

June Meeting

Tuesday, June 22 , 2010

3:00 p. m.

The Thomas E. McMillan Museum

The Program: A Presentation on Early Settlers in Conecuh and Escambia Counties by Charles Jackson

Today's speaker is a 1970 graduate of Jefferson Davis Community College, before receiving BS degrees in Economics and Political Science from the University of West Florida in 1972 – all prior to joining the U.S. Marine Corps. He did his post-graduate studies at the Naval War College (1995-1996).

His distinguished military career spans more than 34 years (14 years active duty – and 20 years service in the Marine Corps Reserve). He is a Combat Veteran of Desert Storm (1991), Somalia (1994), Saudi Arabia (1998), Iraq (2003), and Afghanistan (2005).

Jackson was promoted to the rank of Marine Corps Colonel in 1994, before being



Pictured with his replacement upon his retirement and the head of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Charles is on the right.

assigned the Chief of Staff for Marine Forces Pacific (2000-2001) at Pearl Harbor, HI; which immediately followed his overseas assignment as the Director of Intelligence for Southwest Asia in 1998.

Jackson served his final four years as a Senior Intelligence Officer at the Pentagon in Washington - before retiring for the

third time in Dec-2005.

He currently serves as an independent contractor for the Defense Intelligence Agency and Central Intelligence Agency, specializing in Cultural Intelligence Training matters and Trans-National Terrorism.

He was awarded the Defense Legion of Merit Medal for his Post-911 service in Washington with the Joint Chiefs of Staff; and after being recalled to active duty from

(Continued on page 2)

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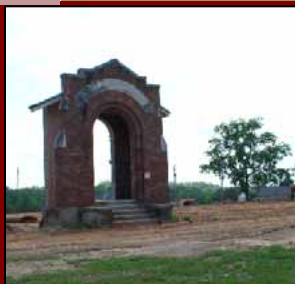
The Next Meeting Tuesday, July 27, 2010

Program: TBA

A Reminder

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

- ◆ \$25.00/person,
- ◆ \$35.00/two family members
- ◆ \$250.00/person for Lifetime Members
- ◆ \$50.00/year business (business card size)



Remains of Former Evergreen High School

Volume 37, Number 6

June 2010

The Program (continued)

retired status twice, he received Bronze Star Medals for his service in both Iraq and Afghanistan Counter-Insurgency operations.

Charles is now semi-retired and lives here in the Brewton area. He is married to his wife of 39 years,

Cindy Jackson, and they have two married daughters and five grandchildren. The Jackson's are active throughout Escambia County - serving actively with several civic, educational, and religious service organizations.

News and Announcements

May Creek Church Celebrates 150 Years

The church, located on Ridge Road, will celebrate its 150th anniversary Sunday, May 30, with special services and dinner on the grounds.

The congregation has planned a day filled with friendship and memories for those who attend Sunday. After a "dinner on the ground," the afternoon will be filled with special singing by The McKissacks.

Note, a feature article on May Creek Church is in the Journal Section of this issue of the newsletter.

Program Announcement for the Jay Historical Society for July 10, 2010

Action of 2nd Maine Cavalry in Bagdad

Historian and Marine Captain David Kummer will present the history of the 2nd Maine Cavalry's action in the Bagdad area during the Civil War. Led by Medal of Honor winner Lt. Col. Andrew Barkley Spurling, the 2nd Maine was responsible for much of the Union success in the Panhandle area, and fought in many important Civil War battles.

Captain Kummer is currently posted in Pensacola and will soon assume a post at West Point, where he will teach history. He has been active in many community projects during his time in our area. Captain Kummer researched and wrote the grant that enabled the erection of the State Historical Marker at the Thompson House.

The lecture will be held on July 10, 2010 (second Saturday) at the Bagdad Museum, 4512 Church Street, commencing at 10:00 a.m. A question and answer session and refreshments will follow. There is no cost and all are welcome. For additional information, call 850-983-7918

Art Exhibit for Month of June at the Dragonfly Gallery

From Joan Baxley of Milton we have this announcement:

"Jim Berry, who has drawn the beautiful pen and ink prints of Bagdad Historical Houses and other art work, has an exhibition for the month of June at the Dragonfly Gallery. The hours are Tuesday-Sat.--10:00-4:00, with a reception for him on Thurs., June 17 from 5:00-7:00.

"I thought you would be interested in this. Please help 'spread the word' for this artist who has always been a friend of Bagdad."

