



Photo of Mound Bayou Cemetery (photo by Michelle Woodham, 26 Aug 2008)

# TYPES OF HEADSTONES FOUND IN MOUND BAYOU CEMETERY

## ABSTRACT

Between 2008 and 2023, several different people have walked through Mound Bayou cemetery, capturing both data and photographs of the conditions observed in the cemetery. These photographs have been examined and used to describe the wide variety of grave marker types as well as some of the adverse conditions that are prevalent in the cemetery. This summary report highlights both the types of markers and the short biographical information available on WikiTree.com to emphasize the importance of addressing the historical preservation needs of the cemetery.

Dot Tribble

7/1/2024

Headstone photographs  
courtesy of Susan Allen

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## INTRODUCTION

Between 2008 and 2023, several different people have walked through Mound Bayou cemetery, capturing both data and photographs of the conditions observed in the cemetery. Many have been posted to the Findagrave website (Findagrave.com). These photographs have been examined and used to identify the wide variety of grave marker types as well as some of the adverse conditions that are prevalent in the Mound Bayou Cemetery. This summary report focuses solely on Mound Bayou Cemetery, but similar conditions exist for nearly all the cemeteries in the Mound Bayou District. The purpose of this document is to highlight both the types of markers encountered in Mound Bayou Cemetery and use the short biographical information available on WikiTree.com to emphasize the importance of addressing the historical significance of some of the citizens buried here as well as the preservation needs of the cemetery.

## MOUND BAYOU COMMONS

The goal of the Mound Bayou One Place Study (MB OPS) team is to assist in completing documentation for Mound Bayou Commons. As part of the One Place Study research, the team has adopted the term “Mound Bayou Commons” to refer to three separate cemeteries as a whole: Mound Bayou Cemetery, Hearon Cemetery (including the extension) and Sanders or Wesley cemetery (See Figure 1). The initial objective has been to photograph headstones in each of these cemeteries, upload those photographs to the Findagrave website ([www.findagrave.com](http://www.findagrave.com)), and to create profiles (biographical information) for each person on WikiTree, a free collaborative genealogy website ([www.wikitree.com](http://www.wikitree.com)), thus contributing to the overall goal to collect in one place information and resources to assist in building and documenting African-American Genealogies.

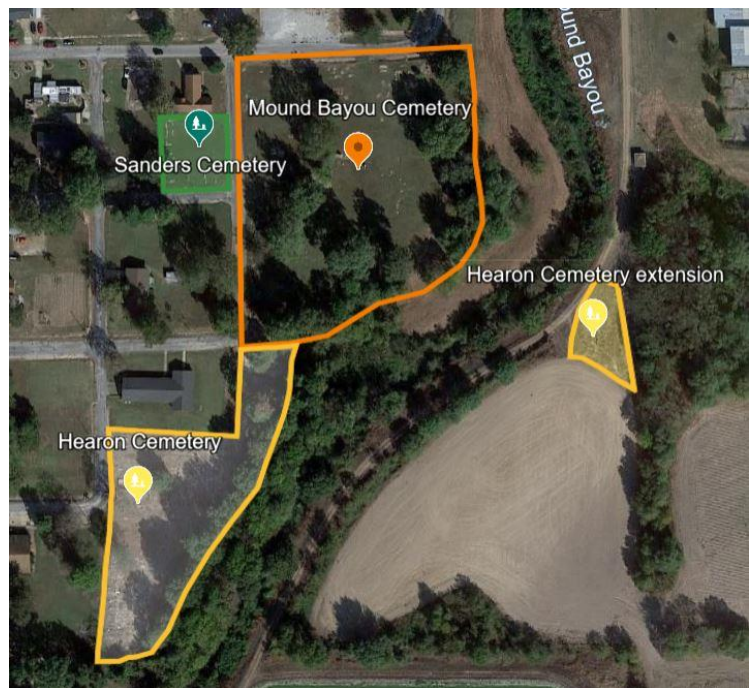


Figure 1 Aerial View of properties referred to as Mound Bayou Commons

While this work continues, the MB OPS team recognizes additional work is needed to:

- Respect and honor the memories of departed loved ones.
- Prevent the degradation of irreplaceable historical landmarks.
- Organize continued maintenance of these cemeteries.
- Expand access to cemetery records.
- Provide multimedia-based methods of record retention and sharing.
- Increase tourism by promoting the unique contributions of the citizens of Mound Bayou

## MOUND BAYOU CEMETERY

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Mound Bayou Cemetery is Mound Bayou's first city cemetery and its oldest municipal burial ground. This section contains a historical narrative the cemetery's development, an examination of its historic integrity and significance, and a discussion of existing conditions observed in the cemetery.

