



WALTON

RELATIONS & HISTORY

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Walton County Heritage Association

January 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.
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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.

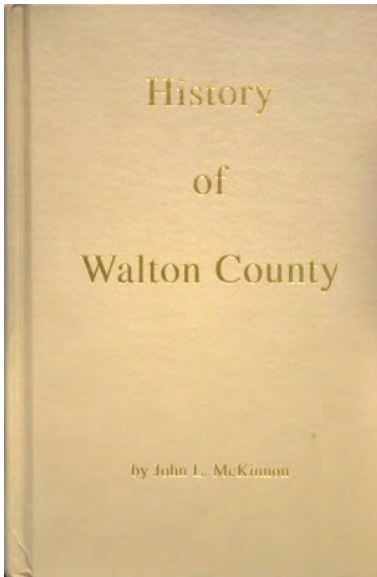
Member Benefits:

- 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

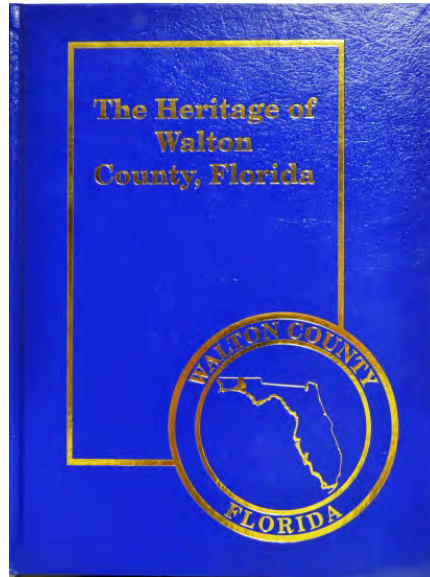
Our most popular books



History of Walton County

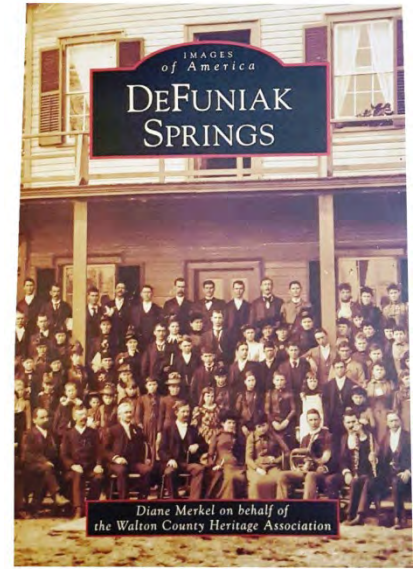
by John L. McKinnon. The Museum has sold out of this book and it is out of print, but it is available at these links;

<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: _____

Qty	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. 850-951-2117

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

Email: HeritageMuseum@briighthouse.com

ANNUAL MEMBER/SPONSOR APPLICATION 2023

Name:

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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 (\$100.00)
Grace L. Marse (\$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.

From the Editor

First, please allow me to apologize for not publishing newsletters for October, November and December 2022. My excuse is that my computer was hacked and my email list was deleted. Additionally, I had to free my computer of the hacker's remote access to it, which I seem to have finally accomplished.

I wrote a newsletter for October, but never published it due to the hacking. What I propose to do is to include that article in this newsletter, along with another article which I am dubbing as a combined one for November and December, 2022, along with January 2023.

At this point, that is the best solution I could think of for catching you up on the newsletters for 2023 and I apologize for any inconvenience that may have caused. Hopefully, from this point forward, I will be able to publish the newsletters in a timelier fashion.

Sam Carnley

John L. McKinnon, Jr.,
His Ramblings and Recollections
of
Life In Walton County
By
Sam Carnley and Bruce Cosson

As promised last month, this article will conclude our review of the inaccuracies and omissions of John L. McKinnon's *History of Walton County* that we began in the July 2022 newsletter.

