



WALTON RELATIONS

Volume 1, Issue 5

Walton County Genealogy Society

February 2010

Two Events of Interest

On Saturday, February 13, at 2:00 at the Museum, there will be a presentation by two University of West Florida history professors regarding an exciting program called “**Next Exit History.**” While this program is not directly related to genealogy, it nevertheless is important to our mission. “Next Exit History” will promote DeFuniak Springs’ history and tourism by creating audio and audio-visual historical podcasts. More visitors to our Museum will bring more interest in our genealogy projects.

On Saturday, March 13, from 9:00 until 4:00, the Walton County Heritage Association will sponsor the **Walton County History Fair** at the Walton County Fair Building. The Walton County Genealogy Society will have tables at the Fair, and we hope you will visit our display. Better yet, we hope you will present your own display of your genealogy. If you have photographs, letters, or other documents of your ancestors, please share them with others. A link to the table reservation form is available on the home page of our website. If you do not feel you have enough for a separate display, please contact **Wayne Sconiers** about sharing the Genealogy Society tables. The History Fair is always a great event, and there is no fee to participate.

Genealogy Society Meeting

The next meeting of the Genealogy Society will be **Saturday, February 13, at 10:00 at the Walton County Heritage Museum.** We will discuss the progress of the Magnolia Cemetery Project, the upcoming History Fair, and future lectures and training sessions. Please join us!



Bruce Family Cross at Magnolia Cemetery

Walton County Heritage Museum

Wednesday-Saturday, 11:00 AM – 4:00 PM
1140 Circle Drive, DeFuniak Springs, FL 32435

850-951-2127

www.WaltonCountyHeritage.org

WaltonCountyHeritage@cox.net

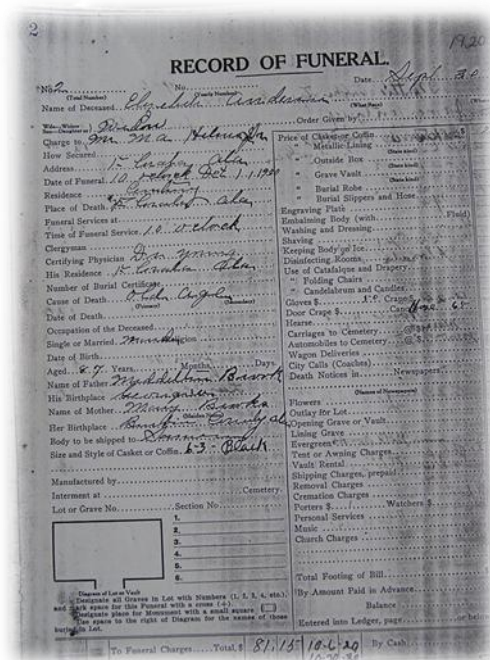
Evans Funeral Home (Floral, Alabama) Records

By Mary Ellen Wexler

Note: CDs of the records of the Evans Funeral Home are available for use in the genealogy section of the Walton County Heritage Museum. We thank everyone involved in this project for this very generous gift! In the article below, Mary Ellen Wexler shares the history of the project.

We wish to express our deepest appreciation to Joe R. Evans and Evans Funeral Home for making their records available to the genealogical community. They have graciously allowed the volunteers of Baker Block Museum to photocopy and photograph the original ledgers of burials done at the Funeral Homes owned by their family. Some records are as early as 1914.

The project of copying the records of the Evans Funeral Home in Floral, Alabama, was conceived years ago in three minds separated by many miles. Joe R. Evans wanted to be sure the documents were preserved and could be used by future generations. While doing genealogical research, Mary Ellen Wexler and her mother, Ernestine C. Harvey, found that the records existed and asked Mr. Evans if they could look through them for deceased relatives. Upon seeing them and noting the condition of some of the ledgers, both women hoped someday they could be copied and preserved. Ernestine lived at St. Joseph's State Park in Port St. Joe, Florida, and Mary Ellen lived in Western New York. It was not for many years that a discussion took place between Mr. Evans and Mary Ellen about how to bring about the fulfillment of their mutual dream.



