



WALTON

RELATIONS & HISTORY

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Walton County Heritage Association

April 2023



WALTON COUNTY HERITAGE ASSOCIATION, INC.

OFFICE LOCATION

Walton County Heritage Museum, (Old Train Depot)

Hours: Open Tuesday – Saturday, 1:00 – 4:00 PM

Postal Address

**Walton County Heritage Association, Inc.
1140 Circle Drive, DeFuniak Springs, Florida 32435
Phone: 850-401-2060**

Website: <http://www.waltoncountyheritage.org/#>

Email: heritagemuseum@brighthouse.com

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Vice President: Carolyn Brown

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Carolyne Brown

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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 varying amounts for donors as shown on attached Annual Donor/Member Application for 2023. Donor logos are also shown on the attached Donor page in the monthly newsletter.

Annual Member/Sponsor Application 2023; See attached.

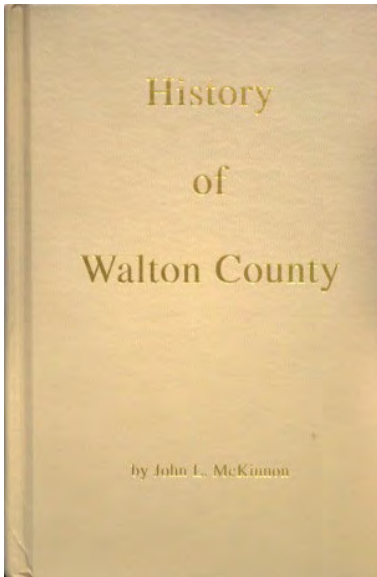
Member Benefits:

- 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.

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From the Museum Gift Shop

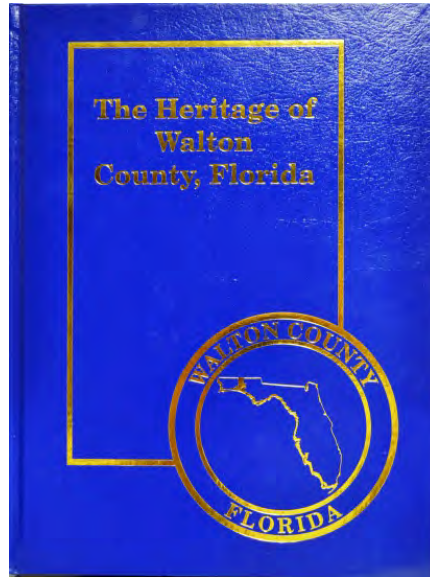
Our most popular books



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 at these links;

<https://dlg.galileo.usg.edu/georgiabooks/pdfs/gb0503.pdf>, and <https://www.alibris.com/booksearch?mtype=B&keyword=history+of+walton+county&hs.x=0&hs.y=0>



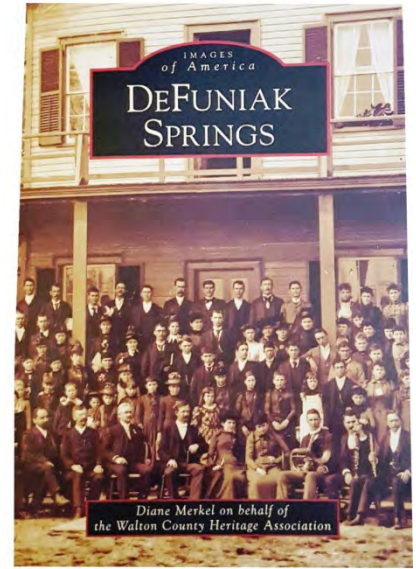
The Heritage of Walton County, Florida. Item code **B13.**

Price: (Reduced) \$40.00

Tax: 2.80

Shipping: 8.00

Total by mail **\$50.80**



Images of America, DeFuniak Springs. Item code **B06.**

By Diane Merkel. Price, including tax,

\$23.53.

MAIL ORDER FORM

Walton County Heritage Association
1140 Circle Drive
DeFuniak Springs, FL 32435

Customer Name: _____

Address: _____

Ph./Email: _____

Quanty	Description	Item Code	Price Each*	Amount
	The Heritage of Walton County, Florida	B13	50.80	
	Images of America, DeFuniak Springs.	B06	31.53	

*Price includes tax at 7% and shipping of \$8.00 per item.

