



WALTON

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Walton County Heritage Association

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WALTON COUNTY HERITAGE ASSOCIATION, INC.

OFFICE LOCATION

Walton County Heritage Museum, (Old Train Depot)

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Cover Design: Sam Carnley

Newsletter Cover Collage Photos

Clockwise from top left:

1. **Darlington, Florida, early 1900s, Courtesy of Baker Block Museum, photographer unknown. Edited by Sam Carnley.**
2. *Henderson-Mathis turpentine still in Glendale or Gaskin. 1904. Black & white photoprint, 4 x 6 in. State Archives of Florida, Florida Memory. <<https://www.floridamemory.com/items/show/42107>>, accessed 28 June 2017 by Sam Carnley.*
3. **William Lewis (Luke) Hurst Family, Fleming Creek/Clear Springs area, north Walton County, ca 1894, from “The Heritage of Walton County, Florida,” p. 190.**
4. **Old Paxton High School, “1961-62 Paxtonian” Year Book, photographer unknown. Edited by Sam Carnley**
5. Walton County Heritage Museum, photo and editing by Sam Carnley.
6. Gladys D. Milton (1924-1999), Midwife, Flowersview/Paxton, photo by her daughter, Maria Milton. Also in “The Heritage of Walton County, Florida,” p. 249, and the September 2018 Newsletter at <http://www.waltoncountyheritage.org/GenSoc/NL2018Sep.pdf> Edited by Sam Carnley.
7. Lake Jackson, South Side, in Paxton City Limits, photo and editing by Sam Carnley.
8. Paxton Water Tower, Paxton, Florida, photo and editing by Sam Carnley.
9. Old Freeport School, constructed ca 1908, burned 1943. Photo from “The Heritage of Walton County, Florida,” p. 45. **Photographer unknown. Edited by Sam Carnley.**
10. *Floralia Saw Mill Company's engine number 3 - Paxton, Florida. 1907. Black & white photonegative, 4 x 5 in. State Archives of Florida, Florida Memory. Photographer unknown. <<https://www.floridamemory.com/items/show/146972>>, accessed 7 September 2019 and edited by Sam Carnley. [Built in 1873 and Originally owned by New York, Ontario and Western Railroad Company as engine number 60; then owned by Southern Iron and Equipment Company as engine number 568 in 1907; then owned by Floralia Saw Mill Company as engine number 3 on March 3, 1907; returned to Southern Iron and Equipment Company and number changed to 915 on March 13, 1913; then owned by Louisiana Saw Mill Company as engine 50 in May, 1913.]*

The Walton County Heritage Association, Inc. is a 501 (C) 3 Florida Not for Profit Corporation Recognized by the IRS as a Public Charity Organization for Tax Deductible Donations.

The Walton County Heritage Association was organized for four main purposes:

- To promote the preservation and restoration of buildings and other landmarks of historical interest within Walton County;
- To maintain the Walton County Heritage Museum to preserve the heritage of Walton County for the education and enjoyment of current and future generations by collecting, preserving, and exhibiting artifacts and information from the time of its original inhabitants to the present;
- To foster and enhance the development, education, and sense of history which is unique to Walton County; and
- To secure cooperation and unity of action between individual citizens, businesses, and other groups as may be necessary to fulfill these purposes.

The Association depends upon the support of its members and the business community to accomplish its goals. Annual dues are \$25 for individuals, \$40 for families and \$100 for corporate memberships.