Mary Ellen was working at the Baker Block Museum when she realized it not only might be a place to store paper copies but might also be a source of volunteers to lighten the workload. Mr. Evans readily agreed to the plan of making paper copies that would be put into notebooks at Baker Block Museum. The paper copies would also be photographed and put onto CDs or DVDs for use in the Funeral Home. He purchased a reader which may be used by the public instead of having to handle the original books. He provided the copy machine, ink, and paper for the project and allowed Baker Block Museum to sell digital copies. He gave Floral Library and the Walton County Genealogy Society a set of the disks. They have been greatly appreciated and used heavily by patrons of the Baker Block Museum and at the Funeral Home.

Ron Bryan, Leah Ann Wilkerson, Ernestine Harvey, and Mary Ellen Wexler copied the pages, and Mary Ellen photographed the pages until she learned that her copy machine would do "batch scanning." After making that discovery, the project went much more smoothly.

Now, we want to get Greenwood Cemetery surveyed. If you would like to volunteer for that project, please email Mary Ellen Wexler at me@wexonline.net.

Due to the magnitude of the job, there are times when printed numbers may be missing on a photo but, generally, image numbers reflect the correct printed number on each document. We are also sorry that photographic props or a photographer's fingers may be seen in an image. We were concentrating more on readability rather than aesthetics.

There is an "every name" index as well as individual indices for each volume. The photograph on this page is an example of one of the records. They may be printed at original size from the digital copies.

Pioneer Corner: The Waldens of Walton County

By Janet Walden Miller

When I was growing up in Walton County, family gatherings always featured good Southern cooking mingled with laughter and storytelling. We were always taught to be proud of our Scotch-Irish roots and the fact that our family was descended from early pioneers of the county, both Cawthons and Waldens.

I knew our people came to Florida before the Civil War and that my great grandfather Joseph Walden and his brother Sam had fought in the war. So, naturally, when I became interested in documenting the family history, I started with some of the tales that were told around the table.

In the past two years, I have learned much about the war that I never learned in school. Both Joseph and Sam were young men when they enlisted and both were captured at Gettysburg while fighting with Co. E, 8th Florida Infantry. From there, they were sent to Fort Delaware Union prison.

How odd now that I remember being taught about the atrocities of Andersonville but do not remember learning a thing about similar inhuman conditions at the Union prisons of that terrible war. Fortunately, both Joseph and Sam lived through their time at Fort Delaware; they returned home to marry and live in Walton and Holmes Counties for the rest of their days.

What I have learned recently is that over 2,500 Confederates died at Fort Delaware and many men, including Joseph and Samuel Walden, suffered lifelong disabilities from the time they spent there. Built on an island in the Pea River, the fort was deemed a secure spot for housing Confederate soldiers and Southern sympathizers, but it was not built to house the large numbers of men who were detained there. After Gettysburg, the population swelled to 12,500 men, resulting in malnutrition, exposure to the elements, overcrowding, disease, and pestilence.

When I located records for Samuel, I learned that he was ‘soon paroled’ but I wanted to learn more because we were always told that he walked home from the war. I learned that some men were given a railroad pass, but there was no railroad in Walton County at the time and the nearest stops would have required him to walk at least a hundred miles.

The Fort Delaware Society provided me with details. The term ‘soon paroled’ actually meant sixteen months detention. Samuel was released as part of the 1864 prisoner exchange; his release was due to the doctors’ determination that he was probably going to die anyway. This thankfully also reveals that his brother Joseph was probably in better condition because he remained at Fort Delaware until the end of the war. How difficult it must have been for Sam to leave his brother behind in that horrible place!

Meanwhile, Sam was transported by ship from Delaware to Venus Point at the mouth of the Savannah River. It is unknown if he secured any other means of travel from there, but he may have walked all of those 350 miles with other native sons who were returning home to Walton County.

