

John Alexander Whitaker
1753-1833
(Information submitted by Lalla Marsh)

John Whitaker was a Captain in the Revolutionary War and an "old Methodist preacher." For his service to his country he was given a land grant in Kentucky. This land covered the area which is now Oddville. John brought his family to Kentucky in 1792 and settled on his land in Bourbon County. This area was first known as Whitaker Station. John drew a pension of \$31.66 per year for his military service. He died on October 29, 1833. he is not buried in the old Whitaker Graveyard. John was away from home, near Beaver Creek Church when he died and for reasons unknown was buried there.

Rev. Josiah Jacob Whitaker, John's first born, built the original Whitaker homestead. The frontier was rough in those days. Death sometimes came early in life, often demanding a need for a place of burial. Most families had private burial plots located on the farm usually in site of the house. It is believed the old Whitaker graveyard originated during the lifetime of John or his son Josiah. Josiah was the first Methodist-Episcopal Minister who traveled 14,000 miles on horseback to evangelize northern Kentucky. He married Suky "Susan" Honey when he was 20 years of age and the couple spent their entire lives in the home on the Whitaker homestead. Josiah died on August 21, 1850. He and Suky are buried in the old Whitaker graveyard. .

As a child Lalla Marsh remembers the visits to the old graveyard and the stories of the Whitaker family told to her by her mother, Leah Whitaker Kearns. From memory Lalla states there may have been 30-50 markers in the old cemetery. Some markers were primitive stones with dates chiseled on them and some rotted wood. Many of the stones were toppled on their side. Even then the graveyard was abandoned and not properly cared for. .

In 1995, Lalla visited Oddville hoping to locate the presence of the old Whitaker graveyard. What she found and learned is very surprising; however, not so unusual. The cemetery is located on property once operated by Whitaker Auto Sales. An old business sign and junk cars covered with vines are all that remained. Glenn Whitaker a former owner of the property where the cemetery is located tried to sell a small area of land and surprisingly learned there was a "Eternal Perpetual Deed" on the property protecting the cemetery and nothing can be built there. Sometime in the 1960's all the stones in the cemetery were removed and the area planted in grass. However, Lalla located a few stones all covered in weeds and vines which had been propped against a big tree.