Blueberry Festival Set for Saturday, June 19, 2010



This announcement of Brewton's plans for the Great Brewton Homecoming as part of the Blueberry Festival:

Join us in celebrating the Great Alabama Homecoming in Burnt Corn Creek Park with original arts and crafts, live entertainment, an antique car show, a motorcycle show and ride, a children's section, blueberries, blueberry bushes, cookbooks, T-shirts, and a food court with blueberry ice cream.

To learn more, call 251-867-3224 or visit www.AlabamaBlueberryFestival.com.

Note: Material on the awarding of an Historic Marker by the Alabama Bureau of Tourism to the Bank of Brewton as well as a ceremony honoring Brewton's namesake are contained in this newsletter.

Snapshots of the May Meeting

Pictures of the May Meeting by Ann Biggs-Williams



Snapshots of the Trip to the Arcadia Mill Site



**Pictures of the ECHS
“Mondays at the Mu-
seum” visit to the site
of the Arcadia Mill
Complex are by Tom
McMillan.**



Activities for the Great Brewton Homecoming



The Alabama Board of Tourism in celebration of the Year of the Small Town is awarding an historic marker to the Bank of Brewton. The marker will be revealed at the Blueberry Festival on June 19, 2010.

The text of the marker reads:

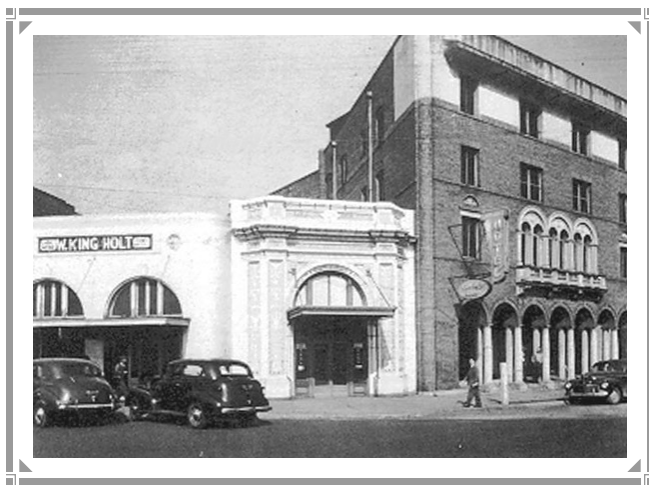
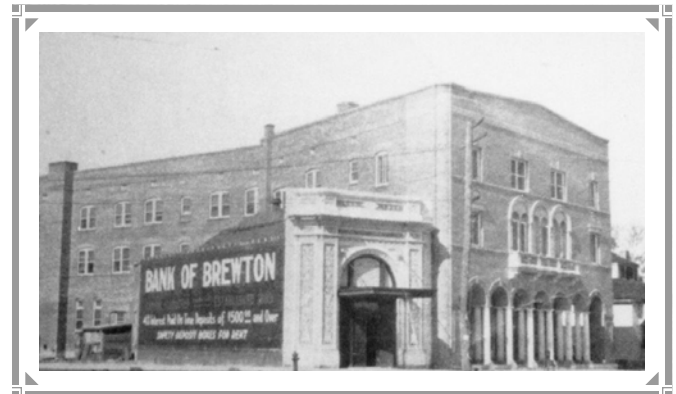
“Recognized as “Alabama's Oldest Bank,” the Bank of Brewton opened for business on Monday, January 7, 1889. Brewton, Alabama was a prosperous town in the late 1800s. A local resident, Charles Sowell, participated in the flourishing times. A native of Monroe County, Alabama and a wounded veteran of the Civil War, Sowell settled in Brewton.

”After a brief stint as a railroad station agent, he began a timber industry that produced a sizeable fortune. In 1888 Sowell commented, “If I take all of my gold and silver and put it on a wagon, two mules could not pull it. We need a bank.” Sowell started organizing the bank that would be the first bank in Escambia County, Alabama and the first bank between Mobile and Montgomery.

“The Bank of Brewton was initially a private bank in 1889, but received a state charter in 1891. Its original location was a few doors from this spot. In 1912 the bank moved into a building at this site, acquired an adjacent building known as the Lovelace Hotel in 1957 and constructed a new building in its place in 1964.

“The Bank of Brewton had only 11 presidents in the first 119 years of its existence. The quality of labor of its early leaders and the support of local citizens is what has established the historic value of the institution.”

Pictured are the Bank of Brewton from around 1912 on the right and from 1944 on the bottom. Pictures courtesy of Lydia Grimes.