Total

Sorry, credit cards not accepted. Please send check or money orders only. Do not mail cash. Please allow two weeks for delivery.



Walton County Heritage Association, Inc.

1140 Circle Drive, DeFuniak Springs, Florida, 32435, Ph. 850-401-2060

Website: <http://www.waltoncountyheritage.org>

Email: HeritageMuseum@bighthouse.com

ANNUAL MEMBER/SPONSOR APPLICATION 2023

Name:

Individual/Family _____

Sponsor/Business/Company _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Member/Sponsor Category:

() Individual \$25.00, () Family \$40.00, () Sponsor \$100.00, () Silver Sponsor \$500.00, () Gold Sponsor \$1,000.00, () Platinum Sponsor \$2,000.00, () Additional Gift \$ _____ * Total Enclosed \$ _____ *Gift earmarked for: _____

Our Mission

The Walton County Heritage Association is a nonprofit organization that was organized for four main purposes:

1. To promote the preservation and restoration of buildings and other landmarks of historical interest within Walton County;
2. 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;
3. To foster and enhance the development, education, and sense of history which is unique to Walton County; and
4. To secure cooperation and unity of action between individual citizens, businesses, and other groups as may be necessary to fulfill these purposes.

* Additional gift of over \$2,000.00 (any amount in excess of that number) would be greatly appreciated. You may earmark this gift for a specific expense/purchase of gift items for our museum.

- All donor categories are entitled to membership in the museum and Genealogy Society and 10% discount on museum gift shop purchases.
- For all levels of Sponsorship, the Walton County Heritage Association, Inc. will acknowledge sponsors on our website, in our newsletter and on a permanent plaque in the Museum. Sponsorships are on an annual basis from January to December. This is an acknowledgement of your gift only and does NOT constitute advertisement or the promotion of any individual, business or organization by the WCHA.

Please mail your check and this form to:
WALTON COUNTY HERITAGE ASSOCIATION, INC. 1140 Circle Drive, DeFuniak Springs, FL 32435.
THANK YOU!!!

The Walton County Heritage Association, Inc., is a 501(C)(3) charitable organization as defined by the IRS Code. Gifts may be tax deductible as defined by the Federal Income Tax Regulations. To request a receipt for your tax-deductible membership in the WCHA, or donation, please contact us.

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OUR SPONSORS for 2023

We dedicate this page to our sponsors in recognition of their generous support of our mission.

SPONSORS (\$100-\$499.00)

Rose Rogers, in memory of Doug Rogers (\$200.00)
Craig Bowen (\$100.00)
David Bludworth (\$300.00)
Grace L. Marse (\$100.00)
Sally Merrifield (\$100.00)
George & Margaret Little (\$100.00)
Marie Hinson (\$100.00)

SILVER SPONSORS (\$500 to \$999.00)

(None at present time)

GOLD SPONSORS (\$1,000 to \$1,999)

(None at present time)

PLATINUM SPONSORS (\$2,000 and up)

City of DeFuniak Springs



In the past the city has generously supported us with cash donations of \$2,000.00 annually, but due to changing budget priorities, was unable to do so in 2023. We wish to recognize the city's generosity however, for its **in-kind** donation of the RR depot which serves as the Walton County Heritage Association, Inc., Museum and administrative facility. The city provides maintenance and upkeep on the facility, and payment of electrical, water and waste disposal services as well. The value of this facility to us is far in excess of \$2,000.00 annually, for which we are deeply appreciative. Thank you, City of DeFuniak Springs.

WHITFIELD

Transcribed and Edited

By

Sam Carnley

As with the previous newsletter article, this one deals with places in Walton County, Florida few people have heard of; Whitfield being one of those places. It lay somewhere near Portland in the south of the county with a post office which operated from 1891-1910. Its major claim to fame seems to have been a lumber mill owned and operated by H. L. Berry & Co. Harvey (Hervey) Louis Berry,¹ was born in Walton County Florida, the son of George H. Berry,² in 1871.

According to the 1880 Federal census of Walton County, the senior Berry engaged in the lumber manufacturing business as a manager. In 1890, he acquired by homestead entry 159.50 acres of land in Walton County described as the SW ¼ of township 1 north and range 20 west, Section 24. As depicted on a 1992 general highway map of the county, the property appeared about a half mile north of the junction of highway 282 and another road identified only as “P.” approximately five miles northwest of Freeport in the Eglin Wildlife Management Area.

