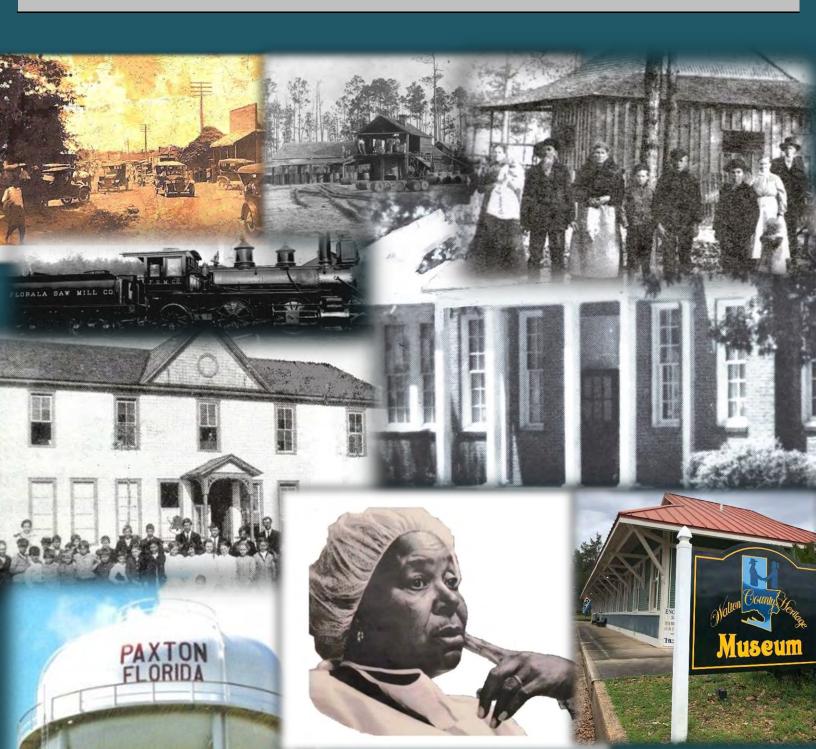


Volume 14, Issue 10

Walton County Heritage Association

September 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. 1140 Circle Drive, DeFuniak Springs, Florida 32435

Phone: 850-401-2060

Website: http://www.waltoncountyheritage.org/#
Email: heritagemuseum@brighthouse.com

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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. Walton County Heritage Museum, with sign painted 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. Florala 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 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.

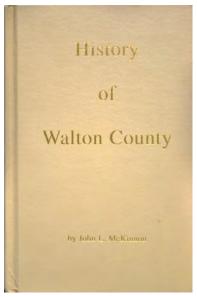
Member Benefits:

- 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



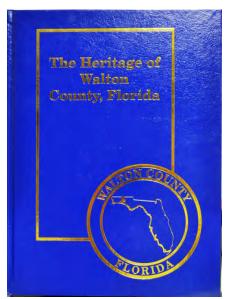
History of Walton County

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;

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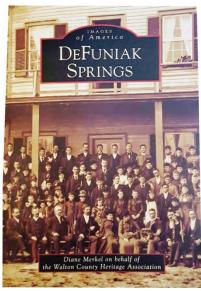
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The Heritage of Walton County, Florida. Item code B13.

Price: (Reduced) \$40.00
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Walton County Heritage Association, Inc.

1140 Circle Drive, DeFuniak Springs, Florida, 32435, Ph. 850-401-2060

Website: http://www.waltoncountyheritage.org
Email: HeritageMuseum@brighthouse.com

ANNUAL MEMBER/SPONSOR APPLICATION 2023

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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 ASSOCIA-TION, 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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We dedicate this page to our sponsors in recognition of their generous support of our mission.

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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.

A Note From the Editor

As previously noted, each month's newsletter will feature a chapter of the Walton County Florida, New History, as they are being written.

We have now completed chapter 3 and accordingly, we are presenting it as this month's newsletter article. As always, in the interest of making our articles as factual as we can to the extent of our knowledge, please let us know of any errors, mistakes, etc. you find in them. Thank you.