Individual Membership Application <http://www.waltoncountyheritage.org/Membership2020.pdf>
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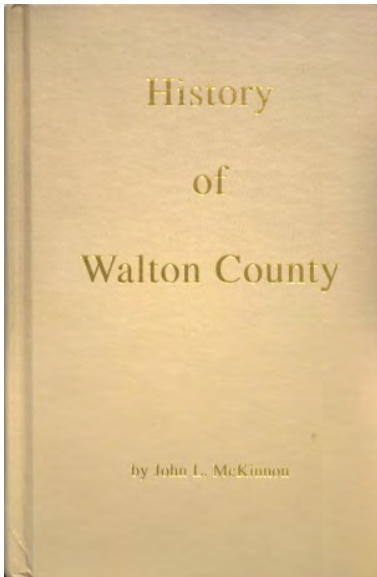
Member Benefits:

- Automatic membership in the **Walton County Heritage Museum** and the **Walton County Genealogy Society**.
- Invitations to Quarterly Members Meetings
- **Discounts** on Special Events
- **The Museum Research Center:** Members get free copies of documents and use of the Genealogy Society computer when the Museum is open.
- **The Museum Gift Shop:** Members receive discounts on books, special publications, postcards, photographs, CDs, DVDs, videos, and gift items.
- Free **subscriptions** to the WCHA Newsletter and Journal.

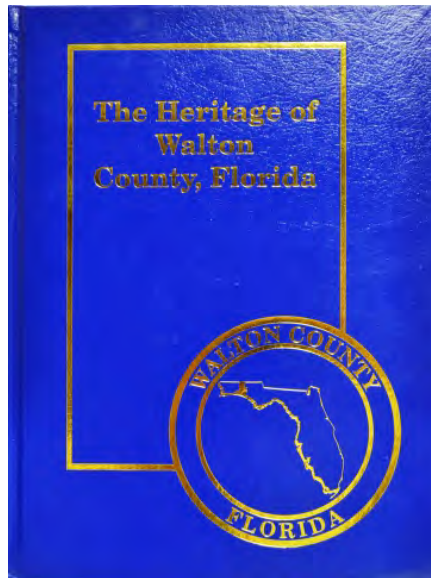
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From the Museum Gift Shop

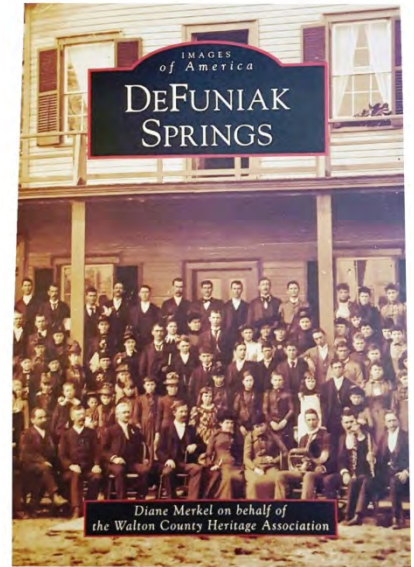
Our most popular books



History of Walton County
by John L. McKinnon. The Museum has sold out of this book and it is out of print, but it is available on line free of charge at this link,
<https://dlg.galileo.usg.edu/georgiabooks/pdfs/gb0503.pdf>



The Heritage of Walton County, Florida. Item code **B13.** History of Walton County's organizations, churches and people. Hard cover, 316 pages, indexed.
\$59.00 plus tax and shipping.



Images of America, DeFuniak Springs. Item code **B06.** By Diane Merkel. Softcover, 128 pages, 185 photos, indexed.
\$21.99 plus tax and shipping.

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Uncle Bully Cawthon

Written by
Gale Cawthon Cassidy

Transcribed and edited by
Sam Carnley

So much has been said and written about Bully Cawthon¹ until I, Gayle Cassidy, decided to bring his picture up to the news office for Mrs. Woodham to see. My husband, Harold and I built our house on the old Chipley Cawthon² home place. Chip, as he was called, was my grandfather and the son of Uncle Bully Cawthon.

I remember as a child seeing Uncle Bully's picture hanging in the back bedroom of my grandfather's house. My father, Cecil Cawthon³, said he could remember the day Uncle Bully's picture was delivered in the frame to Grandpa's house.