We begin this month's review (October 2022) with McKinnon's writings about C. S. V. Jones, minister of the first Methodist Church established in Alaqua in 1827. In reference to "Old Brother Charley Jones," McKinnon wrote on page 260 of his history:

He was a Methodist preacher who married a Scotch Presbyterian wife. He lived east of old Knox Hill. He was a very devout self-sacrificing man of God, preached often in the old Valley log church in the absence of a Presbyterian minister, and was heard gladly by the old Scotch Presbyterians.

There is today a dim trail that leads from the Valley church across Panther and Bruce's creek on to the Alaqua settlements, that was blazed out by this old servant of the Lord and traveled by him in carrying the precious Word to the Alaqua people.

It is known today as "Old Brother Charley Jones" trail. He was the only Methodist in his day in all this country. He never tried to organize a Methodist church here, he preached to Presbyterians and was satisfied to feed any hungry soul on the bread of eternal life.

He survived his family and sleeps now near them in that valley of rest. He honored all their graves with a stone and superscription; no one has honored his grave thus. But even the children of today know where "Old Brother Charley Jones," the faithful pedestrian, Itinerant preacher rests from his labors.

McKinnon confused the part about where Rev. Jones lived with where he went to preach by getting them backwards. McKinnon says he lived "east of Old Knox Hill," [in Euchee Valley] and traveled via the "Old Brother Charlie Jones" trail to Alaqua when he went there to preach.

The true story is that he settled in Alaqua where, in fact, he established the first Methodist Church in the county, contrary to McKinnon's claim that he did not. Because the Presbyterians in the Euchee Valley Church did not have a regular preacher, Brother Charlie frequently walked his "Trail" from Alaqua to Euchee Valley to avail its denominational congregants of his ministry.

In addition to his ministry, Jones served as

the first postmaster in Alaqua. U. S. Postal Service records show he held the position from 31 May 1826 to 31 March 1829, except for the period of May to November 1827 during which the post office underwent a temporary closure.

Jones' son, Thomas, served as the postal carrier, delivering the mail between Alaqua and Pensacola. In the Summer of 1827, Thomas barely escaped death when two men attempted to murder and rob him. Only through ineptitude on the part of the bandits and good luck on his part did Thomas survive the attempt. Law enforcement authorities eventually captured the culprits and jailed them.

After several repeated escapes from the Pensacola jail, notorious for the premature departure of its guests, one of the two by the name of Martin Hutto, finally succeeded in absconding never to be seen or heard of again.

Thomas played a central role in an amusing event recorded by Catholic Bishop Michael Portier of his travels by horseback from Pensacola to St. Augustine in 1827.

Portier's account of the event comes from the following reprint of an article in the May 2017 edition of the newsletter titled *CHARLES SHEPHERD VINSON JONES, ALAQUA'S FIRST PREACHER*, as follows:

The traveler as identified in the footnote was Catholic Bishop Michael Portier. He

departed Pensacola on horseback Tuesday, June 12, 1827 in the company of a mail carrier and a farmer. The farmer left them on the 13th. Continuing on with the mail carrier and after his attempts to converse with him yielded only terse responses, Portier first concluded that talkativeness was not the man's natural inclination. "I was mistaken," he wrote. "A few days later all was very clear. He was the son of a Methodist Minister, and had lost none of the austerity professed by the Protestant Pharisees."

Pharisee, from the Bible, implies hypocrisy and sanctimony and is demeaning to those accused of it. It was at that point that the Bishop's narrative took on an anti-protestant bias. The mail carrier was probably Thomas, the son of Reverend Jones, and his possible equally low opinion of the Bishop's beliefs may have inhibited any desire for conversation or to reveal his identity to him. On the morning of Friday, the 15th the Bishop parted company with the mail carrier, apparently without having learned his name.

Getting back to McKinnon's book, his comment about the grave of Rev. Jones not being marked was true. But that oversight has long since been remedied.

In recent years a group of the Reverend's multitudinous descendants held a ceremony commemorating the marking of his grave with a new stone. It took place on April 8, 2017. That story, too, is found in the May 2017 newsletter.