At home near Shoal River in the summer of 1863, Moses and Jane Walden were grieving for their two sons and wondering if they would ever see them again when the ultimate tragedy took place. As we were told on many occasions, the oldest son Morris was murdered by a band of scalawags. Being the most sensational event in an otherwise ordinary church-going family history, I longed to find more details about this sad tale.

Morris Walden married Susan Winchester Cawthon, daughter of early pioneer William Cawthon. Through networking with other researchers and telling what I knew of the tale to everyone who would listen, a letter that recounted the details of that event was found among the papers of Civil War Florida Governor John Milton.

Morris was allegedly called out of his house one night and shot in front of his family by men who then took livestock and meats from the smokehouse. William Cawthon’s letter of September 15, 1863, recounted the details and named two men who were Union sympathizers. William and three of his sons offered a reward of \$500 for the conviction of those two men. Unfortunately, it appears there was little civil law in Florida during the war and no record remains of any action taken to bring those men to justice.

Morris’s widow Susan lived to be 94 years old and was often asked to retell the tale at family gatherings. It was also said that his father Moses told of his horror at seeing his son shot and how the men lingered in the yard on horseback long enough for him to have gone into the house for his own gun, but he chose to run to his son’s aid instead. *[Continued]*

The story was also told that his murder was avenged by Joseph and Samuel and some of their fellow Confederates when the war was over. It was thought that the gang leader was aware that he was a target but could not wait to get his crops in the ground, so he put on a dress and bonnet to plow his field, thinking to avoid detection. Each man of the posse fired upon him so that no one man could be accused of murder, and the matter was handled by means of frontier justice.

After the war, Joseph married Susan Cawthon's sister, Judah Henrietta, and Samuel married Versanoy Standley from Holmes County. Some of their descendants still live in Walton and Holmes Counties today.

With these oral traditions documented, I continue to find new threads to unravel in my ever expanding search for family ties in the past. The Internet has proven to be an invaluable tool and I look forward each day to finding a new tidbit or treasure.

My Favorite Websites **Part Three - By Wayne Sconiers**

www.geocities.com/Area51/Lair/3680/cw/cw-al.html

This is a directory of Civil War Rosters/Muster Rolls that have been found on the internet. Since only 50-60% of all rosters are on the internet, some units will not be listed.

www.accessgenealogy.com/military/civil/rosters/alabama.htm

Alabama Civil War Rosters and Muster Rolls

www.flgenhisonline.com/counties/walton/walton.htm

Walton County, Florida GenWeb

www.census-online.com/links/FL/1840.html

1840 Census of various counties

content.ancestry.com/Browse/list.aspx?dbid=7605&path=Walton

Ancestry link to 1885 Florida, Walton county census - not free

freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~jmg12/Census/census.html

Various census pages

www.familysearch.org/Eng/Search/frameset_search.asp

Later Day Saints - search for ancestors

www.usgwarchives.net/

US Gen Web Archives - census, wills, deeds, genealogy

boards.ancestry.com/localities.northam.usa.states.florida.counties.walton/mb.ashx

Ancestry.com - message board, Walton County, Florida - free

www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/

Various genealogy information

www.interment.net/data/us/fl/escambia/barranat/index.htm

Barrancas National Cemetery, Escambia County, Florida

mycemeteries.com/USAFL.htm

Links to various cemeteries, list of some cemeteries

www.jerryevansfuneralhome.com/?pagetype=memlist&al pha=R

Obituaries in Walton County, Florida

www.clary-glenn.com/index.cfm

Obituaries in Walton County, Florida

www.worldvitalrecords.com/

Not free

store.ancestry.com/ProductDetail.aspx?p=mfsku4637

Software for family trees

www.legacyfamilytree.com/DownloadLegacy.asp

Software for family trees

www.familysearch.org/eng/default.asp

Software for family trees

genealogy-software-review.toptenreviews.com/

Reviews of all family tree software

www.rootsmagic.com/

Software for family trees

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Walton Relations is a publication of the Walton County Genealogy Society. Wayne Sconiers, President. Distribution is encouraged! For more information or to submit an article, please email its editor, Diane Merkel, at WaltonCountyHeritage@cox.net or call 850-897-4505.