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This report focuses solely on Mound Bayou Cemetery. The purpose of this document is to highlight both the types of markers encountered in Mound Bayou Cemetery and use the short biographical information available on WikiTree.com to emphasize the importance of addressing the historical significance of some of the citizens buried here as well as the preservation needs of the cemetery.

## HISTORY

In 1886, Isaiah Montgomery, his cousin Benjamin Green and several other men arrived by train to a site about halfway between Memphis and Vicksburg. The area was enveloped by dense forest and swampy terrain but by the fall of that year, the men had succeeded in clearing around ninety acres of land and had erected a sawmill and several small houses. The spot they chose was near the convergence of two small bayous and the site of Native American mounds, thus the settlers christened their new town Mound Bayou. The founders cut down trees, drained bayous, built up the land, fought off wild animals, and lived as frontiersmen. In 1898 the citizens petitioned to have it incorporated as a village.

The first cemetery developed for the Mound Bayou village was Mound Bayou cemetery, believed to have been established about 1890. The earliest burial currently documented is that of Addie Montgomery, the daughter of Isaiah Montgomery. The cemetery has been described as an irregular shaped plot of land west of the waterway known as Mound Bayou, west of Montgomery Street and Lafayette Avenue, and south of Martin Luther King Drive. In his book, *The Negro at Mound Bayou*, published in 1910, A. P. Hood provided details on the cemetery and important burials there:<sup>1</sup>

### **"UNDERTAKING-CEMETERY**

*The climate of this section of Mississippi is not less healthy than is ordinarily found to be the case elsewhere. It has not been as yet necessary to compile any table of mortuary statistics for the Mound Bayou district, though it is true that occasionally some members of the community is called hence from the midst of life's engagements to the exploration of the dim and distant realm beyond. For this contingency Mr. Jno. W. Francis undertakes to provide, keeping constantly on hand a full and acceptable assortment of coffins, caskets, burial robes and other funeral supplies. On the east side of the town in the midst of a pretty grove ample ground has*

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<sup>1</sup> Hood, Aurelius P, and Marshall Frady. "The Negro at Mound Bayou: Being an Authentic Story of the Founding, Growth and Development of the "most Celebrated Town in the South," Covering a Period of Twenty-two Years." [Nashville, Tenn.]: [Printed by A.M.E. Sunday School Union], 1910. Undertaking-Cemetery, page 21. Available at <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/emu.010002630190>

*been set aside for burial purposes and here is deposited for final repose the remains of those who while resident at Mound Bayou, "Left the warm precincts of the cheerful day," passed from ceaseless toils and cares of life and entered into the mystic experiences of the life that follows death. Here rests the mortal dust of Benjamin Titus Green, of John W. Cobbs, of Peter Montgomery, of Wm. Lewis Jr., of William Thornton Montgomery, of Rufus Williams, and of Geo. W. Cresswell and from this ground, roads sacred by the tender memories entwined about the lives and characters of the departed shall rise the disenthralled spirits of Miss M. Virginia Montgomery, of Mothers Louisa Johnson and Nancy Marr, of Mesdames Hannah Montgomery, Sallie Ramsey, Gladys Farrell Hood, and others who unselfishly wrought with all the powers of which they were capable for the upbuilding of Mound Bayou along the paths of her best interests. Here too, it is the ambition of those of us who still tarry and strive to carry forward the designs which engaged their efforts to "rest in the shade" when the fitful fever of life is over."*

Thus by 1909, the following people of historical significance were already buried in Mound Bayou Cemetery:

1. Benjamin Titus Green (1854 - 1896)
2. John W. Cobbs (abt. 1859 - 1906)
3. Peter Montgomery
4. William Lewis Jr. (abt. 1833 - 1906)
5. William Thornton Montgomery (abt. 1843 - 1909)
6. Rufus Williams (no profile)
7. Geo. W. Cresswell (1884-?)
8. Mary Virginia Montgomery (1850 - 1902)
9. Louisa Johnson (abt. 1873 - ?)
10. Nancy Marr
11. Hannah Montgomery (no profile)
12. Sallie Ramsey
13. Gladys Farrell Hood

These burials have been followed by numerous other prominent citizens of Mound Bayou, including Isaiah T Montgomery.

