

THE OLD JOHNNY RICH CEMETERY

2019

Monte Harris

Rogers
Historical
Museum

Monte Harris

Adult Programs Educator
313 SOUTH SECOND STREET
ROGERS, AR 72756-4546
479-621-1154
mharris@rogersar.gov



REAL. TRUE. FUN.

www.rogershistoricalmuseum.org

The Old Johnny Rich Cemetery

By Monte Harris

There is a pre-Civil War cemetery located today in the middle of downtown Pea Ridge which has proven to be one of the most historically significant cemeteries in Benton County Arkansas. Since the 1950s, the cemetery has been referred by older Pea Ridge citizens as the Old Johnny Rich Cemetery. The most important reason this cemetery is historically significant is because it is the burial site for not only slaves but the white family who claimed to own them. It has been about 155 years since the last burial took place in the cemetery. On the property there is a large spring which was proven to be important to Civil War soldiers of both armies as a number of mini balls and other battle artifacts were scattered about and picked up many years later by previous land owner Ella McGee's son.

For many years, the cemetery site was a place where teenagers dared each other to explore in hopes of finding the legendary "gold" hidden somewhere on the property by old Johnny Rich. During that time, many grave stones were damaged and perhaps carried away. There were many wild stories of "slave ghosts" who wore ankle chains that clinked in the night as they roamed the property making it a favorite place to visit on Halloween.

In 1969, Billie Jines, owner of the Pea Ridge newspaper wrote a newsstory and took pictures of the Old Johnny Rich Cemetery which for many years was the only source of information available about the property. One day, I was visiting with Billie Jines and she mentioned the slave cemetery. I asked her where it was and was it possible to visit the site. She arranged with the owner who met with us and gave permission to walk out into his field. The grass was high and it was difficult to find any markers but finally we came upon two graves topped with large 6 foot-long handcut limestones. Those were the graves of John Rich and his wife. This type of burial marker was often used in the early pioneer days because it was feared graves might be dug up by wild animals if not protected by a heavy stone. On our visit we were unable to see the slave graves because the markers were flat on the ground under the tall grass.

For several years, I often thought of the Old Johnny Rich Cemetery and had made several attempts at research but had come up with nothing. The cemetery was not officially on record with the state of Arkansas, Benton County or the town of Pea Ridge. Then, one day I heard the property had sold and there were plans to build a large housing development. I knew there would be great risk to the cemetery if someone didn't say something right away. I contacted the new owners and explained about the situation. Fortunately, the housing developers, Linda and her husband Kevin Charles Felgenhauer were very kind and interested in learning about the historic cemetery on the property they then owned. Linda took a personal interest and allowed Arkansas Archaeological Survey to document the old cemetery. Linda also paid for a nice fence to help protect the cemetery.

I began serious research as it was either "now or never" to gather enough information to convince anyone to preserve the little cemetery in what seemed to be the middle of a rather large development plan that was on track to begin immediately. I found some tax records for John Rich which documented him owning and farming the property in 1837. That led to Benton County Ar Slave Census for 1840 and another for 1860 which helped us understand how many people were living in slavery on the property.

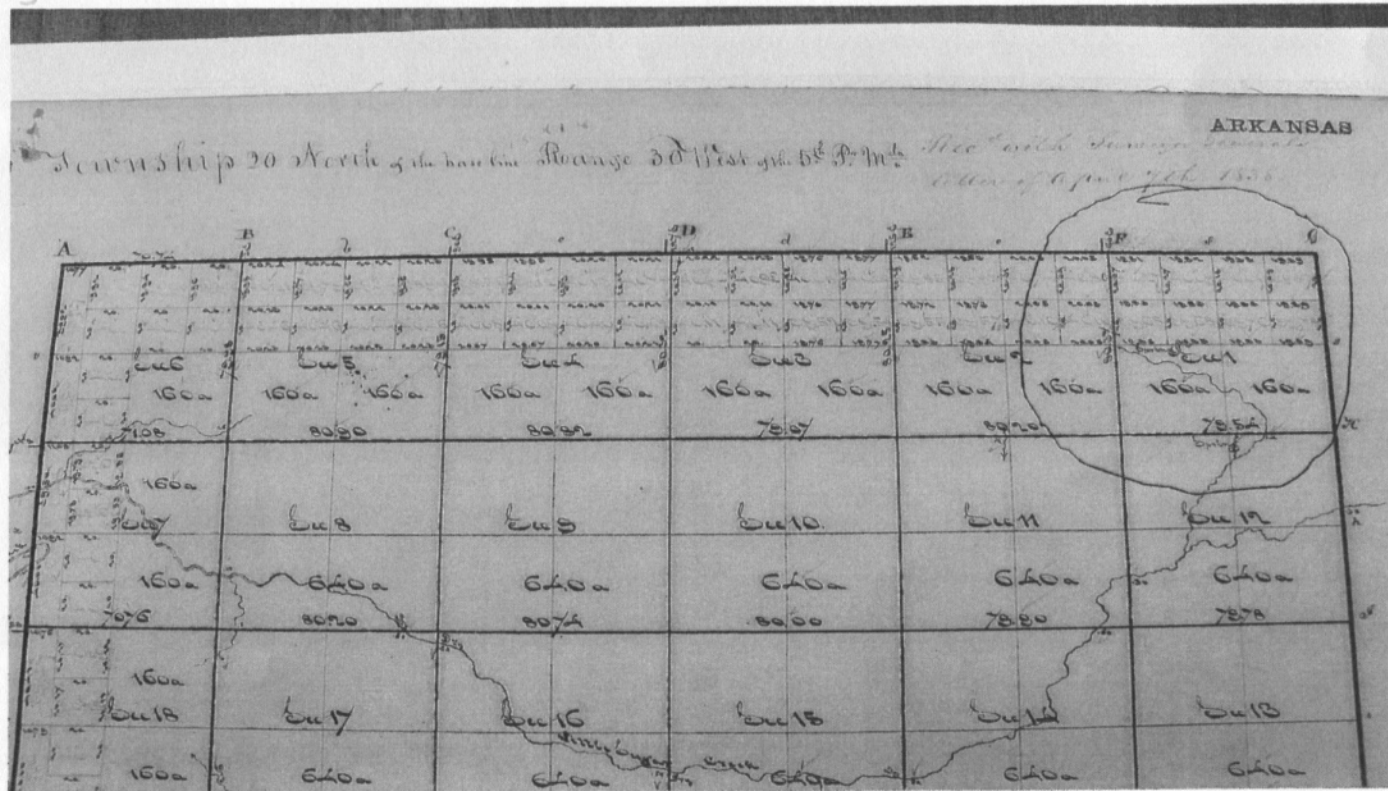
There was no other research found for several days. I finally googled his name: John Ridge - Benton County Arkansas. Suddenly, from out of nowhere an answer appeared from Kegley Library Special Collections at the Wytheville Community College in Wytheville, Virginia. The Kegley Library has a collection of letters from John Rich and Elizabeth Rich in Benton County Arkansas to Fleming Kean Rich - The Rich Papers 1838-1860. It was a genealogical miracle. The library scanned the old letters and it was not long before I was able to transcribe the hand-written correspondence originally written at the Pea Ridge property and delivered by stagecoach to John's brother Fleming in Virginia so many years ago.

Linda Felgenhauer has offered to give the cemetery property to the Pea Ridge Historical Society. The City of Pea Ridge and the Rogers Historical Museum is helping guide the Historical Society through the legal deed work and whatever else is needed to make sure the Old Johnny Rich Cemetery is preserved for the future.