Sam Carnley

From WCHA President, Marie Hinson

We have two announcements from the president as follows:

- 1. The September 2023 WCHA board meeting has been canceled.
- 2. The October 2023 meeting will be held on the 28th at Ghentsville Park in Paxton. If you are familiar with the area, go ahead and drive directly there. If you are not so familiar, please meet at 11:00 am at the museum and we will caravan to the park as a group. We are not planning a shared lunch so please bring your own food and drinks.

Thank you.

Sam Carnley

3 The British Period 1763-1783

After acquiring Florida in 1763, Britain decided changes were needed in its governing structure. Believing that halving it would facilitate more efficient administration, they proclaimed it dual territories divided by the Apalachicola River. Designated as East and West Florida, St. Augustine and Pensacola were named as capitals.¹

In the void left by the demise and exodus of indigenous populations of the province, new migrants from the Creek confederations in Alabama and Georgia, moved in. But their numbers remained small, never rising to anywhere near population levels of the aboriginal inhabitants.²

The flight of aboriginals from Mission San Luis de Apalachee to Pensacola in 1704 proved not to be the last move they made. When Spanish officials in Pensacola heard the unwelcome news that British rule would soon be coming to their province, they and the Apalachees and other Indians living there, decided to leave.

In early September 1763, all the Spaniards and Indians in and around Pensacola unwilling to become British subjects boarded ships bound for Veracruz, Mexico where they hoped to make new homes.³ Presumably, this left the province with a much smaller population but open minded enough to wait and see how they fared under the British before deciding whether or not they too should go elsewhere.

The new British governor, George Johnstone, who arrived in Pensacola in 1764 certainly hoped they would stay, because it became his goal to grow the population and increase agricultural development. In order to do that, he recognized the necessity of first wending his way around the hurdles of resolving land ownership claims and making treaties with the remaining Indians to gain their peaceful acceptance of new settlers instead of attacking them.

Only with the offer of plentiful cheap land free from fear of attack by unfriendly Indians as an obstacle to working it would he be able to entice the new farmers and ranchers his province desperately needed to realize his agricultural goals. He also promoted the development of the tremendous potential of timber and naval stores of the province in contributing to the growth of commerce in British West Florida. His abrasive relationship with the military and Board of Trade however, doomed most of his efforts to failure and within three years brought his governorship of West Florida to an end.⁴

Whereas Johnstone served as the first governor of British West Florida, Peter Chester became its last. He served from August 1770 to May 1781. His term ended with the conclusion of the American Revolutionary War in which the defeat of Britain returned Florida to Spain in

the Peace of Paris in 1783.⁵ During Chester's term, the map of West Florida included a bay and a river named after him.

This came about when John Stuart, Superintendent of Indian Affairs in the Southern District under Chester, authorized Joseph Purcell to prepare a map of the Pensacola to St. Augustine Road. On 14 July 1778, Purcell departed Pensacola in the company of an expedition led by David Holmes, Commissary Captain of the expedition ordered by Stuart. In addition to Purcell and Holmes, the party consisted of "a Lieutenant Barnard, Ten White Men and Twentytwo Upper Creek Indians." ⁶

Ostensibly, the expedition began in response to a plea from St. Augustine for help in defending against a feared attack from American Revolutionary War forces. As the expedition marched eastward, it gathered up Creek warriors along the way loyal to the British and on arrival at St. Augustine it expected to have accumulated a force of sufficient strength to counter the supposed American Patriot attack on the East Florida capital.

In Purcell's capacity as cartographer, members of the group likely acquainted with the areas traversed provided him with the names of geographic features and places encountered. That information combined with his own observations and measurement along the way enabled him to compile the data needed for his map.

On 17 July the expedition crossed Yellow Water River, apparently along the Lower Creek Trading Path heading northeast. On the 18th it came to the fork between the previously mentioned path and the Path (northeast) to Tuckabatchee (Upper Creeks). At that point "We left the Trading Road and directed our course towards the crossing place of the Chactahatchie."

After traveling northeast 5 and ½ miles from the fork they came to the "Great Pond," which can only be today's Lake Jackson. At 5 and ½ miles west of Lake Jackson is an area in northeast Okaloosa County between Svea and Laurel Hill. The above referenced Trading path apparently passed through that area.