As a child I was a little frightened of this man called "Bully," whom I had heard so much about and never was privileged to see. Grandpa (Chip) would sit on the front porch, smoke his pipe, and rock in his rocking chair, and tell, about his father. Mostly what Grandpa would tell was about the unique way Uncle Bully would go to visit all the new neighbors. From the way Grandpa talked, all the new women that moved nearby could expect a visit from Uncle Bully Cawthon.

Before Grandpa (Chip) died he gave Uncle Bully's picture to my father. The resemblance of all three is quite remarkable.

Tom Cawthon, my uncle, listened to a lot of the stories told about Uncle Bully by Chip Cawthon. He related several of these incidences to me

To start with Bully Cawthon's father was named William Dabney⁴. Before 1837 William moved to Dothan. He found Dothan a wilderness and would not stay there. At this time Dothan was called **Cawthon's Cowpen.**

In 1837 William moved south of Lake Jackson with his 24 children at which time he furnished the old Confederate Army with beef. This is where Uncle Bully was raised.

Uncle Bully and his brother Murray moved down to Children Home. They had a rice mill back of the old Children Home cemetery on Pond Creek. Bull and Murray had a rail fence that stretched from what is now the Floyd Cawthon home to Pond Creek. This was where they penned their cows. From the way Chip Cawthon talked, Bully had a large number of cows.

Uncle Bully would travel to Milton by horse and wagon and take beef to sell. One time when he was raveling back a man kept following him. If it had not been for a friend who noticed this man, Bully

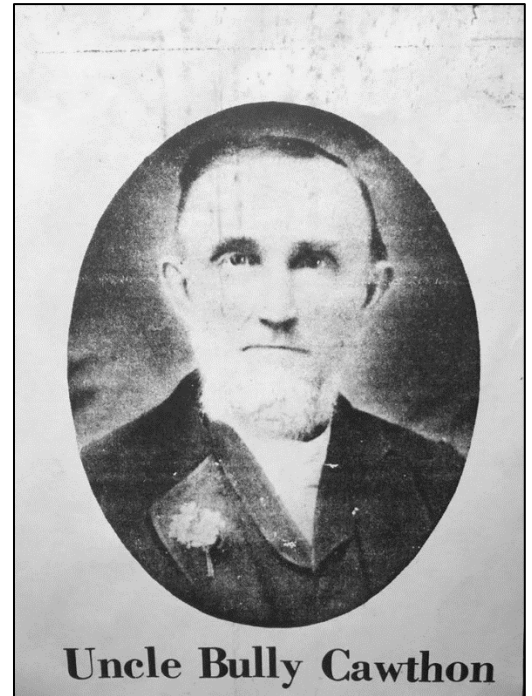


Figure 1. Photo courtesy of Gale Cassidy.

¹ W. J. D. (William Josiah Dabney) Cawthon, (1829-1915). Find A Grave Memorial # 80732875.

https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/80732875/william-josiah_dabney-cawthon

² Dudley Chipley Cawthon, (1888-1974). Find A Grave Memorial # 43007825,

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/43007825/dudley-chipley-cawthon>,

<https://www.familysearch.org/tree/person/details/LLH2-12T>

³ Cecil Cawthon, (1920-1990), Find A Grave Memorial #28891429, <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/28891429/cecil-cawthon>

⁴ William Thomas Cawthon, Jr., per Audrey M. Pittman article following.

probably would have been robbed on this occasion. However, his friend rode on, caught up with Bully and advised him he was being followed.

During the winter, Uncle Bully would get different neighbors to build a pen for 2 or 3 cows. He would take each neighbor these cows and get them to keep them for the winter. The neighbors would use the milk from the cows. When spring came, Uncle Bully would collect the cows. The neighbors would then use the cowpen for a garden. They would till the soil and plant potatoes. They say they had some mighty fine potato patches in those days.

