



# WALTON

## RELATIONS & HISTORY

Volume 12, Issue 03

Walton County Heritage Association

January 2021







# 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: 850-951-2127**

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

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**Treasurer:** Sam Carnley

**Secretary:** Mary Lancaster

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Vacant

### Museum Docent Coordinator

Caroline Brown (Acting)

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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.]*

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

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



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

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

**Individual Membership Application** <http://www.waltoncountyheritage.org/Membership2020.pdf>  
**[Click here](#) for the Corporate Membership Application**

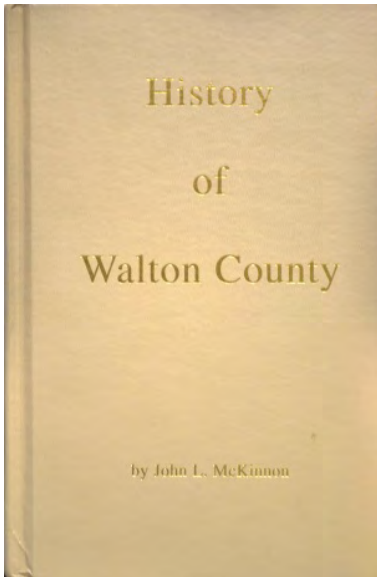
**Member Benefits:**

- 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.

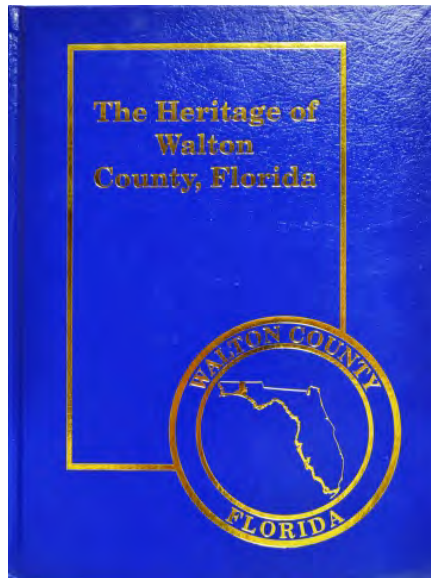
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# From the Museum Gift Shop

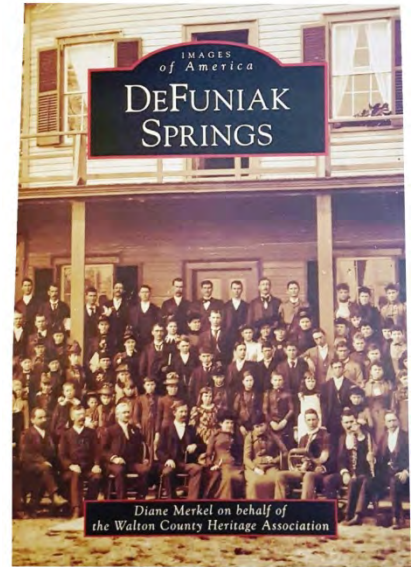
## Our most popular books



**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.

## BOOK MAIL ORDER FORM

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

Customer Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Ph./Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Quantity	Description	Item Code	Price Each*	Amount
	The Heritage of Walton County, Florida	B13	71.13	
	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.

# Eucheeanna; A Town That Might Have Been

Written by  
Carlis J. McLeod for  
“The Heritage of Walton County, Florida”

Transcribed and edited by  
Sam Carnley, for the Walton County Heritage Association, Inc.  
Newsletter; “Walton Relations & History,” January 2021

**Editor’s Note:** This is another in the series of newsletter articles taken from the book, “The Heritage of Walton County, Florida.” The book is available for sale at the Museum located in the old train depot in DeFuniak Springs which presently remains closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. For those interested in obtaining a copy of the book, they may do so by submitting the mail order form included in this newsletter. Those who possess the book may find this story on pages 18-19. This newsletter article is primarily for the benefit of those who do not own a copy of the book and it is hoped they will find it enjoyable and informative reading.