## GENERAL ADVERSE CONDITIONS

The three most common adverse conditions related to grave markers across all cemeteries include:

- Movement of markers, including tilting away from vertical, sometimes to the point of falling over entirely; sinking or partial burial of the marker; exposure of the concrete foundation; displacement of the headstone from the base or of the footstone or cornerstones from their original locations; and subsidence of burial plots and surrounding ground. Flood damage and/or vandalism appear to be the primary cause of many shifted markers.
- Overhanging trees and encroaching vegetation have displaced and damaged markers (particularly as trees planted next to graves have matured).
- The proximity of grave markers to vegetation has resulted in shady conditions and grave markers being covered with bird droppings, leaf mold, and pollen. This has facilitated biological growth, including lichen, algae, moss, fungus, and bacteria, especially on the unpolished surfaces of grave

markers. Grass clippings that collect on grave markers after mowing and trimming also contribute to biological growth.

- Damage from vehicles, lawn mowers, and trimmers. This is much more prevalent in Mound Bayou Cemetery than in any of the other cemeteries.

Other, less common issues include corrosion of metal elements, loss or theft of bronze urns or markers, cracking, or breakage, worn inscriptions, and stone deterioration (particularly marble).

All cemeteries in Mound Bayou Commons area are in need of extensive resetting and conservation of markers, as well as the removal of overhanging or encroaching vegetation. There also needs to be increased awareness/training of maintenance workers to help them avoid damaging markers and other elements with mowers and trimmers.

There are a few conditions which could potentially pose a safety hazard.

- Tilted markers might fall on someone if they are knocked over or leaned on.
- Partially buried markers and fragments could create a trip hazard for pedestrians or, if unseen by mowing crews, could be broken further, creating dangerous projectiles.
- Sunken plots (subsidence) could create a trip hazard.

## TYPES OF MARKERS

### FLAT MARKERS

This style is designed to be installed on a flat level on the lawn itself. The headstone typically measures 4 inches thick and is usually intended for a single individual only.

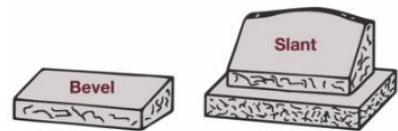


Figure 2 Almeta Thompson Glover

One example of a flat marker is that of Almeta (Thompson) Glover. She was born August 27, 1930, to Samuel Thompson, Jr. and Vanveola Simmons. She was the twin sister of Alfreta (Thompson) Johnson. She married Edgar “Bobby” Glover, Sr. Bobby, a U. S. Army veteran of the Korean War. They were active in the Bethel A.M.E. Church. Almeta passed away on 25 February 25, 2012, in Cleveland, Mississippi.

### BEVEL OR SLANT MARKERS

A bevel marker is also called a Pillow Marker. Pillow grave markers, not to be confused with flat markers, have a distinctive slant. Their design usually ranges from a gentle 3-inch elevation at the front, rising to 6 inches at the back, or a more prominent rise from 5 inches in the front to 8 inches at the back. They may or may not be placed on a base.



No example of a bevel marker was found in Mound Bayou Cemetery, although it is present in other cemeteries in the district.

## UPRIGHT MARKERS

### TABLET STONE

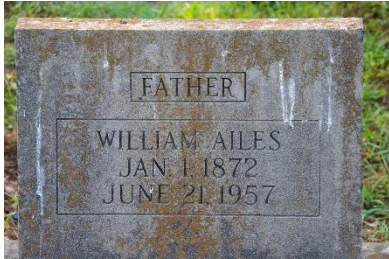


Figure 3 William Ailes

A tablet stone is a rectangular stone. It can be set directly in the ground, into a base, or on a base.

A good example is the headstone of William Ailes who was born on January 1, 1872, to Arion and Rosetta Aills, and died on June 21, 1952. Although not included on the List of Founders and Early Settlers of Mound Bayou, William was living in Mound Bayou by 1900. William married Katie Miller on December 23, 1915, in Bolivar County, Mississippi. Katie served as the Grand High Priestess of the Knights and Daughters of Tabor from 1931 to 1941. She died in 1949.

### DOMED TABLET STONE

A variation on the basic tablet stone, these stones have a rounded top, instead of a squared top.



Figure 4 Henry Lee McCondiche

The headstone of Henry Lee McCondiche is unique both as an example of the domed table style marker, but in the material of which it is composed.

Henry Lee McCondichie was born on July 1, 1910, in Skene, Bolivar, Mississippi, United States. He married Susie N Clemons on March 21, 1929, in Desha, Arkansas. Sometime between 1940 and 1950, Henry married Laura (maiden name unknown). Henry died at age 68 on December 13, 1978, in Mound Bayou, Bolivar,

### SHOULDERED TABLET STONE

A shouldered tablet stone has a more "angled" top. Several examples of this style stone exist in Mound Bayou Cemetery.