I was told by Tom Cawthon⁵ of an incident Uncle Bully had with a bear. His father told him that Bully and Murray were out hunting one day and saw a bear. Uncle Bully shot the bear in the leg with an old muzzle-loader rifle. The bear took after Bully and if it had not been for his doge the bear would have gotten him. **Every time the bear chased Bully the dogs would nip at the bear's legs. The bear would then turn on the dogs.** Finally, Murray shot the bear, saving Bully and the dogs.

The old muzzle-loader rifle is still in the Cawthon family collection. My uncle, Harley Cawthon, of Niceville has the rifle.

Rex Whitcomb's grandfather, Billy Cawthon, was a brother to Uncle Bully.

I never had the privilege to meet "Uncle Bully," as he was called. However, he is one of those people that will live on in the hearts of people. The funny things he did are numerous. But I feel Bully Cawthon was a very generous person, too. Uncle Bully's eventful life will live on and continue to fill people's lives and memories with joy.

STORY OF THE FIRST WHITE SETTLEMENT ON THE SHORES OF LAKE JACKSON

Compiled by Audrey M. Pittman⁶
Paxton, Florida, June 3, 1973

Posted to Facebook by
Gale Cawthon Cassidy December 7, 2020,
and used with her permission.

Transcribed and edited by
Sam Carnley

Early in the 1800's while Florida belonged to England and Spain⁷, North Florida harbored many Indians and renegades who harassed settlers in South Alabama and South Georgia. The territory passed to the United States in 1818⁸ **after Andrew Jackson's** foray into Florida, but roving parties of Indians continued to roam here. In 1835 seven or eight members of a family named Hart, living 8 or 10 miles north-east of Lake Jackson, were killed and their home burned by a band of Creeks⁹. This

⁵ Thomas Jefferson Cawthon, (1914-1997), <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/43157051/thomas-jefferson-cawthon>

⁶ Audrey Miller Pittman, (1907-1990), <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/17592085/audrey-pittman>

⁷ The Territories of East and West Florida were acquired by the U. S. from Spain, the sole owner, on 22 February, 1819. England had no ownership interest in Florida at the time. <https://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/the-u-s-acquires-spanish-florida>

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Correct year was 1837. See Sam Carnley and Bruce Cosson, *The Walton County Indian War*, (The Walton County Heritage Association newsletter, Walton Relations and History, April 2019), p. 6.

<http://www.waltoncountyheritage.org/GenSoc/NL2019Apr.pdf>

incident and several others of a like nature brought on the Indian War of 1835-36¹⁰ during which most of the Creeks were captured and imprisoned at the Navy Yard in Pensacola for eventual removal to the Indian reservations. Most of the trouble ended early in 1837 but there were occasional incidents over the next 20 or 25 years.

Many settlers in South Georgia and Alabama had taken part in chasing these small bands along the border for years. Among them was one William Thomas Cawthon, Jr., a farmer and cattleman. He, along with brothers and other relatives, had moved from Georgia to the present site of Dothan **sometime around 1810. Dothan was then known as Cawthon's Cowpens. From the Dothan area,** William Cawthon moved his family and livestock to the site on Lake Jackson where the Merton J. Reeves home now stands. This was sometime between 1835 and 1840¹¹.

Three ladies have put much work and research into this study and have accumulated a large collection of documents which they will make available to those interested. They are Mrs. Ruth Lockey Philbrick who now resides in Maine, Mrs. Estelle Cawthon Starling of Panama City, Florida, and Mrs. Ina Walden Harris of Dothan, Alabama. Their records on the family go back beyond the American revolution and to England.

