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THE TAYLOR CEMETERY

L. W. WILSON--Field Worker
May-11, 1937.

As gathered from interviews with numerous pioneers and those living in the immediate vicinity of this cemetery, the "Taylor Family" has a very colorful back-ground, which I will try to relate.

I have been unable to ascertain for a certainty as to the exact location of their birth place, but S. M. Taylor, whom I will refer to as Judge, because he was at one time Judge of the Canadian District of the Cherokee Nation of the Indian Territory, was of Cherokee descent and was born Feb. 3, 1813.

His wife, Julietta Taylor, was a full blood Cherokee woman. She was considered by all who knew her as being handsome, ^{and} she was very much admired. Added to her beauty, she was hospitable and home loving, she took all her life a great interest in orphan Cherokee girls and boys, and particularly in girls, who had chosen the primrose path to aright them and make them ladies and good citizens. She was born May 13, 1826.

I have been unable to learn that any children were born to them to bless their union.

When Judge was but 31 years of age and Mrs. Taylor was only 26, they joined the California Gold Rush in 1849.

It has been said on their trip to California, the party contacted in their travel a tribe of Cheyenne Indians and the Cheyenne Chief wanted to barter with Judge for his wife, desiring to trade to him any number of his fine horses, for his wife so beautiful to all and so admirable to the Cheyenne Chief. Useless to say the deal was not consummated because she returned to the Indian Territory near the present town of McLain, Oklahoma, with her husband.

They evidently were rewarded for their adventures into the gold fields of California because they returned with much more riches than when they departed.

After the railroad was built south through Muskogee, I.T. in 1872 and mail and passengers were transported from this point on the railroad to Webber Falls, I.T., the Judge opened up a stage stand, to be exact, one mile east, one mile south and one half mile east of the present town of McLain, Okla. or possibly better described as being in the N. E. 4--Sec. 1--Vann Twp. in the County of Muskogee, Oklahoma, on Dierdy Creek.

At this stage stand all passengers and mail were transferred to other stages for Webber Falls, I. T. Thus it was a division point for all travelers on this route, and necessitated facilities to care for them and the Judge's home, of course, was the only solution to the problem.

His home was of frame construction, two stories, 8 rooms, with large fire places, both upstairs and down stairs, and was

int its day second to none for beauty and construction. It was an ideal place for tired travelers to rest with all the possible, available comforts in these early pioneer days.

In each room was a fire place, so as to accommodate guests with heat for their rooms on cold, wet days and during the winter months.

Mrs. Taylor had charge of all cooking; doing principally all of the cooking and dining room work herself. Her help consisted of orphan boys and girls, whom she took on herself to raise to manhood and womanhood to be useful citizens. At the Taylor home during these days meals were served more appetizing than could be purchased in either Muskogee or Webber Falls. No one ever ate a meal at the Taylor home but what it was relished.

More than operating the stage stand, they were hospitable, loved their neighbors and friends and particularly, Mr. and Mrs. G. A. Derigo, Mr. and Mrs. M. T. McDaniels, Mr. and Mrs. J. A. Counts, Mr. and Mrs. Wm McLain. And everyone knew them as always willing to do all friendly acts possible within their power.

Judge Taylor died March 11, 1883. After he died the life of the stage stand and the old stage line soon ended because the

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St. L. I. M. & Sou R.R. built north out of Ft. Smith, Ark. to Coffeyville, Kansas and the town of Gore, I.T., first known as Illinois City, sprang up across the Arkansas river from Webber Falls, I.T. and all passengers, freight and mail were handled to this point by rail and then carted to Webber Falls crossing the Arkansas River on a ferry boat owned, controlled and operated by Messrs. Dock Campbell and Joe Lynch. This was in the latter part of 1886.

Many people traveled in their own conveyances this old stage line for a number of years, but the stage stand passed out in 1886.

Mrs. Taylor continued to care for these travelers if they chose to stop for a number of years with the same hospitality as before, until she grew too old to be active. She died February 13, 1905.

The old home of the Taylor still stands. Some 200 yards from the house is the cemetery. Many graves are there, some with monuments, some with graves unmarked, beneath some of the largest towering cedar trees. I have ever seen in my life time; measuring more than $1\frac{1}{2}$ feet in diameter and at least 50 feet or more in height.

This cemetery was at one time well kept. An excellent iron fence surrounds the oldest graves, with iron gates for passage ways. Some of the monuments or markers are sand stone slabs.

In one case a frame house was built over one grave but nothing is there to indicate the party buried. There are monuments of limestone and granite. Some of these are very massive. A stone like some of these, today would cost many hundreds of dollars.

Today, this old burial ground is in a delapidated condition. Limbs laden with ice during the winters have broken and fallen down until one is compelled to pile aside the brush and forge through the briers to reach the monuments to read the inscriptions. There are any number of graves here. The oldest grave on which at least was a marker, is that of Lizzie McLain, buried in 1880, but one has every reason to believe there are many much older. I am attaching hereto a drawing of this tombstone which is self-explanatory, and also one of Elizabeth Campbell, giving to the reader an idea of some of the beautiful tombs.

It is apparent more women are buried here than men, attributed possibly to their husbands having been killed during the Civil War, as many markers indicate that they were married the second time. For example M. J. wife of T. Bradley, formerly wife of M. T. McDaniels, Elender, wife of J. E. McDaniels, formerly Elender Emmert.

The monument for Elender McDaniels serves also as a marker for J. E. McDaniels. It is granite, massive and very

beautiful. Attached is a drawing of same.

Last but not the least are the monuments of Judge J. M. Taylor and Julietta Taylor. They were laid to rest side by side. A magnificent monument of marble marked each of their graves. With 22 years between their deaths you could not tell one of these monuments from the other if it were not for the inscriptions. They are absolute replicas of each other. They have massive masonry bases, massive marble slabs that tower some 7 or 8 feet in height and are set on these bases of masonry that should endure the elements through-out the centuries to come.

It's with regret that this burial ground is not preserved and cared for by some one if there are not living relatives who are able to care for it.

The following data were found on the headstones;

Lizzie McLain, wife of Wm McLain, born March 4, 1856,
died April 2, 1880.

Elizabeth Campbell, born Aug. 3, 1835. Died Jan. 19, 1897.

Elender, wife of J. E. McDaniel, born, Sept. 27, 1833,
Died Oct. 24, 1902. Formerly Elender Emmert.

Julietta Taylor, born May 18, 1826. Died Feb. 13, 1905.

Judge J.M. Taylor, born Feb. 3, 1818, died March 11, 1883.

J. E. McDaniel, born Sept. 28, 1833, died Oct. 11, 1900.