WITHERINGTON & WARD FAMILY CEMETERY CELEBRATION

to be held NOVEMBER 5, 2005
at Ward-Witherington Cemetery (established 1819) and Witherington Cemetery (established 1860)
in CONECUH COUNTY, AL.

Don't miss this once in a lifetime celebration!!!

American Revolutionary War troops in uniform.
Flags, Honor Guards, Buglers, Bagpipers, Patriotic Songs, and proper recognition for our ancestors
will all be a part of this grand event.

conducted by:
Alabama Cemetery Preservation Alliance <ACPA>
Sons of the American Revolution <SAR>
Daughters of the War of 1812
Daughters of the American Revolution <DAR>
Sons of Confederate Veterans <SCV>
United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC)
Members of the Ward & Witherington families,
....both families were early settlers of the Fork Sepulga area of Conecuh County, AL

NEW GRAVE MARKERS BEING PLACED TO HONOR
THE FOLLOWING EARLY 1819 SETTLERS OF CONECUH COUNTY, AL
WARD & WITHERINGTON PATRIOTS & SOLDIERS FROM THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR,
THE WAR OF 1812, AND THE WAR BETWEEN THE STATES

WILLIAM WITHERINGTON, SR
  1741-1819  Revolutionary War 'Patriot' (born in Darlington District, SC)

WILLIAM WITHERINGTON, JR
  1773-1837, Ensign, Mississippi Territory Militia, War of 1812, early settler of Fork Sepulga area.
  (born at Little Beaver Dam, Lynches Creek, Craven/now Darlington Co, SC)

SARAH 'SALLY' STANLEY, WIFE OF WM WITHERINGTON, JR.
  1777-1845, wife of Patriot Wm Witherington, Jr. and the daughter of Sands Stanley
  of the Pee Dee area, Darlington District, SC

DANIEL E. WITHERINGTON
  1795-1860, Private, Louisiana Militia, War of 1812.  Son of  WM WITHERINGTON, JR & SARAH STANLEY
  <buried at Witherington Family Cemetery, CR # 22 in Conecuh County>

WILLIAM LEANDER WITHERINGTON
  <buried at Witherington Family Cemetery, CR # 22 in Conecuh County>

THOMAS WARD
  1761-1844  SC Revolutionary War 'Patriot, born in Virginia, early settler of Fork Sepulga area.

ANN GOODSON
  Dates not known, wife of Patriot Thomas Ward

WILLIAM H. WARD
  1843-1872, Pvt. Alabama Confederate Soldier, Gr-Grandson of Patriot Thomas Ward
The appropriate bronze gravestone markers have been obtained for the November 5, 2005 "Dedication Celebration" honoring the following:

William Witherington, SR, SC Revolutionary War "Patriot"

William Witherington, JR, Ensign, Miss Territory Militia, War of 1812
.....Sarah Sally Stanley, wife of William Witherington, Jr.

Daniel Witherington, Pvt., Louisiana Militia, War of 1812

Thomas Ward, SC Revolutionary War "Patriot"
.....Ann Goodson, wife of Thomas Ward

...... YOUR PERSONAL INVITATION ......

We invite all of you "COUSINS" linked to the WITHERINGTON & WARD families of Darlington, SC, Conecuh County, AL, and Calhoun & Ouachita Counties in Arkansas to join with us at this gala celebration on November 5, 2005. ...Flags, Revolutionary War Honor Guard (SAR), War of 1812 Honor Guard, bagpipers, buglers and patriotic singing are scheduled.

Following the official ceremony, there will be a "Dutch treat" box lunch served at the 1856 Historic Witherington Plantation Home, which is located only 3-4 miles from the old Ward-Witherington Cemetery. We will begin gathering at the Bowles Church parking lot on Hwy 83 (north of Evergreen) at 10 AM, with lunch being served following the dedication ceremonies.

Thanks to all of you for helping with the arrangements for this wonderful Ward-Witherington Cemetery Celebration to be held on November 5th at Fork Sepulga in Conecuh County, AL.

CONTRIBUTIONS STILL BEING ACCEPTED......

For all you "Witherington Cousins" who would to make a contribution to the gravestone fund, please send your checks (small donations appreciated) directly to Ann Witherington Morton at the following address.

