

February Meeting

Tuesday, February 23, 2010

3:00 p.m.

The Thomas E. McMillan Museum

The Program: World War I in Alabama

Our guest speaker, Dr. Martin T. Olliff, is the editor of a book of essays on Alabama during the first world war, The Great War in the Heart of Dixie: Alabama During World War I.

An Associate Professor of History at Troy University's Dothan Campus, Dr. Olliff is also the director of the Archives of Wire-



grass History and Culture, located in Dothan.

His articles have appeared in Essays in Business and Economic History; Alabama Review; Provenance: Journal of the Society of Georgia Archivists; and Agricultural History.

tural History

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The Next Meeting

March 23, 2010

Lou Vickery, author of The Rise of . . ., the recently published history of the Poarch Band of Creek Indians, will be the guest speaker.

A Reminder

It is now time to pay dues for the coming year.

- ◆ \$25.00/person,
- ◆ \$35.00/two family members
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Museum Building

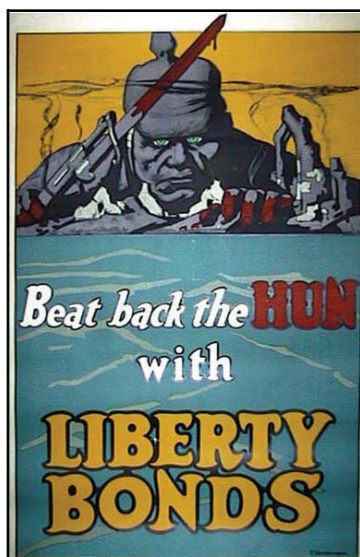
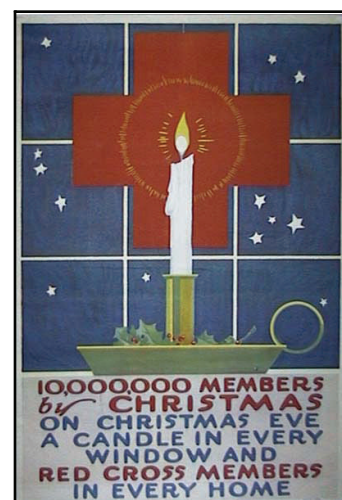
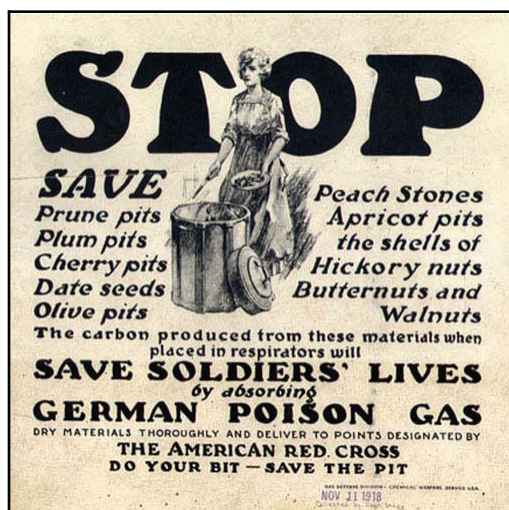
Volume 37, Number 2

February 2010

World War I Posters

The Alabama Department of Archives and History's World War I Unit for Teacher Resources notes "Alabama contributed 74,000 draftees to the American forces in World War I, in addition to whole units of the state's National Guard which were federalized soon after war was declared. Among these was the Fourth Alabama which became part of the famed Forty-second "Rainbow Division." Losses in France included 2,401 Alabamians killed in action; another 3,861 of the state's soldiers died from wounds or disease suffered in service. . .

"Maintaining support on the home front in the face of such losses prompted extensive propaganda efforts on the part of governmental agencies. Posters lauding the virtues of those who supported the war at home and damning the atrocities of the German "Huns" abroad were everywhere apparent. Community public programs were held to entertain and enlighten and to sell the audiences on "Liberty Bonds," Red Cross volunteerism, and a host of other war effort-related programs" ("Teacher Resources for Alabama in World War I," *Lesson 5: Signing Up for Action and Sustaining Morale* <<http://www.archives.state.al.us/teacher/ww1/lesson5/index.html>>.



Pictures of the Posters are courtesy of the Alabama Department of Archives and History. The material is found under the heading "Using Primary Sources in the Classroom: World War I." The website address is <<http://www.archives.state.al.us/teacher/ww1/>>.