It is difficult for African American families to research their genealogy because slavery would typically erase many details of their family history. The Rich family letters led to knowledge about local history that could not have been known from any other source. We know there are descendants of (slave) Edy still living and we look forward to soon sharing this new historical information with any family member that wishes to know as well as the general public.

1834 Survey Map Township 20N Range 30W

- Filed in 1838



[illegible]

| SLAVES. | | | | | | | | | | | | | NUMBER OF PERSONS IN S. UNEMPLOYED. | | | | | |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|---------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|---------------|--------|-------------------------------------|---------|--------------|-----------|--------|--------|
| MALES. | | | | | | | | | | FEMALES. | | | TOTAL. | Slaves. | Apprentices. | Quarters. | Total. | Total. |
| Under 10. | 10 to 24. | 25 to 49. | 50 to 74. | 75 to 99. | 100 and over. | Under 10. | 10 to 24. | 25 to 49. | 50 to 74. | 75 to 99. | 100 and over. | Total. | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 2 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 3 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 4 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 5 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 6 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 7 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 8 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 9 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 10 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 11 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 12 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 13 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 14 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 15 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 16 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 17 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 18 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 19 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 20 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 21 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 22 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 23 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 24 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 25 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 26 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 27 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 28 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 29 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 30 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 31 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 32 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 33 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 34 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 35 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 36 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 37 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 38 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 39 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 40 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 41 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 42 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 43 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 44 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 45 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 46 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 47 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 48 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 49 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 50 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 51 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 52 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 53 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 54 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 55 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 56 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 57 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 58 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 59 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 60 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 61 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 62 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 63 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 64 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 65 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 66 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 67 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 68 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 69 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 70 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 71 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 72 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 73 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 74 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 75 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 76 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 77 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 78 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 79 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 80 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 81 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 82 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 83 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 84 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 85 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 86 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 87 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 88 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 89 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 90 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 91 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 92 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 93 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 94 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 95 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 96 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 97 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 98 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 99 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 100 | | | | | |

1840 SLAVE
CENSUS

Page No. 1

SCHEDULE 2.—Slave Inhabitants in Orange Township in the County of Anteton State
of Arkansas, enumerated by me, on the 14th day of June, 1860. Lincoln Rich Ass't Marshal.

| 1 | NAMES OF SLAVE OWNERS. | 2 | 3 | | | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | NAMES OF SLAVE OWNERS. | 12 | 13 | | | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 |
|----|------------------------|---|------|------|--------|---|---|---|---|----|------------------------|----|------|------|--------|----|----|----|----|
| | | | Age. | Sex. | Color. | | | | | | | | Age. | Sex. | Color. | | | | |
| 1 | W R Vestal | 1 | 38 | F | B | | | | | | Elizabeth Jefferson | 1 | 48 | F | B | | | | |
| 2 | | 1 | 18 | F | M | | | | 1 | | | 1 | 36 | M | B | | | | |
| 3 | James H. Voths | 1 | 22 | F | M | | | | | | | 1 | 26 | F | M | | | | |
| 4 | | 1 | 5 | F | M | | | | | | | 1 | 17 | M | B | | | | |
| 5 | | 1 | 2 | F | M | | | | 1 | | | 1 | 15 | M | B | | | | |
| 6 | W. L. Black | 1 | 27 | M | B | | | | | | | 1 | 13 | M | B | | | | |
| 7 | | 1 | 24 | M | M | | | | | | | 1 | 5 | F | M | | | | 2 |
| 8 | | 1 | 23 | F | M | | | | | | J. L. Tricot | 1 | 24 | F | B | | | | |
| 9 | | 1 | 8 | F | B | | | | | | | 1 | 7 | M | B | | | | |
| | | 1 | 5 | M | B | | | | 1 | | | 1 | 5 | M | B | | | | |
| | John Rich | 1 | 26 | M | M | | | | | | | 1 | 2 | F | B | | | | |
| | | 1 | 14 | F | B | | | | | | | 1 | 7 | F | B | | | | 1 |
| 13 | Samuel Black | 1 | 60 | M | B | | | | | | Thomas Jackson | 1 | 27 | F | B | | | | |
| 14 | | 1 | 22 | F | M | | | | | | | 1 | 16 | M | B | | | | |
| 15 | | 1 | 15 | M | M | | | | | | | 1 | 8 | F | M | | | | 1 |
| 16 | | 1 | 15 | F | B | | | | | | R. Wammack | 1 | 27 | M | B | | | | |
| 17 | | 1 | 6 | M | M | | | | 1 | | | 1 | 21 | M | B | | | | |
| 18 | A. B. Greenwood | 1 | 35 | F | B | | | | | | | 1 | 19 | F | B | | | | |
| 19 | | 1 | 12 | F | B | | | | | | | 1 | 4 | M | B | | | | |
| 20 | | 1 | 6 | F | B | | | | | | | 1 | 2 | M | B | | | | 1 |
| 21 | | 1 | 4 | F | B | | | | | | D. Jackson | 1 | 23 | F | B | | | | |
| 22 | | 1 | 2 | M | B | | | | 1 | | | 1 | 20 | M | B | | | | |
| 23 | William Spring | 1 | 33 | F | B | | | | | | | 1 | 1 | M | B | | | | 1 |
| 24 | | 1 | 24 | F | B | | | | | | E. J. A. Nelson | 1 | 30 | M | B | | | | 1 |
| 25 | | 1 | 20 | F | B | | | | | | M. Quoness | 1 | 30 | F | B | | | | |
| 26 | | 1 | 8 | M | B | | | | 1 | | | 1 | 12 | M | B | | | | 1 |
| 27 | A. W. Kinmore | 1 | 25 | F | B | | | | | | W. Wright | 1 | 27 | F | B | | | | |
| 28 | | 1 | 23 | M | M | | | | | | | 1 | 6 | F | B | | | | 1 |
| 29 | | 1 | 15 | F | B | | | | | | J. W. Carley | 1 | 22 | F | B | | | | |
| 30 | | 1 | 13 | M | B | | | | | | | 1 | 4 | F | M | | | | |
| 31 | | 1 | 3 | M | M | | | | | | | 1 | 2 | M | B | | | | |
| 32 | | 1 | 1 | F | M | | | | 1 | | | 1 | 7 | M | B | | | | 1 |
| 33 | Binnia Colwell | 1 | 15 | F | B | | | | | | J. L. Hail | 1 | 23 | M | B | | | | 1 |
| 34 | | 1 | 8 | F | B | | | | | | A. W. M. Gissick | 1 | 49 | M | M | | | | |
| 35 | | 1 | 4 | M | M | | | | 1 | | | 1 | 34 | M | M | | | | |
| 36 | H. A. Anderson | 1 | 12 | F | B | | | | | | | 1 | 33 | F | B | | | | |
| 37 | B. Colwell in | 1 | 13 | M | B | | | | | | | 1 | 30 | F | M | | | | |
| 38 | trust for heirs | 1 | 8 | F | B | | | | 1 | | | 1 | 11 | M | M | | | | |
| 39 | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | 8 | M | B | | | | |
| 40 | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | 2 | F | M | | | | 2 |