Ann Witherington Morton
P. O. Box 57
Newton AL 36352
Phone: 334-299-3412

For additional information, contact either of the below:

Sherry Johnston
Evergreen Library in Conecuh County, AL
334-578-2670
canebrakesociety@yahoo.com

William R. 'Bill' King
4th Gr-Grandson of William Witherington Jr.
281-493-6767
BillKing@houston.rr.com
Revised: July 27, 2005

Suggested Revised agenda for Nov 5, 2005
Ward-Witherington Cemetery Dedication
Witherington Cemetery Dedication
"Alabama Historic Cemeteries"

Meet at Bowles Church (Hwy 83, north of Evergreen) at 10 AM.
Depart for W-W Cem by 10:30

DEDICATIONS AT WARD-WITHERINGTON CEMETERY
Assembly of SAR Honor Guard, Flag Corps and procession into the cemetery.
Presentation of Historical Alabama Cemetery certificates to Ward & Witherington families: Ted Urquhart, President, ACPA.
Recognition of the graves of American Revolution Patriot Thomas Ward and wife, Ann Goodson. (SAR)
Recognition of the grave of American Revolution Patriot William Witherington, SR. (SAR)
Recognition of the graves of William Witherington, JR and wife, Sarah Standley. (Daughters of 1812)
...William JR. served as an Ensign in the 17th Regiment, Mississippi Territory Militia, War of 1812.
...He was the great-grandson of Patriot Thomas Ward.
History of the 24 Colonial Flag Display.
Dismissal at W-W Cemetery with invitation to enjoy "Dutch-treat" box lunch at Witherinton Home on Hwy 83.
Depart from Ward-Witherington Cemetery about 12 Noon.

LUNCH BREAK
Family, friends & participants gather at Witherington home, including "Dutch-treat" box lunch on the lawn.

DEDICATIONS AT WITHERINGTON CEMETERY
Following lunch, family & friends will be invited to participate in the Witherington Cemetery Dedication as an Alabama Historic Cemetery. Presentation by Ted Urquhart, President of ACPA.
Recognition of the graves of Daniel E. Witherington & wife, Melissa King Witherington at Witherington Cemetery. (Daughters of 1812)
Bronze War of 1812 Grave Marker to be affixed to Daniel's gravestone.
...Daniel served as a Private in the Louisiana Militia during the War of 1812.
Recognition of the graves of William Leander Witherington & wife, Eliza Johnson at Witherington Cemetery. (Daughters of 1812)
...William Leander, son of Daniel & Melissa King Witherington, served as a Private in the 38th Alabama Infantry Regiment, Company 'E', during the Civil War.
Recognition of the grave of Levi Hamm, who served with 1st Battalion of Hilliard's Legion of AL, CSA.

Reminders to ALL attending:

Bring lawn chairs for comfort.
Bring coolers with water & drinks to the cemetery events.
No showing of flags or uniforms at the Witherington Home or at Witherington Cemetery as requested by the Witherington Family.

Other Items:

Have garbage cans available at W-W & Witherington Cemeteries for plastic bottles/papers, etc.
Have garbage cans available at Witherington home during lunch.
Have "Porta-Potties" available at Witherington home for convenience of attendees.
GOVERNOR OF THE MISSISSIPPI TERRITORY

TO ALL WHO SHALL SEE THESE PRESENTS, GREETINGS.

KNOW YE,

That reposing special trust and confidence in the patriotism, valor, fidelity and abilities of

William Witherington

I do appoint him an Ensign of the 17th Regiment Mississippi Territory, to take rank from the date hereof. He is therefore carefully and diligently to discharge the duty of an Ensign by doing and performing all manner of things thereunto belonging: And I do strictly charge and require all officers and soldiers under his command, to be obedient to his orders as an Ensign. And he is to observe and follow such orders and directions from time to time as he shall receive from the Governor of the Mississippi Territory for the time being or the other superior officers set over him according to the rules and discipline of war. This commission to continue in force during the pleasure of the Governor for the time being.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have caused these letters to be made patent and the seal of the Territory to be hereunto affixed.

GIVEN under my hand at the Town of Washington.

The 7th day of July in the Year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and 13, and in the 38th Year of the Independence of the United States of America.