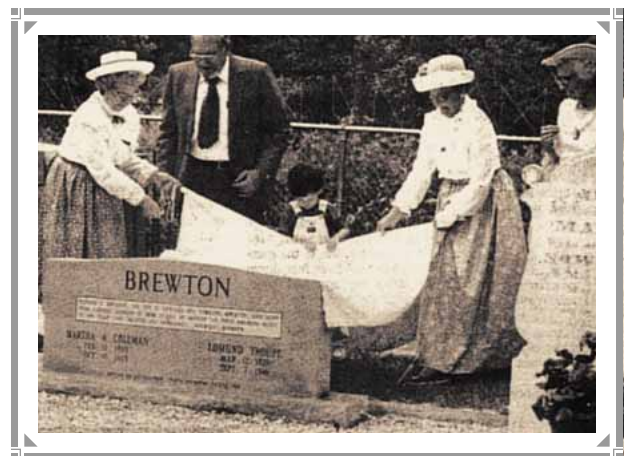


Ceremony to Honor T. E. Brewton

Part of the Blueberry Festival activities will be a ceremony to honor T. E. Brewton, after whom Brewton is named.

ECHS members, Jo and Robin Brewton (Robin is a descendant of the T. E. Brewton family) will participate.

The picture at the right shows an earlier ceremony honoring T. E. Brewton at the grave in Pilgrims' Rest Cemetery in Alco.



Our Business Members

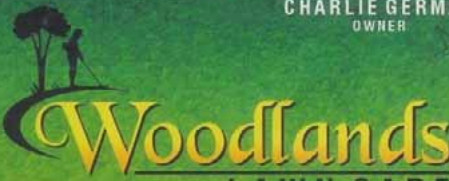
Please patronize our business members. Be sure to tell them you appreciate their support of the Escambia County Historical Society!

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The ECHS *Journal* Section

May Creek Church

Background and History

This article by Lydia Grimes was posted at the website brewtonstandard.com on May 22, 2010.

"The roots of May Creek United Methodist Church date back many years. Many current members have long-time family connections to the church,

"We have had homecoming at the church for lots of years,' church member Donald Dawkins said. 'We all have good memories of growing up and attending church here.'

"For Dawkins and fellow church members Gary and Juanita Dawkins, Roy and Elizabeth Burnham and Ralph Burnham, memories of the church have been passed down through the years.

"Some of us know of a time when the church also served as a school,' Dawkins said. 'In fact school was taught here up until 1924, not only for children but adults were also schooled here.'

"Some members even remember a time when there was no electricity and lamps were carefully lighted for services.

"Methodist roots at May Creek go back many years, and legal papers have not been found to determine its beginnings, but it is thought that Elijah Burnham, Mr. Daniels, Mr. Simmons and Salom Evans were early organizers. The first services were held in "brush arbors" as with most early churches, according to church records.

"The first church building at May Creek was of logs and was built in 1860, before the Civil War. It was built near May Creek as most communities were built along the rivers and streams to have access to water. Papers telling the history of the church said that the building was also used as a school. Benches were built along the walls

for students.

"In the mid 1860s, a new family came to the area. William and Archibald Douglas and their families moved in nearby, and Douglasville was established.

"Later they practiced a form of worship called Sunday school. It was introduced by the Douglas family and the first meeting was held at the home of Mrs. P.H. Tippins Sr.

It was about this time that a new church was built of rough lumber brought from the surrounding woods.

"The next church was built of smooth lumber, much of which came from a house that was being demolished. The rest of the building materials were bought with money raised by having ice cream suppers.

"The present church was built in 1961. It, too, was financed largely by money making ventures. One such event was made possible by the donation of a steer by Fred Crawford. The steer was barbecued and plates were sold to add to the building fund.

"One record seems to indicate that the land on which the church stands was donated by Solom or Solomon Evans. Solomon B. Evans married Jane Maria Tippins, who was born in 1824 and died in 1890. She was the daughter of another prominent family in the area. Lemuel Tippins and Nancy Jones were her parents.

"Solomon Evans died in 1876 and was buried near his son in Weaver Cemetery, but due to a flood in 1890, Jane Maria Tippins Evans was not buried next to her husband, but in May Creek Cemetery, which her husband had given to the church."



Pictures of May Creek Church by Paul Merritt

(Continued on page 8)

The ECHS *Journal* Section

May Creek Church *(continued)*

(Continued from page 7)

The May Creek Sunday School

“The date for the first meeting (Sunday School) was set and an announcement was made from each pulpit on the next preaching date. Congregations were urged to attend and they responded with enthusiasm.

