

Brantley Cemetery, Chilton County, Alabama

By Derric Scott, October 29, 2025 from various sources.

The **Brantley Cemetery** is the family cemetery of Henry T. Brantley. It is in the NW ¼ of the SE ¼ of the NE ¼ of S14 T23 R12E in the general Mars Hill Community area.

The cemetery occupies the point of a ridge overlooking Mahan Creek, which is a steep 50 feet below. The three visible graves (one headstone and two depressions) occupy almost the full width of the point. The *Cemeteries of Chilton* book lists 4 unmarked graves, 2 adults and 2 children – those additional ones were not noticed on this brief visit. Several trees were down from storm activity, one in the cemetery area. Several other dead ones were also standing in the cemetery posing a future danger to the headstone.

The likely old home place is about 150 feet east of the cemetery. Mahan Creek was the original dividing line between Bibb County, to the west, and Shelby County, to the east, in the days before Chilton County was created.

Henry T. Brantley was born in Walton, GA on July 11, 1815 to Joshua and Temperance Brantley. He married Sarah Hendricks on July 23, 1840 and raised his family in Georgia through 1870. In April 1878 he patented 80 acres of land in Chilton County Alabama where the cemetery is now located - the entire E ½ of the NE ¼ of S14 T23N R12E. He acquired this property under the 1862 Homestead Act which allowed homesteaders to claim up to 160 acres of land after 5 years of living on and improving it. This would imply that he had moved to Alabama before 1874 and after the 1870 U. S. Census in Georgia.

The Brantley families eventually owned much more property in the area besides that surrounding the cemetery. This property stayed in the Brantley family until about 1936 when T. V. Mims was shown paying taxes on it. About 10 years later, Howard C. Edwards has it and the next year (1946) Herman C. Edwards was paying the taxes. It is still owned by Edwards family descendants today.

The directions to the cemetery in the *Cemeteries of Chilton* book reference going to "Edwardsville." Local residents still use the term; however, no mentions in any other documents of "Edwardsville" have been found.

While still in Georgia, in 1838 Henry T. Brantley joined Captain Tuggle's Company of Lindsay's Georgia Mounted Volunteers as a private. This unit was raised in support of the Cherokee Wars, specifically to conduct the removal of the Cherokees from Georgia to Oklahoma (part of the "Trail of Tears"). On October 20, 1892 Henry was recorded as receiving his pension for his service in the Indian Wars. Six years later, on July 26, 1898, his wife Sarah A. applied for his pension as a widow.

During the Civil War Henry T. Brantley served in the CSA. His wife Sarah's Alabama Confederate pension application, May 4th, 1908, stated that Henry had died on May 14, 1898. She said she owned the 80 acres and a horse and cow. She did not list his unit. He did sign an Oath Book in Georgia after the war.

Henry and Sarah had 6 children and some moved to Alabama with them. In particular, John N. Brantley (b Mar 3, 1846 – d Jan 1, 1934) lived and owned property in the area, including his parents' property and the cemetery site after their deaths. John N. Brantley is buried in Smith's Cemetery which is only about a mile south of his parents' gravesites. Other children were Isaac Monroe "Ike," Mary Francis (Thompson), Levi G., Piety E., and Sarah Adaline (Wallace). Sarah Brantley's funeral was conducted by Rev. Posey on November 6th, 1910. It is assumed that she is buried beside her husband.