Seal of the Governor: David Holmes
M. T., Jackson County

I do hereby certify that William Witherington came before me
And was duly Sworn the Oaths that is appointed by law as an Ensign in
Cap. James Ware’s Company, 17th Regiment of the Mississippi Territory Militia.
Sworn to before me this 4th Sept. 1813.

James Ware (L 2)

Notes:

1) This is a transcription from a photocopy of the original Ensign’s Commission of William Witherington, Jr. (1773-1837) of Darlington, SC. Witherington served in the War of 1812, likely serving during the 1813 Creek Indian Uprisings of Monroe & Conocuh Counties in Alabama.

2) William Witherington, Jr., born 11 April 1773 at Little Beaver Dam on Lynches Creek, Cheraws District, SC and died 25 August 1837 near Fork Sepulga, Conocuh Co, AL. He married Sarah ‘Sally’ Stanley on 13 February 1794 at Craven County/Darlington, SC.

William Witherington, Jr. was the 4th Great Grandfather of
William R. King, Jr. – 14106 Carolcrest Circle, Houston, TX 77079
Email Address: BillKing@houston.rr.com
Tel. 281-493-6767
Feb. 3, 2005
The United States of America
honors the memory of
William Witherington, Jr.

This certificate is awarded by a grateful
nation in recognition of devoted and
selfless consecration to the service
of our country in the Armed Forces
of the United States.

[Signature]
President of the United States
DANIEL E. WITHERINGTON

Private, Louisiana Militia, War of 1812

DANIEL E. WITHERINGTON was born July 5, 1795 in Darlington District, South Carolina. He was the eldest son of Ensign William Witherington, Jr. and Sarah ‘Sally’ Standley, whose graves were honored earlier today at Ward-Witherington Cemetery. Daniel had migrated from Darlington to Feliciana Parish with his parents as a youth about 1810.

DANIEL WITHERINGTON served as a Private in the Louisiana State Militia and was at the ‘Battle of New Orleans’ with General Andrew Jackson during the War of 1812. A report from the office of Third Auditor, Dept. of the Treasury shows that he enlisted on Dec. 25, 1814 and served to March 22, 1815 as a private in Captain John Bill’s Infantry Company, 10th Regiment of Louisiana Militia.

Daniel migrated from Feliciana Parish, LA to the Fork Sepulga area of Conecuh County in 1819, at the age of twenty-four, along with his parents.

Here, he married Melissa King, the daughter of William and Elizabeth King, on January 28, 1825. Ten children were a result of their 35 year marriage. Melissa’s grave lies here beside the grave of Daniel.

DANIEL WITHERINGTON’S first land acquisition was recorded on October 10, 1840 in Section 22, here in Conecuh County. The recorded land document bears the signature of Martin Van Buren, President of the United States.

Daniel died of a heart attack at the age of 65 on August 20, 1860 here in Conecuh County. He was the first burial here at Witherington Cemetery, at the site that he had earlier selected for himself.
Daniel’s obit appearing in an 1860 newspaper article, which was found in an early family bible, reads:

“DANIEL WITHERINGTON died very suddenly at his residence in Conecuh County, Alabama. Mr. Witherington was a soldier under General Jackson and he helped to gain the noble victory at the Battle of New Orleans. He was one of the first settlers of Conecuh County, and was much respected by all who knew him; but the Angel of Death visited him while he was slumbering, in his usual health, and carried him away from time to eternity, without even a struggle. So an old soldier, a good citizen, a kind husband and an affectionate father is no more.”

Later, his widow, Melissa King Witherington, stated in a widow’s pension application that he enlisted in Feliciana Parish and was discharged at New Orleans. It was not stated that the veteran was wounded. Pension for the widow, Melissa King Witherington, was approved on May 21, 1879 at the rate of $8 per month.

A large number of the descendants and friends of the family are here today to honor the military service of DANIEL E. WITHERINGTON and to share this dedication of the graves of both Daniel and his beloved wife, MELISSA KING WITHERINGTON.
South Carolina Patriot Thomas Ward

DAR and family records indicate that SC Patriot Thomas Ward was born August 19, 1761 near the James River in the Colony of Virginia, and served during the American Revolution in SC. He died here in the Fork Sepulga area in 1844. Patriot Thomas Ward had a patriot pension and two wives, according to family members and DAR history.

