

JOHN DEAN HISTORY IN TALBOT CO GA

Information collected, written and copyrighted by Sidney Smith
Distributed to John Dean descendants March 2013

Hello,

I am Sidney Smith from Talbot County Georgia. While researching my family, I have ran up on John Dean several times. He was instrumental in founding Shiloh Primitive Baptist church in Talbot and there is a creek below my house named "Deans Mill Creek." He also had a huge grist mill on the creek, hence the name. The ruins of the millsite still stand. Here are some pictures:



2013 Photo by Sidney Smith of John Dean grist mill remains, Talbot GA



2013 Photo by Sidney Smith of John Dean grist mill remains, Talbot GA



2013 Photo by Sidney Smith of John Dean grist mill remains, Talbot GA

Some impressive rockwork to stand the test of time with no cement and probably built by John Dean himself (and maybe some slave labor). I have been chasing leads on Mr. Dean for years. John's mill is referenced in my family history, My GG Grandfather wrote of taking his corn to be ground by "John Dean."

John Dean was also a founding member of Shiloh Primitive Baptist church. Below is a historical article on that church that I recently wrote for the local newspaper. It referenced Deans mill several times.

Shiloh Primitive Baptist Church

Shiloh Primitive Baptist Church is now located on Hwy 208 near the Taylor county line. Horeb church and Shiloh church now sit adjacent to each other and share a cemetery.

But Shiloh Church was not always sitting where it is now. In the minutes of Mount Carmel Primitive Baptist Church in Crawford Co., Ga. For Saturday, **July 17, 1840**, a Petitionary letter had been received from brethren in **Talbot County near "Dean's Mill"** for ministerial services to assist in "Constituting a Church." The motion was "Granted." Details in this petition were to locate Shiloh Primitive Baptist Church near Dean's Mill in Talbot Co., Ga. in August, 1840. No other concrete information on its location was listed.

In the Minutes of Mount Carmel Primitive Baptist Church Crawford Co., Ga. For Saturday, August 15, 1840, a request was considered from The Shiloh Primitive Baptist Church in Talbot Co., Ga. by letter called on "us and our Brother James Mathews" for him to supply them as pastor. The request granted.

A bit later that same year, in the Minutes of The Upatoie Association of Primitive Baptist held with Mount Paron Church in Muscogee Co., Ga. Saturday-Monday, September 12-14, 1840, a petitionary letter was received from Shiloh Church, Talbot Co. "to join the Upatoie Association." Messengers were William Childs and Samuel Barron. The Shiloh Church reported they had one Baptized, fourteen other members by letter, and a total of twenty-two in attendance on the meeting on first Sunday in September 1840. It was noted that the church was constituted with seven members in August, 1840.

The Minutes of The Upatoie Association held with Shiloh Church Talbot Co., Ga. September 11-14, **1852**, The Shiloh Church was listed as located **five miles north of Centerville, Talbot Co., Ga.** Messengers were William Childs and Benjamin Smith, reported one baptized, four by letter, one dead and a total of thirty-six members.

A few years later, in the minutes of The Upatoie Association of Primitive Baptist held with Shiloh Church, Talbot Co., Ga. August 31 thru September 2, **1872** Shiloh's location was listed as **two miles north of Prattsburg, Talbot Co., Ga.** Messengers were Elder David Caldwell and B. A. Childs. The church reported they had two Baptized, one of those by letter, another six had died, with a total of eighteen members. A big drop in members is to be noted during this twenty year period.