Their work has been very helpful, but much of what I know about the family, their relationships, nicknames, and their day-to-day life as it was lived here almost 150 years ago, I learned from my grandmother, Sarah Elizabeth Cawthon **Miller. She was William Cawthon's daughter.** I was with her a great deal during my childhood and until her death which did not occur until I was grown. I also knew well two of her sisters. My grandmother lived within a few miles of the Cawthon home for almost a century. She herself lived to be 102 years of age and both of the sisters were over 95 when they died. **All three were spry and keen of mind even in their 90's. They loved to talk of their early years and I was an eager listener.**

Records give various dates of the move to Florida – from 1835 to 1840 – and it may be that they were here by the earliest date. My belief, however, is that William Thomas Cawthon Jr. moved his family to the south side of the lake in 1837 or 1838. I rule out earlier dates partly because of the Indian troubles of 1835-36 which I have already mentioned. Conditions were very unsettled throughout west Florida for a couple of years. Cawthon had been involved in chasing raiding bands of Indians all of his life, and probably visited this area during those activities. By 1837 most of the Indians were gone and white settlers felt more secure. I think he waited until after the Indian wars to move. Besides, Grandma Betty told me many times that she was four years old when they came. She reached her fourth birthday in December of 1837. But regardless of the exact year, we do know they were settled here by 1840 because the U. S. Census Records of that year locate them here.

William Cawthon was married four times and was the father of Twenty-four children. His first marriage to Sarah Smith took place in Georgia when he was twenty-five years old. Seven children were born to them. When he was about thirty-**seven he was married to miss Elizabeth O'Neal, a member of a prominent Henry County, Alabama family.** His marriage to Sarah had ended in her death. He and Elizabeth had six children and were divorced. He then married Nancy Langston Fountain (she had

¹⁰ The war took place during 1837 and was pretty much over by the end of that year. See Sam Carnley and Bruce Cosson, *The Walton County Indian War*, (The Walton County Heritage Association newsletter, Walton Relations and History, April 2019). <http://www.waltoncountyheritage.org/GenSoc/NL2019Apr.pdf>

¹¹ According to another source, the year of the move was 1837, See Linda L. Clark, *William Cawthon, Jr.*, (Walton County Heritage Association newsletter, Walton Relations and History, September 2017), 4, <http://www.waltoncountyheritage.org/GenSoc/NL2017Sep.pdf>

previously been married to a man named Fountain). He was married to this third wife when the move was made to Florida¹². In records most references to this move indicate that grazing land was getting scarce in Alabama and he thought to find better conditions for open grazing. Grandma Betty told me once that family troubles and quarrels with his brothers and neighbors also played a part in his decision.

Sometime in the 1820's a Universalist minister from New England came to Alabama. William Cawthon met him and was introduced to the writings of Hosea Ballou and other Universalists. He became a convert to that belief which was radically different from the fundamentalist beliefs of his family and neighbors. Grandma Betty recalled that he once told her that he saw he was going to have trouble over it, and to avoid anything of that nature he decided to move. He became known as the father of Universalism in the South and all his life continued to read and study Universalist writings. Frequently he entertained visiting ministers in his home. Two of them, Rev. E. B. Armes and Rev. Burruss, married into the family. Several children and grandchildren were named for these ministers. Rev. Armes who married Nancy Charity organized several churches, including one in Florala and also operated a private school about two miles away in the Paxton area.

The move from Henry County, Alabama, although only about 100 miles, must have been quite a thing. Much preparation was necessary to transfer cattle, sheep, horses, ox carts, wagons, tools, and people. **An account in Mrs. Starling's records** tells us that William Cawthon brought two negroes down here, and with a whipsaw sawed timber and constructed a two-story house. Probably out buildings and fences were built before the family came. By that time, there were 18 or 20 children but some of the **divorced wife's children stayed with her part of the time. It is likely that some of the oldest children** may have already married. In addition to the family there were several slaves, an elderly female relative called Aunt Beppie (she probably was his sister), and a stepson called Seth Fountain. After their family arrived here, a house was built across the lake for the older children. Wife number 3 and their children lived here on the south side. An old slave couple and Aunt Beppie lived with the older children and took care of them. That house was located about where the Florala Hospital now stands.

The family operated an almost self-sufficient economy producing just about everything they needed right here. Crops were planted for food and livestock feed; corn, cotton, vegetables, and sugar cane. Cattle and hogs were butchered when needed. Game was plentiful. They raised poultry for eggs, meat and feathers. Most, however, slept on corn shuck mattresses with cotton pillows. Feather bedding was a luxury – probably reserved for Universalist preachers.

