

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

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1140 Circle Drive, DeFuniak Springs, Florida 32435
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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 Florala 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 an 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.

[Click here](#) for the **Individual Membership Application**

[Click here](#) for the **Corporate Membership Application**

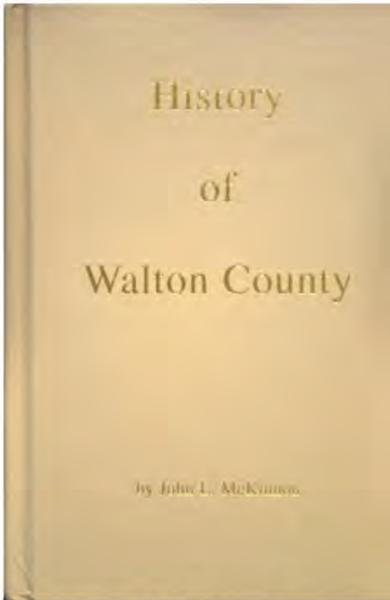
Member Benefits:

- **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.

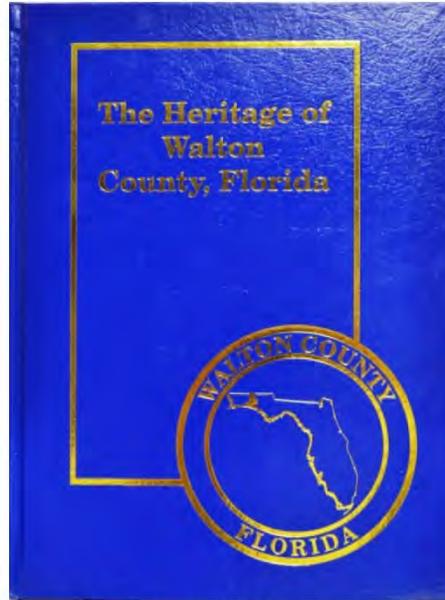
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From the Museum Gift Shop

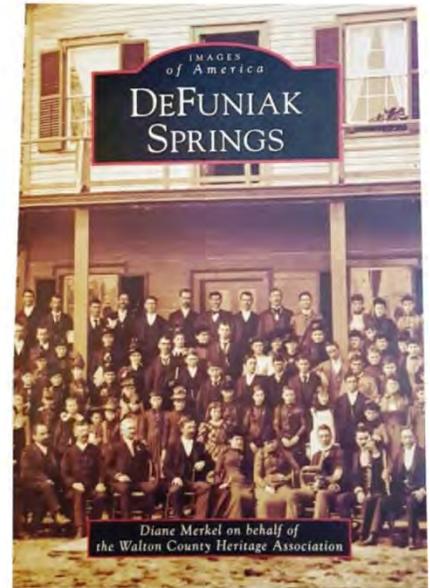
Our most popular books



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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Quantity	Description	Item Code	Price Each*	Amount
	The Heritage of Walton County, Florida	B13	71.13	
	Images of America, DeFuniak Springs.	B06	31.53	

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

William Michael Anderson

A Walton County Farmer and his Military Service

Written by Bob Anderson
Edited for the Newsletter by Sam Carnley

This story is about my Uncle Mike, a man who died before I was born. He was not a hero. He was a farmer from Walton County that left home with great expectations to serve in his Nation's Army. He in many ways was just a "common soldier."

Until a few years ago, all I knew about Uncle Mike was that he was my father's oldest brother and his grave in the Pleasant Grove Baptist Church Cemetery was marked with a tombstone reading "US ARMY RETIRED."

When I first expressed interest in writing a biography of Uncle Mike, two cousins volunteered that they had information, memorabilia, and stories to tell about Uncle Mike. I obtained a copy of Uncle Mike's military records from the National Archives and with some additional research and I wrote that biography.¹ In the eight years since I committed Uncle Mike's story to paper, I have found even more information and I will probably have to [add] another chapter to the biography.

It is an accepted fact of Genealogy that a person's life may be far different from family lore or the researcher's expectation. Some readers may be shocked and dismayed at Uncle Mike's life. However, if the story is viewed with a knowledge of Army life in the early and mid-20th Century, it is not shocking but rather a story of an ordinary man caught up in extraordinary times (World War I, economic depression and World War II) and disappointing circumstances (the tedium of a peacetime Army serving in a foreign country or climate).