No. of owners, _____

No. of male slaves, 36

No. fugitives, _____

No. deaf and dumb, _____

No. insane, _____

No. of houses, _____

No. of female slaves, 42

No. manumitted, _____

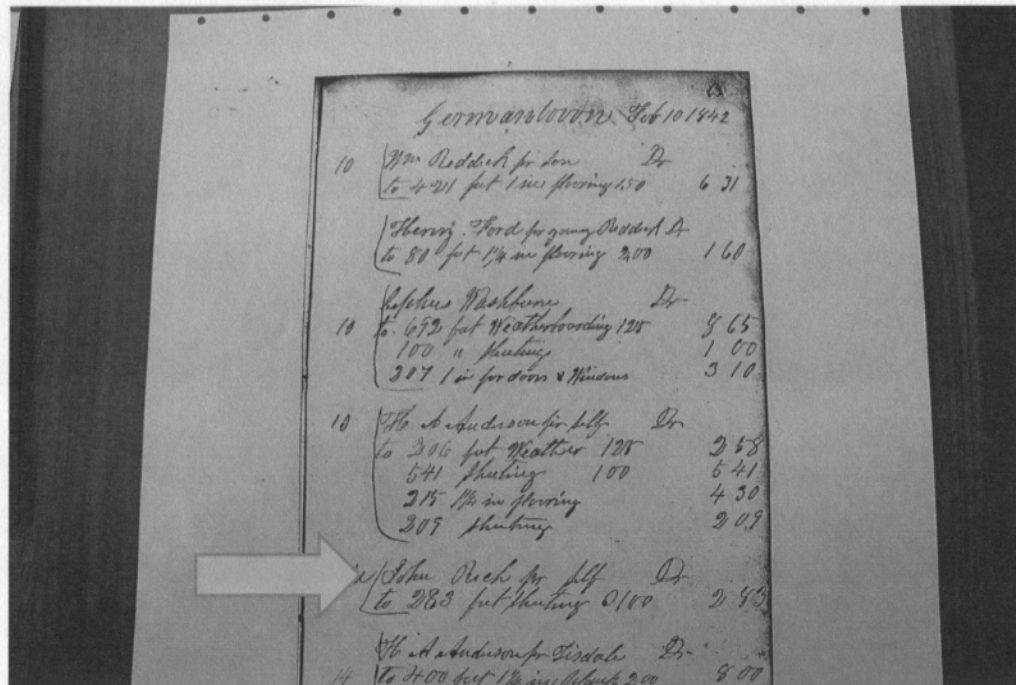
No. blind, _____

No. idiotic, _____

Total slaves, 78

1842 Sager-Greene Business Ledger

Lumber Mill and General Store located on White River
shows John Rich purchased building materials in 1842



Germania, Tenn. Feb 10 1842

| | | |
|----|-------------------------------------|------|
| 10 | Wm Reddick for loan Dr | |
| | to 4211 feet 1 in flooring 150 | 6 31 |
| | Therese, Ford for gunny, David A Dr | |
| | to 80 feet 1/2 in flooring 200 | 1 60 |
| | Leahus Washburne Dr | |
| 10 | to 650 feet Weatherboarding 125 | 3 65 |
| | 100 " shunting | 1 00 |
| | 207 1/2 in for doors & Windows | 3 10 |
| 10 | Wm Reddick for loan Dr | |
| | to 306 feet Weather 125 | 3 58 |
| | 541 shunting 100 | 5 41 |
| | 215 1/2 in flooring | 4 30 |
| | 307 shunting | 2 09 |
| | John Rich for self Dr | |
| | to 283 feet shunting 0100 | 2 43 |
| | Wm Reddick for loan Dr | |
| 14 | to 400 feet 1/2 in shunting 200 | 8 00 |

JOHN RICH Buys
BUILDING MATERIALS
1842

John Rich- Arkansas Time Line

1837-1839 John Rich is listed on early Benton County property tax records. He claimed one slave at that time.

1840 - Benton County, Arkansas Census- John Rich's household included one white male, between 50 and 60 years old, one white female between 40 and 50 years old, three male slaves, all under 10 years and one female slave between 24 and 36 years old. The number of slaves have increased to four.

1841 - Land grant filed by John Rich for Section 1- Township 20 North Range 30 West

1842 - March 4 - John Rich sold a portion of property in Section 1 to John B. Dickson

1850 - Info transcribed on grave stone for Edy was read in error to be March 2, 1860. Date also misread in 1969 newspaper story. Correct death date according to Rich family letter was March 2_, 1850.

1850 - Benton County, Arkansas Census- John Rich's household included a total of seven slaves listed as: one male mulatto, age 18, one male mulatto, age 16, one male mulatto, age 14, one black male, age 9, one female black, age 7, one female black, age 5 and one female black, age 3.

1857 - November 7, John Rich and wife sold property to the Little Flock Church. Property was not the same location where modern Little Flock Church building is today. (Ben Co Deed Book D, p.264) John Rich mentions he and his wife have joined "baptist church of the old order" in June 1847 letter to his brother.

1860 - June 4 - Benton County, Arkansas Census lists John Rich, age 75, born in Virginia, living with no wife. Two slaves listed: one male mulatto, age 26 and one female black, age 14.

1867 - October 13 - John Rich, age 82, married Nancy Graham, age 42, in Benton County, Arkansas.

1868-1870 H. M. Patterson paid the taxes on 83 acres E ½ of NE ¼ of Township 20N Range 30W Section 1 and William Hickman paid taxes on 80 acres W ½ of NE ¼ of Township 20N Range 30W Section 1 according to tax records at Benton County, Arkansas Archives.

1871- Note: Owner unknown for East 1/2 of NE ¼ of Township 20 North Range 30 West- Section 1. Township 20 North Range 30 West- Section 1- West 1/2 of NE ¼ - property taxes paid by William Hickman.

1872 - J. D. Miller paid taxes on NE ¼ of Township 20 North Range 30 West - Section 1.

The next few years list numerous owners of various parts of Township 20 North Range 30 West Section 1. The names are as follows:

J. H. Buttry, John Buttry, J. C. Buttry, W. T. and John Maxwell, W. P. Mosely, J.H. Mosely, W. G. Evans, and John Maxwell.

Old Slave Cemetery Exists In Pea Ridge

By Billie Jines, Editor

Within the city limits of Pea Ridge, there exists one cemetery that apparently is known only to the few who have long known this town as home. One of them, Dewey Buttry, took us to see it the other day. It had been 40 years since Mr. Buttry had been to the old cemetery. He was uncertain about whether he could find it again.

We asked permission to go across the Bill Hall property, located on Hwy. 94, South. Driving as far as we could through the pastures, we found it necessary to climb over a fence. Mr. Buttry first eyed the native stones around a clump of trees beside the fence, then he looked back across the next field to the clump of trees he had first pointed out.

Sure enough, there beneath the oaks, sassafras, walnut and persimmon, were the stones not visible a few yards away. That was because the stones that remain to mark the old cemetery were either laid flat on the ground to begin with, or they have fallen over through the

more than a century since they were placed there. Obviously, some of the stones have been carried off during the years.

Two of the stones, apparently those resting on the graves of Mr. and Mrs. Johnny Rich, are gigantic native ones measuring three by six or eight feet and are at least six inches thick.

Mr. Buttry knelt and tried to fit a loose stone into the chiseled out rectangle which he remembered as having once contained headstones and footstones of the big stone grave cover.

Close by, we discovered large flat sandstone markers that were inscribed. One said: "July the 3, 1860." The other read: "CHS. EDY Dide March the 2, 1860." One had an "R" inscribed in one side.

These may or may not have marked the graves of the six slaves that Mr. Buttry recalled having understood were buried there. He had thought the graves of the slaves were marked only by uninscribed sandstones. However, there were no stones at all where he remembered them.

Buttry explained that the "Uncle Johnny" Rich family resided on that land, with their house near the location of the one presently the home of the W. T. Putmans.

He remembered that one story he had heard was that the Riches worked their slaves during the week with iron weights on their legs. On Sundays, the slaves of other masters were brought together for foot races, with the leg weights removed.