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**The name “Eucheeanna” is known to few outside of Walton County, and even in the western Florida Panhandle, many area residents do not know how to pronounce or spell it correctly.**

**There is no sign, no historical marker, no town and few family dwellings to indicate that this was the site of Walton County’s first settlement.**

It was near the town of old Eucheeanna, a little way down a winding country road, on the banks of Bruce Creek that in 1820 Neil McLennan first saw his “lotus land.”<sup>1</sup> In this virgin hammock, among a band of Uchee Indian warriors, he and his party parleyed with Chief Sam Story (English name) for an invitation for his family and friends to settle there. In a few years the entire region known as Euchee Valley was populated with Scottish Highlanders who first settled in the Carolinas before moving to the Florida Territory. Within this settlement a little trading center developed that came to be known as Eucheeanna. Even though the town is now gone, it is still listed on some Florida maps. A map issued about 1868 shows only the towns of Eucheeanna, Almirante, Knox Hill and Yellow Water. Eucheeanna was the largest of the four.

You can hear several stories of how the little town was named. The more accurate, and perhaps authentic story is that it was named in honor of Nancy Anna McLean, the first white child born in the area and Sam Story’s band of Uchee Indians.

Eucheeanna was born with Walton County in the Florida Territory, Dec. 29, 1824. The second seat of county government for Walton County was located here, the first being at Alaquah [Alaqua]. Some say it was located at Alaquah only because that was where the judge lived.<sup>2</sup> The county seat was officially moved to Eucheeanna when Florida received statehood in 1845.

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<sup>1</sup> McKinnon, John L., *History of Walton County*, (The Byrd Printing Co., Atlanta, Ga., 1911 – First printing; Palmetto Books, Gainesville, Florida, 1968 – second printing.), 13-20. <https://dlg.galileo.usg.edu/georgiabooks/pdfs/gb0503.pdf> Hereafter, McKinnon.

<sup>2</sup> Carnley, Sam, *Henry Marie Brackenridge, Walton County Pioneer Judge*, (Walton County Heritage Association, Inc. Newsletter, January 2019), 10-12. <http://www.waltoncountyheritage.org/GenSoc/NL2019Jan.pdf>



In September 1864, a party of Federal raiders from Pensacola under the old Hungarian General Alexander Asboth, invaded the interior of West Florida and, while on his way to Marianna, looted Eucheeanna [and captured and imprisoned a number of citizens as well as Confederate soldiers. Two of the soldiers were brothers; Lafayette and William Cawthon, who were sent to the Confederate POW camp at Elmira, New York, where William died and Lafayette sat out the war. When it ended, he was pardoned and returned home to Walton County.<sup>3</sup>] The Yankees, 700 strong, camped in the little valley southwest of the courthouse while General Asboth and his staff occupied the home of Giles Bowers overlooking the town and his troop encampment.<sup>4</sup>

This was the night of Sept. 23, 1864. From Eucheeanna, raiding parties went throughout the **valley, looting and pilfering anything of value, particularly food and forage for the soldiers' and horses.**

The Federals locked a number of old men in the county jail and kept them there for more than a day and night without food or water. After robbing the town and surrounding area, the invaders **released the prisoners and continued on through Walton by way of Angus Gillis' plantation, taking** blacks, mules and horses and everything they could eat. They passed out of Walton through Holmes County and on to Jackson where the Battle of Marianna was fought Sept. 27, 1864.

Eucheeanna survived during the early years because its fertile valley gave promise of a prosperous and healthful life to those adventurous Scottish settlers looking for new land. It died when the horse and buggy gave way to the train. The railroad by-passed the valley for a more direct route along the ridge. The Pensacola & Atlantic Railroad, a subsidiary of the Louisville & Nashville line, built a depot at Round Lake. [the depot, built in the early 1880s in what is now DeFuniak Springs has survived to become the Walton County Heritage Association museum]. This was the beginning of Lake DeFuniak and the demise of Eucheeanna.

A railroad, however, did eventually come to Euchee Valley. Between 1910 and 1920, the Geneva Lumber Company, with its big mill in nearby Geneva, Alabama, constructed a logging rail line into eastern Walton County. The mail [rail] line generally followed the Choctawhatchee River valley from Geneva through Leonia and Westville in Holmes County to Euchee Valley in Walton. The mail [rail] line divided a few miles southeast of Eucheeanna where a trestle was constructed across Bruce Creek. This trestle came to **be known as the "Walton Bridge."**

One branch of the line continued south into the LaFayette Creek area while the other ran parallel to Bruce Creek in a west-**northwest direction to terminate with the "Lyman Sections."** This area is east of what today is known as the Woodlawn community near Rock Hill.