Continuing 12 and ½ miles east from that point they came to the "Underground Creek," obviously Natural Bridge. The distance between the two on modern road maps is only 7 miles, suggesting Purcell's distance estimates to be imprecise. Next, after trekking 9 and ¼ miles, they crossed "Fishing Creek." That closely matches the distance from Natural Bridge to Limestone Creek on the road map.⁷

Although its distance from the afore mentioned creek is not stated, the map depicts a Camp Creek as joining Limestone Creek on the east at a fork from which a stream runs northeast and joins Pea Creek (River). On the modern map Camp Creek corresponds to Chestnut Creek.

The distance from Fishing Creek to the Choctawhatchee River, which they next crossed on 20 July, is given as 18 and ¼ miles. Limestone Creek crosses section 28 in the northeast corner of Walton County adjacent to the Holmes County west boundary line. The road map gives the distance from Holmes County's west boundary to the east side of the Choctawhatchee River immediately below the Alabama line as 13 miles. Again, Purcell's number is imprecise.

But that distance is given as the travel to "Old Coosada Town on the east side of Chacta Hatchee." It is also the place of "Benjamin Steadham's Settlement where we got a fresh supply of provisions," apparently a trading post. The distance from the river to the settlement is not stated, so that remains unknown.

From the Choctawhatchee the expedition traveled to the Suwannee River during which Holmes noted a number of Creek settlements and other landmarks of no significance to Walton County history. The march took from July 22 to August 15, a total of 25 days.

On 15 August, Purcell and a companion parted company with the expedition in the vicinity of Suwannee River and proceeded directly to St. Augustine to complete charting that section of the road. The main body of the expedition left the road and struck out across country in the direction anticipated to bring them into contact with the Patriot army.

On 23 August, the expedition arrived at the St. Johns River where Holmes learned the rebels (American Patriots forces) had aborted their march on St. Augustine and reversed directions. Holmes continued on to St. Augustine where he met with the governor on Saturday, the 29th.

He remained there until 8 September when he began his return trip to Pensacola but soon encamped a short distance outside the town. On the 10th as he proceeded westward, Purcell and his companion after departing St. Augustine caught up to Holmes and rejoined the expedition on its homeward march.

Choosing not to retrace the path over which they had come, after crossing the Ochlocknee River on the 28th, they turned south along a path that took them to the head of Santa Rosa (Choctawhatchee) Bay on 2 October. There they boarded a boat to Pensacola where they arrived on 5 October 1778.

Shortly thereafter, Purcell had his map printed. Titled "Map of The Road from Pensacola to St. Augustine, 1778," it included many West Florida landmarks recognizable today in Walton and adjoining counties. They are Pensacola, Pensacola Bay, Mount Pleasant, Yellow Water River, Santa Rosa Island, and Santa Rosa Inlet (East Pass), which are fully or partially located in present-day counties west of Walton. Less recognizable are Chester Bay and River, named for Governor Chester as previously noted. Today they are known as East Bay and Yellow River.

Santa Rosa Island and Santa Rosa Bay (Choctawhatchee Bay), are partially located in Walton County. The Santa Rosa name of those places possibly originated from the one Ayala gave the Choctawhatchee River in 1693 as noted in chapter 2. Chactaw (Chacato) Hatchee (Choctawhatchee) River is partly in Walton, and Pea Creek (Pea River) is a tributary of Choctawhatchee River in Alabama a little north of the Florida state line in Holmes County. There is also a Pea Creek near Eufaula, in Barbour County, Alabama, but it is located too far north to appear on the Purcell map.

Certain features in what is now the north part of Walton County appear on the map for the first time in recorded history. They include Great Pond and Underground Creek, aka Lake Jackson and Natural Bridge Creek. Fishing and Camp Creeks represent those of Limestone and Chestnut. This is quite possibly the first appearance in recorded history for Fishing/Limestone Creek also.