When he was a youth, Buttry said, his grandfather, John Buttry owned the land. Dewey Buttry thought that it was a little more than a quarter of an acre of the field that was fenced off around the cemetery at that time. He showed us about where the fence used to run, and explained how he would back-furrow up close to the fence when he plowed the field.

"As a boy," he reminisced, "I would be plowing out here and remembering that there were slaves buried there, and I would be a little afraid."

The almost-forgotten cemetery is no longer protected by a fence. Undoubtedly, it has already been desecrated by the carting off or destruction of some of the grave markers. Yet, the land there still is the final resting place of some to whom Pea Ridge also was once home.

A marker in the Pea Ridge Cemetery says: "As you are now so once was I; as I am now, so you will be; prepare now for eternity."



THESE GIGANTIC STONES are not apt to be carried off, nor even to be easily broken. It is thought that they mark the graves of Johnny Rich and his wife. (Graphotos)



A STONE MARKING A GRAVE at one time is examined by Dewey Buttry in the old Johnny Rich Cemetery in South Pea Ridge.

Francene's Beantee Salon

DOWNTOWN PEA RIDGE - Behind Jay's Barber Shop
PHONE 451 - 2161 OPEN 10 A.M. TILL ????

EVENING APPOINTMENTS

FREE (100 % human hair) WIG TO BE GIVEN AWAY APRIL 17th COME IN AND REGISTER.
COMPLETE SELECTION OF WIGS AND WIGLETS
SPECIAL: WIGS CLEANED AND STYLED \$6.50

ALL LITTLE GIRLS LIKE CURLS
THIS EASTER

Give her a "Little Miss Pretty" a special prescription wave for their type hair. **\$7.50**

THE WINNERS WERE:



Be the girl of his dreams in this soft pastel pump. \$14.00

COLORS:

White, Blk. Paten, Navy, Red, Green, Pink, Blue, Platinum.

Miss America
Shoes



1969 Image from *The Pea Ridge Graphic* newspaper

Dewey Buttry brushes dirt from a grave marker at Old Johnny Rich Cemetery.

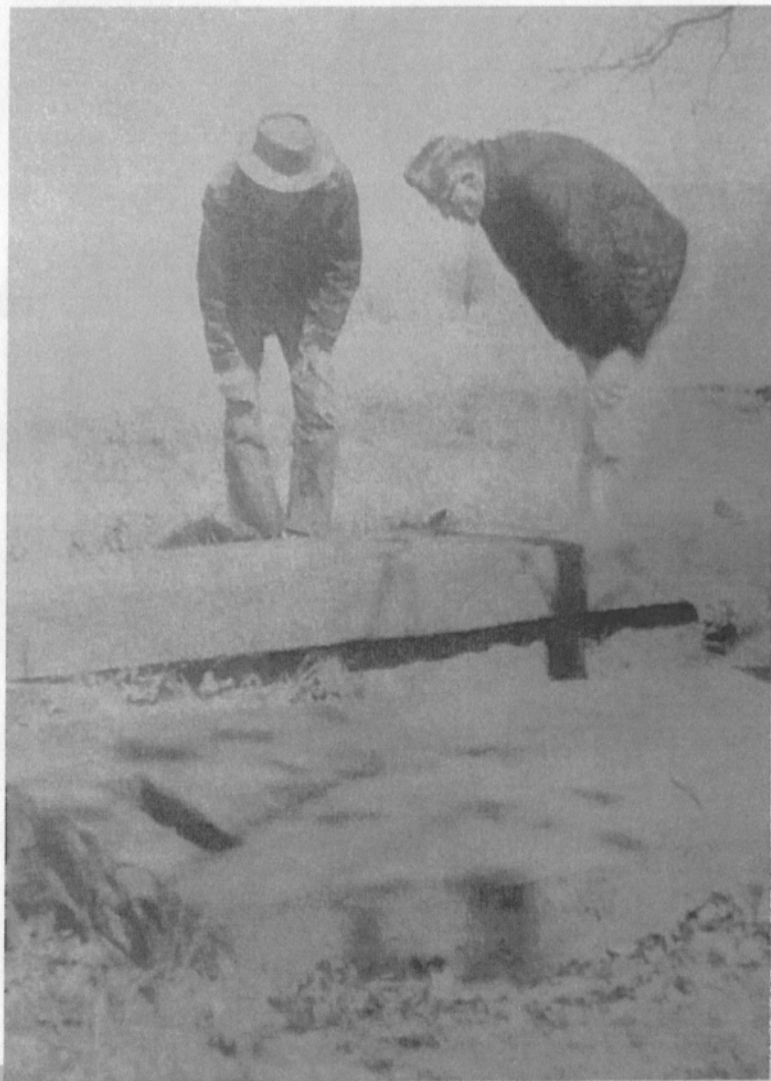


Correction of Death Date

Quote from news article was
first transcribed as:

Rich's Edy Dide March the 2, 1860

Later, grave stone was cleaned
and record of transcription was
corrected to March the 2, 1850.
Also info in John Rich letters
told how Edy died and the
correct date.



Edy's grave marked with her name and death date: March the 2, 1850. Also, marked in stone "Rich's Edy" indicates Edy was slave.








JULY 1850

1850
1850


DIDE MARCH 2 1850

EDY'S GRAVE
DIDE MARCH 2-, 1850
RICH CEMETERY



A large, rectangular, dark-colored gravestone for John Rich and Betsy Rich. The stone is composed of several horizontal layers. The top layer is slightly recessed. There are some smaller, lighter-colored stones or fragments resting on the top surface of the main stone.

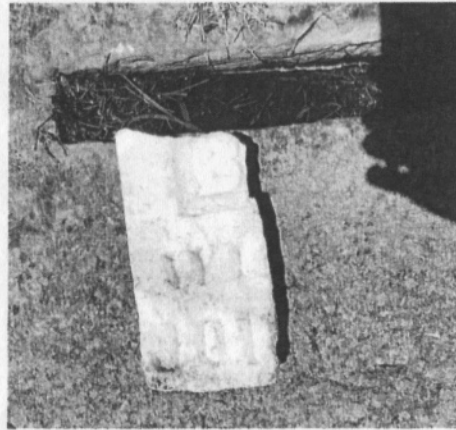
John Rich and
Betsy Rich
GRAVES




A rectangular gravestone that has been severely damaged and broken apart. The stone is lying in several pieces on the grass. The pieces are light-colored and show significant weathering and cracking. The central part of the stone is missing, leaving a large rectangular hole in the middle.

unknown
damaged
grave

Letter B on broken piece of grave marker is believed to be for Mrs. John Rich's grave. She was named Elizabeth but people knew her as Betsy. Other letters are "Wi" and "Joh" possible indications for wife of John Rich.



A black and white photograph showing a broken stone fragment in the foreground. The fragment is light-colored and rectangular, with some faint markings on its surface. It is placed on a dark, textured ground. In the background, there is a dark, irregular shape, possibly a hole or a shadow, and some dry grass or debris. A small, light-colored label is placed near the background, containing the text "BROKEN 'B' STONE".