“On Sunday afternoon late in 1875, happy groups of young people (adults and children came by mule and wagon from ‘May Creek,, by carry all from the Weaver neighborhood, and by horse and buggy from Douglasville), met with their Clark Branch neighbors for the first Sunday School ever to be established in the Brewton area. “Uncle Archie” (Archibald Douglas), as he was fondly called, became superintendent and teacher.

“Much was learned from this form of worship, especially by the young people. They would compete with each other, learning whole chapters of the bible. The classes would last for several months in the spring and in May there was a special day where the children recited what they had learned with parents attending. Winners were announced and prizes given. Picnics and games followed.”

From an article on May Creek Church in The Heritage of Escambia County, Alabama

May Creek Ministers from 1883 Until 1986

W. T. Rencher -1883

R. P. Parker -1883

J. W. Meniffee -1887

C. A. Cornell -1894

J. A. Green -1895

J. L. Barnett -1896

J. M. Shofner -1897

J. F. Stephens -1897

C. G. Cook -1898

J. O. Laurence -1899

B. C. Glenn -1900-1902-1904

L. C. Duncan -1905-1907-1908-1909

M. E. Grant -1908

G. W. Miller -1910

D. B. Dismukes -1913

E. E. Stafford -1916

T. B. Barrow -1920

Monroe Spivey -1922

G. O. Huguen -1924

J. W. May -1927-1928

Peacock -1928-1929

J. P. Steel -1929

J. T. Ellison -1930

J. R. White -1931

J. J. Smiley -1932

A. C. Williams -1935

E. M. Holman -1938

E. B. Paul - 1942-1944

S. H. Shirah -1945-1946-1947

J. R. Helms -1940-1950-1951-1952

James Zellnor -1954

O. D. Williams -1956

Marion Brantley -1957-1959

Jack Holland -1960-1962

Chester Bolton -1963-1967

Mark Anthony -1968-1969

T. L. Butts -1969-1972

Rev. Carlton -1972

Rev. Dunnavant -1973

Thomas Smith -1973-1975

Jimmy Reece -1976-1978

Caswell Garrett -1979

Ken Shaulis -1980-1981

Lester Cassidy -1982-1983

Martha Baxter -1983-1984-1985-1986

Clay Kelly -1986

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The ECHS *Journal* Section

May Creek Church (continued)

(Continued from page 8)

Memories of May Creek Church

By Oscar Louis Burnham

A few thoughts and memories of Louis Burnham as a young boy raised here in the May Creek community attending May Creek Methodist Church. I may have a name or two wrong. My time here was 1929 through 1948. Things that I am writing about happened during the years 1929 through 1948.

For heat we had a pot-bellied stove and for cooling we had hand-held fans from the locale funeral home. The days and years of the 1940's, May Creek Methodist church was the church of our community. This is where I got saved and got my Biblical teachings as a young boy. I was taught by some of the most honest and great people that ever lived.'

Catherine Burnham Ellis and I were fortune enough to take piano lessons. We split the duties playing for church services there at the church. As I remember, we had Sunday school in the morning time and I believe church services every other Sunday at 3 p.m. I am the youngest of my family and I believe that all my siblings went to May Creek Church. I know that my father and mother (Jim. and Maggie Burnham) attended there regularly.

I must mention my good friends Mr. Burl and Mrs. Allie Lamkin. Mr. and Mrs. Lamkin moved into the May Creek community and the church during my time as a youth. They became the backbone of teaching the youth. They led the MYF and would carry the youth to other Methodist churches every month (or it could have been every three months, I don't remember). We would go to these other churches and meet new friends, play games, worship and have a good time. And I must mention Brother Thompson. He was always there to teacher Sunday school each Sunday.

I have heard my Mother and Dad talk about going to school at the May Creek Church. There was a school for older folk and that was all the education they received in



May Creek Church and Cemetery

their lifetime.

At one time there also was a school for the children of the community, and I do not remember if there were two different buildings or not,

I happened to find a book titled Modem Math that belonged to Maggie my sister that she used as a student while attending grade school at May Creek back in Oct. 24, 1924. I will attach a copy of that page to these few words I have written.

Arden Cooper (my daughter) was telling me that she played the piano there at the Methodist church in the early 1970's.

I want to tell of another experience I had with the youth of May Creek Church. On Sunday night only the youth would go to church. There would be no preaching. I remember one Sunday night in the summer time when most of the youth that lived in the community (Preston, Ralph, Catherine, Mary Lou Herrington, me and others that I can't remember) were at the church.