One of those is the stone of Horace Bradley. Horace is listed as one of the Original Founders and Early Settlers of Mound Bayou (1890-1900) and is also mentioned in *The Negro at Mound Bayou* in his wife, Maggie's, biography. Horace Bradley was born enslaved on July 25, 1854, in either Tennessee or Mississippi. He married Maggie A (Unknown) in 1888 according to the 1900 census when they were living at Shelby, Bolivar County, Mississippi. Horace Bradley died October 12, 1920. His wife was a member of the Calanthe Tabernacle of the International Order of Twelve at Mound Bayou, and also Queen Mother



Figure 5 Horace Bradley



of the Tent department of the same organization. His grave is an example of the issues with sinking or partial burial of the markers in Mound Bayou Cemetery.

Another shouldered tablet stone is that of Addie A. Montgomery. She was born on September 20, 1875, at Davis Bend (possibly Hurricane Plantation) in Warren County, Mississippi, to Isaiah T. Montgomery and Martha Robb.

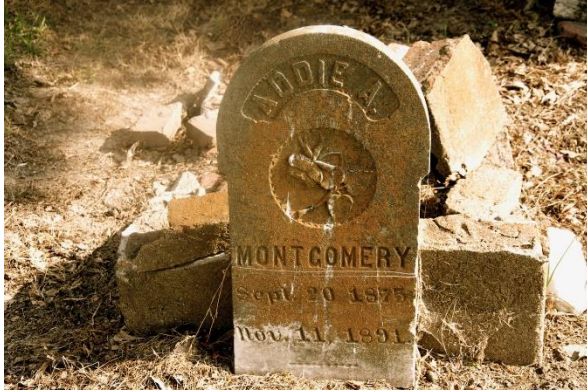


Figure 6 Addie A. Montgomery

Her death on November 11, 1891, may bear the distinction of being the earliest known burial in Mound Bayou Cemetery.

As can be seen, her stone has been displaced from the base and has been broken. A professional assessment will be required to determine if the base is salvageable. The white line across the face of the stone appears to be a scratch rather than a repair.

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## GOTHIC TABLET STONE

There are many different tombstones in this category, which covers the most ornamented tablet stone tops.



Figure 7 William Henry Granger

William Henry Granger's headstone is a good example with its fluted top. According to his biography in *The Negro at Mound Bayou*, William Henry Granger was born enslaved in January 15, 1824 "on Stanford River, in Hailfour, Bedford County, Virginia."

William Henry Granger married Virginia Montgomery at Vicksburg, Warren County, Mississippi. His biography states, "He was married January 15th, 1870, to Miss Virginia Montgomery, a sister of attorney J. P. T. Montgomery. The groomsmen for this important event in Mr. Granger's life were no less persons than Hons. Isaiah T. Montgomery and Joseph E. Ousley, both of whom became conspicuous characters in the history of Mississippi, Mr. Ousley being for a number of years clerk of the Circuit Court of Bolivar County." They lived in Warren County until he came with the first

train load of immigrants to Mound Bayou, arriving February 8th, 1888. He purchased 120 acres about two miles east of Mound Bayou where he lived until his death on January 21, 1915.

Both William and Virginia Granger's headstones have been broken and displaced from the base.

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## STANDARD OBELISK

For centuries, graves have been marked with obelisks. These are narrow, four-sided, column-like monuments, and originated in Egypt. A revival of Egyptian art led to these forms being found in the U.S. with increasing frequency. The standard obelisks are tapered and come to a point at the top.

The tallest monument in Mound Bayou Cemetery belongs to Rev. John W Buffington. He was born on April 17, 1870, in Arkansas, possibly in Tillar, Drew County, Arkansas, or in Desha County. On March 5, 1893, John married Ada Morgan in Desha County, Arkansas. In 1900, John and Ada were living in Hattiesburg, Mississippi where he was listed as a Minister. By 1910, John and his wife, L. C R. Buffington, were living in Leland, Washington County, Mississippi. He was a minister, and she was a dressmaker. They both show this was a second marriage for each of them. John died on December 11, 1913, in Washington County, Mississippi, at age 43. He was buried in Mound Bayou Cemetery. His monument states he was the Presiding Elder of the A. M. E. Church.



Figure 8 Rev. Buffington



One side of the top sub-base includes the inscription “Grand Master of Independent Order of Immaculates of State of Mississippi and Supreme Master of the World” and includes symbology for the I.O.I. fraternal organization.

The monument itself appears to be a 4-piece with an obelisk type top piece, followed by two sub-bases, followed by the larger base piece. While it appears to be level, there is evidence that the lowest sub-base has been displaced and requires re-setting to

avoid possible catastrophic damage.