Patriot Thomas Ward married his first wife, Ann Goodson in 1782 in South Carolina. They had at least four children, two sons and two daughters. Ann Goodson Ward died in May 1826 and is buried here at Ward-Witherington Cemetery. Thomas Ward’s second wife was the widow, Sarah Patrick, who he married in 1828 in Conecuh Co.

Thomas Ward had been a major land owner in Darlington County, SC, owning a total of at least 2,184 acres between 1810 and 1820. In Sept 1815, Thomas Ward sold 684 acres on Lynches Creek and Long Branch to Copeland Pierce. He sold his remaining land in Darlington on Oct 5, 1819, migrating here to Conecuh Co, Alabama in early 1820s, possibly as early as the summer or fall of 1820. He was one of the first settlers of the Fork Sepulga area.

We do not know if Thomas Ward was a nearby neighbor or acquaintance of William Witherington, Sr. in Darlington, SC but both Patriot Ward and Patriot Witherington each owned 200 acres on Lynches Creek in Old Cheraws District, SC before 1800.

There were a number of early Ward family members that settled in this same Fork Sepulga area of Conecuh County, most appearing to have been the brothers and sons of Patriot Thomas Ward. In fact, the land that this cemetery is located on, and on which we are standing today, was recorded in 1837 to William Ward, son of Patriot Thomas Ward. Land recordings show that the various Ward Families owned at least 280 acres here in Section 10 near this cemetery.

There are a large number of descendants here today to honor the memory of their ancestors, SC Patriot Thomas Ward and his wife, Ann Goodson Ward, both buried here at Ward-Witherington Cemetery.

Revised 10.26.05
**South Carolina Patriot William Witherington, SR.**

**Patriot William Witherington Sr.** was born February 10, 1741 in Dobbs County, NC and died September 22, 1819 here at Fork Sepulga. He was the son of John Witherington, who was born in Maryland, and Rocksolanah Carruthers of Dobbs County, NC. We believe that Patriot Witherington migrated early in life from North Carolina to Craven County, South Carolina.

The Patriot’s wife, Elizabeth Lewis, died in Darlington, SC, about 1773. They had been married in Smithfield, NC in 1766 and were members of the Baptist faith. They had one daughter, Laney, and sons Lewis, William, Jr. and possibly Peter.

In November 1772, William Witherington, Sr. was granted 200 acres of land in Craven County, SC by King George III of England. The land was described as “being located on the NE side of Lynches Creek near the fork on a place called Little Beaver Dam, bounded on all sides by vacant land”. We have a copy of this land grant copied from the South Carolina Archives.

Records indicate that he later migrated down to Feliciana Parish, Mississippi Territory (now Louisiana) about 1810 with his son, William Witherington, Jr. and the son’s family.

In early 1819, at about the same time that Alabama was becoming a state, he was with his son’s family when they migrated from Feliciana Parish to Alabama and settled on 240 acres of land in Section 10, located immediately down to the north of this cemetery on the Forks of the Sepulga River. At this time, Patriot Witherington was an older man of about 78 years of age.
Only a few months after arriving here at Fork Sepulga, William Witherington, SR died on September 22, 1819 and family lore has it that he was one of the earliest burials here at Ward-Witherington Cemetery.

_The DAR Records for Patriot William Witherington indicate the following:_

**WILLIAM WITHERINGTON, SR.**

Patriotic Service in SC, during the Revolutionary War. Salleys Stub Entries to Indents for Revolutionary Claims Issued 26 Feb. 1788 to William Witherington for “Beef for Continental use from the Common Interest”.

One interesting note: Patriot Witherington’s daughter, Laney, was the wife of another SC Hero, Captain Peter DuBose, who fought the British with General Francis Marion in South Carolina. Most of you here today will remember that General Marion was referred to as the “Swamp Fox” in South Carolina history books and in the movie “The Patriot”.

In our audience here today, we have many descendants of William Witherinton, SR who proudly share in today’s events honoring this South Carolina Patriot of the American Revolution.
William Witherington, Jr.