Uncle Mike was never much of a letter writer though he was literate. I was told by my father that he never sent a letter home during his entire Army career, thus we are dependent on his official Military Personnel Record for information about his life during his military career. According to my father the first time Uncle Mike came home after enlisting in July 1917 was in 1935, when he walked up to the family home on a hot July day. Mike stayed only a few days before he returned to the Army. The next time he returned home was December 1943.

William Michael Anderson "Uncle Mike" was born on Christmas Eve 1895 in the family home in the Pleasant Grove Community of Walton County, Florida. There are few known records concerning Uncle Mike in the years prior to entering the Army; [only three specifically]. [The first is the 1900 U. S. census of Walton County, enumerated for Sandy Creek, Precinct No. 3, listing William Anderson, age 2, in the household of William R. Anderson.² The second is the 1910 U. S. census of Walton County, enumerated for Precinct 3, Sandy Creek, on 18 April, 1910. It lists William M. Anderson, age 14, born in Florida, in the household of his father, William R. Anderson.³ Under Education, it indicates he attended school since September 1, 1909 at which time he was 13 years old. The other is his draft registration card dated 5 June 1917 containing personal data detailed later herein. Of interest at this point is his highly legible hand writing displayed on the card ending with his excellent signature⁴. We know from the 1910 census that he attended school at least to age 13, more than long enough to learn reading and writing skills. As did many other members of his family he attended Sandy Creek School, identified in Walton County School Board records as in operation from 1885 to



**William Michael Anderson,
(1895-1944).**
Photo courtesy of Bob Anderson

1919⁵]. At home Mike worked at a wide variety of chores that were age appropriate for a farmer's son. He helped with livestock and the various seasonal work associated with crop production.

Such was not to be his future occupation though because in the spring of 1917 life changed for every family in America when President Woodrow Wilson appeared before the Congress on April 2, 1917 and requested a Declaration of War on the Prussian Empire (Germany). In the following three days the House of Representatives and the Senate voted to Declare War on Germany and President Wilson Signed the bill into law on April 6, 1917.

America was totally unprepared to go to war in April 1917 as it had a Regular Army consisting of Three Infantry Divisions, a Cavalry Division, five Light Artillery Regiments, Coast Artillery (Fixed Heavy Artillery) and an array of Combat Support and Combat Service Support Units. Of the 37 authorized Infantry Regiments, 11 were located outside of the continental United States. None of the Regular Army units or National Guard units were at full authorized strength nor had any of the units trained in Division Combat formations. [To raise the military manpower to the level necessary to meet the coming challenge] the President and the Congress approved the first Draft since the Civil War.

On June 5, 1917 Uncle Mike registered for the draft in DeFuniak Springs as ordered by President Wilson. On his draft registration he described his physical characteristics as: height; Tall, Build; Medium, Eyes; Blue and hair; Light.⁶ [His age was 21 with a birthdate of 24 December 1896. Other documentation however, confirms the correct year as 1895]. This was [the prelude to] his first contact with the military and stirred up heretofore unknown passions in Uncle Mike. Over the next few weeks there were surely some strong discussions about Uncle Mike's desire to enlist in the Army. I am certain that his decision to enlist only came after being thoroughly discussed within the family circle as his departure from the farm represented a significant loss of manpower.

