

Smyrna Memorial Cemetery

This cemetery, located in the heart of downtown Smyrna, Georgia has been known as Smyrna Cemetery, Old Smyrna Cemetery, and now Smyrna Memorial Cemetery. Traditional history says the cemetery dates to 1838 which is said to be the year of the founding of the Smyrna Methodist Church who owned the property when it was first dedicated for use as a cemetery. However, there is a possibility the 1838 date may have been "adopted" later because that was the year of the forced removal of the Cherokee Indians from Cobb County and other parts of the state.

What is known for certain is that Wylie Flannigan of Campbell County, Georgia took title to Land Lot 522 in the 17th District on July 1, 1843, after having paid \$5.00 to the state of Georgia as the "fortunate draw" in the Cherokee Land Lottery. Five-twenty-two is the land lot in which the cemetery is located. The cemetery takes up a little less than two acres of that 40 acre tract.

In its Sesquicentennial Celebration History in 1988, the Smyrna United Methodist Church stated that the earliest legal document found involving the church property was a 1915 deed replacing one dated in 1846 which is believed to have been destroyed by Federal Troops during the War Between the States. The reconstructed deed involved the sale of a land lot (40 acres) by Hardy Pace to the Smyrna Methodist Episcopal Church.

And so, the history of Smyrna Cemetery is a mystery, just as is much of the other early history of the area and the people who lived here, and probably will remain so.

The earliest burial in the cemetery which is marked with a grave stone is that of Elijah Fleming who died at the age of 45 on April 8, 1848. The second burial marked with a stone was that of Mr. Fleming's daughter, Mary, who died at approximately 17 years of age on March 14, 1858.

"In the beginning" says the Methodist church history, "it was a typical country church burial ground, but later the