

Marker tells of Limestone's "almost" county seat

By Rebekah Davis

Limestone County Archivist

It's time for more stops on the historical marker tour of Limestone County.

I've been spending a few months sharing the information about these markers. To see the list of most of the markers and more information, you can get maps and GPS coordinates to each one by searching for Limestone County's historical markers on www.lat34north.com, or to view additional markers and directions, visit www.limestonecountyhistoricalsociety.org.

Today's markers are:

- **Cambridge:** This marks the site of Cambridge, a small town established in the earliest years of Limestone County. In 1818, it consisted of several business houses, shops, and a mill. It was one of three locations considered for the county seat, however the choice went to Athens, and Cambridge never grew as hoped. During the "Great Spiritual Revival" of the late 18th and early 19th centuries, camp meetings were held here, sometimes lasting for weeks at a time. Among early Methodists who preached here were, John B. McFerrin who later became a Methodist Bishop and Lorenzo Dow, a man whose presence and message were so powerful that hundreds were converted by him, and children were named for him for generations. Temperance rallies were held here by the "sons of Temperance" during the 1840's, drawing large crowds. The campground was also used as muster and drilling ground by confederate units formed from Limestone County. The eight acres for the meeting house and campground were originally donated by George Malone, an early settler, who came from Sussex Co. Virginia. He had large land holdings and built his large home which he named "Cambridge nearby. It was destroyed by fire in 1955. Over the years, business gravitated to Athens, the rallying cries for salvation, abstinence and freedom have faded from here, and all that remains of Cambridge is the old Methodist Church and the cemetery. This marker is located about 4 miles east of Athens and south of U.S. Highway 72 on Cambridge Lane in front of the Cambridge Methodist Church.
- **Druid's Grove Plantation/Jones-Donnell Cemetery:** VA native John Nelson Spotswood Jones, son of Rev. War Capt. Lewellen Jones, cousin of Martha Washington, and descendant of Rev. Rowland Jones of Williamsburg's Bruton Parish, built Druid's Grove near this site before 1820 and established the community of Greenbrier. Jones graduated from Yale and married Eliza Ann, daughter of Judge John Haywood of NC and TN. Jones's law office, recreated in Alabama's Constitution Village in Huntsville, served as the first public library in Alabama. Druid's Grove burned in the 1930's. Descendants of JNS Jones buried in this cemetery include Donnells and Hundleys. This marker is located in the Greenbrier community, south of Co. Rd. 10 and a short distance west of Greenbrier Road.

About the Archives:

Limestone County Department of History and Archives

Established: 1980

Staff: Archivist Rebekah Davis and Assistant Archivist April Davis

Location: 102 W. Washington St., in the 1905 L&N Passenger Depot

Hours: 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday

Phone: 256-233-6404

E-mail: lcarchives@knology.net or lcarchives2@knology.net

Web: www.limestonearchives.com

Facebook: www.facebook.com/limestonecountyarchives