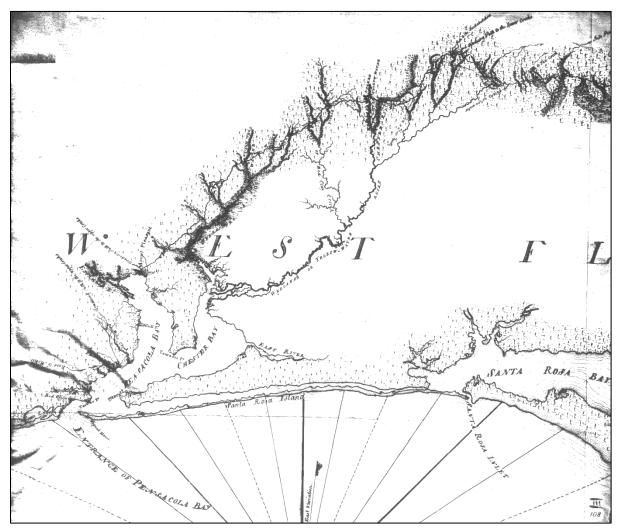
A Camp Creek appears on modern day maps of Holmes County, but it is not configured with another stream as is the one of that name appearing on the Stuart-Purcell map. The appearance of the creek on this map may well be its second historical reference, with its first being in 1693 as noted in the journals of the Ayala expedition of that year. Could its name on the Stuart-Purcell map be associated with Ayala camping there?

The journal of David Holmes and the Stuart-Purcell map of 1778 document a third expedition over or near Camp/Chestnut Creek, for which there is mounting evidence it is where Ayala camped some 330 years ago.

Purcell's map is of historical importance in that it documents a space of time for which few other records of Walton County are known to exist. The period during which Purcell prepared his map proved timely because if he had waited 3 years later, it would not have been possible for him to do so.

In 1779, just one year after Purcell published his map, Spain declared war on Britain, not as an ally of the Americans, but in the sense of "the enemy of my enemy is my friend." In May of 1781, a Spanish army from Louisiana marched into the poorly defended province of Pensacola, forcing the British garrison there to surrender. The following October, General George Washington's Continental Army forced the surrender of Lord Charles Cornwallis in Virginia, bringing to an end the Revolutionary War. The Treaty of Paris, signed by the former adversaries in 1783, returned Florida to Spanish rule.⁸

Stuart-Purcell MapPensacola Plate⁹

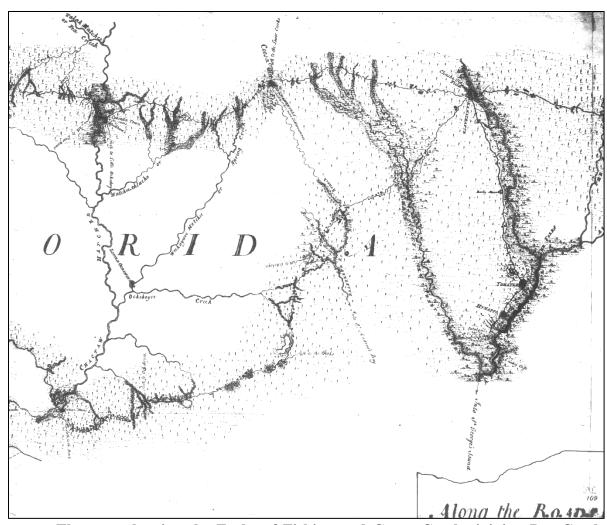


The map showing the seven circled locations in northeastern Walton County was excerpted from the upper right corner of this map.

