



# WALTON RELATIONS

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Walton County Genealogy Society

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## Confederate Pensions

**Mary Ellen Wexler** contacted the Texas State Archives to have copies made of a pension application found in an online index. This is the response she received, in part:

We are pleased to inform you that these records have been digitized and are now available online from Ancestry.com and Ancestry Library Edition. If you or your local library has access to one of these resources, you may wish to view and/or print your copies from that site. The title of the database containing the Texas Confederate Pension Applications is *Alabama, Texas and Virginia, Confederate Pensions, 1884-1958*.

Mary Ellen pointed out that pension indices can be found on many of the USGENWEB sites, as well as on the National Archives (NARA) website, <http://www.archives.gov/research/military/civil-war/confederate/pension.html>. Thank you, Mary Ellen!

If you do not have access to Ancestry.com, it is available on the genealogy computer at the Museum. Contact **Wayne Sconiers** for more information or to schedule an appointment.

## Genealogy Meeting

The Walton County Genealogy Society will meet on Thursday, February 18, at 6:00 p.m. at the Walton County Heritage Museum. Contact **Wayne Sconiers** for more information about the meeting and resources available for your research.

## Upcoming Reunion

**Wright/McCall Reunion** – Saturday, March 19, 11:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., at the First Methodist Church Fellowship Hall on Circle Drive in DeFuniak Springs. Contact Howard Rinker at 850-892-5334 for more information.

If you have information about upcoming family or school reunions, please send it to us for inclusion on our Reunions web page.

### **Walton County Heritage Museum**

Open Tuesday - Saturday, 1:00 - 4:00 PM  
1140 Circle Drive, DeFuniak Springs, FL 32435

850-951-2127

[www.WaltonCountyHeritage.org](http://www.WaltonCountyHeritage.org)

[WaltonCountyHeritage@cox.net](mailto:WaltonCountyHeritage@cox.net)

## **John Wesley Carnley: A Genealogy (Part Two)**

By **Sam Carnley** of Bascom

On 8 March 1912, John Carnley paid fifty dollars to Florala Naval Stores Company for ten acres in the south ½ of the north ½ of the NW ¼ of the NW ¼, section 5, township 4 north and range 21 west. Its location on the map was south of Children's Home Community and a few hundred yards north of Pine Log Creek. Mack Henry Busbee's one hundred and sixty acre homestead lay a short distance to the northeast. On 12 March 1912, John purchased 20 acres from Chipley and Lora Cawthon for two hundred and twenty-five dollars. Its location was the south ½ of the NW ¼ of the NW ¼, section 5, township 4 north and range 21 west, adjoining his earlier ten acre purchase on the south.

For the two parcels totaling thirty acres, he paid two hundred and seventy-five dollars. On 22 November 1912, he sold the thirty acres to D. J. Burlison for three hundred dollars, realizing a meager profit of twenty-five dollars.

No further records of any other land he purchased have surfaced. From this, it appears he squatted on public property for the rest of his life in a log cabin he built in the vicinity of section nine or ten, directly west of the property he earlier homesteaded in section 12. Old timers long referred to the vicinity as the Covington Place, after Andrew J. Covington, the purchaser in 1904 of eighty acres in the south ½ of the NE ¼ of section 16, township 4 north, range 21 west. On the map, section 16 is directly south of section 9, about two miles south of Long Road bridge across Pine Log Creek.

In 1920, John's household on the census included himself, age 45, Emily, 35, and their eight children: Cora - age 17, Katie - 15, Sarah - 12, Willie - 10, Raymond - 8, Henry - 5, Frank - 3, and Sam (Walter) - 0 (less than a year old). The place of the census enumeration was identified as Stella, Precinct 6, an indication he still lived closer to the New Harmony-Stella vicinity than to Children's Home.