BROKEN "B"
STONE

Rich's Cemetery
Graves unconfirmed prior to subsurface testing
Red – existing stones
Yellow – interpreted possible graves
Blue – area covered by resistance survey
Green – current fence

White – minimum recommendation for protection based on currently available data



Draft
11/22/21

ARK ARCHAEOLOGICAL
SURVEY
RICH CEMETERY

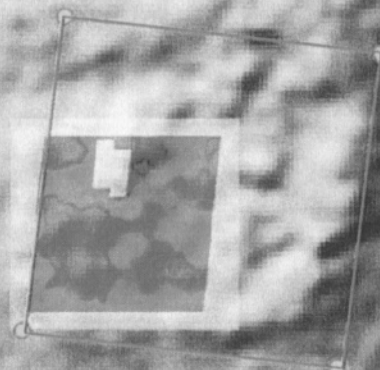


Rich's Cemetery Electrical Resistance (10 meter area)
LiDAR

Potential Graves Based on Low Resistance Readings (red)

Note: Graves are unconfirmed prior to subsurface testing

Green shows current fence, yellow shows old road



Draft
11/22/21

ARK ARCHAEOLOGICAL
SURVEY





ROCK PILE NEAR
RICH'S CEMETERY
NEEDS TO BE CHECKED

FOR BROKEN
GRAVE STONES

Important Questions Remain

How many unmarked graves are there?

Are there more graves outside today's fence?

Are there any field stones or pieces scattered about that once were grave markers?

May 16, 2019

John Rich History

Township 20N Range 30W Section 1 NE

Pea Ridge, Arkansas

John Rich was born in 1785 in Virginia. He apparently moved to Arkansas in the late 1830s. According to 1839 tax records, which are assessed for the previous year (1838) John Rich is listed on the Benton County Arkansas Property and Personal tax records as owner of Township 20N Range 30W Section 1- 158 acres- Taxes \$474.00. Personal property assessed for John Rich included 1 slave between 8 years old and under 60 years old valued at \$300.00. His land grant for the NE quarter of Township 20N Range 30W Section 1 was officially filed on record in 1841.

In the 1840 Benton County, Arkansas Census record, in J. Rich's household is listed, one white male (between 50 and under 60 years old), one white female, (between 40 and under 50 years old), three male slaves, (all under 10 years old) and one female slave, (between 24 and under 36 years old).

In the 1850 Benton County, Arkansas census, John Rich's household included a total of seven slaves listed as: one male mulatto, (age 18), one male mulatto, (age 16), one male mulatto, (age 14), one black male, (age 9), one female black, (age 7), one female black, (age 5), and one female black, (age 3).

In the Benton County, Arkansas 1860 census, John Rich and two slaves listed: One male mulatto, (age 26) and one female black, (age 14).

In the 1848-49 Arkansas Legislative Session, John Rich served as a Commissioner along with B. R. Elzy and Joseph McKissick. They worked on the Turnpike Bill with Van Buren and Fayetteville Turnpike Companies to create a new road via Bentonville and Fayetteville to Van Buren and Fort Smith. (Black, J. Dickson, *'48 Legislature Agenda Not Unlike Today, Benton County Back Them. 1993*)

John Rich's first wife was Elizabeth, known as Betsy according to several sources. It is believed she died in 1860. She is buried in the Rich Cemetery in Pea Ridge. In the Benton County Courthouse, there is a second marriage record on October 13, 1867 for John Rich, (age 82) and Nancy Graham, (age 42). The age recorded for John Rich matches the birthdate of 1785.

The John Rich Cemetery is located on the property in Pea Ridge, Arkansas, once owned by John Rich. There are at least five marked visible graves. Billie Jines wrote a news article about her first visit to the Rich Cemetery in 1969. She reported they found flat stones "beneath the oaks, sassafras, walnut and persimmon". She described the two largest native stones as "measuring three by six or eight feet and are at least six inches thick." In a newspaper article, in 1961, Billie Jines reported what appeared to her on one stone inscribed, "July the 3, 1860" and the other stone inscribed "CHS.EDY Died March the 2, 1860". Another grave stone has the letter "R" or "B" on one side.

For many years, people believed there are six slaves buried in the cemetery. Dewey Buttry led Billie Jines to the cemetery in 1969. At that time, Mr. Buttry had not been back to the cemetery in 40 years. Billy Hall, owner of the property, gave permission to Billie Jines and Dewey Buttry walk into the open field and look for the cemetery.

Billie Jines learned as much as possible from Pea Ridge people and then followed up with as much as possible with county records. There weren't any official records to find about the old cemetery back in the 1960s since it was out in the middle of a field and not many people knew about it. There was no documentation or land record indicating the cemetery even existed. The cemetery was not officially recorded in county or state records until many years later when the Arkansas Archeological Survey was invited to visit the site and file the results of their examination in their records.

As with many old cemeteries, there are ghost stories and legends passed along through the years. Some of the stories are outrageous and scary renditions shared by young people as well as older people who might have visited the cemetery, on a dare, late at night. Apparently, the Old Johnny Rich Cemetery was a prime place in Pea Ridge for young people to gather and whisper ghost stories about Civil War gold hidden in a cave somewhere on the Rich property. Some of these visits unfortunately resulted in broken stones and damage to the graves over the years.

If Billie Jines had not written about the Old Johnny Rich Cemetery in the 1969 news article it is possible the cemetery could have faded away as the last Pea Ridge people who knew about it passed on. Thanks to the Buttry and Hall families who have done what they could to protect the cemetery down through the years. And many thanks to property owner Linda Felgenhauer who personally cleaned the weeds out of the overgrown cemetery and paid for the construction of a fence after the archeologists helped locate as many graves as possible.

The Old House on West Harris Street

Directly southeast of the Old Johnny Rich Cemetery, there is an old house with wood siding, once owned by the McGee Family. The old house is located on West Harris Street and has been empty for many years. This structure has by legend connected to the John Rich family. The old house is situated on the north side of a spring-fed pond which was likely the water source for early residents of this property. The property is located in area near the Civil War military campgrounds overlooking the Sugar Creek valley. The Confederates were situated at Camp Stevens to the west and the Union Army dug trenches on the National Military Park property at Brightwater to the east. Several years ago, Ella McGee's son brought some Civil War bullets and other artifacts he had found on the McGee property to show the staff at the Rogers Historical Museum. There is no question John Rich survived the Civil War on the property which included the cemetery. Another Civil War survivor, Robert Mecklin, a resident of the Fayetteville area, wrote in his diary about Mr. John Rich of Benton County who was tortured by bushwackers looking for gold. It is believed it was the same John Rich that lived on the Pea Ridge in Section 1.

This old house needs to be carefully examined because it is believed to have an older log structure inside which could be John Rich's pre-Civil War house which is, of course, not far from the Old Johnny Rich Cemetery in Pea Ridge.

The McGee family once owned the old house pictured below, located on West Harris Street in Pea Ridge.



1842 Sager-Greene Business Ledger

Lumber Mill and General Store located on White River
shows John Rich purchased building materials in 1842

| Germana 100000 Feb 10 1842 | | |
|----------------------------|---|------|
| 10 | Wm Buddick for 100 ft 1/2 in flooring 150 | 6 71 |
| | Thos. Ford for 100 ft 1/2 in flooring 200 | 1 60 |
| 10 | Wm Buddick for 100 ft 1/2 in flooring 125 | 8 65 |
| | 100 ft sheeting 100 | 1 00 |
| | 207 ft for 100 ft 1/2 in flooring 300 | 3 10 |
| 10 | Wm Buddick for 100 ft 1/2 in flooring 125 | 3 58 |
| | 100 ft sheeting 100 | 6 41 |
| | 215 ft 1/2 in flooring 300 | 4 30 |
| | 207 ft sheeting 300 | 3 09 |
| | John Rich for 283 ft sheeting 0/100 | 2 40 |
| 14 | Wm Buddick for 100 ft 1/2 in flooring 125 | 8 00 |

John Rich
283 ft sheeting

Archaeologists believe the old house on Harris Street in Pea Ridge (formerly Ella McGee's property) may contain a log structure of an earlier home. This site is said to be where John Rich's pre-Civil War house was located which is not far from the cemetery. Certain pieces of house siding needs to be removed for additional inspection by an architect with historic preservation experience.



