

# Black Kentucky Pioneers:

## Yelvington (Greene's Chapel) Cemetery Daviness County, Ky.

Copied by Larry Worth on 5 October 1991

Located about one mile east of Maceo. Traveling east on US Highway 60 turn left onto Grandview Road and cemetery is only a few hundred feet from Highway 60. The cemetery is also referred to as the Green's Chapel Baptist Cemetery, Maceo Cemetery and Shauntee Cemetery. In the Kentucky death certificates & Owensboro newspapers it is most frequently referred to as the Yelvington or Maceo Cemetery; on the Internet site, Find A Grave it is listed as the Green Chapel Baptist Cemetery; and in a listing by Larry Worth he refers to it as the Shauntee Cemetery. The obituary of Mary Frances Riley (1903-1969), who is the last known burial in the cemetery states burial will be in the Greens Chapel Cemetery. A history of the Greene's Chapel Baptist Church that was published in the Messenger-Inquirer (Owensboro, KY, 24 December 1967, p1C) made no reference to a cemetery at the church.

KENTUCKY FAMILY RECORDS, VOLUME 24, PAGE 63 (West-Central Kentucky Family Research Association, McDowell Publications, Utica, KY, 2000):

### SHAUNTEE CEMETERY, DAVIESS COUNTY, KENTUCKY Copied Saturday, October 5, 1991 by Larry W. Worth

Cemetery is near Maceo, Daviess County, Kentucky, used by the African American community there.

BOYD, Wilson (?Mason Stone)	Nov 18, 1873	Feb 26, 1896
CASTLIN, James	Apr 10, 1904	Jan 2, 1938
FORD, Isaac	1860	1935
Lucy	1864	1940
FORD, Trotterl (s/o Ike and Lucy)		
FORD, Isaac (s/o A. D. and A. Z.)	May 1, 1890	Aug 23, 1891
FORD, Ordedia	Apr 4, 1896	Jun 23, 1917
FORD, Sallie L. (Consort of I. F. & L.)	Jun 21, 1886	Jan 1, 1894

GALLEY, Pen. T. (s/o F. & M. C. Galley)	Jul 7, 1892	Jan 19, 1896
GRIMES, Rev. Ed	1867	1940
GRAY, Lottie A. (w/o G.)	Age 65 years	Oct 18, 1895
GRAY, Ida E.	Jan 18, 1893	Aug 21, 1936
GRAY, Bennie G.	Dec 17, 1891	May 25, 1965
GORDON, Morris A.	1863	1931
HANSFORD, Elizabeth (w/o H. S.)	Aged 58 Years	Oct 29, 1893
HOWARD, Calvin Mary		
JOHNSON, w/o William H.	May 12, 1898	Nov 13, 1920
LEWIS, Malcom III	1942	1943
LEWIS, Ernest (s/o R. & J.)	Feb 13, 1889	Aug 3, 1909
LEWIS, Casper (s/o R. & J.)	May 9, 1884	Apr 15, 1892
LOWERY, Matilda (w/o Lou)	Aug 13, 1858	May 16, 1902
LINZAY, Nannie (d/o W. N.)	Feb 19, 1889	Feb 21, 1904
PORTER, Calvin	Aug 12, 1876	Jun 26, 1961
RUMMAGE, Lottie Ann	Mar 1, 1876	Aug 13, 1938
SHAUNTEE, Stephen	Mar 13, 1879	Sep 25, 1935
SHAUNTEE, Pauline (d/o Stephen & Robbie)	Nov 27, 1909	Jan 10, 1910
SHAUNTEE, Hester (w/o Thomas)	May 9, 1864	Oct 19, 1896
SHOUNTEE, Peggie C. (w/o George)	Sep 22, 1840	Apr 19, 1903
SHONTEE, May C. (w/o Randle)	May 11, 1876	Jun 22, 1902
TAYLOR, Penn (Kentucky Pvt. 515 Engrs.)		Dec 23, 1928
TAYLOR, Lizzie J. (d/o J. B. & R.)	May 17, 1883	Jan 9, 1894

TAYLOR, John B. (Father)	Nov 14, 1840	Jan 7, 1943
TAYLOR, Rosetta (Mother)	May 11	April
TAYLOR, Katie K. (d/o F. & E. J.)	Jan 8, 1882	Dec 11, 1890
WOODS, Cora	1884	1953
WOODS, Wallace	1890	1927
YEISER, Randall (Co. I, 118 U.S. Colored Infantry)		
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Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, KY  
Monday, 7 July 1969 p8A

**MISS MARY F. RILEY**  
Miss Mary Francis Riley, 66, of 1005 Crabtree Ave., died Saturday at the Owensboro-Daviess County Hospital after an illness of several months.  
She was born in Daviess County on Feb. 18, 1903, and had lived in Owensboro all her life. She was a member of the Mount Calvary Baptist Church.  
Surviving are three sisters, Miss Nanie Riley, Mrs. Carrie Elnora Douglas and Mrs. Elizabeth Harris, all of Owensboro and one brother, William Cecil Riley of Owensboro.  
Services will be held at 2 p.m. Wednesday at the Mount Calvary Baptist Church, conducted by the Rev. B. F. Green, pastor of First Street Baptist Church, Hopkinsville. Burial will be in Greens Chapel Cemetery.  
The body is at the Young Funeral Home where friends may call after noon Tuesday.