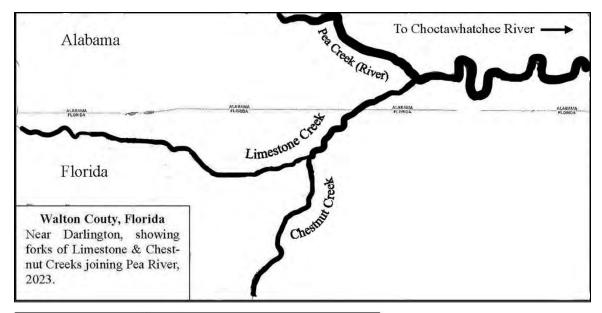


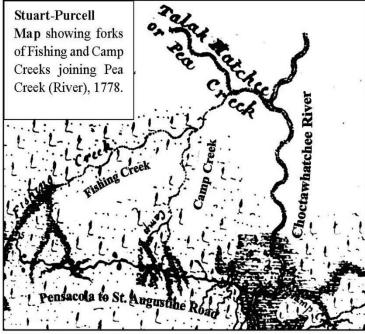
1. Path to the Tuckabatchee, 2. Trading Path to the Lower Creeks, 3. Great Pond (Lake Jackson), 4. Path to Yellow Water (Yellow River), 5. Underground Creek (Natural Bridge Creek), 6. Path to Pea Creek (Pea River), 7. Into Pea Creek (Pea River). Source: Stuart-Purcell Map, Northeast Quadrant, Pensacola Plate, West Florida.

Stuart-Purcell Map Choctawhatchee River Plate¹⁰



The map showing the Forks of Fishing and Camp Creeks joining Pea Creek (River) is an excerpt from the top left corner of this map.





These two maps compare tributaries of Pea Creek (River) between 1778 and 2023. The one of 1778 is excerpted from the Stuart-Purcell Map of the Pensacola to St. Augustine Road charted by Joseph Purcell during the period of 14 July to 5 October, 1778.

The road approximated the path followed by at least two earlier expeditions; the one of Ayala in 1693 and later by General Andrew Jackson in 1818.

The comparison strongly indicates that Fishing and Camp Creeks on the Stuart-Purcell map are the same as Limestone and Chestnut Creeks on the 2023 map, respectively. The distance from fishing Creek to Old Coosada Town east of Choctawhatchee River on the Stuart-Purcell map is cited as $18^{1/4}$ miles.

Considering that Ayala calculated the distance from the west side of the Chocta-whatchee River to Chestnut Creek as approx. 13 miles, which is shorter than the distance between the two points cited by Stuart-Purcell, the two sources agree closely enough to confirm Chestnut Creek as the site of the 1693 encampment. Lending further support to that contention is that the Stuart-Purcell Map places the Creek in the path it is reasonably certain the Ayala expedition followed as documented in expedition journals.

1 British Florida Heritage Trail,

https://files.floridados.gov/media/694158/smallflorida british heritage trail pdf.pdf

² Hann, John H. *Apalachee, The Land between the Rivers,* (University Presses of Florida, 15 NW 15th Street, Gainesville, Fl. 1988), 264-265.

³ Ibid, 314-315.

⁴ Fabel, R. F. A. (1975) "Governor George Johnstone of British West Florida," Florida Historical Quarterly: Vol. 54: No. 4, Article 8. P.11-12, Available at: https://stars.library.ucf.edu/fhq/vol54/iss4/8

⁵ Peter Chester, third governor of the province of British West Florida under British dominion, 1770-1781. July 25, 1925. OCLC 1857630.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peter Chester (governor)#:~:text=Peter%20Ches-

ter%20(1720%E2%80%931799),1770%20until%209%20May%201781.&text=Chester%20fo-

cused%20on%20agricultural%20development%20in%20the%20Lower%20Mississippi%20Valley.

⁶ Jones, Frank S., History of Decatur County Georgia, Including the Journal of an Expedition by David Holmes, (The Reprint Company, Publishers, Reprinted 1980 with permission), 56-74.

⁷ Chestnut Creek, Walton County Florida, Google Maps,

https://www.google.com/maps/place/Chestnut+Creek/@30.9779234,-

86.0723129,14.25z/data=!4m6!3m5!1s0x889230e5aadd346b:0x27a36cf8f64c5767!8m2!3d30.9662366!4d-86.0556189!16s%2Fg%2F11bw7kw5 g?entry=ttu

⁸ British Florida Heritage Trail, p.6.

https://files.floridados.gov/media/694158/smallflorida british heritage trail pdf.pdf

⁹ Boyd, Mark F., A Map of, the Road from Pensacola to St. Augustine, 1778 (with nine plates) https://stars.library.ucf.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1913&context=fhq

¹⁰ Ibid.