In 1891, H. L. Berry, the son, acquired through homestead entry, 159.81 acres described as the W ½ of the SW ¼, the SE ¼ of the SW ¼, and the SW ¼ of the SE ¼, all in section 36, township 1 north, range 20 west. Its location on the map places it directly south of the section 24 location of George Berry’s property with section 25 separating them. Its distance from Freeport is a little over two miles to the northwest.

Prior to acquiring the homestead property however, H. L. began in 1890 purchasing property in sections twelve, thirteen and fourteen, of township 1 south, range 20 west. The section 13 property was located in the vicinity of the mouth of Alaqua Creek and the Bayou it flows into. H. L. purchased his last section 13 property in 1897.

The same year, the DeFuniak Springs newspaper, the Breeze, published an article titled “WHITFIELD, A Live Lumber Town And the Men That Make It.”³ It tells of the formation of H. L. Berry & Co. by H. L., his father George and Calvin Johnson in 1890. With the new

¹ Harvey L. Berry, age 39, b. Florida. Occupation; sawmill operation; U.S. Census, Walton Co. FL., DeFuniak Springs, Precinct No. 14, enumerated 1 June 1900. <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:S3HT-6SZ9-Q5D?i=49&cc=1325221&personUrl=%2Fark%3A%2F61903%2F1%3A1%3AM36N-3YP>

² George Henry Berry, age 40, Occupation; Lumber Manufacturer, b. 1840, Florida, U. S. Census, Walton, FL., Portland Precinct #10, enumerated 21-22 June 1880, <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:33SQ-GYYY-1DH?i=10&cc=1417683&personUrl=%2Fark%3A%2F61903%2F1%3A1%3AMNZC-YSK>

³ The Breeze, DeFuniak Springs, FL., July 1897, copy provided courtesy of Mrs. Leah Ann Jackson Wilkerson, Paxton, Florida.

company came the need for a new plant and the location chosen for it as described by the Breeze placed it “on a point jutting out into Alaqua Bayou about half way between the mouth of the creek and Choctawhatchee Bay.” The location as described is depicted on the map at the end of this article. The paper goes on to give more details of the mill and the men who run it as follows:

A contract was made with the large machinery house of E. P. Allison & Co. of Milwaukee, for the machinery and work was commenced on the present splendid plant of the H. L. Berry Co.

The work was pushed along as rapidly as thoroughness in every detail would permit and in March of 1891 “the Buffalo bellowed” for the first time. This name was given the mill from the hoarse tones of the big twelve-inch whistle that has been heard on several occasions at deFuniak, 20 miles distant and over the water at the head of the Narrows 20 miles away.

When the mill started the one wharf extended but a short distance out into the bayou and a force of men was kept at work extending it until now the extreme end is nearly a quarter of a mile away. It has been the policy of the enterprising company to constantly add to the conveniences and equipment of the plant, and among the first additions was a large storage shed for dry sap lumber, which is situated at the end of a long wharf entirely away from the other wharves, and so arranged that lighters may lie at either side and receive a cargo.

The next move was a large dry-kiln for this class of stock. The first one, however, was destroyed by fire and the one now used [missing - torn] and is larger and better than the old [one]. There is no retrogression [missing – torn] these people. Complete equipment for fire [control] was put in shortly after completion of the mill and the workers were highly drilled in its use, a fact that saved the mill when the dry-kiln burned and has since proved a valuable investment on several occasions.

Not only is the mill and yards thus protected by the pumps and connections there, but a flat with pump, boiler and hose is fastened to the storage house wharf with every facility for getting up steam in the shortest possible time, and it would be under very unfavorable circumstance indeed that a fire would do much damage.

The very important matter of log supply at the mill is amply provided for in the large storage booms, in which over two month’s run can be stored, and the company are the owners of large tracts of timber lands in this state and South Alabama that will provide them with the raw material long after the other bay mills are cleaned out.

This part of the business is under the management of Ex-Senator, Allen R. Jones, -- but we are getting ahead of our story.