WWI Draft Registration Cards
Of
Walton County, Florida

By
Sam Carnley

I had intended to make this article about the WWI Draft Registration Card files of Walton County, Florida. That will be one subject, but in researching the files I came across another topic that I think our readers will find both disturbing and interesting that merged with the military registration laws.

It is the story of what was known as the “Convict Leasing” program of the Florida State Prison system, a practice approved by the State Legislature during the period of 1877-1919.

The WWI Registration law overlapped that period from 1917-1918, and it seems that state prison convicts in the leasing program during that time were obligated to register for the draft.

The registration cards of Walton County include a number from convicts, as well as some from men who served as their warden and guards.

Shortly after the U. S. entered WWI in April, 1917, the government enacted the Selective Service Act, requiring all men between the ages of eighteen and forty-five to register for the draft.

Local draft boards were established in every county of every state and in some cases, in the larger cities as well. The law obligated every American male of the specified ages to complete a registration form.

Exemptions were allowed depending on an individual's circumstances, but could not always be justified to the draft board's satisfaction. In some instances, eligible registrants failed to register for one reason or another, which if could not be justified, put them in violation of the law. Penalties were involved but exactly how severe they were remains unknown.

Draft evasion or dodging as it was sometimes known, was not new in WWI. As the following article notes, it was a problem then as it had been in the past:

In the United States during World War I, the word "slacker" was commonly used to describe someone who was not participating in the war effort, especially someone who avoided military service, an equivalent of the later term "draft dodger." Attempts to track down such evaders were called "slacker raids.

Despite such circumstances, draft evasion was substantial. According to one scholar, nearly 11 percent of the draft-eligible population refused to register, or to report for induction; according to another, 12 percent of draftees either failed to report to their training camps or deserted from them.^[2] A significant amount of draft evasion took place in the South, in part because many impoverished Southerners lacked documentation and in part because many Southerners recalled the "horrible carnage" of the Civil War.

In 2017, historian Michael Kazin concluded that a greater percentage of American men evaded the draft during World War I than during the Vietnam War.¹

How many Walton County men failed to register is unknown, but approximately 1,328 of them dutifully registered as the law required.

The county opened its draft board office in DeFuniak Springs, but the date and place remain unknown. As a matter of practice, the board likely sent out copies of registration forms to employers throughout the county, making it convenient for their employees to register without traveling to DeFuniak Springs, especially those located at considerable distances from the city.

Some employers availed themselves of convict labor through the state prison lease program which allowed them the use of prison inmate laborers at a substantial savings compared to what they paid regular employees.

In carrying out the obligation imposed on them by the state prison to keep the convicts securely contained, businesses using them found it necessary to employ wardens and guards around the clock to control them, both on and off the job sites.

Businesses typically using leased convicts were the naval stores operations run by turpentine companies and saw mills. The often-inhumane abuses inflicted on the captive workers by the turpentine outfits eventually led to laws

¹Draft Evasion, From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Draft_evasion

against leasing out state prison inmates. Florida had a two-tiered leasing system; one at the state level and the other at the county level. The state implemented a law ending its convict leasing program at the end of December, 1919.

County leasing however, continued a few years more until public indignation and outrage over the murder of a convict forced the state to outlaw the practice in 1923.

The convict, a young white man from North Dakota named Martin Tabert, had suffered under cruel and extremely taxing working conditions at the Putnam Lumber Company in Clara, about an hour's drive south of Tallahassee in Dixie County.

Tabert, age 22, had been arrested in Leon County and charged with vagrancy, landing him in the county prison system run by Sheriff James Robert Jones. Even though Tabert's parents sent him the money to pay his \$25.00 fine plus the amount he needed to cover his travel back home to North Dakota, corrupt county prison officials stole his money and sentenced him to prison anyway.

Sheriff Jones received \$20.00 for every county prisoner he leased out, and with that intent he sent Tabert to Putnam Lumber Company as an involuntary captive laborer.