After the Pensacola & Atlantic rail line was completed and the county seat relocated many of the descendants of the original Scottish settlers in the Euchee Valley area moved to the new town of Lake DeFuniak, now DeFuniak Springs, for cultural and economic reasons.

There were few homesites in Eucheeanna. The majority or [of] the old Scottish settlers were farmers and lived around the town, coming in occasionally for supplies from the valley (fertile area in south-east Walton County about 12 miles wide and 25 miles long). However, plans were formulated for the town to grow and perhaps eventually be incorporated as seen through old land and tax records showing Madison Avenue and Washington Street within the town limit.

A few merchants and craftsmen, such as the village smithy, had set up shops at Eucheeanna. In the beginning, the business district consisted of only a commissary and post office. After 1845, a wood courthouse and community building were erected. All these buildings and a few dwelling houses were clustered at the juncture of McKinnon Bridge and Red Hill Bridge roads.

Before the turn of the century there were at least three stores, a large steam mill, a two-room log schoolhouse, and several substantial homes in the immediate area of Eucheeanna. The Bloodworth family owned and operated a steam-powered cotton gin, sawmill and gristmill at Eucheeanna. Because

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<sup>3</sup> Carnley, Sam, *The Walton County POWs of Asboth's Raid on Marianna*, (Walton County Heritage Association, Inc. Newsletter, April 2014). <http://www.waltoncountyheritage.org/GenSoc/NL2014Apr.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> McKinnon, 327-331.

of its color, the **Bloodworth commissary was known locally as the “red store.”** It was the favorite gathering place for all the old men in the community with an ongoing checker game from early in the morning until closing time. Before World War II, the boiler and much debris from the old mill were **still scattered around. The vault from the “red store” could be found across the road. By this time all** the stores and businesses were gone. Will Howell bought the old Bloodworth commissary, moved it away and used it as an addition to his home. The boiler, vault and other pieces of iron work from the old Bloodworth mill were cut into scrap metal and shipped to Japan in 1937.

Euclachanna, like many other Florida “ghost towns,” had its share of legends. The “hanging tree,” was perhaps the favorite of most of the young people. Immediately west of the McKinnon Bridge road and just south of the site of the old courthouse and jail stood an old gnarled pine with a prominent crook in its trunk and one large limb that protruded parallel to the ground. Legend says this was the “hanging tree.” There is no question it gave many of the young folks a scary feeling when they passed that way on a dark night.

On Halloween, it was not unusual to see a scarecrow type effigy swinging from the protruding limb. The “hanging tree” was cut down and a short section of it manufactured into lumber when Mr. Lee Lindsey logged the Bloodworth property at Euclachanna in the mid-1930s.

The Confederate monument that now stands on the courthouse lawn in DeFuniak Springs was originally at Euclachanna. The monument was so important to the Scottish people in the valley that a bitter dispute arose as to where it should be located. Some wanted it to be located at the courthouse in Euclachanna, while others preferred it to be located at the Euclach Valley Presbyterian Church, or the Know Hill Academy. The dispute ultimately ended in the State Appellate Court.

Legend has it that the monument was actually stolen one night, loaded onto an oxcart and hauled to Knox Hill. Euclachanna eventually became home for the Confederate monument and it remained there at the site of the old courthouse for a number of years after the county seat was moved to DeFuniak Springs. In the early 1900s, vandals began systematically destroying the monument and a decision was made to relocate it permanently at the new courthouse in DeFuniak Springs where it could be protected.

In 1885, the winter Chautauqua was first staged at Lake DeFuniak and in the years that followed excursion trains from the northern and Midwestern cities brought thousands of tourists for the winter festivities. That same year there was talk of moving the courthouse from Euclachanna to Lake DeFuniak.

In April of that year the courthouse at Euclachanna burned and many of the county records were destroyed. There is reason to believe the fire was no accident. There are descendants of the old-timers living today who remember talk of the courthouse fire and they probably could tell you who actually brandished the torch.

It was all political and some say inspired by “railroad money” in an effort to move the county seat to the new town of DeFuniak Springs.

Today, there is literally nothing left of the little old Scottish town of Euclachanna and many areas of the Uclach Valley are as remote as they were when Neil McLennan and his party first visited there in the early 1800s. A lush growth of foliage has all but obliterated any signs of this historic old county seat. *Submitted by: the Walton County Heritage Book Committee; Written by Carlis J. McLeod (used with permission).*