

Baxter Bay

In the early 1850's Israel Baxter relocated his family. He moved from 3 miles south-west of Malone where he had home steadied in the late 1820's. He purchased 600 acres of land a mile south of present day Malone. Included in this land purchase was a large cypress pond. This pond would later become permanently known as Baxter Bay. In this era the traveling for supplies was probably a major consideration in the choosing of more lucrative locations. The travel distance to Bolton or the Banner Road merchants were about the same distance as before he relocated. In this era there were also merchants in the Greenwood area to the south. A run there would add 6 or 8 miles to a round trip. With mules and horses for transportation perhaps he did most of his shopping locally. Baxter Bay was probably the decisive factor in choosing this property. This purchase came with an unlimited supply of food. For many decades and perhaps millenniums Native Americans had depended on Baxter Bay for their lively hood. Geological surveys today indicate even in the severe drought years, Baxter Bay maintained its water (which is supplied by underground springs).

Rocky Grove Cemetery is located a quarter mile east of Baxter Bay on the same property. Due to unavailable deed records it is unclear when the first interment was performed. Speculation is: In an unwritten contract, Israel donated the cemetery to the community and he and his spouse are buried there in unmarked graves.

NOTE: ---- (Documented in 1982) ---- In an interview with Mrs. Hatcher who was born at the turn of the century and raised near the cemetery she stated: When I was 10 or 12 years old a herd of large hogs literally destroyed rocky grove cemetery. She remembers most of the headstones being uprooted and damaged with many being completely destroyed. She remembers several piles of headstone pieces. When ask what became of the broken piles she stated: I assume the chain gang convicts hauled them away when

they cleaned up the mess the hogs made. Perhaps the headstones of Israel and spouse "Mary Ann Futch" were included in the debris which was hauled away. Israel being the cemetery founder and donator to the community would have most likely had family headstones. It was alleged by family elders that Mary Ann was the first interment in Rocky Grove in the mid 1850's.



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Top photo: 1900
Lower photo: Cypress trees in background