In January 1922 the sawmill had worked Tabert to near complete exhaustion. Being at the point of total collapse, when he failed to immediately respond to convict guards' orders to get back to work, the "Whipping Boss," Thomas Walter Higginbotham, began viciously and brutally whipping him with a leather whip.

The punishment took place in full view of other guards and convicts. After suffering an alleged 150 lashes,

whether on his own or with the assistance of others, Tabert made it to his cot where he died a short time later.

When news of his death and the surrounding circumstances hit the papers, the public responded with outrage. Its reporting on the affair earned the *New York World* newspaper the Pulitzer Prize for Public Service.

In the investigation and trial that followed a jury convicted Higginbotham of second-degree murder. Seemingly more concerned about possible damage to the state's tourist trade from the negative publicity than the inhumane and barbaric treatment of rented-out prisoners, Governor Cary Hardee in 1923 had convict leasing at all levels of government outlawed once and for all.²

As noted at the beginning of this article, convicts on lease to Walton County business registered for the WWI draft. Nothing is known of how they were treated, but as they had no more rights than slaves, it is certain that many of them suffered undeserved abuse at the hands of heartless, tyrannical and unaccountable convict guards, the worst of which Higginbotham represented.

Following is a list of Walton County WWI draft registrants identified as leased convict laborers:

Image No: 477³

² Martin Tabert, Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Martin_Tabert

³ Image 477, United States World War I Selective Service Draft Registration Cards, 1917-1918, Florida, Walton County; A-Z <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:33SQ-GYRR-97RR?i=476&cc=1968530>

Name: Hoze Cartes
Age: 24
Race: Ethiopian
Home Address: Pensacola, FL.
Occupation: Leased Convict Labor
Employer: Bullard Sellers Co. (Turpentine operator)
Where employed: DeFuniak Springs
Signature: X

Image No: 533
Name: Jno Chair
Age: 24
Race: Black
Home Address: Macon, GA.
Occupation: Leased Convict Labor
Employer: Walton Land & Timber Co. (Turpentine)
Where employed: Bruce, FL
Signature: X

Image No: 622
Name: Collie Crosby
Age: 24
Race: Ethiopian
Home Address: Point Washington, FL
Occupation: Leased Convict Labor
Employer: Bullard Sellers (Turpentine)
Where employed: DeFuniak Springs
Signature: Signed

Image No: 1265
Name: Walter Kennedy
Age: 26
Race: Black
Home Address: Kingstree, S. C.
Occupation: Leased Convict Labor
Employer: Walton Land & Timber Co. (Turpentine)
Where employed: Bruce, FL
Signature: X

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Image No: 1297
Name: Earnest Kohn
Age: 27
Race: Black
Home Address: Milton, FL
Occupation: Leased Convict Labor
Employer: Walton Land & Timber Co. (Turpentine)
Where employed: Bruce, FL
Signature: Signed

Image No: 1315
Name: Reuben Lampkin
Age: 28
Race: Black
Home Address: Pensacola, FL
Occupation: Leased Convict Labor
Employer: Walton Land & Timber Co. (Turpentine)
Where employed: Bruce
Signature: Signed

Note: The above list is not meant to be inclusive of all leased convict laborers who registered for the draft in Walton County. The total number may therefore be greater than the number listed.

Listed below are selected draft registrants who identified as either a warden or guard employed by businesses to control and supervise the convict laborers they leased. As with the leased convict draft registrants, this number is not intended to be all inclusive and may not represent all convict guards who registered for the draft in Walton County.

Image No: 615
Name: Walter Crawford
Age: 21
Race: Caucasian
Home Address: Portland, FL
Occupation: Convict Guard
Employer: Walton Land & Timber Co. (Turpentine)
Where employed: Portland, FL
Signature: Signed

Image No: 1273

Name: Joseph Fredrich Kininger

Age: 38

Race: White

Home Address: Portland, FL

Occupation: Convict Warden

Employer: Walton Land & Timber Co. (Turpentine)

Where employed: DeFuniak Springs

Signature: Signed