World War I Posters (continued)



“When America went to war in 1917, the United States government attempted to mobilize all aspects of society in support of the effort. Patriotic propaganda on the home front combined with economic controls over essential resources to bring government into the lives of citizens to an unprecedented extent. Conservation, along with increased production of foodstuffs, was urged upon Americans, including Alabamians, as the surest means of defeating the enemies of democracy. Food prices were set and home "Victory Gardens" were encouraged by the government intent on supplying Allied troops even as manpower was siphoned off the farms to fill the ranks of the military and industry. Women and children of both races were exhorted to enlist to do battle for the cause on the home front” (from Lesson 4, From the Home Front, “Food Will Win the War” on the Alabama Department of Archives and History website, <http://www.archives.state.al.us/teacher/ww1/lesson4/index.html>).

Wartime Alabama



Wartime Alabama

“Young men aboard a train painted with a message for Kaiser Wilhelm II in Conecuh County, southern Alabama, during World War I.”

Pictures and captions are from the article “World War I in Alabama,” [Encyclopedia of Alabama](http://www.encyclopediaofalabama.org). This article and the accompanying pictures can be found at

<<http://www.encyclopediaofalabama.org/face/Article.jsp?id=h-1545>>.



Ohio Boys at Camp Sheridan

“The Thirty-seventh Ohio Division, known as the ‘Ohio boys,’ trained at Camp Sheridan near Montgomery during World War I, improving business for local merchants.”

(continued on page 4)

Wartime Alabama (continued)

(continued from page 3)

World War I Victory Parade in Downtown Montgomery, Alabama 1919

The soldiers are marching past the Exchange Hotel.

Picture and caption from the website of the Alabama Department of Archives and History

<http://216.226.178.196/cdm4/item_viewer.php?CISOROOT=/photo&CISOPTR=4270>.

All other pictures and captions are from the article "World War I in Alabama," Encyclopedia of Alabama. This article and the accompanying pictures can be found at

<<http://www.encyclopediainalabama.org/face/Article.jsp?id=h-1545>>



Red Cross Headquarters in Montgomery, 1918

"The Red Cross was a large part of Alabama's homefront World War I effort. The headquarters here, with two nurse volunteers standing in front, displays the flags of the Allies in the conflict, including that of the United States, Great Britain, and France."



Ohio Boys at Camp Sheridan

"The 'Ohio boys,' members of the Thirty-seventh Ohio 'Buckeye' Division, awaiting a ferry at Camp Sheridan near Montgomery during World War I."



Montgomery Victory Parade 1919

"Montgomery celebrated the return of Alabama troops and victory in World War I with a parade in May 1919."

A February Surprise



Pictures by Paul Merritt



Matilda's Windmill: A Postscript to the Story of William and Matilda



Last Month's issue of the newsletter carried the story of William and Matilda. Although the log house that William built for Matilda no longer exists, there still exists a concrete symbol of her and of the love story of these two—the windmill pictured on the left.

According to historical society member Don Sales, who is a descendent of Matilda and William, Matilda had always wanted a windmill and William had one built for her and placed in the yard of their log house.

At Matilda's death, a nephew, Jim Boutwell, inherited her house. When, after living many years in the log house, he decided he needed to move closer to town, he had the windmill disassembled and taken to the Traveler's Rest cemetery north of Flomaton where Matilda is buried. The reassembled windmill is still there near her grave.

Mondays in the Alabama Room



Come join this group who are meeting in the Alabama Room on Mondays at 10:00 to file, inventory, catalog, in general clean-up and organize.

Come and stay as long as you can, an hour or longer.

From the left, those pictured are Jerry Simmons, Jo and Robin Brewton, Jacque Stone, Ranelle and Paul Merritt, Susan Blair, Don Sales, and Alan Robinson. Barbara Page, not pictured, joined the group this last Monday. Catherine Fountain, not pictured has also been to the Mondays at the Alabama Room.

ECHS Scholarship Awarded

ECHS Scholarship Recipient

Terry Walker Jr., a native of Brewton and graduate of T. R. Miller High School is furthering his education at Jefferson Davis Community College with the assistance of a scholarship from the Escambia County Historical Society.

Terry graduated from JDCC in the spring of 2009. However, he is attending JDCC this fall semester to add a social sciences curriculum to his transcripts. Terry hopes to eventually transfer to UWF.

Terry is the son of Jean Walker who works at the Alabama Cooperative Extension Service and the late Terry Walker Sr..



Jerry Simmons Congratulates Terry Walker

Through Jerry's guidance while he was President of ECHS, the society established the scholarship fund.

