

DEMPSEY PERKERSON FAMILY CEMETERY.

Location: River Road at Fork Creek, Land Lot #38, 15th.
District, DeKalb County, Panthersville District.

Recorded Feb. 6, 1932.

There are approximately 12 visible graves in this old family cemetery, only three of which bear inscribed markers. Among those not marked is the grave of Dempsey Perkinson, who died in 1875 at the age of 97.

Following are the inscriptions:

Waldrop
aldrop, Emma Warren.
aldrop, Thomas M.
aldrop, William D.

Oct. 16, 1847 - Aug. 11, 1924.

March 4, 1847 - June 23, 1928.

April 11, 1876 - Feb. 7, 1925.

PERKERSON CEMETERY PRESERVATION FUND
3812 Overlook Trail
Kennesaw, GA 30144-2040
May 1993

Dear Perkerson Family Member:

The Cemetery of Dempsey Perkerson and his family on River Road in DeKalb County, Georgia, is in need of our maintenance and repair. The entire area including the cemetery is currently for sale and the agent for the realty firm is Samuel Masters, a descendant of Rev. Samuel Masters, a close friend of Dempsey Perkerson in the 1800's. The housing development across the street from the cemetery is all black and a black owns the adjacent property to the property which is for sale.

Last November my husband and I worked an entire day to clear large pines which had been toppled by a tornado in April of 1990. Trees covered the entire cemetery. With the help of three hired workers and a non-Perkerson cousin, we worked eight hours on the cemetery. We personally paid the three workmen. We are about half finished with the cleaning of the cemetery area.

Known to be buried at the Perkerson Cemetery is Dempsey Perkerson, his wife, Nancy Ward Perkerson, and at least one of his children, Martha Perkerson Waldrop. Martha Waldrop's son, Thomas Madison Dempsey Perkerson, his wife, Nancy Emmaline Warren Waldrop, and Martha's daughter, Georgia Waldrop, are also known to be buried at the cemetery, as well as Thomas and Emma's son, William. Dempsey owned several slaves who lived with him following the "War of Northern Aggression" and they are likely buried in the cemetery, as well as some of the Indians which he helped "hide out" on the South River after most Cherokees were banished from the State of Georgia. These Indians were the source of Dempsey's "chest of gold" which he is said to have had at his death. There are likely 25 or more buried at the cemetery.

Upon Dempsey's death, the property passed to his grandson, Thomas Waldrop, with whom he lived his final years. Upon Thomas's death, the property was sold by his son, Homer D. Waldrop, with the remaining stipulation that the 1/2 acre cemetery was set aside in the deed. Mr. Masters, agent, states that the cemetery is marked on the plat of the property which is still for sale.

I am writing to request your financial help to complete the restoration and fencing of the Perkerson Cemetery to prevent encroachment on the graves of our ancestors. Although the State of Georgia has passed legislation to prevent desecration of family and other cemeteries, nothing is safe from developers. This cemetery sits in the middle of a 40 acre plus tract which is for sale for development. Only a fence can adequately set the boundaries of the cemetery and serve as a protection from such future development.

A similar cemetery in Cobb County is likely to be moved to allow the construction of a Nalley Automobile dealership. (The developer planned to use a front-end loader to relocate graves to another site in the area.)

To adequately insure that we are preserving the Perkerson Cemetery, we actually need the following measures:

- (1) Archaeological survey to determine all burial sites.
- (2) Re-survey the property as per the description in the deed to ascertain boundaries of the designated cemetery.
- (3) Removal of the remainder of the pine trees and underbrush prior to fencing.
- (4) Installation of a chain link fence with gate and another sign on fence stating PERKERSON CEMETERY, and an emergency address to contact if there are problems.

My parents placed the marble marker PERKERSON CEMETERY at the cemetery about 10 years ago. (One requirement of the state law is that the cemetery be clearly marked and show evidence of care by the descendants.) Last November, my family and I placed a grave marker for Dempsey and his wife at the cemetery. Many of the graves are field stone marked.

I am writing to request your help with these needs. Although I have been working on the cemetery myself for the past six years, I can remember my Great Uncle Homer Waldrop talking about his care of the cemetery through the years. I am one of only two great-grandchildren of Thomas and Emma Waldrop, and my cousin lives in Colorado. My Mother, Mildred Pattillo Hill, and my Aunt, Virla Pattillo Smith, are in their 80's and no longer able to provide the manual labor and leadership to maintain the cemetery. For that reason, I am committed to obtaining other Perkerson descendants in this effort to preserve the cemetery.