Ruppert Dawkins would always walk Mary Lou Herrington home. Mary Lou' father had a big peanut patch right across the branch and road from where Lamkin road is today. Some of the older ones in the group decided we were going to have a peanut boil. The peanuts would come out of Mary Lou's father's field. The pot, the wood and the salt would come from Leon, Jnez, Ralph and Catherine's, the Buntham's house. The group got everything together and we had a peanut boil.

When Preston and I got home that night, my dad and mother were putting on their clothes to come looking for us because it was getting very late. I know that the Lord forgave us. He wouldn't mind the young people having a little fun. You didn't nun to Hardee's at that time. There were very few cars around.

The ECHS *Journal* Section

William Wallace 1829-1902

This article on William M. Wallace is sent to us by Buddy Mitchell.

A previous issue of ECHOES has an article on the recovery of the burial site of William Wallace.

Earlier this month there was the dedication of a headstone for William Wallace's grave.

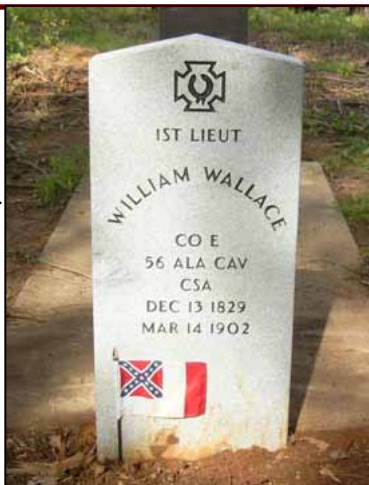
William M. Wallace owned and operated sawmills in Escambia County Alabama and in Santa Rosa County Florida. He has the unique distinction of having two communities in two states named for him. The Wallace community in Santa Rosa County Florida is named for his mill complex as is the Wallace community in Escambia County Alabama.

In the early 1860's Wallace established a sawmill operation on the Escambia River in western Santa Rosa County near Bogia/Chumuckla. His sawmill complex consisted of a mill building, engines, boilers, double gear circular saw mill, log cars and a railroad track. Then on March 14, 1862 the Wallace Sawmill was destroyed by Confederate forces under the direction of Lt. Colonel William K. Beard. This destruction was part of a scorched earth policy ordered by General Braxton Bragg in conjunction with his evacuation of some 8000 Confederate troops from Pensacola, Florida. From Bragg's order to General Samuel Jones:

"I desire you to leave nothing the enemy can use; burn all from Fort McRee to the junction with Mobile road. Save 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."

Subsequently Lt. Colonel Beard's order:

"You will burn every sawmill, planning mill, sash factory, every foot of lumber, and all boats of every description. If there is any cotton at any of the places you will not fail to destroy it. It is not supposed that you will meet with any opposition, but should there be, you will carry out your orders by force of arms. I rely upon you to execute your orders that nothing of material value to the enemy shall be left in that vicinity."



Headstone of William Wallace

The CSA Headstone was provided by the William Carney Camp of Sons of Confederate Veterans and dedicated on June 12, 2010.

The destruction of Wallace's mill was only part of the widespread havoc inflicted on the milling business and other industrial sites over two days by Beard's raid on the Blackwater and Escambia river systems.

Although much bitterness was wrought by this ruthless Confederate raid on Wallace, within two months after the burning of his mill he entered Co E 56th Regiment Alabama Cavalry CSA also known as the Alabama Partisan Rangers at Greenville, Alabama. His regiment operated for some time in Northern Mississippi, Georgia and South Carolina. His unit saw heavy fighting against Union General Sherman during the Atlanta Campaign. When the surrender came in 1865 Wallace had reached the rank of 2nd Lieutenant.

Back from the war, Wallace re-established his sawmill operations in Santa Rosa County. He formed numerous partnerships with Pensacola businessmen and with his Jernigan relatives in the county to supply lumber for export. In the early 1870's he and lumberman John T. Norris formed Wallace & Norris. As part of their mill complex they built Wallace Lake in western Santa Rosa County near the Escambia River probably as a holding pond and to supply water for their log flumes. In 1879 he was elected Representative from Santa Rosa County to the Florida Legislature.

Sometime in the 1880's he moved his family across the state line into Escambia County Alabama where during this period through the 1890's he owned and operated sawmills in Escambia County including Wallace Lumber Company. He was involved in mill operations at Wilson Station and Sullivan Station and partnered with Samuel Sanford to build a saw mill at Wilson Station later to become Nokomis.