Our Business Members

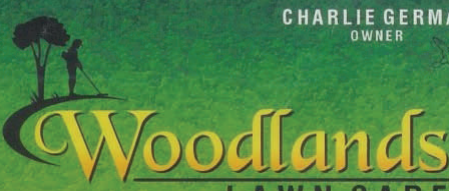
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The ECHS *Journal* Section

A Piece of Hidden History

The following article by Ryan Carter is reprinted, with permission, from the Atmore Magazine. It concerns the recovery of a small cemetery which is the burial place of William Wallace.

Wallace is known as the "father of log ditches in south Alabama and northwest Florida," credited with having built the first log ditch in Santa Rosa County, Florida in 1873 (Annie C. Waters, History of Escambia County, Alabama, p. 204).

The communities of Wallace in Escambia County, Alabama, and Wallace in Santa Rosa County, Florida, both named for William Wallace, still exist.

Confederate Officer's Resting Place Brought to Life

By Ryan Carter

Pieces of our history can turn up anywhere.

Members of the 56th Alabama Calvary Regiment fought in northern Mississippi. The regiment was made up of young men from southwest Alabama and northwest Florida.

In the later years of the Civil War, the 56th served in Georgia fighting in the battle of Atlanta and trying unsuccessfully to stop Sherman's march to the sea and his eventual taking of Savannah.

One of the soldiers in the 56th was William Wallace. In his book Shadows and Dust Volume II: More Stories from the Confederate South, Kevin McKinley tells of Wallace's time in the confederate army near the end of the war and his return to southwest Alabama. The following is an excerpt from his book:

The unit surrendered with General Joseph E. Johnston's forces at Greensboro, NC on April 26, 1865 with 150 men. Years later, in 1885, former Private C.H. Crittenden of the 56th compiled a muster of the men present when Gen. Johnston surrendered to Sherman. Crittenden's list included Wallace, who is listed as a 2nd Lieutenant at war's end.



Grave Site After Area Cleared and Grave Stones Erected

William Wallace returned to the southwest Alabama area and moved to Santa Rosa County, Florida, where he is listed as serving as a state legislator in 1879. Wallace married Nancy Minerva Jemigan after returning from the war. Wallace was a man of ingenuity, and he is credited with having been the originator of the process of ditching water many miles to move timber from the woods to saw mills.

In his book, McKinley says family descendants doubt Wal-

lace was as prolific in this area as local history gives him credit, but, at the very least, he was one of the first to use the method of transporting logs by way of a flume to the saw mills.

Now that we know a little about William Wallace, this is where our story begins.

As you travel from Highway 21 out Robinsonville Road, before you get to the church and off in a cotton field, there's a cluster of tall trees. Buried beneath the trees and undergrowth, there's a small cemetery that, although not forgotten, wasn't visited or cared for, for many years. That changed recently.

Kevin and a small group went to the site on Saturday, November 14, 2009, and cleared much of the undergrowth.

The property is owned by Davis Findley who lives in Daphne. He gave the group permission to clean the cemetery.

Kevin said when they first arrived at the site, they could barely see the grave markers because of the growth. Helping to establish a timeline, Kevin talked with folks fa-

miliar with the site.

"Gary Helton said he remembers a funeral there in the 1950s, and Davis Findley recalled there was a body ex-



The Grave Site Before Clearing

This picture shows the thick undergrowth which was cleared to reveal the graves of William Wallace and members of his family.

(Continued on page 9)

The ECHS *Journal* Section

A Piece of Hidden History (continued)

(Continued from page 8)

homed in the 40s or 50s,” Kevin said. However, Kevin is certain the caretakers of the cemetery have all died, leaving the cemetery to nature’s mercy for many years.

One of the markers bears the name William Wallace. Those cleaning the site believe there are at least seven people buried there but think there could be more with the markers and gravesites being lost over the years. It’s believed that at the time of his death, Wallace owned the land surrounding the cemetery.

Buddy Mitchell of Brewton has a connection with Wallace. While researching family history, Buddy discovered an ancestor was married to William Wallace. According to a 1902 letter published in the Standard Gauge, an early Escambia County (Ala.) newspaper, Wallace was “unfortunate” in marriage. He lost his first two wives and had no children until he married Nancy Minerva Jernigan, the daughter of Mr. Joseph Jernigan.

His third wife is buried next to him at the site in Robinsonville.

According to a profile of William Wallace put together by Buddy Mitchell, Wallace established a sawmill operation on the Escambia River in the early 1860s. The Santa Rosa community which was home to the mill is called the Wallace Community. The Wallace Community in Alabama is also named for him.