Your support, both financially and morally, is needed to preserve this cemetery. Mr. Franklin Garrett, Atlanta Historian, states often that Dempsey Perkerson was "one of the most influential founders of the Atlanta area." He has found numerous documents which indicate all of Dempsey's efforts in the early 1800's which made a difference even today.

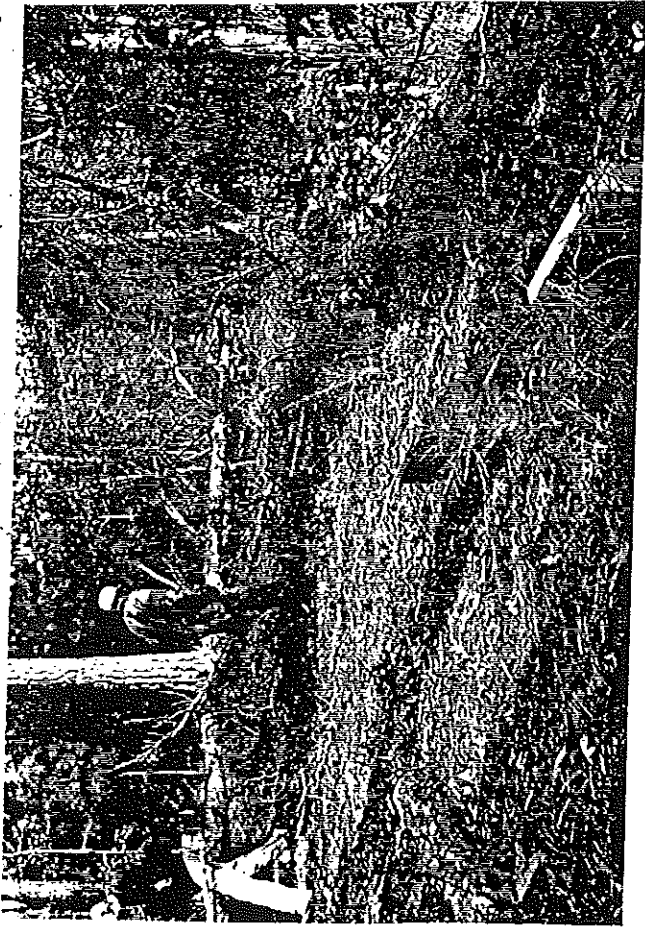
I would hope that sufficient funds could be raised this year to complete the project by December, 1993. We have set the first Saturday in November, 1993, for the final work day to clear the cemetery of the other trees and brush. Fencing could take place immediately after that. Both surveys need to be completed prior to November. I shall hope to hear from you regarding your commitment to help with this project.

