

PICKENS COUNTY  
SOUTH CAROLINA  
CEMETERY SURVEY

Volume Three

Anne                      Julia                      Era  
SHERIFF • WOODSON • DAVIS

OLD PENDLETON CHAPTER  
OF  
SOUTH CAROLINA GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

PICKENS COUNTY  
SOUTH CAROLINA  
CEMETERY SURVEY  
Volume Three

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## INTRODUCTION

The original purpose of the cemetery survey by the Pendleton District Chapter of the South Carolina Genealogical Society was to read and record inscriptions from family and church cemeteries in Pickens and Oconee counties, and then to provide this information in available printed form.

These two counties, along with Anderson County, formed Pendleton County from 1789-1798 and Pendleton District from 1798-1826 (the geographical area of the county and the district being one and the same). Out of the Pendleton District, Pickens and Anderson counties were formed in 1826, only to be changed to Pickens and Anderson districts in 1827, to become effective in 1828. The first Pickens County (subsequently called Pickens District), with its seat on the banks of the Keowee River at Old Pickens or Pickens Court House, as it was properly called, survived until 1868. At that time, current Pickens and Oconee counties were created by a division of the Pickens District.

The town of Pickens Court House, which came into being sometime after 1828, was located slightly below the present Duke Power Dam on Hwy. 183 in what is now Oconee County. According to some notes attributed to the late Frederick Van Clayton, the first court of Pickens District opened October 27, 1828. Even so, an act was not passed by the General Assembly until December 18, 1829 authorizing the delivery of titles to those who had purchased lots in the new town. Never a large town and never popular as a town site, it was seemingly rapidly abandoned in favor of Walhalla and "new" Pickens (the present town by that name) after the division of District. Unfortunately very little research has been done on the town of Pickens Court House and many of the details of its existence remain fragmentary.

Since the inception of the cemetery project in the late 1970s, much new information has surfaced regarding this area. It can now be stated almost assuredly that there were no white settlers in the Pendleton District before 1777, with the first clearly documented settlement not taking place in present Pickens or Oconee county until after the conclusion of the Revolutionary War. While it was previously thought that most of the early settlers received land grants, current evidence indicates this to be true of only a portion of the early settlers. Land purchase(s) accounts for the property ownership of many early settlers. And a number of early land grants went to individuals (land speculators in some instances) who never came to live in the Pendleton District. Equally it was previously thought that many of these land grants were issued for service in the Revolutionary War. As it turns out, only a small fraction of the early grants were issued for such service.

Although the population of the Pendleton District would grow at a phenomenal rate between 1784 and 1794, there is little evidence that this growth was distributed over the entire area.

It now seems apparent that the population diminished as one moved northward and westward from previously settled areas of S.C. (in effect, northward of Abbeville County and westward from Spartanburg County). The northwestern portions of Pickens and Oconee counties were on the very edge of the frontier...in a land of scattered cluster settlements whose population lived at least partially in fear of Indian attacks until ca. 1798. In terms of actual land ownership, the northwestern quarter of Oconee County and a small section of northwestern Pickens County remained the property of the Cherokees for years after the conclusion of the Revolutionary War, with the final cession to S.C. not taking place until 1816. Numbers of small forts, or stations, would be erected along this frontier between 1787 and before 1798. Thus, while the conceivers of the cemetery books may not have had historical analysis as one of their original purposes, these books help to confirm and support the just presented historical analysis of the early years of Pendleton County and District.