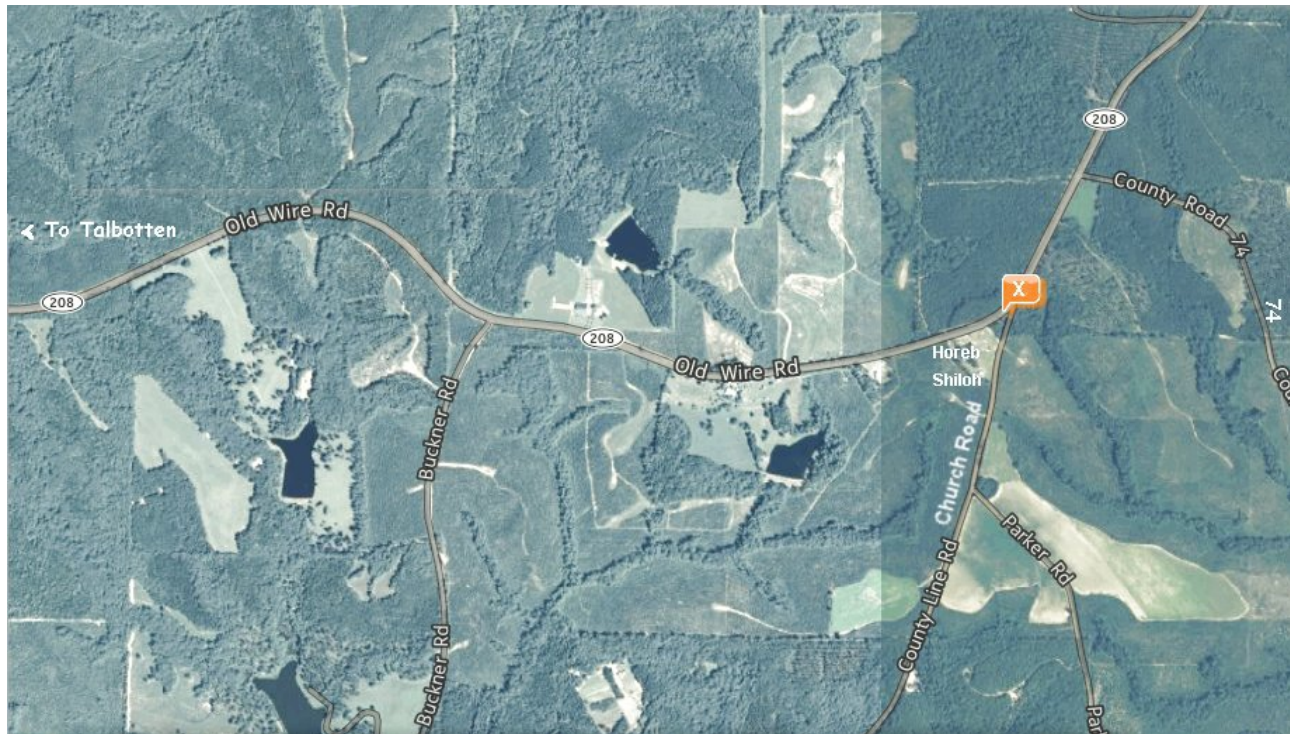
Shiloh Church was **moved from its original location to her present location between March and October 1887.** It was dragged about eight miles south, for reasons unknown, to where it sits today. It could be that a lot of the members had died or moved their support to nearby Collinsworth Methodist Church. Some parts of the church were disassembled and taken by wagon. The church would then be **resurrected in Taylor County.**

THE TALBOTTON NEW ERA, **July 17, 1888** listed under the section headed, MT. ZION MENTIONS, contained the following article:

*The Shiloh Primitive Baptist Church will observe the ordinances of the Lord's Supper and feet washing on the fourth Sunday in this month, at Shiloh Church **just over the line in Taylor County, near Daviston.***

The location this time was in the east side of land lot 203 in the 15th District of Taylor County, Ga. For whatever reason Shiloh Church relocated to Taylor County, they would soon be back in Talbot County without moving one board. A dispute over the county line between Talbot and Taylor County was growing.

The February term of the Superior Court of Taylor County minutes reflect the following: "It has been presented to us that there is a dispute to the proper line between Talbot and Taylor Counties and request the clerk to ask the Governor to appoint a suitable surveyor to mark out and define the proper line between the said counties. Talbot and Taylor Counties Engineer R. R. Reneau completed a survey of the Talbot and Taylor line. **The county line was moved from in front of Shiloh Church to behind the church and cemetery.** Thus, moving Shiloh church from Taylor County back into Talbot County where it proudly sits today.



Map of the current location of the Shiloh Church

The original location of Shiloh Church remains a mystery. I have located what appears to be its original location along with a cemetery with many unmarked graves. Out of respect to the current landowner and to preserve the sanctity of the cemetery, I will not reveal this location.

This cemetery matches all descriptions of being near Deans Mill, and relevance with the locations of Centerville and Prattsburg. It sits high on a hill overlooking what were surly bottomland cotton fields in its heyday. There are no grave markers; just many coffins sized depression in the ground with a rock for a headstone. One set of graves are contained in a grave house, research indicates this belongs to the Childs family mentioned above. This is only logical considering their prominence in the Shiloh Church. All the other graves will remain unknown to us for eternity unless someone else has more concrete information on the beginnings of the Shiloh Primitive Baptist Church. [end article]

I would be interested in knowing if any descendants have a picture of John Dean? It would be nice to put a pic to the legend of the 52 inch grinding mill in Talbot county. I have found the cemetery for the original Shiloh Church and feel that John Dean is buried there. He was of prominence in the church and it was less than one mile from his mill and his home. (I have found the ruins of his home near the mill site). Here are pics of the current church and old cemetery.



Believed to be the grave of John Dean (as passed down from community elders)

I can forward more pics of the mill as well as some of the cemetery where he has to be buried. Sidney Smith