Ensign, Mississippi Territory Militia, War of 1812

William Witherington, Jr. was born April 11, 1773 at a place called Little Beaver Dam on Lynches Creek, Cheraws District, SC on land that his father was granted the previous year by King George III of England. Records indicate that he was the youngest of at least four children.

In 1794, Wm Witherington, Jr. married Sarah ‘Sally’ Standley, the daughter of Sands Stanley, in Darlington District, SC. There were thirteen children born of this marriage.

Sometime about 1810, Wm Witherington, Sr. sold his land in Darlington, SC and migrated with Wm Jr. and his family down to Feliciana Parish in the Mississippi Territory.

A few years after arriving in Feliciana Parish, William Witherington, Jr. received an Ensign's Commission dated July 7, 1813 at Washington in Jackson County, Mississippi Territory. The commission was signed by Governor David Holmes of the Mississippi Territory. Ensign Witherington was sworn to duty on September 4, 1813 at the Capitol in Jackson County, by Captain James Ware of the 17th Regiment, MS Territory Militia.

Witherington was commissioned as an Ensign immediately following the “Fort Mims Massacre” and the “Battle of Burnt Corn” with the Creek Indians. At that time, these lands of Monroe & Conecuh Counties were a part of the Mississippi Territory. A copy of the original 1813 Ensign’s Certificate of William Witherington, JR. has been obtained from an Arkansas ‘cousin’.

The 17th Regiment, MS Territory Militia, was one of the units that was immediately mustered at the Capitol of Washington in Jackson County, following the Fort Mims Massacre, and was immediately dispatched to Monroe County for the building of Fort Claiborne in October 1813.
Early in 1819, William Witherington, JR migrated from Feliciana Parish, LA with his family and his aging father, Patriot Wm Witherington, Sr., and settled in the Fork Sepulga area here in NE Conecuh County. He obtained approximately 280 acres of land in Sections 9 & 10. His land was located immediately to the South and West of this cemetery. This included the land down to the forks of the Sepulga River, located no more than one-half mile from where we stand today. He farmed cotton and operated a ferry at the river and later built a bridge across the river which was known as “Witherington’s Bridge”.

Rev. Benjamin F. Riley’s History of Conecuh County records William Witherington, Jr. as, ‘one of the earliest settlers in this part of Conecuh County’. He also served as a ‘Justice of the Peace’ as early as 1820.

To put this time frame in perspective for you historians in the audience, Alabama became a Territory in 1817, Conecuh County was established in 1818 and Alabama became the 22nd State of the United States on December 14, 1819.

William Witherington, JR died August 25, 1837 here at Fork Sepulga, and his many descendants are here today to dedicate this beautiful ‘War of 1812’ grave marker in his memory. The family is also dedicating a new stone in memory of his devoted wife of 51 years, Sarah ‘Sally’ Standley Witherington, who died here in 1845.
Families are to be commended for taking action and restoring the burial places of their ancestors. The results of this effort by the Ward/Witherington families of Conecuh County was experienced by a large gathering at the Ward/Witherington Cemetery on Saturday, November 5.

The cemetery is located about eight miles northwest of Evergreen near the community of Lyeffion. A number of descendants and heritage supporters had worked for months reclaiming and resurrecting the cemetery from its somewhat abandoned condition. Then last summer the cemetery was named to the Alabama Register of Historic Cemeteries. These accomplishments led to the descendants of those buried within the cemetery to plan and stage the ceremonious program to honor their ancestors.

As people arrived at the cemetery they saw an amazing pageant of colors in the many flags and the period dress of the sizable number of reenactors. This amid the trees in fall color was an awesome sight on a knoll out in the woods. The cemetery is located about a mile and a half north of Highway 83 in a somewhat remote area. The few graves had been refurbished with some new markers and appropriate metal stakes. The headstones of those specifically being honored were draped with significant coverings representing the service periods of the veterans of different wars.

The program was begun by “A Call to Arms” by Bugler Christopher Long, Chief Researcher and Historical Interpreter of the “American Village” in Montevallo. After an invocation by Dr. Walter Reeder, Chaplain of Alabama Society of the Sons of the American Revolution, the colors were then posted with the flag bearers led in by the bagpiper and bugler. The “Regional” Sons of the American Revolution Color Guard posted the United States Flag, Bennington Flag, several state flags, Sons of American Revolution Flag, and Daughters of the American Revolution Flag. The Confederate ceremonial flags had already been posted near the display of 24 Colonial Flags.