Figure 9 Inscription, south side of top sub-base

## VAULTED OBELISK

A variation of the standard obelisk, vaulted obelisks are four-sided, but are not tapered, instead ending in an arch-like point. Mound Bayou Cemetery includes many of this type of monument, primarily seeming to be headstone paid as a benefit of burial insurance.



Figure 10 Richard A Fourshea

One of these is the monument of another of Mound Bayou’s Founders and Early Settlers, Richard A. Fourshea. He was born in Mississippi on September 27, 1864. His biography in *The Negro at Mound Bayou* states that he was a member of the Green Grove Baptist Church, and that at the time of his death, Wednesday, Oct. 12, 1909, he was serving his second term as city [Mound Bayou] marshal.” Richard was buried in Mound Bayou Cemetery. The biography further states “ His funeral Thursday, Oct. 13th was one of the most largely attended ever held here and testified to the high esteem in which he was held by the people of his home community.”

Other than general deterioration due to weathering, the monument is in good shape but may require leveling and resetting on its base.

Another vaulted monument is that of G. A. Brown. The headstone shows W A Brown was born on February 20, 1877, probably in Mississippi and was a member of the Grand United Order of Odd Fellows Lodge 7246. He died on March 28, 1915, in Mississippi, at age 38.

Unfortunately, the lack of any information other than his first and middle initial has meant it is difficult to conclusively match him with records (census, marriage, death, etc.) His association with the G.U.O.O.F. may provide a useful link in the future, but for now, research has stalled.

The photograph shows that his marker has been displaced from its base and needs to be reset.



Figure 11 W. A. Brown

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## PILLAR

This report uses the term pillar headstone to describe a variation of the standard obelisk that are four-sided but have a blunted or flat top. The headstone of Prince and Leila Hutchins is an example of this type of stone.

Prince Hutchings<sup>2</sup> was born enslaved in December 1845 in Wilkinson County, Mississippi. On July 27, 1863, Prince joined the 5th United States Colored Heavy Artillery at Natchez, Mississippi, stating he was 22 years old. He was a Private and a laborer. He was mustered out of service on May 20, 1866. He applied for and received a Civil War Pension. Prince married Luticia (Unknown) about 1873, in Mississippi or Louisiana. Prince and his wife, Lutitia, appear on the List of Founders and Early Settlers who had arrived in Mound Bayou between 1887 – 1890. Prince died on May 6, 1917, in Mound Bayou, Bolivar County, Mississippi. Prince Hutchings and Lutitia (Unknown) had a daughter, born in 1892. Lelia died on June 21, 1917, and was buried with her father.



Figure 12 Prince and Leila Hutchings

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## CROSS



Figure 13 Gustava Richardson

The marker for Gustava Keaton Richardson was clearly a cross before the monument was displaced from its base and broken.

Although Gustava's headstone clearly provides her dates of birth and death, the only other information uncovered for her so far is an article in *The Southern Advocate* (Mound Bayou, MS) on page 3 of the August 30, 1941, issue stating, "Mrs. Gustava Keaton Richardson, Home Demonstration Agent for Bolivar County has developed more than twenty Home Improvement Clubs throughout the County."

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<sup>2</sup> Surname appears as Hutchen, Hutchin, Hutchins, and Hutchings. The latter is the spelling on his headstone.

## HEART



Figure 14 Yevorne Bridges

The headstone for Yevorne Conwell Bridges may represent the “youngest” monument in Mound Bayou Cemetery. Yevorne was born on October 1, 1948, the daughter of Elijah Conwell, Jr., and Daisy Reed, who are also buried in the cemetery. She was a retired teacher who was living in Grenada, Mississippi. She died on July 24, 2018, and was buried near her parents in the Conwell section of the cemetery.

Hers is one of the few monuments in the cemetery that does not appear to need remedial attention.

## LEDGER STONE

A ledger stone is a flat, low to ground marker that usually covers the entire grave. Designed to lie flat at lawn level.

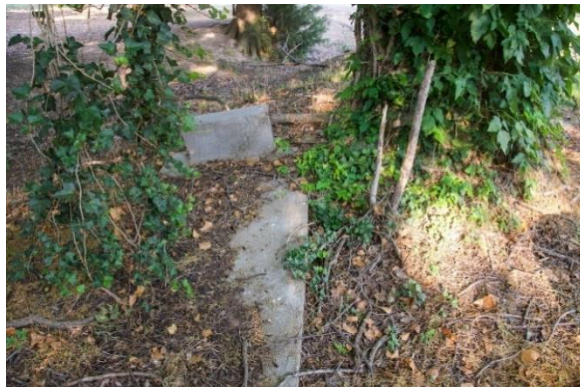


Figure 15 (above) and Figure 16 (below) Alice Priestley Bolton



The grave of Alice Priestly Bolton is an example of a ledger style grave. It also exhibits partial burial of the grave due to subsidence of the soil. Nearby vegetation may be a contributing factor.

