

Old Mars Hill Cemetery, Chilton County, Alabama

By Derric Scott, August 19, 2024 from various sources.

The **Old Mars Hill Cemetery** is located west of Jemison on Chilton County Road 42. It lies about 450 feet east of the road, ½ mile west of the current Mars Hill Baptist Church location. This is in the NW ¼ of the NW ¼ of Section 30, T23N, R13E. The cemetery has one legible, badly broken, headstone and 8 or more visible bases and marker fragments distributed around a small area. Many of the marker fragments have slightly legible carvings on them. The total size of the cemetery is unknown.

William D. Scott Family

William D. (Douglas?) Scott was born about 1790 in Virginia and was one of the earliest settlers in central Alabama. He lived in the area now known as Chilton County as early as 1820 and bought the land where the cemetery is located from the U. S. Government on May 22, 1835. William D. Scott apparently owned the property for about the next four decades, until his death in about 1872. (This may be the same William Scott that moved into Cherokee country while it was still the Alabama Territory, likely moving through Huntsville and then down in to the central part of the state).

His son, William Dudley ("Dudley") Scott, is the only burial with a currently visible and legible headstone. Dudley was born about 1826 in Alabama. He was a CSA soldier with a very long resume – see his service information below. He was badly wounded in both legs on October 7, 1864 at the battle of Darbytown and New Market Roads, near Richmond, Virginia. He died only 8 years after the war at the age of 47.

Very likely the deaths of these two men only about one year apart led to financial hardship for the remaining family members. Within a year of Dudley's death, I. N. and R. J. Langston owned the property and were paying taxes on it. Langston family members continued to own it until the 1890s. William Dudley Scott's wife, Catherine, received an Alabama CSA pension in the 1899 – 1910 timeframe (where she listed his death date as April 17, 1873) and it was noted she had no property.

Mars Hill Baptist Church

Mars Hill Baptist Church was first mentioned in the Mulberry Baptist Association Minutes in 1885 with representatives from the Langston and Scott families and Pastor J. M. Gothard. Note that the church was NOT mentioned in the 1881, or prior, minutes. There are no 1882, 1883, or 1884 minutes online; so it is possible that the church existed and joined the Association in the years 1882-1884, but they were definitely there by 1885.

The Mars Hill Baptist Church bought the property for their new (current) location in 1886 and the first documented burial in the **new** Mars Hill Cemetery was February 9, 1887.

Likely History

Referencing the above dates, it appears probable that the cemetery was originally the William D. Scott family cemetery; since burials were done there more than a decade before the first mentions of the Mars Hill Baptist Church. The Langston family was very active in the early Mars Hill Church and owned the old cemetery property at the time of the apparent church formation; so it is possible or likely that the cemetery was used as the church cemetery from about 1883 through 1886.

The grave listing of the Old Mars Hill Cemetery from the *Cemeteries of Chilton* census:

Last Name	First Name	Birth	Death	Comment
Scott	William Dudley	Illegible	(Apr 17, 1873)	Age 47Y, Broken slab, "May the rest..."
Illegible				Numerous broken pieces, headstone bases

William Dudley Scott's CSA Service Records (2.5 years)

Mar 28, 1862 - **Enlisted at Centreville/Six Mile** by Harrison, 3 years (or length of war), age 41.

Private, Co F, 44th Regiment Alabama Infantry

Jun 30, 1862 - **Richmond sick**, furloughed (Aug 29, 1862, Typhoid Fever)

Aug 30, 1862 - **Second Manasas, VA - sick** (Company lost 22% of 130)

Sep 17, 1862 - **Sharpsburg, MD - sick** (Company lost 70% of 113)

Dec, 1862 - **Richmond sick**, furloughed

Mar 1863 - **present**

May 3, 1863 - **Suffolk, VA - present** (w/ Longstreet)

July 2, 1863 - **Gettysburg, PA - present** (Company lost 26% of 363)

Sep 19-20, 1863 - **Chickamauga, GA - present** (w/ Longstreet)

Oct 28, 1863 - **Raccoon Mtn, TN - absent/AWOL**

Nov 29, 1863 - **Knoxville, TN - absent/AWOL**

Jan 7, 1864 - **Dandridge, TN - absent/AWOL**

(My theory is that he went home for a time while the army was so close to Alabama).

May 6, 1864 - **Wilderness, VA - present** (27 killed, 112 wounded)

May 8, 1864 - **Spotsylvania, VA - present**

May 24, 1864 - **Hanover Junction, VA - present**

Jun 1, 1864 - **Mechanicsville, VA - present**

Jun 3, 1864 - **Cold Harbor, VA - present**

Richmond-Petersburg Campaign

Jun 17, 1864 - **Bermuda Hundreds, VA - present**

Aug 14, 1864 - **New Market Hill, VA - present**

Aug 16, 1864 - **White's Tavern, VA - present**

Sep 29, 1864 - **Ft. Gilmer, VA - present**

Sep 30, 1864 - **Ft. Harrison, VA - present**

Oct 7, 1864 - **Darby Town, VA - present - severely wounded in both legs**

(Battle of Darbytown and New Market Roads)

Oct 8, 1864 - **Hospital, Howard's Grove, Richmond, VA**

Oct 13, 1864 - **Darby Town, VA - absent/wounded**

Mar 25, 1865 - **Petersburg, VA** (siege ends) (**not present**)

Apr 9, 1865 - **Appomattox Courthouse, VA** (surrender) (**not present**)

Jun 16, 1865 - **Talladega, AL**, paroled ("POW")

(My current understanding is that a lot of local CSA veterans went to the U. S. Army installation at Talladega after the war to get officially "paroled." It's also possible he was taken as a POW from the Howard's Grove Hospital in Richmond but there is no record of that.)

(Dudley's birth and death dates are inexact; one record says he was 41 years old when enlisted in 1862 which calculates to birth 1821 and death 1868 - as tombstone says 47 years old. His wife listed his death date as April 17, 1873 and, using age 47, gives 1826 - 1873. US Census ages vary widely: 1850 FC - 22 (b1828); 1860 FC - 30 (b1830); 1870 FC - 50 (b1820). The most reliable seems to be the wife's repeated death date statement of Apr 17, 1873 and the age on the tombstone (47) yielding birth date between April 18, 1825 and April 17, 1826.)