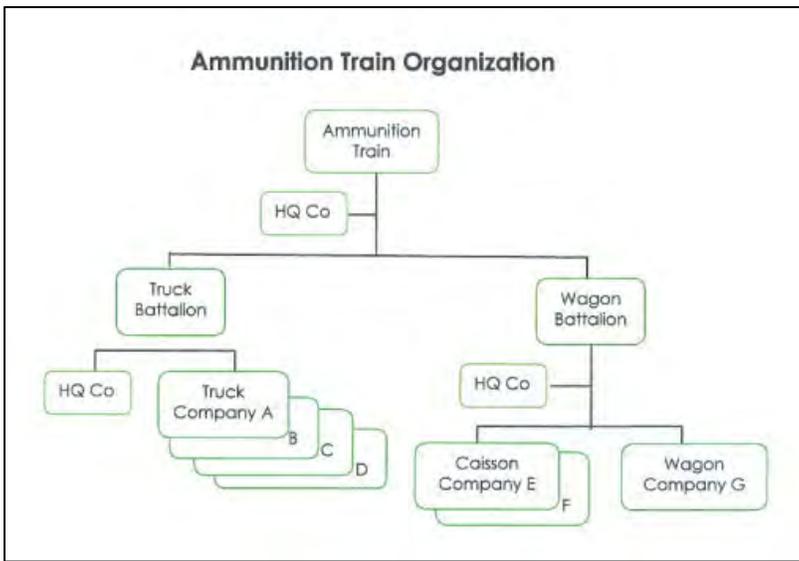
[With the U. S. Army's need for manpower a higher priority,] Uncle Mike departed home on July 12, 1917 for Defuniak Springs and took the train to Pensacola where he was processed for enlistment in US Army at Fort Barrancus (now a portion of Naval Air Station-Pensacola), Pensacola, FL. After preliminary processing he and other young men were sent by train to Savannah, Georgia and then to Ft Screven located on Tybee Island on the Atlantic coast southeast of Savannah. At Ft Screven Mike was given a medical and dental examination where his physical description was established as: Eyes: Grey, Hair; Light Complexion: Fair; Height: 5 feet, 10 ½ inches; Frontal Scars: 1" diameter right forehead, ¾' scar left temple; Back Scars: Birthmark left shoulder; Hand scars: 1 ½" diameter on back of left hand.⁷ He was formally enlisted in the Army on July 14. On the next day Mike departed Ft Screven for Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia in Northwest Georgia (South of Chattanooga, Tennessee). Mike was assigned to Company D, 52nd Infantry (D/52) at Camp Chickamauga Park, Fort Oglethorpe, GA for his initial military training and occupational training as a Wagoner. On completion of Basic Military training on 18 Oct 1917 Mike was promoted to Private First Class.

It is important to note that Wagoner was not only an occupation it was military pay grade. A Wagoner was equivalent to a Corporal for pay. For a description of the duties of the Wagoner, see the article, "Duties of the US Army Wagoner," at rootsweb.com.

On May 18 1917 the Congress passed legislation increasing the pay of enlisted soldiers. First, the minimum pay would be increased from \$21.00 to \$30.00 per month and other pay levels increased \$6.00 per month. Second, foreign service would be compensated by a 20% additional to the monthly pay. Below is selected data from the Pay Table of 1917:

Pay per month for Rank/Occupation	Years 1-3	Year 4-6	Years 7-9
Private, Private Second class and bugler	\$30.00	\$33.00	\$36.00
Corporal (Artillery, Infantry), Wagoner	\$36.00	\$39.00	\$42.00
Sergeant (Artillery, Infantry)	\$38.00	\$41.00	\$44.00

Mike completed Wagoner training on Dec 23, 1917 and was immediately assigned to Camp Greene, NC (near present day Charlotte). At Camp Greene the newly constituted 3rd Division was organizing and training to deploy to Europe and join the Allies in the Great War (WWI) fighting the German Kaiser. Mike was further assigned to Co E, 3rd Ammunition Train and on Dec 24, 1917 was promoted to Wagoner.



The 3rd Ammunition Train and Mike departed from the United States on the vessel SS Carpathia on March 15, 1918. The exact port of departure is not known but this increment of the 3rd Division is recorded as departing from ports at Halifax (?); Hoboken, NJ; Newport News, VA and New York. The Carpathia is reported to have stopped at Southampton, England before proceeding to the port at Bordeaux, France where it docked on March 29, 1918. In an area near the port the 3rd Ammunition Train assembled its wagons, animals and personnel in preparation to make a 620 kilometer (385 miles) march to a training area centered on Château Villain (approximately 140

Figure 1

miles southwest of Paris). It is here that 3rd Division (less Field Artillery) continued its unit and individual training under the tutelage of the French Army.