Alice L Priestley was born about 1912 in Louisiana, United States. Alice is believed to have married Henry Clarence Bolton about 1939 in Bolivar County, Mississippi.

We know Alice died sometime after the 1950 census was taken in Bolivar, Mississippi, United States, but before 1962 when Henry died and was listed as a widower.

The “headstone” atop the ledger marker is handmade concrete marker with her name scratched into the surface. No dates of birth or death appear to be present.

## BOX TOMBS / CRYPTS



**Figure 17 John Frank and Mary Slate Huddleston**

marriage ended in divorce. He subsequently married Mary Slate, the daughter of Mack and Mary E. "Fannie" (Unknown) Slate, the daughter of two of the original settlers of Mound Bayou. He passed away on October 20, 1985. Mary died on December 7, 1974.

Box tombs are, predictably, box-shaped monuments built over a grave. These are the simplest forms of "sarcophagus-like" markers. The body is not inside the box but buried underneath it. Box tombs in this country are usually fairly simple structures, with minimal decoration. Box tombs are more prominent and easier to spot in a cemetery than a simple headstone but are not as expensive as a mausoleum. Box tombs are also referred to as chest tombs.

Two examples exist in Mound Bayou Cemetery. John Frank Huddleston was born in 1896. He was the son of John Huddleston and Fredonia Cooper. He married 1<sup>st</sup> Addie E. (Unknown) and adopted three children. That

The second example is the tomb of Maceo Charles. Dennis and his wife, Ethel Mitchell (Sheridan) Denis. He



**Figure 18 Maceo C. Denis & E. Mitchell Sheridan Denis**

was born to Georgie and James Denis in Pass Christian, Harrison County, Mississippi on September 15, 1909. Maceo married Cora Hayden, daughter of Henry Hayden and Cecile Elizabeth Hayden, on April 8, 1939, in Harrison County, Mississippi. At some point after 1950, Maceo married Ethel Sheridan Mitchell, daughter of Annie Mae Richardson and James C. Mitchell. Ethel died on August 17, 2014, in Cleveland, Mississippi at age 92.

Both of these tombs appear to be in good condition and only need of standard maintenance services.

## BARREL TOMBS

There are only two barrel-shaped tombs (characterized by the rounded tops) in Mound Bayou cemetery. They



**Figure 19 Barrel tombs**

have collapsed and no identifying information can be found on these tombs. They will require a professional assessment to determine if restoration is possible.

## VETERANS' MARKERS

Veterans' markers include those placed by the Veterans Administration (VA). These include marble or granite tablets, and marble, granite, or bronze surface markers. For additional information regarding the History of Government-Furnished Headstones and Markers refer to <https://www.cem.va.gov/cem/history/hmhist.asp>.

In the Mound Bayou Centennial Celebration published in 1987, 107 veterans of World War I were named as well as 237 veterans of World War II. Not all of these were buried in Mound Bayou cemetery, but they evidence the long history of patriotic service by Mound Bayou citizens.

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### MARBLE OR GRANITE TABLET STONE WITH ROUND TOP

The upright granite and upright marble headstones are 42 inches long, 13 inches wide and 4 inches thick. Weight is approximately 230 pounds. Present day markers may include Lithichrome (a darkened shading) used for the inscription on headstones at private cemeteries.



**Figure 20 Eusebius M. Barron**

This exemplar of the style also shows one of the issues associated with the adverse conditions that need to be addressed. This stone tilting away from vertical requires re-leveling at a minimum.

Eusebius Marion Barron was born on November 17, 1911, in Fernandina, Nassau, Florida, United States. He was the son of Rev. William M. Barron, a Baptist minister, and Rosa Belle Bryant. He enrolled in Morehouse College at Atlanta, Georgia in 1930 and earned his Bachelor of Science in 1935. He subsequently completed his Master of Science in Chemistry in 1937 at the same college.

Eusebius married Zee Alfin Anderson, daughter of Daniel Anderson and Sophia (Plummer) Anderson) on August 16, 1940, in Jackson, Hinds County, Mississippi. He enlisted in the U.S. Army on September 2, 1943, and served in Medical Detachment, Section II, 1476th Services Command Unit, receiving an Honorable discharge on December 18, 1944.