In the few records in which he appears, John was identified as a farmer, but it is clear from his homestead application documents how little farming he did. It appears he barely held the land he acquired long enough to clear it for planting crops. Like many of his neighbors, he probably worked at odd jobs to supplement the little income he earned from farming. One income source available to anyone willing to work hard was the cutting and selling of rail road crossties. These were in demand by the lumber companies which laid train tracks throughout the area to haul logs to their lumber mills at Florala, Paxton, Lakewood, and other locations. The tracks ran through almost every community, making it convenient for those wanting to sell crossties to transport them to the tracks to be picked up.

Cutting crossties demanded physical stamina and a knowledge of different tree types. Preferred trees were red or white oak, with southern yellow pine a close second. The length acceptable to the railroads was eight and a half feet with four flat sides. Any knots or rotted places rendered them unacceptable. Felling the trees took the work of two men on the opposite handles of a cross cut saw. The downed logs were then measured out and sawed into the required lengths. Working one man to a tie, each side was flattened with a broad axe. As each side was finished, the log was rolled over and the remaining sides flattened until all were done.

Wielding a broad axe invited danger. The user stood on top of the log swinging the axe along its side toward himself. Slashed and severed toes and serious cuts to the feet and lower legs were the prices

hewers paid for failing to pay attention to what they were doing. Many a crosstie cutter suffered permanent injury to himself from the careless use of the tool.

A finished crosstie could weigh three or four hundred pounds, considerably more than the average man could lift onto a wagon bed. A good strong man might have been able to do all the work of felling the trees and hewing the ties by himself, but he needed help loading them on his wagon for hauling to the railroad. He received payment on delivery at the rate of thirty or forty cents each. At those rates, if he could cut ten crossties in a day, which only the best hewers could do, he made at the most three or four dollars for a day's work.

No one knows, of course, exactly how John cut his cross ties but, in the spring of 1923, somewhere in the woods near his cabin south of Pine Log Creek, he had several on the ground ready to sell and was loading them on his wagon. His daughter, Sarah, who was about 15, and possibly other of his children, was helping him. When he went to step up on the front wheel hub to climb onto the wagon seat, his foot slipped, throwing him to the ground. He got up laughing and tried it again but fell a second time and did not get up. Realizing something was wrong, Sarah ran to him. She dropped to her knees and lifted his head on to her lap. Not knowing what else to do, she watched helplessly as he gasped a time or two and then stopped breathing. Witnessing her father's death affected her deeply. For the rest of her life, she told many times of the anguish she felt as he lay dying with his head in her lap.



**Emily Busbee Carnley**  
**12 March 1885 - 18 August 1936**

Leaving him lying there, she went to find someone to help her get him home. There were probably no more than two or three houses scattered in the woods nearby and, as she came to each one, she found no one home. She finally made her way to Mack Henry Busbee's grist mill on the north side of Pine Log Creek. The only person she found there was Irene Busbee, Mack Henry's granddaughter. Needing to run some errands, he left her there to mind the mill until he returned. Sarah told Irene what had happened and sat with her while they waited for Mack Henry.

On his return, Sarah told her sad story, and he took her on his Model T Ford truck to where she had left John's body. They loaded him on the truck and took him home. In the meantime, Sarah's brother Will, who was about 13 at the time and might have been with John when he collapsed, had gone home to give his mother Emily the bad news. It then came as no surprise to her when Mack Henry and Sarah arrived with John's body. They carried him into the house and, after taking down a door, laid him out on it and bathed him, at least as Irene Busbee Nelson told the story.

Shepherd Funeral Home of Florala handled John's funeral. According to their records, he was a 45 (he was actually 48) year old farmer and died on 7 April 1923 of heart failure near Florala. His burial followed at Clear Springs the next day at 4:00 P. M.

The record contains no details of who actually prepared the body for burial or when, or where, they

picked it up, but Shepherd provided the casket. It was manufactured by Junction City and cost \$35.00. Payment was secured by John's brother, W. B. (Wiley Berry) Carnley, of Stella Rt., Florida.

