

The Wicks Family Since 1700

OUR STORY

Ned Wicks, who was born between the late 1700s and the early 1800s died a slave. He was brought From Georgia with 40 wagons of 100 slaves by a slaveowner named Richardson, who settled in Lowndes County Artesia, Mississippi. The Richardsons in turn sold Ned to a slaveowner named Gilmore. The Gilmore Store still stands on location in Artesia.

Religion

Ned was a strong willed minister. His master threatened him with 40 lashes if he continued to go to Columbus on Sundays to preach. Ned ignored his warning and said "Give me 100 lashes and I will still preach". The story is that Ned ultimately converted his master.

Ned had four sons and one daughter. Of his five children, Dennis Sr. (1826-1920) appears to have been the most outstanding figure of Ned's children. He was 35 years old when the Civil War started in 1861, and 37 years old when on January 1, 1863 President Abraham Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation.

Landowners

In September 1887, Dennis Sr. contracted for 330 acres of land from a Jewish man named Simon Loeb. Dennis sold 80 of these acres to his brother Elijah. Loeb previously bought this land from Martha Vaughn on January 5, 1883. Dennis paid three hundred dollars down, in cash, on the land and promised to pay five hundred dollars each January 1st for the following six years until he completed the payments. However, he was not able to complete the land payments before the six years were up and a man by the name of Charlie Smith, who once owned him, provided Dennis with the necessary financial assistance. Charlie Smith was said to have been partial towards Blacks, whom he considered smart, and he tried to participate in whatever ways he could. After many long and hard years, Dennis Sr. finished paying for the land in 1910.

He left this land to Dennis Jr., Zack Sr., Jim Sr., Ned, and Sally when he died. They in turn donated a significant service to the community.

Education

Zack donated the family cemetery, which is now the Wicks Memorial Garden. Jim donated a school that stood opposite the New Zion Baptist Church. It was named The Wicks Normal School. Dennis Jr. donated a pool, which is still on site a few hundred feet from the New Zion Baptist Church. The pool supplied enough water for all the animals in the community. He also donated the community pump, which supplied water for everyone living there. Until recent years it was still on site approximately five hundred feet from where the late Dennis III lived. Ned donated the Church. They had previously gone to New Prospect for church services, but Ned was dissatisfied by the way things were done there so he persuaded the people in the community to build a church of its own. However, before they built the church; they held church services at Sally's house where Dennis Jr., Zack Sr., and Jim Sr., were converted. The church was built under the supervision of Dennis Sr. Ned was the first pastor. Only family members pastored New Zion and that tradition is still alive.

*And history continues... *