In 1946 Eusebius was one of three Mississippi negroes who was awarded a scholarship for medical studies. enrolled at Meharry Medical College in Nashville, Tennessee, and graduated in June 1948. On May 23, 1949, Dr. Barron opened his doctor's office in Indianola, Sunflower County, Mississippi as part of the State-sponsored effort to bring medical professionals to underserved communities in the Delta. Just two months later, Dr. Barron died.

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### MARBLE OR GRANITE SURFACE MARKER

The flat granite and flat marble grave markers are 24 inches long, 12 inches wide, and 4 inches thick, weighing approximately 130 pounds.

Sergeant First Class Richard Garland Stringer was born on June 2, 1897, in Southland, Phillips County, Arkansas. He was the son of two of Mound Bayou's Founders and Early Settlers, Columbus R. Stringer and his second wife, Lula Shaw.

Richard was inducted into the US Army on April 1, 1918, at Cleveland, Mississippi. He was in the Quartermaster Headquarters Detachment of the 92nd Division Infantry. He was promoted to Sergeant on 9



Figure 21 SFC Richard G. Stringer

Apr 1918; to Sgt 1st class on 18 Aug 1918, and he served overseas from 10 Jun 1918 to 17 Feb 1919. He was honorably discharged on 18 Mar 1919.

Richard returned to Mound Bayou and married Gertrude T. Slate, the daughter of Mack and Mary Slate, two other Founders and Early Settlers. Richard died on October 17, 1958. His son, Richard Garland Stringer, Jr., ordered the military headstone for his father on September 2, 1967. The date of

birth was given as June 2, 1897; however, the date of birth listed on Richard Sr.'s World War I draft registration is May 5, 1895.

Richard's marker shows considerable chipping damage along the corners and edges, most likely from the use of powered lawn mowers.

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#### BRONZE SURFACE MARKER



Figure 22 CPL Edgar Glover Sr.

The Veterans' Administration provided a flat bronze grave marker that is 24 inches long, 12 inches wide, with 3/4-inch rise. It weighs approximately 18 pounds. Anchor bolts, nuts and washers for fastening to a base are furnished with the marker; however, the government does not furnish a base.

Edgar Glover's bronze military marker is an example of a surface marker with its mounting base.

Edgar "Bobby" Glover, Sr. was born May 28, 1931, in Durant, Holmes County, Mississippi to John Wesley Glover and Daisy Mae McMurty. Bobby married

Almeta (Thompson). He died at age 62 on December 6, 1993. His memorial on Findagrave.com says, "A native of Durant, he graduated from the Holmes County Training School. He was a U. S. Army veteran of the Korean War. He attended Jackson State University and graduated from Alcorn A & M College. He began his teaching career at Bassfield, (Jefferson Davis County) Mississippi in 1953. He was a member of Bethel A.M.E. Church where he participated in many facets of the church including trustee, steward, Sunday school, Cathedral and Gospel choirs, and Bible Study leader for the Young People's Department."

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#### HISTORIC HEADSTONES AND MARKERS (PRIOR TO WORLD WAR I)

In addition to the headstone and markers described above, two special styles of upright headstones were available from the VA for those who served with Union Forces during the Civil War or for those who served in the Spanish-American War. None of these types of stones are found in Mound Bayou Cemetery, although

there are citizens buried in the cemetery who were Civil War veterans, such as Isaiah Montgomery, William Thornton Montgomery,

## AFRICAN AMERICAN FRATERNAL HEADSTONE SYMBOLS

Although published for Arkansas, the assertions made in Blake Wintory's 2018 handout, "*African American Fraternal Headstone Symbols in Arkansas: A Guide*", are no less true for Mississippi, and Mound Bayou in particular. He states, "*In the first half of the 20th Century dozens of African American fraternal organizations in Arkansas provided burial insurance and other benefits. Owned and operated by African Americans, they provided important services to their communities. Some, like the Prince Hall Masons, Knights of Pythias, and Grand United Order of Odd Fellows, had white parallel organizations; while others, like the Supreme Royal Circle of Friends, Knights and Daughters of Tabor, and the Mosaic Templars of America, were distinctive and not directly based on a white organization. The Royal Circle of Friends, Knights and Daughters of Tabor, and the Mosaic Templars of America were likely the largest providers of burial insurance and headstones in Arkansas between 1912 and 1930. They provided standard headstones to hundreds of deceased members—men, women, and, sometimes, children—and are easily identifiable in cemeteries throughout Arkansas.*"<sup>3</sup>



Figure 23 Georgia Anderson  
(Household of Ruth)

At least twelve of the monuments in Mound Bayou Cemetery bear the symbols of fraternal organizations. There are likely others; however, conditions of the monuments may have prevented positive identification. The section below shows the headstone names and the fraternal organizations with which they were associated. Many of these monuments are fallen, broken, and need professional conservation services.