In his profile of Wallace, Buddy documents the sawmill operation was destroyed by confederate forces as part of a scorched earth policy ordered by General Braxton Bragg. The following is an excerpt from Buddy’s profile:



Helping Clear the Site

From the left: Ben Black, Jeff Ross, Kevin McKinley, Sam Cotita, Stephen Cotita, Jeff Grenier, Allen Powell, and the dog, Mau.

“I desire you to leave nothing the enemy can use: burn all from Fort McRee to the junction with Mobile Road. Safe the guns, and if necessary destroy your gunboats and all other boats. They might be used against us. Destroy all machinery, public and private, which could be useful to the enemy; especially disable the sawmills in and around the bay and burn the lumber. Break up the railroad from Pensacola to the Junction, carrying the iron up to a safe place.”

General Samuel Jones

After the war, Wallace re-established his sawmill operations and formed a partnership with John T. Norris. Their company, Wallace & Norris, built Wallace Lake in western Santa Rosa County probably to use as a holding pond and to supply water for their log flumes.

According to an article in A Sawmill Scrapbook, Volume II, the log ditches pioneered by Wallace covered some 30 miles.

According to his grave marker, Wallace died in March 14, 1902.

Thanks to the efforts of those who care enough about history, you can get to his final resting place. The thick underbrush has been removed and several of the fallen trees are gone. Kevin said the group is planning another cleaning day soon. As you can tell from the picture taken recently at the site and from the profiles and stories put together by Kevin and Buddy, much work went into cleaning the cemetery and to preserving the

history of those resting there.



Grave Marker for William Wallace

The ECHS *Journal* Section

Wallace, Escambia County, Alabama

The following article is reprinted with permission from Pictorial History Volume II- "Flomaton and Surrounding Area."

Wallace-A Shadow of What Was

Wallace, Alabama, originally named Florence, was settled in the mid-1800s but it was not until 1880 that it became a flourishing town. Wallace, Alabama, is one of two settlements in the area named for a Major Wallace; the second one is in Santa Rosa County, Florida, between Jay and Milton.

The major was a timber/sawmill man and is credited for devising the first log ditches in south Alabama and north-west Florida. Log ditches were dug by manpower three to four feet deep, and often the sides were stabilized with lumber made from one of the many sawmills in the region. Most of the time, they were fed by dammed-up small streams and primarily used to straighten out their curves to float logs to a sawmill, or to float squared-off timbers from a mill to the river. From there, they were lashed together in "booms" and floated downriver to Pensacola.

When the railroad was built through Wallace, the population increased. There were naval stores operations (turpentine) in the vicinity and jobs were plentiful, enough for a growing little town. Brothers Charles and Douglas Sowell were cattle-men as well as businessmen,

Reporting from Wallace in 1883

(Wallace, Ala., Dec. 26, 1883) Be it known that this place is now Wallace, a post office of that name having been recently established with Mr. C.R. COCKRAN, postmaster.

Miriamville is now no more...

Christmas has come and gone, with all its pleasures and follies. Egg nog flowed freely in spite of prohibition. We had a Christmas tree for the little folks, which was loaded with gifts of various kinds and descriptions, after the distribution of presents, the floor was cleared and the young people spent a delightful evening, tripping the lights fantastic... -"More Anon"

Mr. J.T. McGowan is elected town clerk and Mr. Allen JOHNSON, marshal.

Newspaper Transcriptions From The Banner, Brewton, Alabama Transcribed by Larry E. Caver, Jr. (2003). recorded on the website GenealogyBuff.com located at <<http://www.genealogybuff.com/al/al-escambia-extracts1.htm>

with Douglas operating a grist mill and surveying for the Sullivan Timber Company.

There were several stores, churches, a depot, a cotton gin, and a doctor in town until the timber business began winding down. Today, according to the History of Escambia County, Alabama, "Wallace is only a shadow of its former self."



Wallace School 1925

Top, L:-R: Wheeler McDavid, Lee Elder, Willie Elder, Gertrude Hines (holding flowers), Clyde Webb (boy with back to wall), Minerva McDavid, Mae Belle Hines, Mammie Elder, Lucy Elder, Rowena Elder; Bottom: Teacher, Miss Carrie McPhal, Clyde Owens, Joe McDavid, Mallory McDavid, Drew Elder, Viola Elder, Eugene Hines, Bertha Hines, Agnes Elder, Lena Cardwell .

The ECHS *Journal* Section

Wagon Train to Missouri

This is the third segment taken verbatim from the diary of William Campbell, who travelled by wagon train from Virginia to Missouri. Mr. Campbell was the brother of the writer's direct ancestor. Last month we left them on August 27, 1829 just as they are arriving at Charleston, Virginia (now West Virginia).