Following the Pledge of Allegiance, led by Maggie Susanne Ford, Witherington descendant of Oakwood, Georgia, the bugler played “To the Colors.” Walter Dockery, member of the Black Warrior River Chapter, ALSSAR, Tuscaloosa, Alabama, presented an identification of the special set of 24 Colonial and Regimental flags.

Bill King, Witherington descendant and emcee for the ceremony, extended an official welcome and identified the descendants of the Ward, Witherington, and Ball families. Ted Urquhart, President of the Alabama Cemetery Preservation Alliance, praised the descendants for their restoration of the cemetery and plans to maintain it in the future. He recognized Lee Anne Wofford who was representing the Alabama Historical Commission’s Cemetery Registration Program.
Additional greetings were extended by the following: Jean Vaughn, Regent for Alabama Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution; Mrs. William E. Slinkard, First Vice-president of the United Daughters of 1812; and MG Mark Bowen, TAG AL, on behalf of Governor Riley and the Army and Air National Guard.

Betty Sparks, with the assistance of Vam York, another Ball descendant, presided over the Ball family’s memorial segment. They dedicated the marker and placed a floral wreath at the graves of their Ball ancestors who were early settlers of the area.

Curtis Thomasson, Commander of the Covington Rifles Camp of the Sons of Confederate Veterans, voiced a biography-eulogy and dedication of the headstone for Confederate Veteran William Henry Ward and his wife, Margaret (Chitty). Two of their descendants, Val Ward and Tyler Ward, unveiled the new headstone and placed a wreath at the graves.

Members of the United Daughters, War of 1812, presided over the dedication of the headstone for War of 1812 Veteran William Witherington, Jr. Mrs. William E. Slinkard, First Vice-president, National United Daughters of 1812 read the biography-eulogy for Witherington. Connie Grund, Linda Shabo, and Jean Vaughn shared in dedicating the monument and the placing of a wreath.

The Alabama Society of the Sons of the American Revolution presided over the portion of the program to pay tribute to two Veterans of the American Revolution and their wives, Thomas and Ann (Goodson) Ward and William Sr. and Sarah (Stanley) Witherington. First, SAR membership certificates were presented to two Witherington descendants. Jean Vaughn, Regent for the Alabama Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution, presented biographic-eulogies for the two veterans and officially dedicated the headstones. Others who participated in this ceremony included Colonel Larry P. Cornwell, USAF-Retired and Senior Vice-president of the Alabama Society of the Sons of the American Revolution, and Doctor Walter Reeder, Chaplain of the ALSSAR. The monument was unveiled and wreath placed by Bill King, Witherington descendant.

With all grave markers dedicated, “Amazing Grace” was played by Bagpiper John Quinn, Esquire, Birmingham Society of Piping. This was followed by the color guard presenting “Attention and Present Arms” and the company of joint SAR/SCV Riflemen firing their muskets in single rounds with a one-two second pause between rounds. The bugler followed with a stirring sounding of “Taps.”

A special surprise was then announced before the closing of the ceremony. Arrangements had been made for an U.S. Air Force Fly-over of a “Dixie 15,” 117th Air Wing KC-135, being flown by the 106th Air Refueling Squadron, Birmingham, Alabama. It flew over the cemetery at a precise moment in honor of the occasion. The large plane stunned the crowd as it came into view over the tree tops and saluted with a tip of the wing as it flew past. Doctor Walter Reeder then voiced a benediction, which included a portion of George Washington’s Prayer for These United States.
Before dispersing from the one and one-half hour program, the crowd joined in singing “God Bless America.”

Much appreciation was expressed to Robert Glenn Nivens, U.S. Army, Infantry (Retired), who served as event coordinator. He was responsible for arranging the different portions of the entire ceremony and coordinating the different reenactment groups. He also organized the flag displays and facilitated each activity throughout the ceremony.

Anyone who has a response to this writing is requested to contact Curtis Thomasson at 21361 Rabren Road, Andalusia, AL 36421, 334-222-6467, or Email: chthom@alaweb.com.

Revised Nov. 14, 2005

Bill King, Houston, Texas