

The grave of Sarah Crockett Goodgame is perhaps Chilton County's most famous gravesite. The lady, who moved to Alabama from Georgia in 1819, has been rumored to be the sister of the famous Davy Crockett, but there is no evidence to support that. However, due to this association the lady's grave has been vandalized in the past with both her original headstone and a replacement headstone having gone missing. David Dennis, President of the Chilton County Historical Society and a descendant of the lady, says that hers is one of the most well documented burials he's ever seen. He can even tell you from where the brass tack used in her coffin were purchased.

The gravesite, at the Mullins Cemetery in old Jumbo, has suffered the indignity of not only the headstones being stolen, but also vandals seeking gold and jewelry once dug up the lady's remains. Several other graves and headstones at the Mullins Cemetery were also vandalized or dug up.

When the Chilton Cemetery Association, a nonprofit group dedicated to working on the counties cemeteries, formed last January they set as one of their first goals to get a granite slab for the lady's grave that would be heavy enough to discourage vandals. Money was raised for this project among their members and at special events then given a large boost when David Dennis offered to match donations. Katherine Reece, the CCA secretary and treasurer, requested quotes from the county's monument companies and was thrilled when Tim Mims of Mims Memorials in Maplesville offered the group a price on a 6' X 6' X 6" slab that was well below the going rate. Not only did the nonprofit group get a good price on the slab but also on the text to be engraved and the placement of the stone. "We paid close to half what we had expected to pay for Sarah's slab," said Reece "I know Tim isn't making a penny on this slab and in fact dug into his own pockets to make this happen." The text alone would have cost quite a bit since the group wanted the same information that was on her original stone on the slab. "In those days headstones were almost autobiographies," said Reece. Tim Mims and his assistant Wesley Milton placed the slab. Thanks to Glenn Littleton, a picture of her original headstone was available with all the original text visible. Her original headstone read:

Sacred To the memory of Sarah Crocket, wife of John Goodgame. Born in Virginia A.D. 1780 moved to Georgia, in early life. Removed to Alabama in 1819. Attached herself to the Baptist Church the same year and lived an orderly member until she departed this life the 30th, of Sept. 1853. Aged 73 years. Blessed in the dead which die in the Lord.

"Tim tells me this slab weighs 1,700 pounds," said Reece, "I hope that's large enough to discourage vandals."

Most memorial companies charge \$3 per letter to engrave a stone. Mims offered the group such a good price on the granite slab that the CCA has enough money left over to almost purchase headstone for Sarah Crockett Goodgame's daughter-in-law, Sara Raspberry Goodgame, and her grandson, Reese Goodgame. They are buried at a nearby cemetery, which was also heavily vandalized. Sarah's son, John Goodgame's headstone was also destroyed but since he was a veteran of the late Creek War of 1836 the group was able to get a veteran's stone for him at no charge.

Thanks to the landowners, Charles and Mildred Jones, the CCA held a clean up day at the cemetery last November and cleared out all the trees that had grown up in the cemetery. In the process several headstones that had also been vandalized were found, cleaned and moved back to their original locations. Pieces of the headstone for Willie Waggoner, whose headstone states had died at the age of four, were found 50 feet away from his grave. After the rest of the volunteers had left Jeff Reece, President of the Chilton Cemetery Association, found an old field rock that had been hand cut to read M. M. Ellison. The group contacted Benny Ellison and showed him the rock, Benny said the Ellison's had always heard that one of their ancestress, Mahala Mary Ellison, had been buried at the Mullins Cemetery by her husband when he came home on leave from the Civil War.