Her husband's death left Emily a destitute widow with seven children to support. Cora, the oldest, had married in 1921, but one less mouth to feed did little to ease the burden of a woman who had no means of providing for her remaining children. Over the next few years, other children married and moved out: Sarah in 1925, Katie in 1927 and Willie in 1929. At the time of the 1930 census, Emily's household included only herself, age 46, Raymond - 18, Henry - 15, Frank - 13 and Walter (identified as Sam on the 1920 census) - 10. Between the year of John's death and 1930, Emily relocated her family from the cabin near the Covington Place to a small wood frame house north of Children's Home Community. The move was made possible by the generosity of William L. ("Babe") Gordon, a wealthy land owner and resident of the area. In a gesture of compassion for Emily's desperate plight on the loss of her husband, Gordon built the house at his own expense and allowed her to live there rent free for the rest of her life. The location of the house is depicted on a map of north Walton County dated 1936 and identified as a map of John W. Carnley's plat of 30 acres, which appears on Page 6.

The photo of Emily (above) was taken at the house. Gordon Pond, named after Babe Gordon, is the light area visible in the center of the dark background by Emily's right arm.

**Mrs. Emily Carnley  
Dies Near Laurel Hill**

Mrs. Emily Carnley, age 51, of Laurel Hill Route 2, died at her home Tuesday. She was a native of Walton County, Fla., living in the Babe Gordon community all her life, and was a member of the congregation list of the church.

Survivors are one sister, Mrs. Summerlin of Campton, Fla. Brothers: Frank Busby, Laurel Hill, Route 3; Hubbard Presley, Laurel Hill, Rt. 2; Corbin Presley, Crestview; Lee Presley, Laurel Hill, Rt. 4; Obie Presley, Laurel Hill, Rt. 3; daughters: Sara, Kate and Mary, all of Laurel Hill, Rt. 2; sons: Will, Ramon, Henry, Frank and Walter, all of Laurel Hill Route 2; nine grandchildren.

Funeral services were held at Clear Springs Baptist Church on August 19 at 3 p. m., Rev. W. A. Thomas of Bethel officiating. Burial followed in the cemetery by Shepherd Funeral Home.

As it turned out, the "rest of her life" in the house was short. She died there on 18 August 1936 after suffering from an extended illness brought on by severe headaches so debilitating as to keep her constantly bed ridden. Dr. Fletcher W. Galaway of Florida certified cerebral hemorrhage as the cause of her death. Whether the hemorrhage resulted from a stroke or possibly an aneurysm was not stated. Her obituary in the local newspaper (probably Florida) appears at left.

Emily's mother Betty survived her. Betty's father was James Benjamin Lassiter, a brother of Martha Ann Lassiter Carnley, Emily's great aunt as well as her mother-in-law. Although Betty and her second husband, James Presley, were still living at the time of her death, Emily's obituary omitted them as survivors. The obituary included a daughter Mary, which was erroneous. Her correct name was Cora. Mrs. Summerlin in the obituary was Emily's sister, Ella Busbee, who married J. P. Summerlin. She and Frank Busbee, also mentioned in the obituary, were Emily's full biological siblings. Their father was Candy Busbee, Betty's first husband, who died about 1891 when Emily was 7 years old.

Emily's then 3 year old brother Hosea died about the same time as Candy. The story told of their deaths was that the family had attended an event, possibly at church, where they had dinner on the grounds. Afterwards, both Candy and Hosea came down with what was described variously as severe diarrhea, dysentery, or "bloody flux." Speculation was that they contracted food poisoning from spoiled food at the dinner. Whatever the cause, they died within a few days of each other and were buried at Evergreen Cemetery in Florida.

Betty then married James Presley, either in late 1891 or early 1892, because their first child Obie was born 10 October 1892. The Presley brothers mentioned in Emily's obituary were children of that marriage and her half siblings. Betty and James both died in 1950, having outlived Emily by 14 years.

