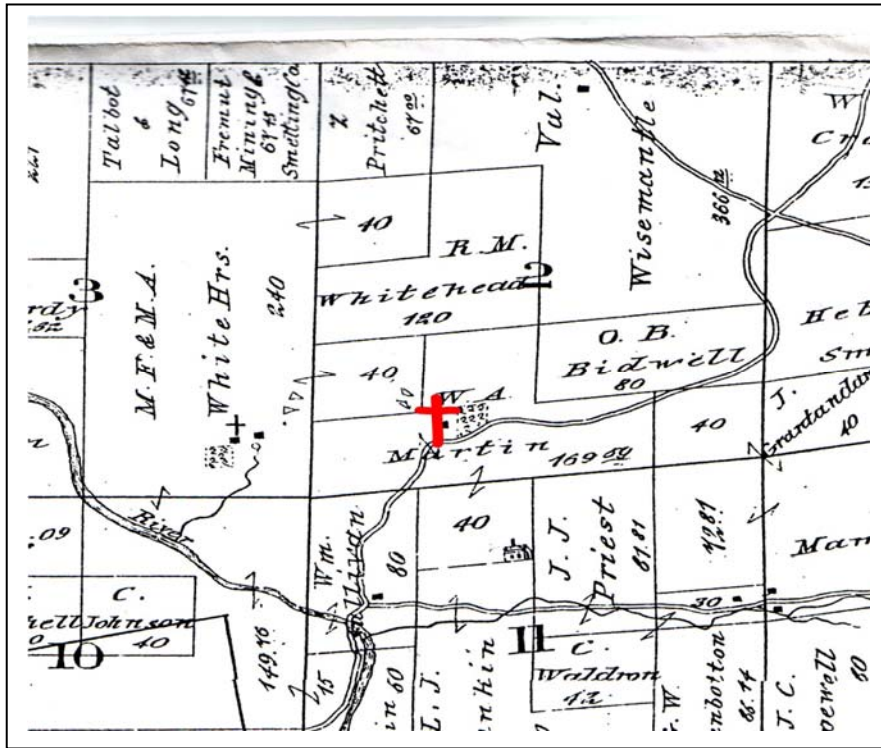
The Martin heirs hold onto the property until 12th March 1895 when Whitaker. A. Martin and wife Mollie of Crawford County, Lewis C. Martin and wife Jennie, Stephen D. Martin and wife Sallie of Morley, Scott County, sell the land to James F. Nichols for \$1200.⁰⁰ “...S2/W2/SW & SW/SE & E2/SW S2 & NE/NW (less 1 acre heretofore conveyed for a school for *white* children) S11, all in T39 R3 containing 212.⁶³ acres...” being recorded in Book 41 at Page 601. (*Evidently the other children had either sold their interest to the above three or had passed away.*)

23rd December 1897 James F. Nichols sells the tract to John C. King and wife Ida for \$3000.⁰⁰, (same legal description), being recorded in Book 46 at Page 365.

Although no deed excepting out the cemetery was found I feel confident that we can put an “official” name of **Willis F. Martin Gravesite** on this location.

Willis F. Martin was obviously a slave holder from his statements in his will “...if I recover my Negro property...”.

Goodspeed’s biography of Whitaker A. Martin states...“a druggist in Steelville, was born in Jefferson County, Mo. In 1835. Reared a farmer and received a limited education, he began clerking in Washington County when twenty years of age, in which capacity he was employed until 1861, when he entered the army as a captain of Company A. White’s Battalion, Missouri State Guards (*Confederate Unit*); having served his term of enlistment he was on to join the regular service when he was taken prisoner, though soon afterward paroled. From 1864 to 1866 he was engaged in mining gold in Montana; and then returned to Missouri he spent some years in contracting on the Iron Mountain Railroad. For a short time he was commissioned stock merchant in East St. Louis, and in 1886 he bought a stock of drugs in Steelville, where he has since been actively engaged in business. In 1870 he married Susan J. Scott and to their union were born two children. Mrs. Martin died and in 1885 Mr. Martin married Mollie Mayes, by whom he has one daughter. Politically Mr. Martin is s staunch Democrat. His parents...were among the earliest settlers of Jefferson County.”