Life was hard for all. The women had spinning, weaving, cooking, washing, quilting, gardening, carding wool and cotton, making soap, and knitting socks and stockings. The men were busy all year too. Cattle were marked, branded, slaughtered and driven to market. Sheep were sheared and the wool packed and sent away. Lumber was sawed, rails split for fences, shingles and boards rived for roofs, horses were shod, harnesses made or mended, wagons built and repaired and some crude tanning of leather was done to get material for harnesses and shoes. They also made their own bricks.

Although most of the living was produced here, there were certain things that had to be bought. The market towns were Troy, Alabama and Milton and Pensacola in Florida. Two or three times a year trips would be made to one of (or) the other to trade for supplies. These included tools, salt, flour, medicine, cooking utensils, sewing thread, needles, etc., and perhaps at time special articles of clothing. Things traded would be shelled corn, hides, wool and furs.

¹² Nancy Langston Fountain was his common law wife whom he never legally married. See Linda L. Clark, *William Cawthon, Jr.*, (Walton County Heritage Association newsletter, Walton Relations and History, September 2017), 5, <http://www.waltoncountyheritage.org/GenSoc/NL2017Sep.pdf>

Herds of cattle were driven to market once a year. The trip to either town took two days or longer. Every two or three weeks a stage coach made the trip between Milton and Troy. An overnight stop was always made at the Cawthon place and the Cawthon home became the first post office¹³.

The two decades of the 1840 and 1850's saw other families moving in. They scattered out over the land building their cabins and clearing land. Among the families who came were the McSwains, Harts, Bowers, Woods, Meiggs, Cockcrofts, Steeles, Claries, Flournoys, Edges, Harrisons, Cooks, Turners, Infingers, Gordons, and others.

The Cockcrofts brought in mill stones and set up a grist mill on Paxton Creek. To make meal before that, corn was pounded with a rock on a hollowed-out block.

William Cawthon could well have earned the title “Father-in-law of North Walton County”, for almost every family found a husband or wife for a marriageable son or daughter at the Cawthon place. Most of his children had married by the middle 1850's. Names of some of the brides and grooms included McCaskill, Welch, Ghent, Koonce, Armes, Ball, Hutchison (2 boys and a girl married Hutchisons), Troutman, Hart, Miller, Gordon, Walden (2 girls married Waldens), Brown (2 brothers married twin sisters, Clara and Maria Brown), but I guess the McSwain family set the record. One boy and 3 girls married McSwains. Nancy Langston Fountain, third wife, died in 1846 and Mr. Cawthon later married Mary McSwain. One child was born to her.

The given names of the Cawthon Children and grandchildren are interesting. As for the boys – William Thomas, Jefferson, Josiah, Dabney, Hosea, Ballou, Stephen, Corbin, Ashley, E. B. Armes occurs over and over. **Two thirds of Mrs. Cawthon's descendants were girls. There were two Elizabeths, two Nancys, two Marys, two Marthas and two Susans.** In order to keep things straight, they were given nicknames. One Susan was called Sudie and the other Sukie. One Mary was Little Mary and the other Big Mary. One Nancy had a double name and was always called Nancy Charity and the other Nancy was called Babe. Many grandchildren bore the surnames of Uncles by marriage. Several were named Hutchison, (soon shortened to Hutch), Hart, Gordon, Koonce, and Armes.

