

TAYLOR FAMILY CEMETERY
City of Oak Point
Denton County, Texas

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Samuel L. Taylor and his wife, Martha, along with three sons, Benjamin F. Taylor, Moses B. Taylor, & Richard K. Taylor, and being accompanied by three slaves Kijeah, Matilda and James, migrated to Texas in 1859 from Davie County, North Carolina. Also accompanying Samuel & Martha Taylor on their journey west from North Carolina were friends William & Beulah Lunn and their son, E. S. Lunn. The Taylor's settled and began farming on land (currently in the City of Oak Point to the northwest of the City of Little Elm) in a loose knit community originally known as "Sand Town". Samuel L. Taylor and one of his sons, Benjamin F. Taylor, are noted as being two of the earliest settlers in the Little Elm area. Per the 1864 Denton County property tax records, the Taylor farm consisted of 460 acres. As evidenced by the Masonic emblem on his tombstone, Samuel L. Taylor was a member of the Masons.

In addition to farming, Moses B. Taylor raised horses on the family farm and sold a sorrel mare to the infamous outlaw Sam Bass that became known in the area as the "race mare". Often Sam Bass would race and place wagers with the mare. On many occasions these races were run down the main streets of Denton and, much to the dismay of many religious Dentonites, these races were often held on Sundays, the Sabbath.

The **Taylor Family Cemetery** was established on the Taylor farm and the earliest marked grave-stone, of those still remaining, is that of Beulah Lunn who died January 27, 1870.

Of the 16 marked grave-stones remaining in the cemetery today, 12 were members of the Taylor Family, including Samuel L. Taylor, Martha Taylor, and their son, Moses B. Taylor. In addition, the cemetery also contains the graves William and Beulah Lunn, and their son, E. S. Lunn. There are twelve (12) other marked graves (but not specifically identifiable) where the grave-stones have either been lost to history or no stones were placed on the grave at the time of burial. These twelve (12) graves are denoted in various ways including brick borders, non-engraved fieldstone used for headstones, headstone bases but no longer with a headstone, footstone, or a combination of these items denoting the grave.

In addition, there are at least twelve (12) completely unmarked graves that are evident only as significant depressions in the ground with these depressions being aligned with the identifiable graves in the cemetery. A significant number of the graves with grave-stones are those of children under the age of 10 years, giving evidence to the lack of qualified medical attention being readily available and/or epidemics that may have periodically sweep the area in the 1870's and 1880's.

In 1933, The Daughters of the American Revolution conducted a survey of the cemetery and were able to identify 24 graves of individuals by name that are buried in the **Taylor Family Cemetery**. Of the 24 individuals known by name to be buried in the cemetery, 23 occurred in the period between 1870 and 1888. The other and last known burial, that of a Hispanic – Gefferino Tores, occurred in 1918. All of the grave-stones are original and no contemporary grave-stones have been placed in this cemetery. A significant number of

the graves have foot stones with the initials of the individual carved into them, thus making identification of specific graves somewhat easier. All of the marked graves are laid out on an east-west axis with the headstones to the west and the foot stones to the east.

In 1991, the author of this narrative was able to locate this cemetery. At that time, the cemetery was approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ mile from any road and in a very secluded and wooded area. At that time, there were 19 graves that were still identifiable by name and the original barbed wire fence that enclosed a portion of the cemetery was still standing. In addition, the cemetery had several large plantings of Iris flowers along with three large cedar trees that were situated at three of the four corners of the barbed wire fenced area. Although the barbed wire fencing is gone, these Iris and cedar trees remain today.

In 1992, the large tract of land containing the one acre cemetery was developed into one to three acre home sites known as Emerald Sound, and the one acre **Taylor Family Cemetery** became part of a 4.3 acre community park which is owned by the Emerald Sound Property Owners Association. The cemetery is now readily accessible by a paved street, Alexandrite, on its west side and a small parking lot on the north, which is associated with the community park. During the development, a significant number of trees along with several grave stones and the barbed wire fence were removed from the cemetery. Today, the apparent graves are enclosed by a modest fence installed by the developer in 1992, but the fenced area only encloses approximately $\frac{1}{3}$ of the one acre cemetery. It is quite likely, due to the age and lack of maintenance of the cemetery for over 100 years, that there are other unmarked graves outside the currently fenced area.

Bibliography

Taylor Family Cemetery City of Oak Point Denton County, Texas

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4. U. S. Census, 1860, Davie Co., North Carolina
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