

Neel Cemetery

Daviess County, KY

By Jerry Long, Owensboro, Ky., 1991

Six miles east of Philpot, on the Jack Hinton Road turn south onto the Haynes Station Road. Turn into second lane on left, lane ends at house. In field northeast of the house, about 100 feet or so, is a small area grown up around a tree. Scattered around the tree is the remains of the Neel family cemetery. When the cemetery was plowed over in a nearby field, the monuments, most broken, were piled around the tree.

The cemetery is on part of a 250 acre farm of Zachariah Neel (c1795-1878). It is now owned by Leroy Watkins, who rents it out. Zachariah Neel moved to Daviess County in 1842 and 21 March 1843 acquired this property (see Daviess County deed books N - p366, T - p242, Z - p607). Previously owned by John B. & Eleanor (Lackland) Hays, the property was originally part of a 5000 acre survey owned by May, Bannister & Co., whose representatives deeded the 249 ½ acre tract to Thomas Steerman, whose heirs in 1831 transferred it to Zachariah Bryant, who the following year deeded it to Presley Wilson, who contracted to sell it to John B. Hays (see Daviess County deed books AB - p57, AB - p56, D - p115, E - p 571, H - p188). The cemetery may have started as the Hays family burial ground, John B. Hays was living there when he died in 1837 and subsequently members of his family were buried there.

In a listing of the Neel cemetery published in 1977 in the book, Daviess County, KY Cemeteries, Volume I (West-Central Kentucky Family Research Association, Owensboro, Ky., p82), four monuments were listed. On 31 July 1991 Jerry Long, Owensboro, KY, and Jordan Neel, Frankfort, KY, visited the cemetery and found that mistakes were made in enumerating each of the four monuments noted in the previous listing, and also parts of six other monuments were found. None of the six parts matched up and apparently were all of different monuments. Three of the fragmented monuments were subsequently identified as to whose graves they had marked. The following 10 monuments were found:

Zachariah Neel		died 8 March 1878.
		(In a previous listing his age was enumerated as 82 years & 24 days, on the monument as it was found now no age was remaining.)
Zachariah T. Neel	born 16 April 1846	died 15 February 1883
Infant son of Z. & E. Neel		died 19 July 1852, age 4 months
John A. Hays	born 27 March 1817	died 3 March 1889
	(Son of John B. Hays & Eleanor Lackland)	

[broken off] Hays born 29 June 1810 died 4 April 1865
(Gravestone of Aaron L. Hays, son of John B. Hays & Eleanor Lackland)

Emily wife of A. [broken off]
(Gravestone of Emily, wife of Aaron L. Hays, she was born about 1811 and died after 1880)

[broken off] born _0 _17__ died 4 December 1888
(Gravestone of Robert Ragsdale, born 1794 and died 4 December 1888, his daughter, Mary Ann, married David Thomas Hays, a son of John B. Hays & Eleanor Lackland. See Owensboro Daily Messenger, Thursday, 6 December 1888, History of Daviess County, Kentucky (1883, p.548), History of Kentucky: The Blue Grass State, Vol. III, The S. J. Clarke Publishing Co., Chicago-Louisville, 1928, p.1024.)

Mary N. (? Willian) [broken]

[broken] died 10 September 1882

[broken] died 2? July 189?

Also possibly buried here were:

John B. Hays, born 6 January 1786, died 26 July 1837, and his wife, Eleanor Lackland, born 14 February 1785, died 12 October 1851.

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Family of Zachariah Neel (c1795-1878)

By Jerry Long, Owensboro, Ky.

Zachariah Neel was born about 1795 in Maryland. He may be the son of Doras (Theodore) Neel, who appears in the 1810 Shelby County, KY census. When Zachariah first appears in the Shelby County, KY tax lists in 1819 his name immediately follows that of Doras Neel, and Zachariah named one of his sons, Doras. Doras Neel of Shelby County, KY is probably the Theodore Neel, who married Sarah Kirby in Prince Georges County, MD on 7 May 1778 and who signed his name as Doras Neel on an oath of fidelity he took on 9 March 1776 in Prince Georges County, MD (see Maryland Records, Colonial, Revolutionary, County and Church, Vol. II, Brumbaugh, 1928, p.279).

Zachariah Neel was enumerated in the 1830 and 1840 censuses of Shelby County, KY and in the 1850, 1860 & 1870 censuses of Daviess County, KY. He moved to Daviess County in 1842. On 8 March 1878 he died on his farm near Philpot.