One of my uncles was named Koonce which was the name of the husband of one of the Cawthon girls. Susan called Sukie had married John Koonce from another prominent Henry County family. They lived in Columbia, Alabama, where he owned lots of land and many slaves. He became ill; a helpless invalid, and was brought down to the Cawthon home in the hope that the change would help him. Grandma Betty said he railed and cursed at everyone, especially the slaves who took care of him – often hitting them with his walking cane. But she said he rarely hit the little negro girl who fanned him because she

¹³ Post Office records show no evidence of a post office with a Cawthon as post master. From 1828 to 1835, Almirante (now Laurel Hill) was the location of the post office serving that area and Jeremiah Savell was post master. From 1835 to 1836 John McDavid was post master. He was again post master from July 1840 until Daniel A. Wilkinson assumed the position in January 1842. Eli Horne, William Gaskins and James D. Clary served as post master in 1846, 1847 and 1848, respectively. Clary continued in the position through 1852. See Almirante, Florida Stampless Postal History 1763 - 1861, (David G. Phillips Publishing Co., Inc., 666 N. E. 128th Street, P.O. Box 611388, North Miami, Florida 33261-1388), p. 76. On 16 October 1850, John Ghent was appointed post master of Ghentsville. See Ghentsville, Florida Stampless Postal History 1763 - 1861, (David G. Phillips Publishing Co., Inc., 666 N. E. 128th Street, P.O. Box 611388, North Miami, Florida 33261-1388), p. 141. This was in the community where the Cawthons lived. Ghent also operated a stage coach station with lodging for overnight coach passengers. **He married William Cawthon's daughter called Big Mary,** about 1842-43, supposedly against the wishes of her father. It likely was his post office and stage coach station referenced above. See GHENTSVILLE By Sam Carnley with Bruce Cosson and Linda Clark <http://www.waltoncountyheritage.org/GenSoc/NL2018Feb.pdf>

was so watchful and agile. He returned to their home at Columbia where he died and Sukie came back here with her father. She was inconsolable in her grief and cried constantly. Grandma by then was married to Lewis Miller and had a new baby boy as yet unnamed. Sukie, who was childless, begged grandma to name the baby for her husband. Finally, she gave in and named her son Sherrod Koonce. **“I was so afeared he’d take after that man!” she said.**

As the Cawthon children married, they moved to homes of their own, mostly within 10 miles of this place and, so far as I know, all moved south into Florida. Their cattle roamed many miles and they became familiar with the terrain and so could pick good homesites. Always there was a good spring of water nearby. Homes were on high ground and well drained. I live only a few yards from where Lewis and Betty Miller settled. They were certainly hardy people with a great deal of strength and stamina. Under frontier conditions such as existed here, where life was especially hard on children, families were lucky to raise half the children born to them. It is certainly remarkable that all of the Cawthon children lived to be adults.

There are 3 graves on the Merton Reeves place. I know who 2 if them are and I think I know the third. Nancy Langston Fountain Cawthon died sometime around 1840 and was buried there. The oldest son and only boy by his first wife, Thomas Jefferson, was killed by being thrown from a horse. His grave is probably one of the three. John Ghent, husband of Big Mary, was also buried here. Many tales have been told about this man – some highly embroidered. I believe I was told the correct one. **The Ghents were living here when John Ghent was accused of taking money which was being sent by mail. I don’t** know if he was awaiting trial or if he had already been tried, but he was being held in a second story cell of the Milton jail¹⁴. One night he tried to escape by jumping out of the window. His back was injured and he was never able to straighten up or lie down. He was sent home and died soon after. As his body could not be straightened and fitted into a coffin, he was placed in a chair and a box was built around him. He was buried sitting up.

In those days it was not the custom to haul bodies long distances for burial. Five brothers and sisters and their families – the McSwains, Gordons, Waldens, Miller and Layette [Lafayette] Cawthons – settled a little southeast of here. When the first death occurred (it was Eliza Miller mother of Lewis Miller) they selected a spot for a cemetery. Today it is known as Miller Cemetery. **Four of William Cawthon’s children are buried there as well as many members of those families.** There was also at one time a Universalist church near the spot.