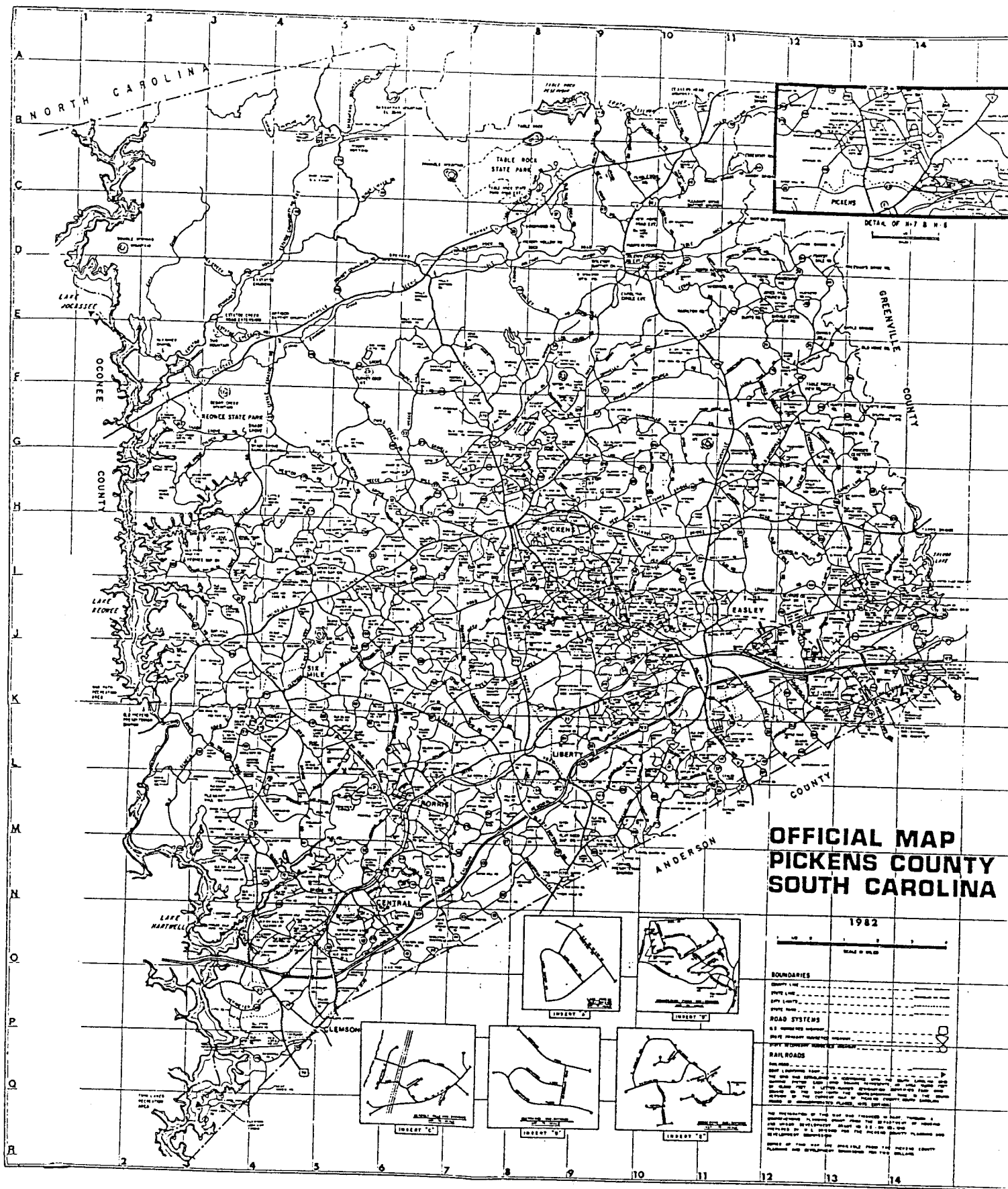
Introductions to previous volumes have described the Pendleton District as one of the gateways to the west for the migration from the eastern United States. No recent evidence has altered this conclusion. Unfortunately many thousands of people only passed through without leaving a record of their visit, others died here while on their way to other places, while yet others stayed in this area only until new lands further west were opened by land speculators and/or ceded by the Indians. Even so, a large number of individuals came to both live and/or die in this area, only to have their descendents move on to other areas in later years as a result of bad farming years, the War Between the States, the disasterous years of sharecropping and credit pricing during the years after the War Between the States, or for a variety of other reasons. As a result, the records of Pendleton County and District along with the records of the modern counties that make up the area that was called Pendleton District are perhaps one of the great sources of information about thousands of American ancestors. The majority of the court and legal records of this area appear to be reasonably intact, and the continued quality genealogical publications are slowly tapping these vast resources. Although changing conditions and economic situations have deprived many residents of this area of marked graves, this projected final volume of the white cemetery inscriptions of the Pickens District (current Oconee and Pickens counties) brings to a conclusion a valuable and far reaching project. The five volumes of this work are genealogically and historically important, and a tribute to the many people who have spent years in making their publication a reality.

I had originally criticized these publications for failing to include Black cemeteries in this area. Only after voicing this criticism did I learn that no Black help was forthcoming, although requested, to help identify and locate isolated graveyards and to at least hint at the identity of numbers of unmarked graves. It is to be hoped that such identifications will be undertaken in the future by those most able to provide

this much needed information.

Undoubtably those working on these publications have failed to locate some isolated and forgotten graves in remote parts of both counties (keeping in mind that vast forests without many access roads cover substancial parts of northwestern Oconee County). In the wake of current economic progress in the northeastern section of Oconee County and the northern part of Pickens County, it seems almost inevitable that some small graveyards, often no more than a single stone, will simply disappear in the process of development. While the failure to locate these few graveyards is to be regretted, it would seem likely that the vast percentage of readable tombstones have now been surveyed and recorded. Those who would question the accuracy of any of the materials found in these works may use the location maps to do their own verification. I am sure that many of the people who have worked on this project would agree that in addition to the weather, the briers, "chiggers", and bees await your coming!

Frederick C. Holder  
Keowee River / 1988



# OFFICIAL MAP PICKENS COUNTY SOUTH CAROLINA

1982

**BOUNDARIES**  
 COUNTY LINE  
 STATE LINE  
 CITY LIMITS  
 TOWNSHIP LINE

**ROAD SYSTEMS**  
 U.S. HIGHWAY  
 STATE HIGHWAY  
 COUNTY ROAD  
 PRIVATE ROAD

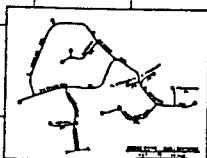
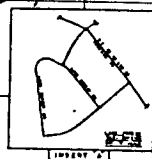
**RAILROADS**  
 PASSENGER SERVICE  
 FREIGHT SERVICE

**WATER**  
 LAKE  
 RIVER  
 CREEK  
 STREAM

**LAND USE**  
 FOREST  
 PASTURE  
 CROPLAND  
 URBAN

**POINTS OF INTEREST**  
 STATE PARK  
 HISTORIC SITE  
 MONUMENT

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## DEDICATION



This book is dedicated with sincere appreciation and deep gratitude to Mrs. Era (Curron) Davis of Pickens, South Carolina, for her untiring efforts in collecting tombstone inscriptions. Working on this project for over ten years, she has collected numerous names and dates from family and church cemeteries throughout Pickens County.



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