Notes to document the old house on Harris Street was not the pre-Civil War home of the Buttry family. Dewey Buttry's grandfather, John W. Buttry acquired a portion of Section 1 property in the early 1900s. His grandfather Buttry was married to Margaret Martin. The Martin family operated a store and post office in the area of 12 Corner's Church and Dodd Road on the Pea Ridge before the Civil War. It is possible Dewey's grandfather Buttry knew John Rich when the Rich family lived on the property where the Rich Cemetery is located. Dewey Buttry would have learned of John Rich and the number of slave graves from his grandfather.

The Dewey Buttry Connection

Mr. Dewey Buttry is featured in the 1969 *Pea Ridge Graphic* news article about the Rich Cemetery in Pea Ridge, Arkansas. Dewey Buttry's parents were John Henry Buttry and Causby Buttry. His grandparents were John W. Buttry and Margaret Martin Buttry who lived in a two-story house between the Twelve Corners Church and the Twelve Corners Cemetery. According to Dewey, portions of Section 1 were once owned by his grandfather. Dewey was born 1897 and was eight years old when his grandfather died.

1903 Benton County Plat map lists John B. Buttry owner of S½ of NE1/4 of Section 1.

1905 - John W. Buttry died. His will arranged for 30 acres off the east side of Section 1 for his sons, J. A. Buttry and W. A. Buttry. This particular property was the east side along Highway 94. That part of the property was later divided into lots for houses which still exist. He left other portions of Section 1 to his other children.

1969 Billy Hall gave permission to Dewey Buttry and Mr. and Mrs. Jines to cross his pasture and visit the old cemetery. Pictures of the gravestones were published in the *Pea Ridge Graphic* along with the article written by Jines.

Many years ago, Dewey Buttry was told there were six slaves buried in the old cemetery.

Rich Cemetery Location
Township 20 N Range 30 W Section 1

Township 20-N Range ~~II~~ III-W (5th PM) - Map Group 13

1903 PLAT MAP
RICH CEM LOCATION

[illegible]

Helpful Hints

1. How Napa's INDEX can be found on the preceding pages.
2. Index to Page "C" to show where this Township lies within Benton County, Arkansas.
3. Numbers within square brackets [] denote a multi-plotter (land parcel multi-owner). Refer to Appendix for a full list of members in this group.
4. Areas that look to be covered with Pastures usually indicate multiple sales of the same parcel (Re-bid or Over-bidding parcels). I have not included an explanation of these and other circumstances that might explain the groupings of Pastures on this map.

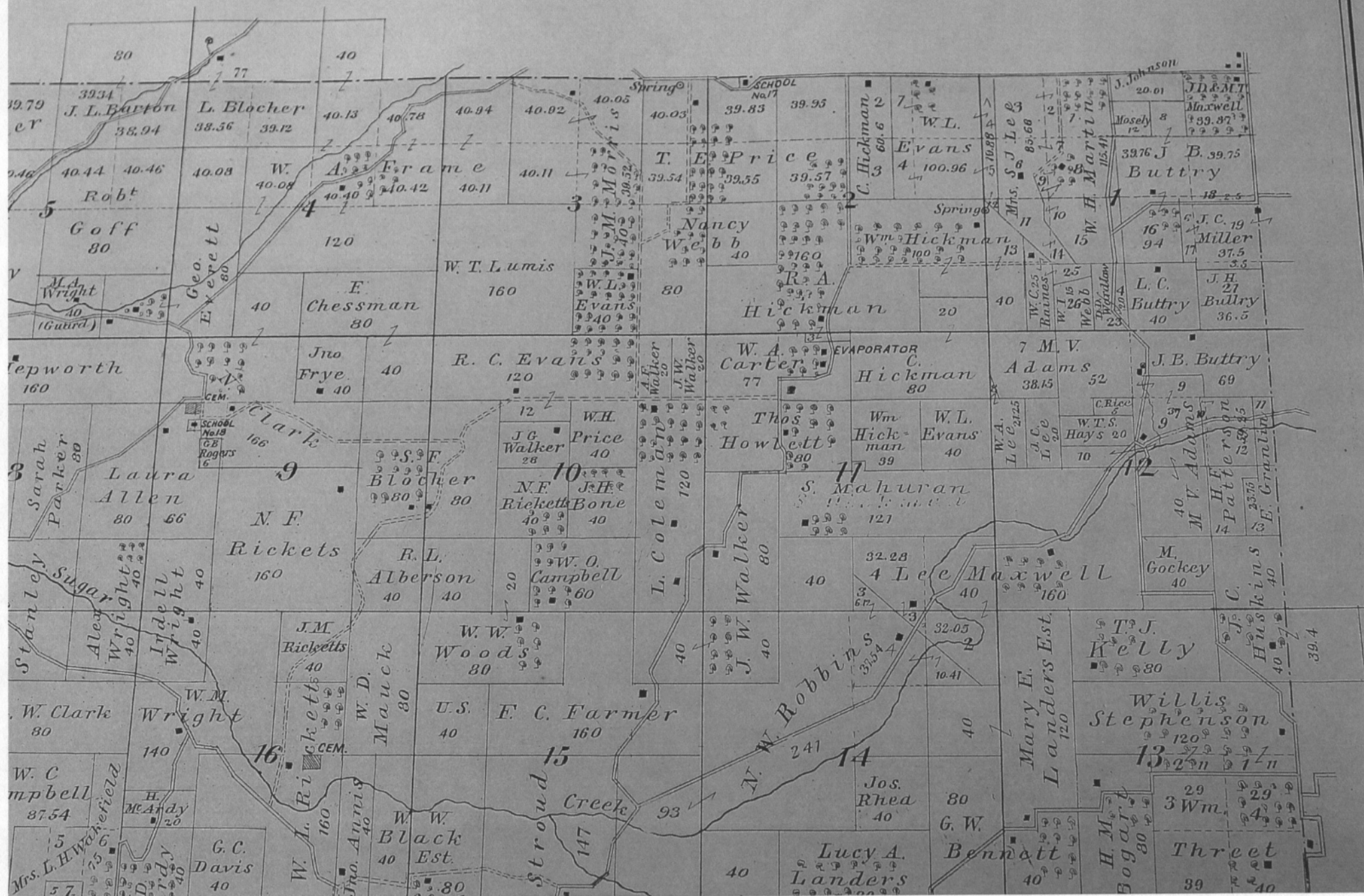
Legend

- | | |
|---|--|
| _____ | Patent Boundary |
| _____ | Section Boundary |
| _____ | No Patents Found (or Outside County) |
| 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99 100 | List Numbers (Indicate Outside a Section) |
| [] | Group Number (or Section Number) |

Scale: Section = 1 mile X 1 mile
(generally, with some exceptions)

Township 20 North, Range 30 West
of the Fifth Principal Meridian.
Scale 2 Inches to the Mile

1903 BEN GAR
PLAT MAP



John Rich Letters Transcription
October 30, 2019
Monte Harris

The John Rich letters have provided important information as to whom is buried in the old Johnny Rich Cemetery in Pea Ridge. After looking through the regular local sources of genealogical information and finding very little, it was just a lucky break that connected Flemming Rich of Virginia and his brother, John Rich in Arkansas. Within the genealogical file was the notation about family letters between the brothers and one brother was John Rich of Arkansas. A request was made to the Kegley Library in Wytheville, Virginia and it was not long before the scanned copies arrived.