August 27, 1829 Charleston is a town about as large as Lexington, Va. It is built on a bottom along the Kanawha River. One street is laid off along the margin of the river, scarcely leaving room for a row of houses between the street and river; here all the business is done. The other street has but few houses on it; the beauty of the town is very much diminished by the row of houses on the bank. The houses are principally of wood, some brick.

August 28, 1829. Strayed about the town without an acquaintance and all for the feeling of a stranger in a strange place.

Sept. 1, 2, 3, and 4, 1829. We waited patiently for the arrival of our wagons. In the meantime I became acquainted with a number of citizens with whom I was well pleased.

Sept 5, 1829. Our wagons arrived and we put 5000 pounds out of them into a keel boat to go by water, and they lay one day at Daniel Ruffners.

Sept 7, 1829. We started with one whole party for Missouri; crossed in the horse boat. Our party consisted of 55 persons, 20 horses, 10 dogs and 4 cows.

On of our carriage horses had become very lame in Charlestown and we had to leave it with Mr. Calhoon. We took a horse out to supply his place, which did most wretchedly. We took another and which performed very well.

We encamped that night near the Kanawha River, 14 miles below Charleston. Our tent was carelessly prepared and we suffered much from the cold.

Sept 8 1929. Made an early start; left the river. Crossed the Cole Mountain, a small bridge, roads tolerable and encamped at two fine springs near Mud River, a branch of Guyandotte.

One route lay through Tay's Valley; a fine country. A great profusion of peaches were found all along the road from Greenbrier, Va to Greenup, Kentucky. Wears well on peach pies etc.

Sept 9, 1829. Proceeded on our journey; passed through Barboursville the country town of Cabell Co., Va. It is a small village of 15 dwelling. Crossed Mud River and drove down Guyandotte Valley to its mouth; we passed through Guyandotte, a mall handsome village.

We had great difficulty and delay in crossing the mouth of Guyandotte and driving up its steep banks. The Ohio at this point is a noticeable stream, and presents a view of several miles on the opposite side.

Lawrence County, Ohio extends for many miles. It appears to be in a poor broken country.

We proceeded down the Ohio River and encamped below the mouth of Twelve Pole, opposite to the village of Burlington, the capital of Lawrence County. It is a small village of 15 houses handsomely situated and badly built.

Between the Guyandotte and Big Sandy 12 miles in Cabell Co. Va. The Ohio bottoms and from 3/4 to 1 1/2 miles wide, a very fine body of land. The houses are indifferent. There are some iron works in this country. The roads were found excellent, except the mouths of the streams where the banks were very steep. We made 24 miles today.

Sept 10, 1829. Had great difficulty ferrying the mouth of Big Sandy. The ferry and ford filled with quick sands and the banks almost impossible for heavy loaded wagons.

We here left the State of Virginia and entered Greenup County, Kentucky, went down the river, roads excessively bad, had a heavy gust of rain in the evening.

Passed a large Steam Iron Furnace just erected, and encamped at Powell's 16 miles. Greenup is a rough, broken country. Land's poor except a few bottoms.

Sept. 11, 1829. Passed by Greenup burg, Kentucky, a handsome little village on a bottom of the Ohio River. The beautiful new Steam Boat Virginia came sailing majestically down the Ohio River. Mr. Brother (Charles Fenelon Campbell) took passage on her for Ripley, Ohio. We left the Ohio River, crossed Little Sandy at a forge.

Crossed Tiger Mountain, went up Tiger Creek and its branch White Oak; 18 miles to Pettit's.

Sept 12, 1829. Passed by the spot where two Negro traders had been murdered by their chained slaves two or three weeks before. The torn fragments of their dress were scattered about, the bushes beat down, the grass and leaves torn up, and other marks of a violent contest. 7 of the Negroes are in jail and 6 will hang.

We crossed a steep mountain, the dividing line between Greenup and Lewis counties, came down the valley of Montgomery's creek and again came to the Ohio River. Traveled several miles down the river to Vanceburg, a small, trifling village on the Ohio River of 14 houses. Saw the steam boat packet going down the river. We encamped 1/2 mile above the town near some salt furnaces which make about 100 bushels per day.

Sept 13, 1829. It being Sunday, we laid by to rest man and horses; rain in the morning. Crossed the river in a skiff and took a walk in the great free State of Ohio.

To be continued.

ECHOES
THE NEWSLETTER FOR
THE ESCAMBIA COUNTY
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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ECHOES, The newsletter for the Escambia County Historical Society, a 501 (c) (3) corporation, is published monthly except November. Comments are welcome. You may email the Society at escohis@escohis.org or call 251-809-1528.

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