The history of the 3rd Division is not clear about whether units like the 3rd Ammunition Train deployed as a unit or were deployed with the respective combat units they supported (Infantry, Artillery, and Machine Gun). Within a matter of five paragraphs, the history description of the departure for France changes from “unit in mass” to “elements of 3rd Ammunition Train”. Ammunition Train: The Infantry Division Ammunition Train was organized with two Battalions: A motorized Battalion with four Truck Companies and Horse Battalion with 3 Companies (Figure 1). The Truck Companies moved ammunition from railroad heads to the ammunition dump. The Caisson Companies with its 6-horse Caissons moved 75mm artillery Ammunition and the Wagon Company with its 4 horse Limbered Caissons moved small arms (rifle, pistol, machine gun) ammunition from the ammunition dump to just behind the Infantry and Artillery units on the front line.

By early July 1918, the 3rd Division was deemed ready for combat and moved forward to the front line of combat where the division was placed under the command of American General John Pershing.

Combat Action

On July 15, 1918 the 3rd Division began offensive operations when they engaged in the last significant offensive operation of the German Army. As a Wagoner in the Ammunition Train, Uncle Mike made many roundtrips from the Ammunition storage areas (Dumps) to an area just behind the Infantry and Artillery units on the front line, a one-way distance of 1½ to 3 miles. Each of these trips was arduous because the Spring weather had turned the roads into rutted quagmires. Once in the forward area,

Mike and the other Wagoners had to keep close rein on their teams as the wagons were unloaded by manual labor. On the return trip, Uncle Mike could be required to transport wounded or the dead. Back in the Ammunition storage area Uncle Mike had to monitor the loading of the wagon to insure it was balanced and secure while also feeding and tending to the health of his mule teams.

In all Uncle Mike received battle credit for participating in four campaigns: the Champagne-Marne Offensive (15 July through 18 July 1918), Aisne-Marne Offensive (18 July through 6 August 1918), St Michel Offensive (12 September through 16 September 1918) and the Muese-Argonne Offensive (26 September through 11 November 1918).

The cessation of combat on 11 November 1918 that came with the signing of a Truce Agreement between the Allies and Germany was only a momentary pause in activity for Uncle Mike. On 14 November 1918, the 3rd Division began moving to take up positions in Germany. The American Army paused at the Luxembourg-Germany border until it became clear that the Germany Army was committed to removing its forces to east of the Rhine River.

On 1 December 1918 the 3rd Division and seven other American Divisions crossed the border into Germany and took up positions to begin the occupation of German Rhineland. The 3rd Division was assigned the sector located in and around the City of Koblenz and its strategic bridge crossing over the Rhine River. The 3rd Division units deployed to the northwest of Koblenz around the town of Andernach, where the Division Headquarters was established. Sometime during December 1918, Uncle Mike transferred from Company E to Company G, 3rd Ammunition Train.

I had always been taught in my history classes that military action ceased on 11 November 1918. The actuality was this was not the case; 11 November 1918 simply marked the end of active combat and beginning of a pull back of the German forces to positions east of the Rhine River for immediate demobilization. However, the German military remained in combat formations just east of the Rhine River until final acceptance of a Peace Treaty in late May 1919. However, the Allied Forces remained in a high state of readiness to resume offensive combat operations until June 29, 1919 when the German Army began a general demobilization. The need for preparedness to return to combat resulted in the American Expeditionary Forces significantly slowing the rate of return of forces from France to the United States.

Occupation Duty in Germany

In June 1919 Army personnel desiring to remain in Germany for Occupation duty were discharged and allowed to reenlist for units identified to remain on duty after 1919. Uncle Mike reenlisted for the 8th Infantry Regiment. In June 1920, Uncle Mike again reenlisted (this time a standard 3 year enlistment) to remain in the 8th Infantry. During his time with the 8th Infantry, Mike served in Supply Company, Company E and Company K.