The Rich Family letters from the Kegley Library included family news and intimate personal details of their daily lives in early Pea Ridge, Arkansas. The letters answered many questions about the family who lived on the property where the old John Rich Cemetery is located. The letters included the names, birthdays and such intimate details such as the body weights for John Rich, his wife, Elizabeth and their slaves. Not only did the letters provide the names of the enslaved children who once lived with the Rich family but also included a detailed account of the death of their mother named Edy. Edy was buried in the Rich Cemetery with a marked stone inscribed with her name. The letters also proved her death date to be ten years earlier than previously believed.

John Rich was born in 1785 in Virginia. He is described on the Benton County Arkansas census as being unable to read or write which leads to the assumption John had to dictate his letters to someone who could write. John's correspondence is to his brother, Flemming K. Rich who apparently remained in Wytheville, Virginia where the brothers had grown up. Flemming K. Rich was a prolific cabinet and furniture maker whose beautifully crafted woodwork was greatly valued back in his day and still available and appreciated in the antiques shops of Wythe County, Virginia.

Beginning in 1837, John Rich was listed as a taxpayer on the same Pea Ridge property where the old Rich Cemetery is located. That property is situated on the northern ridge above the Sugar Creek where considerable military activity took place during the Civil War. Through the years, the owner of a part of the old Rich property has found a substantial amount of minie balls and other remnants of the Civil War.

An old house built of logs near the Rich Cemetery is of great interest to anyone searching to learn more of the John Rich story. In 1969 newspaper story, Mr. Dewey Buttry identified the old log house as the home of W. T. Putman but he believed the log structure or at least the location was once where John Rich lived in earlier times. More investigation of the house and deed research needs to be done to determine exactly how old the house is and if it could actually be directly connected to John Rich.

There are still unanswered questions even with the incredible wealth of information derived from the old letters, census records and land deeds. Perhaps, the most important question is about John Rich's wife, Elizabeth. When and how did Elizabeth die and is she buried in the Rich Cemetery in Pea Ridge? Elizabeth, sometimes referred to as Betsy, is listed with John Rich in the Benton County Arkansas 1850 Census but in the next census in 1860, John is listed alone.

After the Civil War, in 1867, according to Benton County, Arkansas Marriage Records at the Court House, John Rich, age 82, married Nancy Graham, age 42. It is believed this is the same John Rich who once lived on the Pea Ridge property near the old Rich Cemetery.

The following transcriptions of the Rich family letters include the phonetic spelling and misspellings as well as the common grammar errors of John Rich's time.

From Bentonville, Ark

June 18

To Wm Flemming Rich

Virginia, Wyth County Wyth Courthouse or father-in-law Mr. Nikes

Benton Co State of Arkansas June the 12th day 1847

Dear Brother & Sis

I take this opportunity of writing you these lines to let you know that through the mercies of God myself and family are all well at this time hoping that through the same kind providence this may reach you and yours all enjoying the same blessings. I have nothing of importance to rite you more than we are living in Benton County in this state and am doing as well as I could reasonably expect. I have a verry good farm and it is in good order. Eady has 6 children, 4 boys and 2 girls. The three oldest boys is able to do good work and the others is small yet. Times have been dull here for several years past, but they are beginning to get better produce and stor of all kinds has taken a rise-pork last fall was worth \$3 per

hundred, bacon is worth from \$6 to \$8 cents per pound, flower from \$2 to \$2-50 per hundred. I am well satisfied to live in this country and think that I am settled for life. When you receive this letter I wish you to rite to me how you are doing together with all my old neighbors and acquaintances. We had a remarkable cold backward spring and corn crops is small. Wheat crops is promises to be light good. I also inform you that me and my wife have become members of the babtist church of the old order and fell determined to _____ to the end all of _____ of

_____ that toward that is promised to the faithful. I will say to you now that I have not heard anything from none you in several years and when you get this letter I want you to rite to me how you and family is doing and also how my brother Nimrod and family is doing and also how my step mother is doing as I feel a desire to heare from you all once more. Rite where my friends and relations are being that I may know where to rite them. I feel the effects of old age coming on and would like to keep up a correspondence with all my friends and relations by riting to them and receiving answers. No more at present but remain your brother
Respectfully

John Rich

Elizabeth Rich

Flemming Rich
and Wm Rich

Notes: The birth dates of all Edy's children are listed in two of the John Rich's letters. In the 1847 letter, John mentions Edy has 6 children but does not say anything about Edy being pregnant with her seventh child who was born four months later in November of 1847.

In this same letter, John reports he and his wife, Elizabeth joined "the babtist church of the old order", probably referring to the Primitive Baptists which had at least four separate congregations meeting in different places located in Benton County before the Civil War. Benton County Arkansas deed records include the 1857 real estate deed documenting that John Rich sold property to the Little Flock Church.

According to church history, the Little Flock Primitive Baptist congregation was consituted in 1842. At that time, a group often met for several years at a church member's home in the neighborhood until the organization could afford to build a church house. The Little Flock Primitive Baptist Church practices "foot washing" and continues as an active congregation in a beautiful church building which

replaced an earlier structure destroyed by fire during the Civil War.

From Bentonville Ark
To Mr. Flemming K. Rich
Wytheville, Virginia

State of Arkansas Benton County
May 17, 1850

Dear brother and sister and all connections

it is with pleasure we embrace this another opportunity of conversing with you through the medium of the pen to let you know that we are all well and harty at this time hoping that where these lines comes to _____ they may find you all enjoying the like blessing for which favors we feel thankful to the divine another of our being for the continuance of his goodness to us. We received your verry kind letter of the 15 April on yesterday the 16th inst which was received at an exceptable time by us as we were getting anxious to hear from you and you may be _____ glad to hear that you was all still in the land of the living and was all well. We have nothing of importance to write at this time moore than we will inform you that Edy dead. She died on the 25th of March last. She taking sometime last fall with something like cold with spiting of blood but never appeared to be heartsick none of the time and was never confirmed to her bed and on Saturday before she died on Monday she helped to pick a mess of greens and from that she _____ and the bleeding appeared to be from the lungs and on Monday evening she gout up and walked to the door and sat down and appeared to strangle in her blood and died in that pose? She had seven children, George the oldest, he was born July the 5th 1831 Ruphes born July 28th 1833 Edmond was born December the 20th 1835 Jim was born Sept 11th 1842 Jane was born Jany 19, 1844 Elizabeth was born June the 27th A.D. 1845 Squire born on Nov 18th, 1847 and they all wish to be remembered to their grandmother and their aunt Mary and to tell them that they all keep well and harty and would be glad to see them you wrote that your son William had some thought of traveling some when he got free and if it was his notion to travel westward and stay on us we should be glad as to the distance if ever he started it will be trifling for I am not near as far from home as you suppose and you would perhaps not think so if you was to come and see and as to cabinet work I am hardly able at this time to give you a correct statement about it but would say that a common breakfast table is worth from 4 to 5 dollars and a dining table fr 8 to 10 dollars and other work in proportion but if you should not forget

yourself again in answering this letter I will try to give you a more correct account in my next and all kinds of business is becoming more lively and times is getting better the grate push to California in this part of the county is making quite a stir people going in search of gold. The abalision question is making considerable excitement in the west. Corn is worth from twenty five cents to 37 ½ per bushel wheat 75 _____ 25 bacon from 4 to 6 cents per lb beef from 2 to 2 ½ cts per lb cows and calves from 8 to 10 dollars work oxen from 30 to 45 dollars horses from 50 to 75 dollars and all other property in proportion and as to price of land it varies according to the improvement on it government land that is not improved there is a grate quanity of it and the government price is one dollar and twenty five cents per acre and in general it produces well and in the county where we live the water cant be best in the world and streams sufficient for mills and all other machinery in abundance there are some of or eight sawmills now in our county and walnut and cherry planks can be had at 1.50 to 2 dollars per hundred feet.