Wallace was an early pioneer of using log ditches (flumes) in his mill operations in Escambia County Alabama according to an article titled *Log Ditches* by Neal Collier published in *A Sawmill Scrapbook*, Volume II. Collier states:

"Log ditches were pioneered here by William Wallace, for whom the Wallace community is named. He built his first in Santa Rosa County about 1873. He built 20 miles of

(Continued on page 11)

The ECHS *Journal* Section

William Wallace 1829-1902 (continued)

(Continued from page 10)

ditch for the Sowell Mill at Wallace beginning about 1880. He is responsible for most of the log ditches in the area and constructed a great many of them, some up to 30 miles long.”

Collier continues:

“Wallace’s ditches were four feet wide and three to four feet deep. The sides were lined with poles and sometimes one inch lumber. There was always a pond or easily diverted creek to provide driving water. Five yokes of oxen in each team pulled the thirty to thirty-five foot logs to the ditch. Up to 200 logs could be dogged (chained) together for a drive. Sometimes the pond would have to be filled and drained several times to push a mile-long chain of logs to the mill.”

The use of flumes to drive logs to the mill was introduced in the area as early as 1830 at Arcadia in Santa Rosa County Florida. This does not diminish the fact that Wallace was instrumental in the promotion and development of these type ditches in both Santa Rosa County Florida and Escambia County Alabama. Many of these log ditches or canals developed by Wallace can still be seen in Escambia County.

William Wallace was born in 1829, probably in Baldwin County Alabama. Not much is known about his parentage except his father was born in North Carolina and his mother in South Carolina. He had a sister Mary Wallace born c1828 who married Thomas Byrne, Jr.

William’s first wife Mary died in the 1860’s and he then married Celia Jernigan. Celia was the daughter of Joseph Jefferson Jernigan and Caroline Dixon of Santa Rosa County Florida. After the early death of Celia, William married her sister Nancy Minerva Jernigan. William and Nancy Wallace had eight children including William Wallace, Jr., Joseph Rufus Wallace, Robert Bruce Wallace, Mary Augusta Wallace, Origen Sibley Wallace, Hettie S. Wallace, Anna Mable Wallace and Louis E. Wallace.

William M. Wallace died on March 14, 1902 and is buried north of Canoe in Escambia County Alabama. The gravesite is located in a grove of trees in the middle of a cotton field off of Robinsonville Road. Until recently access was limited but now that has changed because of the clearing of many



Picture of a Log Ditch

William Wallace is often called the father of the Log Ditch which he developed as means of transporting logs to a stream or to a holding pond.

years of under brush and trees under the direction of Kevin McKinley.

Sources

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- ◆ Annie C. Waters, History of Escambia County Alabama, 1983, 204
- ◆ Neal Collier, Log Ditches, A Sawmill Scrapbook, 1992, Volume II, 35-36
- ◆ Confederate Papers Relating to Citizens or Business Firms, 1861-65, National Archives, William Wallace Claim/Santa Rosa County Florida filed with Confederate States Government on January 30, 1863.
- ◆ Brian R. Rucker, “Bad Day at Blackwater: Confederate Scorched Earth Policy in West Florida,” Pensacola History Illustrated, vol. 6, Summer 2002, No. 1.
- ◆ U.S. War Department, The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies 70 vols. (Washington, D. C., 1880-1901) I, 6: 835-836
- ◆ William Wallace Confederate Service Records
- ◆ Kevin McKinley, “Life and Times of William Wallace,” The Tri-City Ledger, November 16, 2006
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- ◆ Allen Morris, comp., The People of Lawmaking in Florida 1822-1985 (Florida House of Representatives, 1985)
- ◆ Annie C. Waters, History of Escambia County Alabama, 1983, 204-207
- ◆ Brian R. Rucker, “Arcadia and Bagdad: Industrial Parks of Antebellum Florida,” Florida Historical Quarterly 67 (October 1988): 147-165
- ◆ Brian R. Rucker. “Blackwater and Yellow Pine: The Development of Santa Rosa County, 1821-1865” 2 vols.(PhD dissertation, Florida State University, 1990)
- ◆ 1900 Escambia County Alabama Census: This census states 1829 as birth year. Gravestone is inscribed 1830 as birth year
- ◆ Alabama Death Certificate of Robert Dunn Byrne 1900 Escambia County Alabama Census

ECHOES
THE NEWSLETTER FOR
THE ESCAMBIA COUNTY
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