When the German Army began its general demobilization 29 June 1919, the American Expeditionary Forces began a rapid redeployment of troops to the United States. The 103,000 soldiers on occupation duty on 2 July 1919 were drawn down to approximately 15,000 soldiers by early August 1919 and re-identified as American Forces Germany. The United States technically remained at war with Germany until a separate peace treaty was signed in the summer of 1921.⁸

I have been unable to uncover a specific American Forces Germany troop list in my research. The only combat Unit formation I have been able to identify is an ad hoc organization that 3rd Corps organized as a Rapid Reinforcement unit for Corps reserve. This organization was transferred to American Forces Germany and consisted of:

1 Infantry Brigade (appears to have been the 8th Infantry Regiment reinforced with a change in the number and mix of companies),
1 Engineer Battalion,
1 Field Artillery Battalion (75mm cannon),
1 Field Signal Detachment and
1 Machine Gun Battalion (motorized).

Adding the necessary support troops for this size combat organization and a Civil-Military government augmentation for an Occupying Army, you will have about 15,000 soldiers.

Occupation duty in Germany must have been boring after the high paced duty during combat. I have read several reports about the challenges the American Forces in Germany faced as an Army of Occupation. First and foremost, was that neither the American Army nor the local citizens knew what to do with an Army of Occupation. Second, the Americans had to find facilities to house troops, its horses, its mules and its equipment. Third, The Americans had to figure out how and where to conduct not only military training but also occupy the leisure time of the troops.

For a short period of time the troops were placed in German homes that spare rooms, but this provide unsatisfactory for military purposes. Once buildings were found to house entire troop units, a “No Fraternizing” policy was adopted.

That the American Army was challenged with inadequate facilities, both living facilities and operating facilities to include training facilities and areas is well documented.^{9 10} In one report of a visit to the Area of Occupation in late 1919 by General Pershing, Senior American Commander in Europe and later Army Chief of Staff, records that after visiting the Headquarters and surrounding buildings and the officer quarters in nearby hotels, Pershing decided to inspect the troop barracks. He found the enlisted personnel crowded into smelly, dimly lit quarters which were often old barns or stables that had been pressed into use. At the conclusion of his walk through, it is reported to have remarked (language edited), “Get these soldiers into better quarters now!” Whatever was said resulted in immediate action taken to resettle the enlisted soldier into much improved living conditions and to provide more recreation activity.

The American Forces in Germany had a wide schedule of competitive athletic and military activities and organized tours to a wide variety of historic sites and popular Spa/Gambling centers such as Baden-Baden. Boredom does not promote good behavior in young, high strung men especially when they do not speak the local language and are living in what have been described in official reports as “squalid, uncomfortable and overcrowded”. Uncle Mike was one of those bored soldiers and developed two favorite activities: consumption of the alcoholic beverage that the area is famous for and squiring a very attractive German Fraulein (maiden). Such activities almost always end with unsatisfactory outcomes, [especially when the person feels powerless to improve his circumstances].

[Evidence he may have suffered from that state of mind comes from Uncle Mike’s personal effects]. Among them were several pictures of the stables in Andernach. These pictures bear witness to Uncle Mike’s love for horses and mules, [and perhaps his yearning for happier thoughts as an escape from the depressing reality he faced at the time]. On several occasions my cousin, Grady King Anderson, has related this story about Uncle Mike after he came home in 1943. It goes like this: On days when Uncle Mike was feeling better, he would take out one of the horse, place Grady (age3 or 4) on the horse’s back then walking along side he would stop and visit with people at the farms [as he made his way around] the Pleasant Grove Community. These little journeys with Uncle Mike greatly impressed Grady for him to so vividly recall the walks years later.

The result of the reduced pace of life, poor living conditions and a free flow of alcoholic beverage was such that Mike Anderson began a rapid downward slide in behavior. First, after numerous alcohol

related incidents, Mike was reduced from Wagoner to Private in late 1921. And second, his attempts to escape the poor living conditions of the common soldier resulted in a sometimes cohabitation relationship with a local German woman, Maria Heidger Rüber. Twice during the approximately 32 months he was on Occupation Duty Maria bore a child, a boy and a girl.

Attempts by my father when he was assigned in Germany with the Army during 1951-1953 to locate Frau Maria Heidger Rüber and the children were unsuccessful. Residents in the area reported Maria and her daughter died during one of the many bombing raids of WWII and the son was drafted and never returned home after WWII. This relationship with Maria must have been quite meaningful as Uncle Mike carried her picture with him for the remainder of his life.