In 1894 the firm of H. L. Berry & Co. in which various changes had been made, notably the purchase of an interest by Mr. John M. Garrett and H. Baars of Pensacola, and the sale of the interest of Mr. Geo. Berry to H. L. Berry the affairs of the concern were changed into a corporation under the Laws of the State of Florida with an authorized capital totaling \$100,000, Mr. H. L. Berry being elected President, John M. Garrett, Secretary and Treasurer, and in addition to these two, the board of directors being made up of Calvin Johnson, H. Baars and A. R. Jones, all of whom take an active interest in the affairs of the business as will appear later.

THE LOGS AND THE LUMBER.

Were you to wake up some morning in the thriving town of Geneva, Alabama, you would soon learn, by keeping your ears and eyes open, that a very important factor in that town's progress was the logging business and that not the least noted of the big concerns in that business are the firms of White, McLean & Morris, and J. R. Beaty & Co., both of whom have large contracts with the company of which we have just been writing.

J. R. Beaty & Co. having a logging railroad reaching out into the timber lands mentioned before. Going out on the railroad we find frequent "ramps," or loading platforms built where the logs hauled from the stumpage are loaded on the cars. Unloaded on the banks the first rise in the river, starts them under the supervision of skilled river men toward the mouth of the river, where the Booming Company take them in charge and after rafting deliver them by steamer to the mill booms.

The mill itself is a model in its way being fully equipped with every practical labor-saving device known and so well arranged that even with the large capacity of 100,000 superficial feet per 24 hours there is no trouble in getting the lumber out of the way.

At present the mill is running night and day, one crew being under the supervision of Mr. John L. Miller,⁴ who has been with the company so long that he seems almost a part and parcel of it and whose faithfulness to their interests is only equaled by his knowledge of how to so direct matters as to get the largest number of logs turned into merchantable lumber and properly piled on the yards in a given number of hours at the minimum expense.

Of course, much depends on the sawyer, it being one of the certainties that there is only money in a sawmill while the saw is on the cut, and in this crew Mr. Pleasant

⁴ John L. Miller, age 54, b. England. Occupation; Lumber Supervisor. U. S. census, Walton Co. Fl., Portland Precinct #10, enumerated 9 June 1900.

A. Dawson occupies that important position and fills it well. He has been with the firm since the mill first started, and is well liked by everyone. He has a pleasant home nearby presided over by a most charming wife, a sister, by the way, of Chairman McSween, of the Commissioners, and his garden is one of the show places of the town.

The other crew is in [the] charge of Mr. Wm. Bauler, a native Walton County boy, who has grown up around the bay, and by his close attention to business and the interests of his employers under all circumstances, has worked up to this place from that of a deck hand and cook on a lumber schooner, all in the short space of six years.

The genius of the lever in this crew is Mr. H. C. Lambert whose long experience in some of the best yellow pine mills in the south enables him to get out all there is in a log and at the maximum speed of which the mill is capable. Personally, he is a genial whole souled fellow that it does one good to know.

The shipping end of the business which is by no means the least important, is looked after for the company by Mr. D. O. Green [missing – torn]. The lumber is [shipped] to Pensacola by the steamer “Florida.” The H. Baars Co. who handles the cut are the leading lumber merchants of the city and have close business connections with all of the European and South American markets, enabling them to place large quantities of all grades of lumber at advantageous prices.

The very important part of keeping the saws in shape to do the best work is looked after by Mr. Calvin Johnson, who has as his assistant Mr. Messenger. “Cal” is one of those men who always impress you by that sterling honest that sticks out all over them, and whose word is good as the gold.

Mr. Johnson has one of the prettiest homes in this whole section and only his modesty prevented us from being able to present our readers with a picture of it. The picture of him was obtained “unbeknownst” and we may have to apologize for that.

In the office Mr. John M. Garrett presides and looks after all the extensive accounts and correspondence for the Company, being assisted by Mr. A. Hollowell as time clerk and stenographer. John is handsome, genial and deservedly popular with all alike, but so far, he’s escaped the matrimonial noose, though [missing – torn].

[The mill commissary] is run by P. Garret & Co., with Mr. M. G. Morrison as manager, assisted by Mr. Ed. Woodward. A large line of goods is carried and prices are very low. The mill boarding house is run by Mr. F. W. Lowery and the new hotel soon to be opened will have Mrs. E. Y. Malone as landlady.