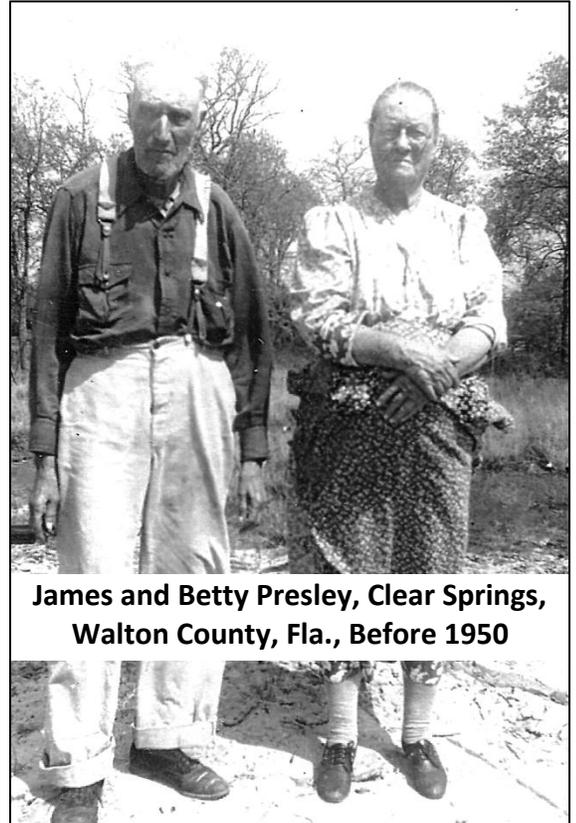
Additional information about Emily's death and funeral is provided by Shepherd (subsequently Evans) Funeral Home records: Raymond Carnley ordered the funeral and paid for it with a check in the amount of \$38.85. The deceased's occupation was housekeeper, and she died Tuesday, 18 August 1936 at 11 o'clock. Her date of birth was 12 March 1865 (correct date should be 1885), and her place of death was Laurel Hill, Rt. 2, near Svea (Sweer). That location was actually several miles from Emily's home, but it may have been given because it was the closest place to where she lived that was named on a map.

She was of the Congregationalist denomination and probably had been a member of the Congregational Methodist Church pastored by her late father-in-law, Reverend George M. Carnley, who died in 1914. He served at churches in Gordon and Stella and possibly at a third location in the Children's Home vicinity.

Following their mother's death, Raymond and his brothers departed the Babe Gordon house and Children's Home. Frank married Ann Bryan in 1937 and was living in Clear Springs where he worked as a farm laborer. Raymond, Henry, and Walter traveled to Lake Wales in Polk County, Florida, and as of the 1940 census, worked at nearby Winter Haven as fruit peelers in a citrus canning plant owned by Snively Groves, Inc. They and cousins Lloyd and Elvin Carnley, all of whom were single, lived with cousin Starlin Carnley and his wife Doreatha.

About 1940 or 1941, Sarah moved with her husband, Allen Cawthon, and their children to Eloise in Polk County, where they remained the rest of their lives. After his 1941 marriage to Eunice Kirkland in Polk County, Walter returned to Walton County where he lived until drafted into the Army shortly after the outbreak of WWII. Following his discharge in 1945 at the end of the war, he remained in Walton County except for about a year spent in Polk County around 1946 or 1947. Walter was the youngest child of John and Emily but the first of them to die in 1960, about a month past his fortieth birthday. He and Eunice had four children, none of whom now live in Walton County. Frank, too, was drafted and, after the war, moved permanently to Polk County where he spent the remainder of his life. Raymond and Henry also served during the war and afterwards made Polk County their permanent home as did Will, the only Carnley brother not called into service.

