

INTRODUCTION TO MALONE CEMETERY
(also called Union Cemetery)
Union Road

This very old cemetery is presently located in a field behind the Freewill Baptist Church on Union Road. Union Road intersects the Baileyton Road about five miles or so due north of Greeneville. The number of burials here is not known. Many if not most of those interred here were related and carried the surnames of Casteel, Malone and Reynolds.

Over time, the cemetery became unused after 1937 and became overgrown. The land was turned into pasture where cows were allowed to roam freely; thus, destroying an untold number of tombstones.

In 2009 a clean-up effort of the old, overgrown graveyard was led by local residents Madge and Vance Walker, whose second great grandmother was buried there in an unmarked grave. The Hardin's Chapel Ruritans helped as well as other descendants and interested parties. A Malone Cemetery Association was created, the cemetery was enclosed within a fence, and a nice sign was placed.

In 2009, 18 inscribed tombstones and another 25 graves marked only by field stones were found. Numerous unmarked graves were observed. Persons who have interest in this burial place may wish to read The Greene County Pioneer, Volume 25 Number 2 where Madge Walker writes about the cemetery project and includes a newspaper story from 1948 of a Family Reunion and a clean-up of the cemetery.

The history of the farm and graveyard may be found in Historic Greene County, page 58, written by Glenna Casteel:

“The Will Casteels lived on a farm near Ottway. Their marriage reunited two farms which had been granted by North Carolina to Zachariah Casteel and John Malone in 1787. Zachariah's part of the land grant went to his son Jeremiah Jr., Will's father. John Malone's part of the land grant went to his son William, then to William's son John, and finally to John's son Thomas....

In 1888, Thomas Malone gave one-fourth acre of land for a School-Church called Union. This is now the Union Freewill Baptist Church. The Malones also created a family cemetery on the highest hill of their farm. The oldest legible stone reads: William Malone born November 11, 1781, died March 24, 1844.”

The first comprehensive survey of this cemetery was made during the 1960s by Buford Reynolds and his colleagues. The enclosed 2012 cemetery spreadsheet and research into those interred here is based largely on the 1960s survey. A few unmarked graves were identified by death certificates.

In the Summer of 2017, I once again went to the old graveyard. In less than ten years after the cleanup in 2009, the Malone Cemetery is once again unmaintained.