THE TOWN ITSELF

Where only seven years ago there was a point covered with sapling pines, today there is a thriving village of some 300 inhabitants with well laid out streets, all of them saw dusted to form a substantial and easy roadway, a model mill plant with its own electric light plant, ample boiler power to run another mill [mill] as large, daily mail, neat and comfortable dwellings occupied by contented white employed of this company who are happy because employed regularly and paid promptly, and in good health; two or three doctors having starved out and the present one looking mighty thin.

Of course there has been a directing mind in all this, and that is the President and largest stockholder, Mr. Harvey L. Berry, to whose vim, push and business foresight the success of the company is largely due, Mr. Berry is a type of the progressive Floridian, being born in Pensacola less than forty years ago, and getting his education wholly in the common school of that time, augmented by a cultivated taste for reading. He is married and has a bright family of three girls and one boy.

In addition to the close attention he gives his business he finds time to be actively interested in all that tends to the advancement of the community where he lives. His latest move in this direction is the building of a telephone line from Whitfield to DeFuniak, for which he personally contributed a large proportion of the capital, and by his influence secured the remainder.

Personally, he is quiet and unassuming, and makes friends wherever he goes. He is a Mason, an Oddfellow, a Woodman and a Good Templar. He kills what spare time he has talking insurance in behalf of the Equitable Life.

There is at present a good opening here for a barber, and also a meat market, to both of which enterprises due encouragement will be given. For further particulars in reference to the town and its prospects and surroundings the interested inquirer can address any of its citizens all of whom are loyally interested in its welfare.

H. L. traveled extensively to Pensacola in connection with his business. On those occasions when he found lodging in the city, he overnighted in one or other of the several hotels there. The Pensacola News routinely reported on guests in the hotels and H. L. Berry's name appeared often in those reports. For example, on 28 February 1893, the paper reported him a guest at the Plaza Hotel.

In the 25 May 1895 edition of the paper appeared the report that "Mr. H. L. Berry of Whitfield was a passenger on Saturday evening's train for Pensacola."

The Pensacola paper also carried reprints of happenings reported on by the DeFuniak Herald. The following from 12 September 1895 is one example:

A somewhat unlooked for ripple ruffled the surface of our social circle Tuesday evening when at the residence of Mr. H. L. Berry, Miss Genoa McCormack was married to Mr. Silas D. Boyer, a brother to Mr. H. H. Boyer, the timber merchant of Pensacola, agent for Jules Schreyer, Fr. Mr. S. D. Boyer is not so well known to DeFuniakers, but was for some time located at Whitfield in the interest of the brother who buys largely from the Whitfield mills.

Miss McCormack, who has made her home recently with Mr. Berry's family, is a sister of Mrs. J. W. Bowers and her friends throughout the county are limited only to the number to whom she is known. Interesting, pretty and accomplished she will grace the western home to which she is going and carry with her the best wishes of the scores of friends who regret to lose her.

Mr. and Mrs. Boyer left on last night's train for the northwestern portion of Missouri, their future home, where Mr. Boyer is engaged in agricultural pursuits. Rev. J. F. Daily officiated at the ceremony.⁵

In addition to H. L., other members of the company sometimes traveled to Pensacola as well. Mr. John M. Garrett, mentioned in the Breeze article on Whitfield, appeared in the Pensacola paper of 20 January 1897 thusly, "Mr. John M. Garrett, of the H. L. Berry Mill Company, at Whitfield, and his little nephew were passengers on the steamer Florida to this city, to-day."

A reprint from the DeFuniak Breeze in a Pensacola News article dated 26 March 1897 read as follows, "A piece about six inches in diameter blew out of the throttle valve at the Whitfield mill last Monday, necessitating a shut down until a new one can be secured. . . The contract for the telephone line from here to Whitfield was closed by Mr. Berry with A. W. Wright last Saturday, and its construction will be begun at an early day . . ."

A Pensacola paper article dated 6 April 1910 reported, "H. L. Berry asked for permission to carry firearms, presenting security for the privileges. It was granted under the usual conditions."

People associated with the mill were not the only ones reported on or given voice in the Pensacola paper. On occasion, a little humor enlivened its more often than not humdrum reporting and Lee H. Jernigan of Whitfield took great delight in that effort when corresponding with the paper.