### HOUSEHOLD OF RUTH (3)

- Geogia Anderson
- Laura Payne
- Laura Powell

### GRAND UNITED ORDER OF ODD FELLOWS (2)

- W. A. Brown
- H. S. Swangen

### INDEPENDENT ORDER OF IMMACULATES (I.O.I) (1)

- Rev. John W. Buffington

### PRINCE HALL MASONS (6)

- Sam Thompson, Sr.

<sup>3</sup> African American Fraternal Headstone Symbols in Arkansas: A Guide By: Blake Wintory – <https://lakeport.astate.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Arkansas-Fraternal-Headstone-handout-June-2018.pdf>



- Cornelius Stephens
- E. P. Powell
- Hillery Powell
- C. D. Hargrove
- R. D. Dillon

## NOTABLE MISSING MONUMENTS

As part of the research done as part of the Mound Bayou One Place Study, it has become apparent that several monuments are missing from the list of headstones currently identified.

From the named burials published in *The Negro at Mound Bayou* in 1910 we know the following people of historical significance were already buried in Mound Bayou Cemetery, but no headstones have been identified for them:

1. John W. Cobbs (abt. 1859 - 1906)
2. Peter Montgomery
3. Rufus Williams
4. Geo. W. Cresswell (1884-?)
5. Louisa Johnson (abt. 1873 - ?)
6. Nancy Marr
7. Hannah Montgomery
8. Sallie Ramsey
9. Gladys Farrell Hood

The List of Founders and Early Settlers that the city has published in multiple Founders Day brochures (e.g., Mound Bayou Souvenir Program, 50th Anniversary (1937) and Mound Bayou Centennial Celebration (1987)) includes over three hundred names. While it is not certain that all of them lived in or remained in Mound Bayou, the lists provide insight into potential burials in Mound Bayou cemetery.

In addition, from historical records there are other notable residents whose burials seem to be missing:

Eva Pearl (Gilball) Green Francis: Married 1st Benjamin T. Green. After Ben's death in 1896, Eva successfully continued his mercantile business for several years She married John William Frances on December 26, 1899, earning the distinction of the “wealthiest colored woman in the United States.”<sup>4</sup> Following his death sometime between 1920 and 1930, Eva was left to manage his estate as the sole beneficiary. Eva died on October 11, 1942. While her place of death has not been uncovered, it is highly likely she was buried in Mound Bayou Cemetery, but no headstone exists.

John William Frances: An original settler of Mound Bayou, he came to Mound Bayou in 1888 and began work for the firm of Montgomery & Green as a clerk in their store. He rose to become manager of the store. John W. Francis was the proprietor of the only undertaking establishment in Mound Bayou about 1910; was a member of the firm of Banks & Francis, lumber and building supply dealers, and was president of the Bank of Mound Bayou for a time. He was also the treasurer of the Mound Bayou Oil Mill and Manufacturing Company. He

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<sup>4</sup> Newspapers.com. *The Leavenworth Times* (Leavenworth, Kansas), Sunday, 7 Jan 1900, page 4. Accessed Jun 7, 2024.

died sometime between 1920 and 1930. While his date and place of death has not been discovered, it is highly likely he was buried in Mound Bayou Cemetery.

## SUMMARY

The biographical information included in this document is limited to those people whose photo was used to illustrate the distinct types of headstones seen in Mound Bayou Cemetery. It is not intended to be a list of historically significant persons and does not represent the breadth of biographies that have been completed as part of the Mound Bayou One Place Study.

This document is intended to spark the interest in continuation of work to document the historical significance of Mound Bayou Cemetery, preserve the memory of the citizens buried here as well as highlight the preservation needs of the cemetery. To that end, the objective is the same as that expressed by Dr. Susan Allen in 2012 when she was discussing the University of Mississippi's Mound Bayou Service-Learning Historic Preservation Project: *"Our role is to find out what the community wants and what is important to them. We then work with them to help find the resources to accomplish that."*<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Edwin Smith, "Social Work Students Continue Mound Bayou-UM Collaboration," University of Mississippi News, November 9, 2012, <https://news.olemiss.edu/social-work-students-continue-mound-bayou-um-collaboration/?msclkid=fdc48bdcc0a311ec9a01f252ebc6b5ab>.