

Old Stanton Cemetery, Chilton County, Alabama

By Derric Scott

The **Old Stanton Cemetery** is a small graveyard across the road from the present-day **Ebenezer Baptist Church** in Stanton. It is located on the property of the Ebenezer Church's pastorium in the back yard. All this church property was obtained from George A. Oden by the church in 1854.

The **Ebenezer Baptist Church** is one of the three oldest churches in what is now Chilton County. It played a central role in the Civil War Battle of Ebenezer Church in April of 1865 and the old building bore the scars until it was destroyed by fire in the early 20th Century.

The ***Cemeteries of Chilton*** book has this cemetery listed twice, first as **Wright #2**, surveyed in 1979, and then as **Old Stanton**, surveyed in 1989. It also has three entries in the U. of A. Cemetery listing as **Old Stanton** (#230) and **Wright** ("see **Old Stanton**") and **Stanton** (#137). There is no Alabama Cemetery Preservation Alliance (ACPA) entry for it. It has also been called **Old Ebenezer Cemetery** in a few places but we'll use **Old Stanton Cemetery** as the name. It is unclear why the COCC lists it as "**Wright #2**" – as there doesn't seem to be a **Wright #1** in the book as published and the U. of A. Atlas simply lists it as **Wright**.

Visible are two headstones, one of which is a double headstone for two of O. H. P. and Kate Longhorne Chambers Wright's children. There is also a large plot with an extensive wrought iron fence around it, but no headstones are visible inside. There has been no information found about the plot and fence.

The new Presbyterian Church was sharing the Ebenezer Baptist Church's building in the timeframe of the mid to late 1880s when these burials were done. Oliver Hazard Perry (O. H. P.) Wright was an early deacon in the Presbyterian Church in Stanton. From a short history of the Presbyterian Church in Stanton written by James R. McArthur in 1889 the church was started after preaching services on June 4, 1885. They organized the church immediately with about 10 members, including the McArthurs and the Coes. At the time of this history (1889) they still did not have a building but were planning to buy the school building being used as their meeting place, which was owned by the Gregory Coe Lumber Co.

There is little known about the origins of this cemetery. Perhaps it was really the cemetery of the Presbyterian Church, although it is on land owned by Ebenezer Church since 1854? Perhaps the Presbyterians were sharing a cemetery with Ebenezer Church as well as the building? Perhaps it was originally a family cemetery which might explain the fenced plot? Ebenezer Church was burying people in the larger, currently active, cemetery just up the road in this timeframe so it wasn't likely the primary cemetery for Ebenezer Church in the 1880s and later.

Newspaper mentions have been found of the deaths of all three of the known burials.