Witness an article headlined, "WOULD GIVE BATTLESHIPS SOME COONS," in the edition of 15 December 1911. Quoting Mr. Jernigan, the paper writes:

⁵ Hymeneal, The Pensacola News, 12 September 1895, Newspapers.com, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/352756227/?terms=%22h%20l%20berry%22&match=1>

Whitfield, Fla., Dec. 12, 1911, Editor, Pensacola Journal.

I notice the offer of the bob-cat for a mascot for the Battleship Florida. Let's put \$10 more to the cost and give both vessels, the Florida, the Utah and the German ship Hansa, each a nice pet coon.

That is something the boys can pet and handle like a cat and they are the nicest pet on a boat of any. I will give \$5 on same, and can get the three delivered in Pensacola by Monday, if not Sunday, if I can get a reply Saturday.

The coons are grown, being nearly 18 months old, and were caught before their eyes were open and raised with a bottle. They are daisies and I am sure the boys would like them.

Respectfully yours,

LEE H. JERNIGAN⁶

On 29 November 1914 the paper wrote, "Mr. H. L. Berry and family will move to San Diego, Calif., early in December. The removal of this family will be a decided loss to DeFuniak. Mr. Walter and family from Jacksonville will accompany Mr. Berry. These two gentlemen will go into business together in their new home. We wish them success and prosperity." No information provided on why and when H. L. parted ways with his Whitfield saw mill business.

Following that on 1 August 1915 came this, "Mr. J. J. McCaskill returned Monday from a visit to different points in California. While there he visited the family of H. L. Berry who has recently moved from here to San Diego."

On 27 June 1916, the paper reported:

One of the most important cases ever on the local docket is scheduled for today. The suit involves \$250,000 and is that of H. L. Berry vs. J. G. Pace. Mr. Berry is a former resident of Pensacola, but now of San Diego, and will come to this city for the trial. He is suing Mr. Pace for alleged violation of contract in failing to sell and deliver a large milling property including a tract of timber land. Mr. Pace denies that he ever made a contract, and that he ever broke any contract with Mr. Berry.

The plaintiff is represented by W. W. Flournoy of DeFuniak Springs and R. Pope Reese. Mr. Pace is represented by Watson & Pasco and John P. Stokes.⁷

⁶ "Would Give Battleships Some Coons," Pensacola News Journal, 15 Dec. 1911, Fri. p. 2, Newspapers.com, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/465188716/?terms=%22would%20give%20battleships%20some%20coons&match=1>

⁷ H. L. Berry vs. J.G. Pace, Pensacola News Journal, 27 June, 1916, Tue., p. 2, Newspapers.com, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/352469899/?terms=%22H.%20L.%20Berry%20vs.%20J.%20G.%20Pace&match=1>

The above might explain H. L.'s disposal of the saw mill he formerly owned. Nothing about selling the business was found in the Pensacola, or DeFuniak papers, which seems unusual considering the importance of the mill to the local economy.

Walton County friends of H. L. received shocking news in the Pensacola News Journal edition of 19 December, 1916, which read:

H. L. BERRY, WELL KNOWN HERE, DIES IN SAN DIEGO, CAL.

The news of the death of H. L. Berry Saturday in San Diego, California, from a gunshot wound accidentally received while cleaning a pistol will be a great shock to his many friends in West Florida, where he was one of the best-known figures in this section of the country.