Zachariah Neel married first, Elizabeth Miles, 4 August 1822, Shelby County, KY. The daughter of Reuben Miles, she was born in the 1790's and died in 1832 in Shelby County, KY. By this marriage there were three children:

1. Zerilda Neel, born about 1823 in Shelby County, KY. In Daviess County, KY on 24 May 1845 she married John C. Fowler. The 1870 & 1880 Daviess County censuses suggest that she died during the 1870's. Their children were: Mary E. (born c1846), Frances A. (born c1848), Zachariah Barney (born 1850), Joseph D. (born c1852), William H. (born c1854), Edward (born c1856), John B. (born c1858), James H. (born c1861) and Eudora M. (born c1864).
2. George W. Neel, born 15 January 1826, Shelby County, KY. Married Mary E. Hays, 22 October 1850 Daviess County, KY. She was the daughter of Aaron L. & Emily Hays and was born in Henry County, KY on 15 July 1832. George W. died 3 December 1916 at Whitesville, Daviess County, KY, his wife died 7 January 1889, they were buried at the Cates Cemetery in Whitesville. Their children were: William Samuel (17 June 1852 - 17 November 1929; married. Sue Evans & Marcella Evans), Sarah E. (9 February 1854- 1 April 1922; married James Harvey Harrison), John R. (8 December 1855 - 2 January 1940; married Julia Ann Bartlett), George Allen (10 May 1862 - 17 January 1947; married Jane L. Bartlett), Emma Jane (1 July 1865 - 1 May 1955; married Charles W. May), Thomas F. (May 1868 -7 August 1924; married Attie Sinnett), Richard Oakley (27 January 1871 - 29 November 1951; married Edna Duncan), and Harry Otis (4 January 1874 - 12 May 1940; married Georgia Evans, their son, Robert, served as Daviess County Clerk 1970-1981).
3. Doras Neel, born about 1828, Shelby County, KY, died 1850-1856; according to Daviess Co., KY deed book N - p366 he died leaving no heirs.

Zachariah Neel married second Elizabeth Turnham, 8 March 1835, Shelby County, KY. She was born about 1817 in Shelby County, KY, and died subsequent to the 1880 Daviess County, KY census. Six children were born to them:

1. Josiah Neel, born 10 April 1841 KY, and died 7 January 1914, Daviess County, KY. Married in November 1866 to Josephine E. Helm. Buried at the Cates Cemetery, Whitesville, Daviess County, KY. Nine children were born to them: Laura (born c1869), Artie (born c1873), Georgianna (born c1874), Minnie Catherine (born 1876), Allen J. (born 1883), James P. (born 1886), Clyde (born 1889), Vernon (born 1892), and Josie (born 1895).

2. Richard E. Neel, born 18 November 1843, Daviess County, KY, died 9 May 1908, Daviess County, KY, buried St. William's Cemetery, Knottsville, Daviess County, KY. Married Susan Ellen Whelan, 2 January 1866, Daviess County, KY. Four children were born to them: Eliza E. (born c1866), Lucy (born c1869), John R. (born c 1873), and Lawrence W. (born 1882).
3. Zachariah T. Neel, born 16 April 1846, Daviess County, KY, died 15 February 1883, Owensboro, Daviess County, KY, where he operated a hotel. He was buried in the Neel Cemetery, Daviess County, KY. On 17 December 1879 in Daviess County, KY he married Susan J. Ramsey. They had one child: Bessie (born 1880).
4. William A. Neel, born c1847, Daviess County, KY. Married Lucy Ann Whelan, 13 February 1872, Daviess County, KY. He was listed in the 1880 Daviess County, KY census, but his family was not there in 1900. He died 7 December 1923 Butler County, MO. He was buried Sacred Heart Cemetery, Butler County, MO. His children at the time of the 1880 census were: Robert E. (born c1873), Ollie (born c1876), and Maggie (born c1878).
5. Infant son born in 1852 Daviess County, KY, died 19 July 1852, at the age of 4 months, and was buried in the Neel Cemetery.
6. Rufus Putman Neel, born 15 August 1856 Daviess County, KY. In the 1880 Daviess County, census he was living with his mother, but does not appear in the later Daviess County census records. He married Susan B. Greathouse, 28 November 1883 Hancock County, KY. He died 30 August 1920 White County, Arkansas; buried Lebanon Cemetery, White County, AR.

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History of Daviess County, Kentucky, Inter-State Publishing Co., Chicago, 1883, p.547:

George W. Neel, born Jan. 15, 1826, in Shelby County, Ky., is a son of Zachariah and Elizabeth (Miles) Neel. His mother died in 1832, leaving three children – Zerilda, George W. and Dora. His father then married Eliza Turnham. They had five children – Josiah, Richard E., Zachariah T., William A. and Rufus P. When he was sixteen years old his father came to Daviess County, and settled on a farm in Knottsville Precinct, where he died in March, 1873, aged eighty-five years. George W. Neel was educated in the common schools of his day. He lived with his father, working on the farm, till his marriage in October, 1852, to Mary E., daughter of Aaron L. Hayes, when he went to farming on his own account. In 1856 he went to Edwards County, Ill., but remained only four months, returning to Daviess County. After residing here three years he went to Vermillion County, Ind., and lived nine years. In 1865 he came again to Daviess County, and the next year bought a farm. In 1876 he bought an addition to it, now owning 170 acres, well improved. Mr. and Mrs. Neel have eight children – William S., Sarah E., John R., Emily J., George A., Thomas F., Richard O. and Harry O. William S. married Sulla, daughter of John Evans, and John R. married Ann, daughter of S.W. Bartlett.

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Gravestone of Zachariah Neel (c1795-1878)
In Neel Cemetery, Daviess County, KY

