

## THE OLD WAGONER GRAVEYARD

By- D. B. Clayton, Sr.

For quite a while there was uncertainty as to where Hans Wagoner was buried. Descendants who lived around the Old Hans Wagoner house site insisted he died there and was buried in a family graveyard near the house. The uncertainty was caused by a statement that Hans died on the Santee River. Recently, it was discovered from old State Records that the Tributaries of the Santee were called "Santee" quite often, thus the mystery was cleared up. Family tradition stated Hans was buried near his home and that a Cedar tree was planted at the head of his grave and close to the Rock that was placed as a headstone to his grave.

On July 26th, 1957 William T. Castles, his wife and D. B. Clayton, Sr. went to the Old Home place of Hans, which is found to be a very level plot of land several acres in size overlooking Beaver Creek. The old house sites were marked by the remains of several tumbled stone Chimneys and several hundred yards from the ruins was a plot of land circular in shape about 50-60 feet diameter, thick with underbrush, and containing approximately a dozen graves each with rocks for markers and foot stones. There was no tombstones, the reason being given that Hans died about 1783, the nearest place where tombstones could be obtained was Charleston some 175 miles away, and no means of getting the Stones to Fairfield without extreme difficulty.

We located the grave of Hans in this plot, which was then part of a pasture owned by the Dickey Family, and showing signs of having been a cotton patch. by the remains of a big cedar tree whose stump was about 15 feet high and about 15" in diameter. It had partially grown around the rock that was the head marker of a grave.

Tradition has stated that Hans built a Fort for the protection of his family of girls, and the neighbors who might have to seek shelter from the Warlike Cherokee Indians of that date, and that this fort was in a big bank over a Spring which made it easy to get water during a siege. We found the Spring at the foot of a high bank, but any evidence of a fort was long gone.

Hans was a miller, and built a Mill operated by a water wheel and the remains of the old dam about a quarter of a mile up Beaver Creek was easily found, the center of the dam had long ago been washed out leaving about twenty feet of the dam at either end where it was attached to the banks of the stream. The water stored behind this dam was evidently carried down to the Mill nearer the house by a ditch along side the bank or a wooden flume, which was typical of that time. There is no longer any doubt as Hans was buried, but we do not know what others were buried there. Probably one or maybe two of his five wives (not all at one time) are buried with him, too; his last one, Margaret ? who outlived him was probably much younger, likely married again and may have moved away to be buried in some other cemetery.

The old graveyard is located nearly due East of the Dickey House about nine tenths of a mile from the house in the center of the Field. It is some 300 yards northwest of Beaver Creek at a point some three quarters of a mile up the creek from where Highway 215 crosses the creek and where a marker was located by the DAR Chapter. It is about 300 yards West of Reedy Branch where it empties into Beaver Creek, and where old Fort Wagoner was located.

The land of Hans was left to Samuel Mobley who married Mary Wagoner one of Hans oldest daughters and some of the descendants stated that Samuel and Mary were buried in the Wagoner Graveyard, but this is disproved by the will of Samuel Mobley, Jr. who in devising his property in his will stated that a line between the plots of two of sons ran through the place where "my father and mother are buried". Samuel at that time lived on the western branch of Little River, a number of miles away from Beaver Creek.