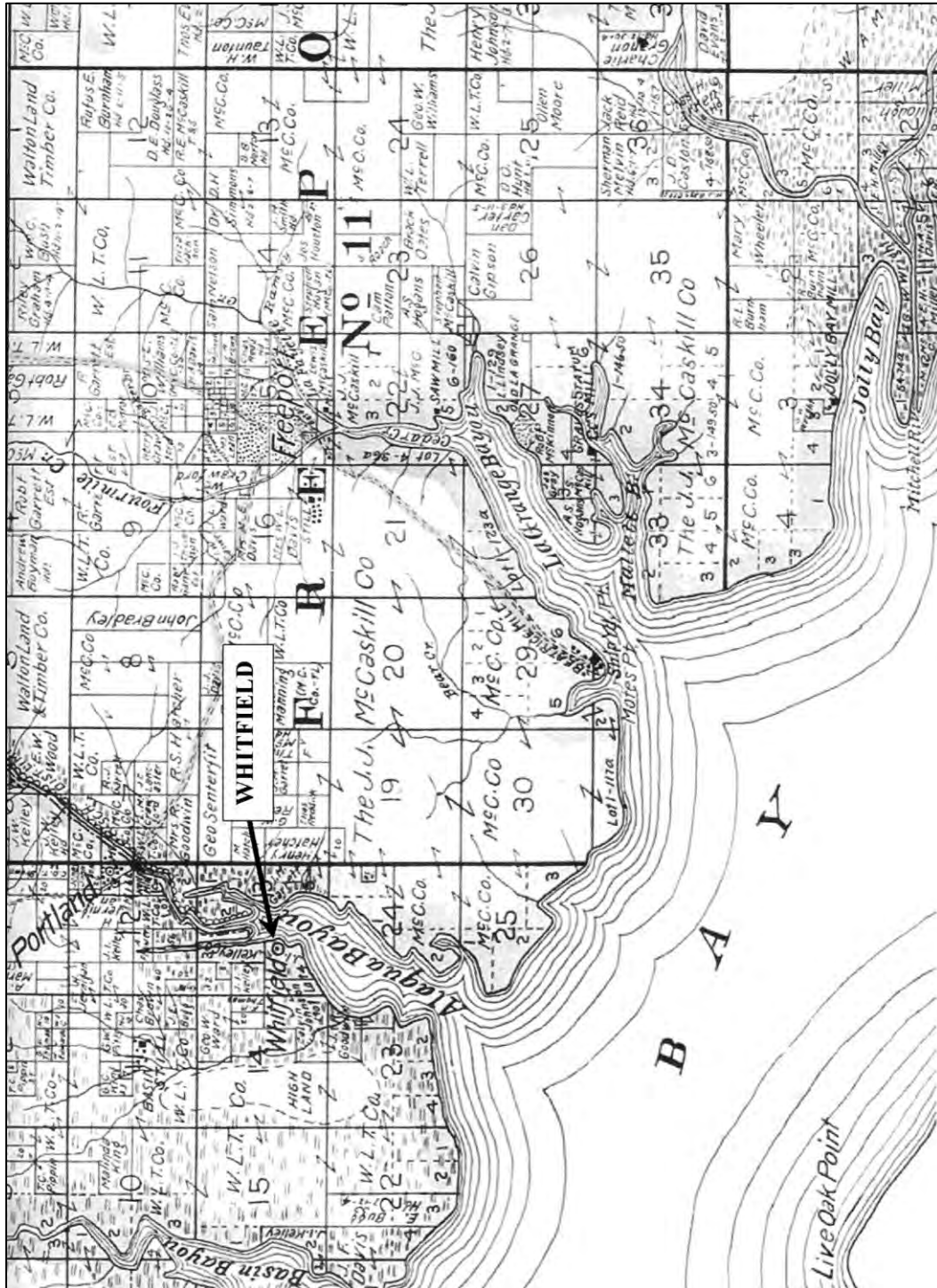
Born in Madison County, Mr. Berry was for forty years a resident of Walton County, being identified with DeFuniak Springs from the earliest days of its founding.

Mr. Berry was at one time head of the Berry Lumber Company, in Foley, Ala., then superintendent of the Escambia Manufacturing Co., and later general manager of the Southport Lumber Corp., of Washington County. His home all the time however was in DeFuniak.

He left Florida a year ago to engage in the floral perfume business in California. He is survived by a wife and five children and was 55 years old at the time of his death.

Curiously, the article doesn't mention the saw mill he owned in Whitfield. What happened to it is unknown, but it likely closed down when its timber supply ran out. Most saw mills in Walton County eventually disappeared for that reason. Typically, when the saw mills died, so did their mill towns with few exceptions; Paxton, the mill town of the Florala Sawmill Company, being one of them.

Regarding the pistol causing H. L.'s death, we are left wondering if it was the one he obtained permission to carry in Pensacola in April of 1910. Nonetheless, H. L. Berry established the saw mill town of Whitfield in Walton County and because of its short life, it became one of those places very few people in the county ever heard of.



Map
 Whitfield, Walton County, Florida.
 Its post office continued from 1891 to 1910. How long the sawmill
 remained in operation is unknown.

⁸ Map courtesy of Bruce Cosson, Alauqa, Walton County, Florida