William Rich son of Uncle Allen Rich is living in Barry Missouri and John and Fielding Rich is living in Pretis County in the same state. Georgetown is their nearest post office Them and their families were all well the last we heard from them; you wrote that you wished me and my wife to come and see as you thought we had a better chance than you had but that you quessed at but ther is this much about if I was in that old warrant? County and living where I am I would come and I would bag and bagage two and come never to go back again and if I had children as you have I would try to leave there and get where I could settle them around me but you must do as you please in that matter.

And now I want you to redeem your promises and as soon as you get these lines set down and answer it write soon and write often and keep informed all the time how you are doing and about the times and so on. My sheet is full I must close for the present by commending you all to the god of all grace who is able to keep us preserve us blameless to the _____ of Jesus Christ where I hope that we shall all meet if we never meet in this world where there will be no need of ink and paper but we shall now even as we are known and the best best of will be that we will never part anymore but meet and be complete and long together dwell and serve the Lord with one accord of Brothers-farewell

John and Elizabeth Rich

To Fleming K. and Mary T.? Rich and all connections

Note: John Rich writes that slave Edy was dead. One of the large cairns in the Rich Cemetery was transcribed "CHS.EDY deid 1860". The letter allows a correction of Edy's death date which was in 1850. The letters CHS is part of Rich's last name so now it is clear the gravestone reads *Rich's Edy died in 1850*.

The letter also mentions the enslaved children, "wish to be remembered to their grandmother and their aunt Mary," which must mean that some of their family still lived in Virginia, perhaps, with other members of the Rich family.

In an earlier letter, John reported the three oldest boys, "did good work". The children were George, the oldest was 19 years old, Rufus was 17 years old and Edmond was 15 years old were the three oldest. The "still small" ones were eight year old Jim, Jane is six years old, Elizabeth is 5 years old and a little three year old boy, named Squire when their mother died.

Pea Ridge Ark 5

Jan

To N or F Rich Withville, With County VA

Arkansas County of Benton

January 1st 1854

Very Dear Brothers

I take the present opportunity of writing you a few which I will inform you that we are all well trusting the lines may find (you) and all of yours enjoying the Blessings. It has bin so long since I received a letter a letter from any of you that I do not know hardly whether I am writing to the living or dead but let that be as it as it may I still have a desire to hear from you and want you to write on the reception of this. Our country prices is very buoyant evry thing sells for good price and demands the cas I mean gold or silver. Pork is from three and half to four. Oxens 45 to 50. Cows and calves from 15 to 20 dollars. Horses in fare demand. Wheat wheat 80 cents per bushel. Corn 35 cents per Bushel.

Our country is settling very fast in fact we are thick enough for any kind of neighboring but as for health, good citizens, schools &c we are equal to any. I have concluded to give you the number, names, ages and weight of my famaly.

| | | Weights |
|------------|--------------------|---------|
| My Weight | | 178 |
| Elizabeths | | 230 |
| George | born July 5th 1831 | 182 |
| Rufus | Do July 28 1833 | 184 |
| Edmon | Do Decem 20 1835 | 174 |
| James | Do Sep 11 1842 | 96 |
| Jane | Do January 13 1844 | 92 |
| Elizabeth | June 27 1845 | 60 |
| Squire | November 18 1847 | 54 |

I want you on the reception of this to hand this letter to mother and tell her I would be glad if she would write to me and I want you to write also. I have not heard from any of you since June 1851. I have never heard any thing from Andy Lea since you wrote to me and I want you to let me no whare he live if you know &c. I would like if any of you have any notion of coming that you would let me know. William Rich mooved last Spring near the city of Austin Texas. Uncle Alins famaly in Missouri was all well the last I heard from them. I heard from them last October. I will close by addressing our selves yours truly
John & Elizabeth Rich

To Nimrod and Flemin Rich & their famalies

Note: John Rich seemed proud of how much everybody weighed in his letter to his brother and family. Perhaps it was a way to show how "harty" they were with plenty of food. However, one wonders if his wife, Elizabeth, approved of everybody in the family knowing her weight, much less, sharing such intimate details with strangers living 165 years later.

State of Arkansas Benton Co July 9 day 1860

dear brothers & sister

I once more take this present opportunity of riting a few lines to you to let you no I am here yet among the living & injorying as good health as I cold expect any boddy of my age. I hope when thes few lines comes to hand they may find you all well & dooing well. Dear brother I received your friendly letter July 4th. I was glad

to hear from you once more in life. I received letter from Fleming Rich June 15 they was all well and rote like he was dooing well. When I seen you last I expected to come the St. Louis route but when I got to the depo at Memphis they would not let me take that route because I could not make the proof that Rufus was mine. I had no bil of sale with me to show that he was mine and so I came home the same route that I went. I got home the sixteenth day of May safe and sound when I got to fort smith on the Arkansas river the stage was not reddy to start and so we put out a foot and walked a bout sixty or sevinty miles. I wold rite something the _____ if cold. I cant rite much no how and you will find it out before you get done _____ letter tha I have got a new pen _____. I can do _____ better . There is a good _____ of sickness about here at this time and a good many deaths with something like the flux. People is mostly done plowing in thar corn. corn crops looks very well and oats tolerable too wheat was very lite flower is seling for five dollars per hundred corn meal sic bits per bushel bags eight and twelve sents per pound. I dont no of anything more to rite at this time for I hope is not the last time I will rite to you if I liv I want you to rite to me soon and often as you can for it is a great pleasure to me to hear from you so I will bring my letter to a close by subscribing my self your affectionate brother until seperated by death

John Rich

To fleming rich & family

giv my respects to all of my inquiring friends. I have just leant that fleming rich lived one hundred & twenty miles from here.

Now I will rite a few lines to William rich my nephew. I thought one letter would doo both of you. I will let you no that I received a letter from you July the fourth. it made your old uncle mitty glad to see you though enuf of me to send me a letter. I often think of you all. giv my respects to your brothers and sisters. I would like to no how Evaline is gettin along. tell her to rite me a few lines if she pleases. so no more at this time but remains your affectionate uncle

John rich

To William rich & family

Notes: The 1860 letter is not signed by both John and Elizabeth Rich like the earlier letters which raises the question of whether Elizabeth was dead. There is no mention of Elizabeth or her death in the letter. Perhaps her death happened far enough in the past that the family back in Virginia had already been advised in an earlier letter that was not saved in the Kegley Library. Or maybe, she died later after the 1860 letter was written.

If the cemetery is to be properly preserved, it is important to visit the cemetery and

examine more closely the dates on the gravestones, especially since Edy's death date recorded in the letter does not match the date transcribed in the 1969 news article about the Rich Cemetery. This is another reason why a visit to the cemetery for a closer examination might help determine who is buried and how many graves are actually there.

This particular letter provides a glimpse into everyday life on the Pea Ridge in 1860. John Rich tells of traveling with Rufus, one of Edy's sons. At this point in time, Rufus is twenty-seven years old and has been enslaved by the Rich family all of his life. John writes about arriving at Memphis depot and was not carrying a bill of sale or any paperwork that would prove Rufus was his slave. He had to change his planned route and return through Ft. Smith on the Arkansas River. The stagecoach was not ready so John, "put out his foot" and walked, along with Rufus, "sixty or seventy miles" back home. This is a remarkable story of John and enslaved Rufus traveling together and on their return home, crossing the Boston Mountains, on foot, from Ft. Smith to Pea Ridge.