# An Integral Part Of County History

By **CHUCK POEHLEIN**  
Messenger-Inquirer Staff Writer

Three miles off U. S. 60 E. on the Yelvington-Knottsville road, a one-room frame church, known widely as Greene's Chapel, stands in a thicket of scrub elm and choking sassafras, waiting for the earth to reclaim it.

The wood is as grey as the winter sky and the roof sags threateningly. Inside, the once-white ceiling is now water-treaked, and crumbling plaster from the walls reveals the church's wooden ribs.

Once the gathering place for a congregation whose members rarely saw each other except when they came here to worship on Sundays or gathered on the lawn outside in good weather for a social, the site is now a shambles of disrepair. A cerosene lamp holder has become a nesting place for sparrows, and mice play among the strings of a piano which once accompanied hymns of worship.

The music is gone now and so is the congregation. All that remains to suggest that this was once a church are a few scattered fragments of hymnals, a dusty pulpit, and the broken piano — all else is gone and the building now provides shelter for the storage of hay.

Before the Civil War, Negroes were compelled to drive their masters to church in wagons or buggies. For this reason, if they wished to attend a church, they had to attend that of their masters. But after gaining their freedom, many groups of them founded churches of their own. Such was the case with this congregation.

It is believed that the founders of this church were former members of the Yelvington Baptist Church.

Their first church was in the large log home of Barney Greene, whose farm was near the present church property. Later, members of this small group took it upon themselves to build a church of their own, and in the Daviess County Courthouse Deed Book No. 9, we find recorded the following deed, and also the first mention of the proposed church's name:

May 18, 1891

T. S. Kendall and wife, Mary Jane, to Isaac Greene, Liga Bracken, Hamson Vicks, and James Helm, Trustees of GREENE CHAPEL (do sell) for consideration of \$50 cash (on southeast side of Glensford of Pup Creek) one acre forever.

(Signed) T. S. Kendall  
Mary Jane Kendall

Greene's Chapel was built about 1893 by volunteer labor and financed by donations of money and materials.

#### Only Member

The only living charter member of that church is Simon Yeiser, who is 91 years of age. He lives alone in Maceo, and is the source for many of the facts in this story.

The first sermon preached in the new church was delivered by Pastor Barney Stone, who chose as his topic "Remember Lot's Wife." It is said the preacher delivered the entire sermon on his knees, and developed the theme that from the Biblical lesson of Lot's wife, man should ever press forward and never look back.

A man who attended that first service as a boy, said in his memoirs that the impression made by this service remained with him all his life. This boy, Worden Wells, later became a prominent farmer and landowner of Daviess County.

The congregation grew until its membership numbered nearly one hundred. The founder, Barney Greene, for whom the chapel was named, died and was buried on his farm, where the church membership originated.

Other pastors who followed Barney Greene were, in order of their time of service, G. H. Hazelwood, Handy Watson, G. T. Tandy, Leroy Ellis, George S. Greene, C. H. Bigbee, Lafayette Thruston, B. G. Greene, and S. Anderson.

A school was also built nearby and the teachers of this school were Ella Hawes, Eva Tinsley, Lula Ballentine and Dolly Woolfolk Wilson. The Rev. Benjamin Franklin Greene, the next to last pastor of Greene's Chapel, attended all eight grades at that school. Rev. Greene is now pastor of the Liberty Street Baptist Church in Hopkinsville.

Once a year a large revival conducted by a visiting evangelist was held on the grounds and here was served, probably for the first time to the people of this area, a prepared meat for which the area has since become famous — barbecued mutton.

Water for these meetings was brought in a huge barrel or hoghead on a sled, drawn by oxen owned by Harry Daviess.

Following the revivals, baptisms were conducted either in Pup Creek or in a nearby pond.

Years passed and the congregation began to wane. Efforts were made to keep the chapel alive, but were to no avail. When the last regular pastor left, services were held only once a year by visiting ministers. And because the membership was scattering to urban areas, the last regular service was held in 1947.

The church then closed its doors and its pews were later given to the Holiness Church in Owensboro.

In 1962 Harry Daviess died and in order that his funeral might be conducted from his beloved church, neighbors cleaned up the encroaching vegetation and readied the church for its final service.

For just that little while Greene's Chapel stirred in its sleep — now it belongs to history.