One may question why Uncle Mike did not marry. A review of the Official History of the Occupation Forces revealed [possible reasons for this].¹¹ Initially the Official policy was NO FRATERNIZATION with local nationals and enlisted personnel were not to be married. The No Fraternization policy was rescinded on September 27, 1919.

In October 1919 a policy for marriage of enlisted personnel was announced. On July 12, 1920 the American Forces in Germany received a letter from the War Department disapproving the marriage policy. In August 1920 a new policy on marriage was issued by American Forces in Germany. The new policy established strict personal financial responsibility and conduct requirements for soldiers requesting permission to get married. This included depositing an amount of \$100.00 with the enlisted person's company commander for the cost of transportation of the wife and any children to the United States and limited the number of soldiers in pay grades 3 and below (in the modern Army pay grades E6 and below) requesting permission in any one month to the number of spaces on transport to the US during the next month.

An examination of Uncle Mike's Military Personnel Record for the period July 1920 to June 1922 revealed that he never rose above grade 7, Private Second Class, following an incident in the spring of 1920. Mike was court-martialed for gambling and reduced from Wagoner to Private. Thus, Uncle Mike could never qualify to request permission to marry because he was a very low priority rank and he could never accumulate the \$100 deposit. [Grade 7 was the lowest at the time when an inverse relationship existed between grade levels and their numeric designations. In modern times, the relationships have been reversed so that grades and numeric designations are direct, i. e. the higher the number, the higher the grade. See table below:]

1917 Grades low to high with rank and title.									
Grade	7.	6.	5.	4.	3.	2.	1.		
Title	Pvt.	PFC.	CRP.	SGT.	SSG.	SFC.	MSG.		
2020 Grades low to high with rank and title									
Grade	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.
Title	PVT.	PV2.	PFC.	CRP.	SGT.	SSG.	SFC.	MSG.	SGM.

Return to the United States

In 1922 the American Congress refused to ratify the League of Nations Treaty and the American Army began to withdraw troops from Germany with the goal to cease Occupation operations by the year's end. In June 1922 Mike was reassigned for return to the United States. Upon his arrival in mid-July 1922, he was initially processed at Fort Slocum, NY then sent to Camp Dix, New Jersey pending further assignment. By late August he had joined the 34th Infantry Regiment at Ft Eustis, Virginia. The 34th Infantry Regiment transferred to Ft George G. Meade, Maryland shortly thereafter. The 34th Infantry Regiment became the test unit of the "Motorized" Infantry Regiment that is reported to have

a high-paced activity. As a test unit the 34th Infantry gained considerable repute as the “Regiment of Future Generals” as several regimental officers became Generals during WW II. Two of the most notable officers were George Patton, Jr. and Dwight D. Eisenhower.

Uncle Mike apparently liked duty with the 34th Regiment and he reenlisted in July 1923. In August 1923 he was promoted to Corporal and in December 1923 he was promoted to Sergeant. During his time with the 34th Infantry, Uncle Mike apparently changed his military occupation to “Soldier or Infantryman.” This change is based on inference from his military records as he began to be paid a monthly bonus for marksmanship qualification with the rifle and machine gun.

More Foreign Service – Philippine Islands

In February 1926, Uncle Mike, now a Sergeant, once again reenlisted. Apparently, he had developed a desire to travel and was assigned to the 15th Infantry Regiment in San Francisco, California. On 8 April 1926 the 15th Infantry departed San Francisco bound for Manila, Republic of the Philippines. The 15th Infantry arrived in Manila on 4 May 1926. The tempo of military life in the Philippines was not what Uncle Mike needed and he began a rapid descent into alcoholism, once again. He was reduced to Private in November 1926. In what became a pattern for the remainder of Uncle Mike's Army service, he gained Corporal stripes at least twice while in the Philippines but he was a Private when the 15th Infantry returned to the United States in February 1929.

Return to the United States – the 1930's

On his return to the United States, Mike reenlisted and once more requested the 34th Regiment. As the 34th Regiment had no vacancies, he was assigned to the 28th Infantry Regiment, at Ft Ontario, New York (located near the city of Oswego on the shore of Lake Ontario). Mike's duty with the 28th Regiment bounced between periods of sobriety and alcohol with promotions to Private First Class and even Corporal when sober and reduction to Private when not.