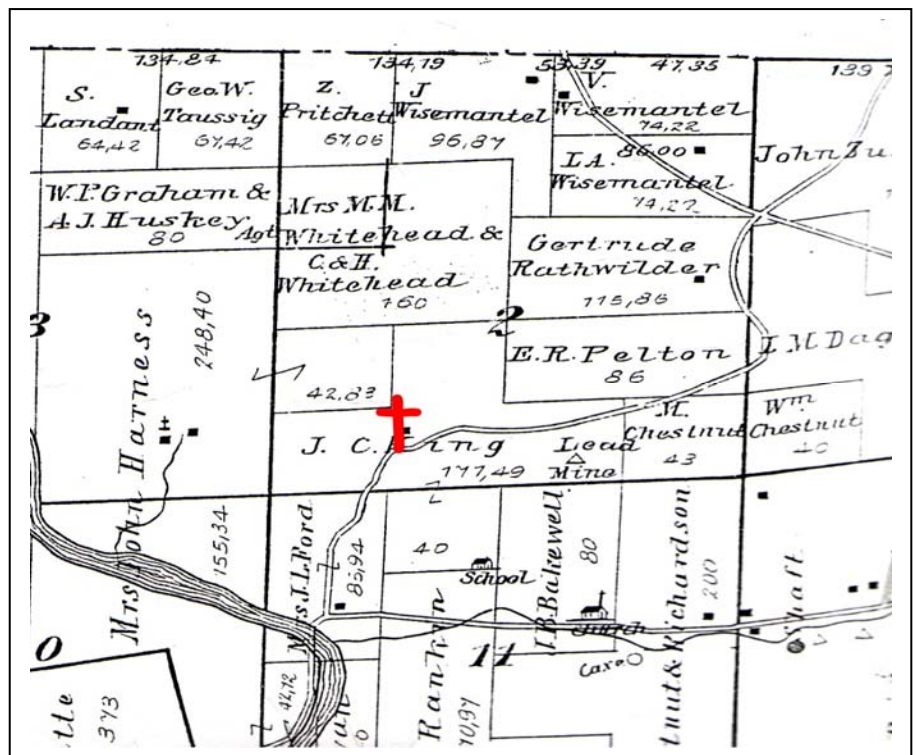
As can be seen in the picture at left, on 1876 Atlas of Jefferson County, W. A. Martin is listed as owner of the property. The cross I added to the photo to denote the approximate location of the gravesite.

Note the Oakland School (for white children) located in Section 11.

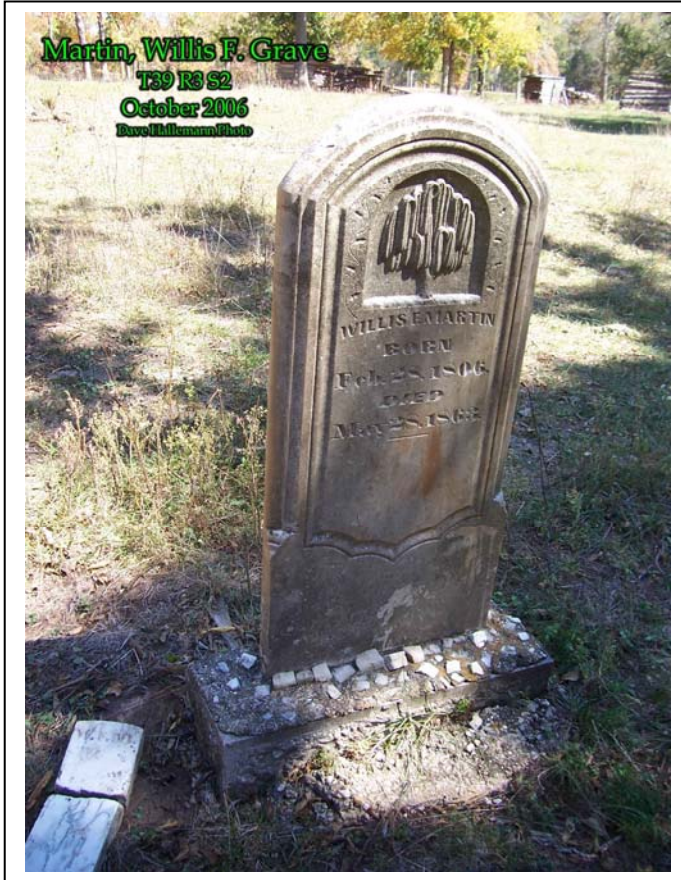
The small symbols on the nearby White's 240 and 40 acre tracts are mines.

On the 1898 Atlas the tract has been sold to J. C. King. As before I added the cross to show location.

Also note the lead mine located on the property. Mammoth Church now shows up down the road.



The following person is listed on the monument in this cemetery;



Weeping Willow
at top

Willis F. Martin

Born
Feb. 28, 1806

Died
May 28, 1863

Quartz crystals are laid around base of monument.
Footstone W. F. M.

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