With regards,

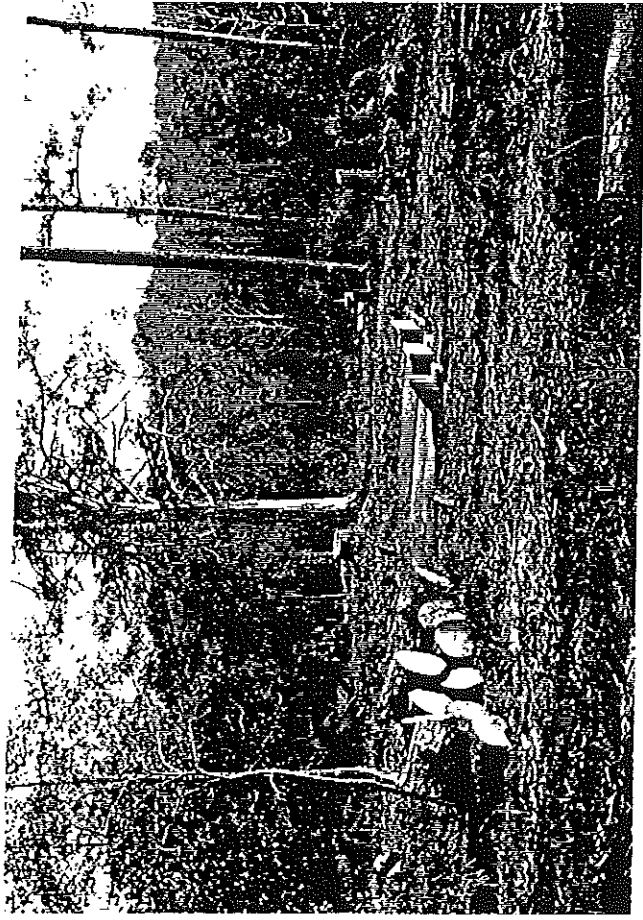


(Mrs.) Mimi Jo Hill Butler

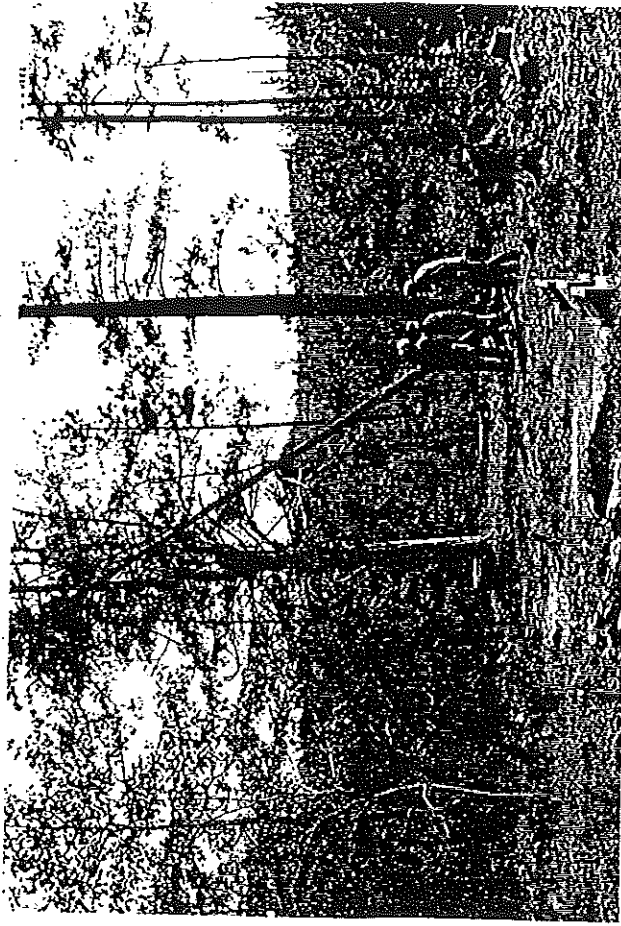
PERKERSON CEMETERY, River Road, DeKalb Co, GA



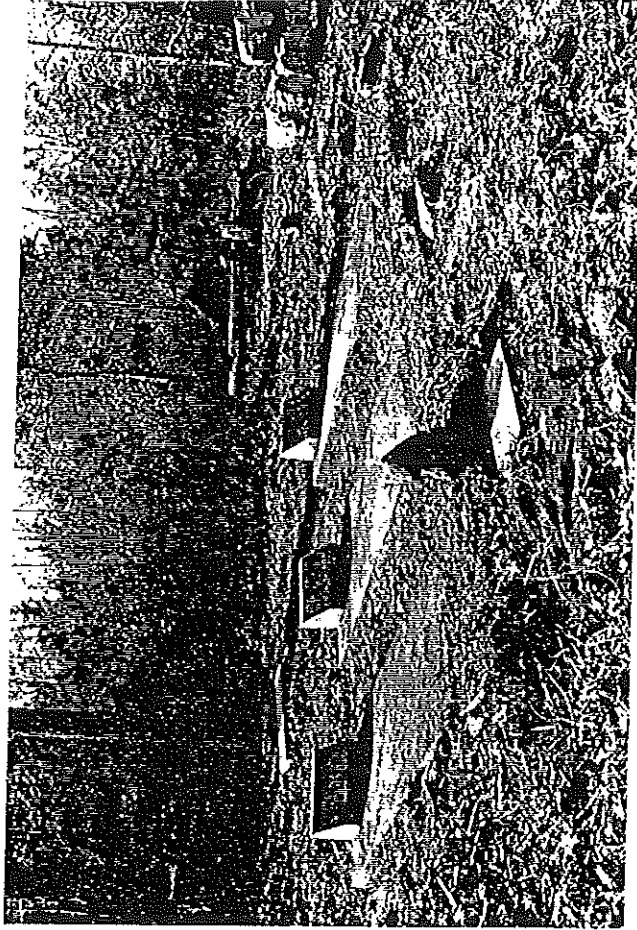
Trees felled by tornado crossed markers and blocked the Perkerson Cemetery. These trees had to be cleared first.



Perkerson Cemetery showing remaining pines which need to be cut and cleared before installing fence. Large roots of uprooted pines are visible in the background.



Other tall pines in the cemetery area were then cut to prevent others from falling on graves and markers. My husband and three hired men worked hard to clear the area.



Newly installed marker for Dempsey & Nancy Ward Perkerson, Waldrop markers, and the Perkerson Cemetery marker installed by J.B. & Mildred Pattillo Hill & Virila Pattillo Smith some 10 years ago. Some 25-30 other graves are visible in the cleared area.