When a Universalist church was built on the north side of the lake, several members of this family were buried in back of it. All of these early graves originally had wooden markers and usually a picket fence was put around them, sometimes with a roof overhead. These have long since vanished. When the streets of Florala were paved the church, (now Grace Baptist Church) was moved back a ways. Some of those graves are under the church. One of those buried there is said to be Aunt Bepie, thought to have **been William Cawthon’s sister.**

¹⁴ Ghent was in custody of the U. S. Marshal on the 3rd **floor of the St. Mary’s Hotel in Pensacola on 15 July 1858** while his trial was in progress. Around 2:00 A. M., he managed to jump out a window about 32 feet above the ground. He landed on his feet but suffered internal injuries leading to his death a few hours later. When the court received notice of his death his trial was terminated without any finding of innocence or guilt. He had two brothers, Fielding and Nimrod who lived in Milton where he was taken for burial. According to folklore, the one elderly slave he owned traveled from Ghentsville to Milton in an ox cart, dug up his body and transported it back home for burial; either standing up or sitting in a chair. See GHENTSVILLE By Sam Carnley with Bruce Cosson and Linda Clark <http://www.waltoncountyheritage.org/GenSoc/NL2018Feb.pdf>

Several of the boys, Bullie, Murray, Hosea, and John, settled to the southwest almost in what is known as **the Children's Home Community**. **Fountains** and **Harts** and perhaps some of the others settled in what is now Okaloosa County.

When the civil war broke out, the Cawthons had been here about 25 years and many changes had occurred. North Walton County was dotted with many cabins and small farms. There was some contact with other settled areas. Four sons saw service.¹⁵ **Stephen A. was a captain. Hosea was with Lee's army.** William and Lafayette were taken prisoner and held at Elmira, New York, where William died.¹⁶ The families suffered much from privations and harassment from bands of deserters.

Events of this war period would make a long story in themselves. One account which I have read states that William Cawthon himself was captured and imprisoned at Fort Barrancas, but was soon released because of his advanced age. He was almost 80 when the war ended. He died in 1870 near Basin Bayou and was buried there. The grave site is on Eglin Reservation.

I do not know why he was there. The story has persisted that he was with a group hunting a small band of Indians. Others believe that he was helping to drive cattle to Freeport or Portland for sale. Another possibility is that he was with a party which had gone to get salt by boiling the salt water. During the Civil War and for several years thereafter, it was the custom for groups to go to the coast and secure salt in this way. It is a slow and tedious process that required a great deal of time, but something the older men and boys could do quite well.

In the early 1870's the towns of Florala and DeFuniak Springs began to build up. Eventually most of the families of the Cawthon children and grandchildren moved to one or the other. The homesite on the lake was finally abandoned. Vegetation took over. It returned to its natural state.

¹⁵ At least one grandson also saw service and was a fatality of the war. John Ghent Jr., enlisted in Co. H., Captain **(Stephen Ashley) Cawthon's Company, 6 Regiment, Florida Infantry. Captain Cawthon was Big Mary Cawthon Ghent's brother and John Jr.'s uncle. In September 1863, John Jr. was killed at the Battle of Chickamauga Creek, Georgia.** See GHENTSVILLE By Sam Carnley with Bruce Cosson and Linda Clark, p. 14. <http://www.waltoncountyheritage.org/GenSoc/NL2018Feb.pdf>

¹⁶ Lafayette and William were members of the 15th Confederate Cavalry stationed at Pollard, Alabama. They happened to **be home on leave the day Union general Asboth's troops stormed onto their Shoal River farm and took them prisoner.** Along with several other local men, they ended up at the **Union's Confederate POW camp in Elmira New York where William died.** Lafayette survived to return home after the war. Elmira was second only to the Confederate POW camp for Union soldiers at Andersonville in the level of brutality, privation and abuse its prisoners suffered. See Sam Carnley, *The Walton County POWs of Asboth's Raid on Marianna*, (Walton County Heritage Association newsletter, Walton Relations and History, April 2014), 2-4. <http://www.waltoncountyheritage.org/GenSoc/NL2014Apr.pdf>