In May 1932, Mike reenlisted once again for the 34th Regiment at Fort Meade, MD. This time there was a vacancy. He served with the 34th Regiment until 1938 by reenlisting in 1935. It was in July of 1935 that Mike went home on leave for the first time since enlisting in the Army, a period of some 18 years. In May 1938, Mike reenlisted once more. He requested continued assignment to the 34th Infantry. However, the 34th once again did not have a vacancy and he was assigned to the 22nd Infantry Regiment at Fort McPherson, Georgia (near Atlanta). The 22nd Regiment a short time later relocated to Fort McClellan, AL (near Anniston). Uncle Mike apparently was content with duty in the 22nd Regiment as he was a Sergeant for a short period in early 1941.

War Clouds on the Horizon – World War II

In July 1941, Mike reenlisted for what would be his final time. He once more requested assignment to the 34th Infantry Regiment. However, the 34th Regiment had no vacancies for a “Limited Service” soldier. Being identified as “Limited Service” soldier resulted in Uncle Mike being sent to Fort Lee, Virginia, for training at the Quartermaster School and retraining as a Mess Sergeant/Cook. While at Fort Lee, Uncle Mike was once again reduced to Private for drunkenness.

Upon completion of his training in November 1941, Mike was assigned to the 53rd Quartermaster Regiment at Ft Bragg, North Carolina. Mike apparently was in a period of sobriety and his performance improved, earning him a promotion to Corporal. In August 1942, he was reassigned to the 207th Gasoline Supply Battalion at Camp Mackall, a remote section of Fort Bragg. This transfer led to a renewal of his love for alcohol and a decline in his performance resulting in reduction to Private.

End of Military Service – Hospitalization and Retirement

In July 1943 after several months of being in and out of the Camp Mackall hospital, he was admitted to the Fort Bragg hospital in an alcoholic stupor. A few days later he was transferred to Oliver General Hospital in Augusta, Georgia for treatment. Early in August 1943, after a few more alcohol related incidents, the Ward Doctor referred Mike's case for Medical Disability Retirement. Major George Crumkes, a psychiatrist, was assigned to Mike's case and made the following notes and observations:

“Pvt Anderson is tired after over 20 years of service.” . . . “He has significant problems coping with the modern World War II Army.” . . . “He expressed that his greatest desire is to return to Florida and perhaps farm in partnership with his brothers.”

After this interview, the process for medical retirement of Mike was initiated. On 31 October 1943, William Michael Anderson was medically retired from the US Army. He was transferred directly to the Veterans Hospital in Atlanta, Georgia for further medical treatment. At the time of his retirement, Mike Anderson had the following Medical-Dental diagnoses:

Cerebral Arteriosclerosis – tremulous, anxiety
Retinitis, bilateral - Nearsighted acuity 20/30 in both eyes – glasses correction
Otitis, bilateral hearing loss Right ear loss – 60% Left ear - 25%
Missing all upper teeth, missing 7 lower teeth, no molars present,
upper plate unsatisfactory and causing patient continuous pain

I believe that the Doctor did not list “Chronic Alcoholism” as a disqualifying diagnosis because this diagnosis was/is a “Line of Duty Determination” of “NO” and disqualified the soldier's for honorable discharge/retirement. After reading Uncle Mike's entire Personnel and Medical Record file, it is my opinion that Mike was suffering from Chronic Alcohol consumption and abuse. I also believe that it was a primary cause of Cirrhosis of his liver, cancer and his death.

Mike stayed at the Atlanta Veterans Hospital for only a few weeks before returning to the family farm. His health was poor and he spent considerable time in bed. His brother, Angus, and sister-in-law, Ruby, provided nursing care and assistance. He returned to the Veterans Hospital Atlanta in October 1944.

William Michael Anderson, Pvt, US Army Retired, died at the young age of 48 on 12 November 1944 at the Atlanta Veterans Hospital. Uncle Mike is buried at the Pleasant Grove Baptist Church Cemetery, Walton County, Florida. [Find A Grave Memorial No. 54496346].