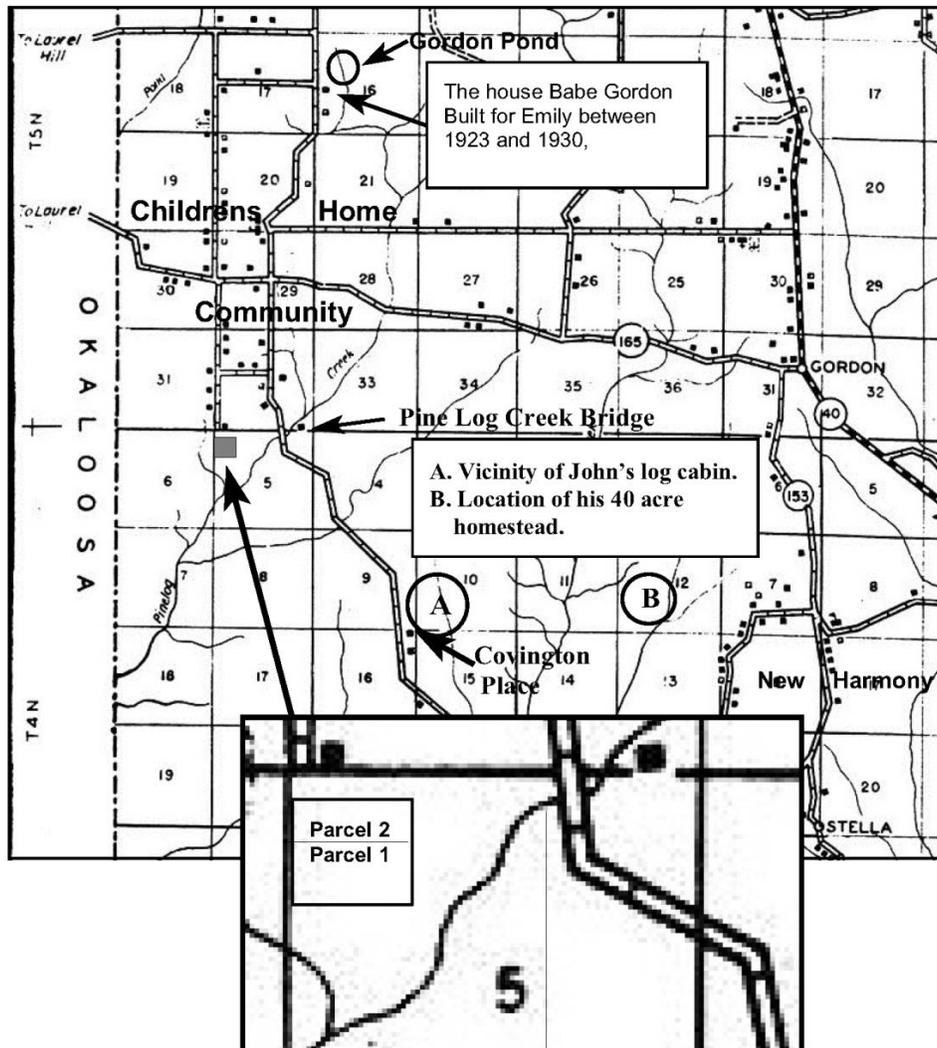
Cora and Kate spent their entire lives in Walton County. Cora bore no children, but Kate presented her husband, James Palmer, with ten children, only one of those still living currently resides in the



**James and Betty Presley, Clear Springs, Walton County, Fla., Before 1950**

county. Walton County is now the home of none of John Carnley's descendants who share his surname except for those found in its cemeteries.

Map  
John W. Carnley, Plat, 30 Acres, Walton County, Florida,. 1912



**Parcel 1:** Warranty deed from Chipley Cawthon to John Carnley for 20 acres, described as the South 1/2 of the NW 1/4 of the NW 1/4, Section 5, township 4 N, range 21 W, 12 March 1912, Deed Book 37, page 234, Walton County, Florida.

**Parcel 2:** Warranty deed from Florida Naval Stores Company, an Alabama Corporation, to John Carnley for 10 acres, described as the South 1/2 of the North 1/2 of the NW 1/4 of the NW 1/4 of Section 5, township 4 N, range 21 W, 8 March 1912, Deed Book 38, page 15, Walton County, Florida.

In a warranty deed dated 22 November 1912, John sold both the above parcels to D. J. Burlison for \$300.00. Deed Book 37, page 233, Walton County, Florida.

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*Walton Relations* is a publication of the Walton County Genealogy Society. Wayne Sconiers, President.

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Diane Merkel, at [WaltonCountyHeritage@cox.net](mailto:WaltonCountyHeritage@cox.net) or call 850-897-4505.