A Walton County farmer returned home after serving his nation in war and peace.

Sources

¹ US Army Military Personnel File of William Michael Anderson, Copy from National Personnel Records Center (Military Records), 1 Archive Circle, St. Louis, Missouri (Copy in the personal possession of Robert M. Anderson Jr., Centerton, Arkansas)

Acknowledgement: This story is only possible because of dedicated Archivists in the Military Personnel Records Department of the National Personnel Records Center in St Louis, Missouri. A 1973 fire destroyed or damaged over two million military personnel record files for people who served in the US Army prior to 1953. Records not totally consumed by fire but were water soaked were placed in “Frozen” storage,

When I requested Uncle Mike's file, an Archivist retrieved the file from frozen storage and using a laborious process dried each individual page so it could be copied. Each page is 3 ¾ x 8 inches in size (slightly larger than the 80 column punch card). Most of the over 200 pages had only about 10-15% of the page burned.

The personnel file pages when copied, 2 -3 pages per letter sized sheet of paper, resulted in a stack about one inch thick. Of the over two dozen requests I have made to the Military Personnel Records Center for persons who completed

their military service prior to 1953, this is the only request that resulted in a copy of the actual file. For about half of my requests only a "Substitute" record was found, usually a "Final Pay Statement".

² "United States Census, 1900," database with images, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:M36F-V61> : accessed 16 May 2020), William R Anderson, Precincts 3-4, Sandy Creek, Limestone & Precincts 13-14 Argyle, De Funiak Springs & Precinct 1, Walton, Florida, United States; citing enumeration district (ED) 120, sheet 6B, family 111, NARA microfilm publication T623 (Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1972.); FHL microfilm 1,240,177. <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:M36F-V61>, accessed 5/16/2020

³ "United States Census, 1910," database with images, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:MVKP-TC7> : accessed 16 May 2020), William M Anderson in household of William R Anderson, Sandy Creek, Walton, Florida, United States; citing enumeration district (ED) ED 111, sheet 2B, family 33, NARA microfilm publication T624 (Washington D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1982), roll 169; FHL microfilm 1,374,182. <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:MVKP-TC7>, accessed 5/16/2020.

⁴ "United States World War I Draft Registration Cards, 1917-1918", database with images, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:K35F-FZL> : 23 August 2019), William Michael Anderson, 1917-1918. <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:K35F-FZL>, accessed 5/16/2020.

⁵ Sam Carnley, *Early Schools of Walton County, Florida*, (Walton County Heritage Association Newsletter, "Walton Relations & History," Vol. 11, Issue 1, October 2019), 4, 9-10. <http://www.waltoncountyheritage.org/GenSoc/NL2019Oct.pdf>, accessed 5/16/2020.

⁶ Ancestry.com, "U.S., World War I Draft Registration Cards, 1917-1918," database (accessed 28 Dec 2017), registration; Roll: 1556939

⁷ US Army Military Personnel File of William Michael Anderson, Copy from National Personnel Records Center (Military Records), 1 Archive Circle, St. Louis, Missouri (Copy in the personal possession of Robert M. Anderson Jr., Centerton, Arkansas)

⁸ Page 76; "The U.S. Army in the World War One Era" CMH Pub 77-2; Brian F. Newmann, Series Editor; Center of Military History, United States Army; Washington, D.C. (available on the internet, URL: <https://history.army.mil/catalog>.)

⁹ "American Representation in Occupied Germany, Vol. 1 & 2"; Assistant Chief of Staff, G2, American Forces in Germany. Center of Military History, United States Army (available on the internet, URL: <https://history.army.mil/catalog>.)

¹⁰ "American Representation in Occupied Germany, Vol. 1 & 2"; Assistant Chief of Staff, G2, American Forces in Germany. Center of Military History, United States Army (available on the internet, URL: <https://history.army.mil/catalog>.)

¹¹ Pages 41-60, Chapter 4, "Relations with the Civil Population, American Representation in Occupied, 1920-1921, Volume 2", Compiled by Assistant Chief of Staff, G2, American Forces in Germany, Published 1922, Government Printing Office, Washington, DC.