

The September Meeting Tuesday, September 23, 2014, 3:00 p. m. The McMillan Museum

The Program:

Rev. Blue of Second St. Siloam Missionary Baptist Church, Brewton will speak on the History of the St. Siloam and, as a member of the board, he will also discuss the John L. Fisher Community Center.

We have this biography from Rev. Blue:



"Rev. Willie James Blue was born February 22, 1949 in Escambia County Alabama to the late Andrew Governor Gray and Doris Blue Thomas. He joined the First Marietta Baptist Church and was baptized by Rev. U. L. Johnson. He was reared by his great aunt (the late Elizabeth King).

"He attended school in the Macon and Boykin communities and then graduated from Southern Normal High School in 1967.

"In 1970, he met Jacquelyne Humphrey and they were united in Holy Matrimony on November 24, 1970. Rev. Blue and Jacquelyne are the proud parents of three grown children, Michael, Timothy, and Tiffany and the loving grandparents of one granddaughter, Kamiesha.

"In April of 1971 Rev Blue answered the call into the ministry. He was licensed under the late Rev. L. Johnson at the First Marietta Baptist Church, where he later became pastor for eight years.

"Pastor Blue then joined the historical Second Saint Siloam Missionary Baptist Church, where he was ordained under Dr. H. J. Lancaster. In 1987 he accepted the call to be the pastor of SSSMBC where he has been pastor for the last 27 years."

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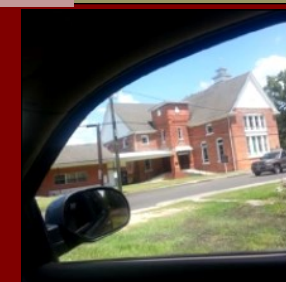
The October Meeting Tuesday, October 28, 2014 McMillan Museum

ECHS Member Charles Ware will present a program on one of the forgotten towns of Escambia County, AlaFlora.

Correction to ECHOES for August 2014

The newsletter article on the Burnt Corn Post Office suggested that there was a post office in Burnt Corn continuously from 1817 until it was closed in 1997. Our speaker for the August 2014 meeting, Eugenia Brown, noted that the post office in Burnt Corn was closed from 1926 to 1936.

Also, the Purnell Methodist Church is no longer a Methodist Church. It is now under the leadership of a Homecoming and Cemetery Committee.



Second Saint Siloam
Missionary Baptist Church

Volume 41, Number 9

September 2014

Afro-American Cemeteries in Escambia County, Alabama Listed on Find a Grave

"A cemetery is a history of people - a perpetual record of yesterday and sanctuary of peace and quiet today. A cemetery exists because every life is worth loving & remembering--always."

Unknown

For the last four years, ECHS member Darryl Searcy has been cataloging Afro-American cemeteries in Escambia and surrounding counties for placement on the website Find a Grave (<http://www.findagrave.com/>).

The following is a list of the cemeteries in Escambia County which Darryl has catalogued:

Baptist Hill
Bergen/Pine Grove
Oak Grove
Belleville Faulk AME
Greater Nazarene
Green Street AME
Hybart
Jerusalem #1
Jerusalem #2
Little Zion Baptist
Mars Hill
Mt. Olive Baptist

New Home Baptist
Pine Flat
First Shady Grove
Second Shady Grove
Second Mt. Zion
St. John
Unity & Charity
Westside
Fanny Hill
Hollywood
Black Cemetery
Bowman

Corinth Primitive
Lucy Hill Complex
First Marietta
Pierce-Rabb
Lucious
Macedonia
Mount Shilo
Pleasant-Jordan
Pollard Cemetery (South Section)
Second Bethlehem
Second St. John's

For an account of one of Darryl's adventures in photographing and listing cemeteries, see the article "Funerals and Chicken Broth" in the journal section of this issue of ECHOES.

The Program: Rev. Blue

(Continued from page 1)

Rev. Blue is Vice-President of the Brewton NAACP, a member of the steering committee that developed the Brewton Master Plan (the city's economic development plan), and is on the board of the John L. Fisher Community Center, which is the community center developed using the former Brewton Middle School. As part of other community activities, Rev. Blue has joined with other pastors of the city to bring entertainment for young people to Brewton. €



Rev. Blue shown at the playground area of the Fisher Community Center.

The John L. Fisher Community Center



The John L. Fisher Community Center
The former Booker T. Washington High School and then Brewton Middle School has become the John L. Fisher Community Center, named after the principal of Booker T. Washington High School.

The Brewton Standard in an article by Lisa Tendell, "Groups Partner on Community Center Project," reported on the various groups that were joining to support the idea of using the former Brewton Middle School for a community center. Those joining included the Coalition for a Healthier Escambia County (<http://www.brewtonstandard.com/2010/08/31>).

Ruth Harrell, chairwoman of the coalition, commented, "We see the community center as the beginning of an opportunity for Escambia County to begin to focus on wellness."

Alline Manuel, community center steering committee chair, thought the center could be "a hub for the community where education, activities and exercise can be offered."

"With so much already in place at the school, we have a wonderful opportunity to take this facility and have a wonderful community center," Manuel said. "If we are able to move forward with our plans, there will be basketball, tennis and a pool available for the community. We can offer computer and exercise classes and so much more. The possibilities of

"We want to make this school building into a community center that will not only serve the black community but the entire city," community center steering committee chair woman Alline Manuel said.

"By having a community center, we will be able to do something to keep our children off the streets" (Brewton Standard).

Another step in moving toward a community center is to have the property recognized by the Alabama Historical Association, Manuel said.

"The middle school was the home of the only public all black school in Brewton.

"That would be a qualification for historical status. The status can only be given to the land where the school sits since it was the home of Booker T. Washington High School" (Brewton Standard).

what can be offered at the center are endless. We just need the support of this community to make this a reality.

At the time of the 2010 article in the Standard, the committee working on plans for using the soon to be vacated middle school was preparing a letter to the city for approval of the plan.

In October of 2013, the Brewton City Council authorized Mayor Yank Lovelace to negotiate a lease with the committee. The Standard reported that at the public hearing regarding this vote by the council, the meeting was packed, filled with residents on hand to support the lease. No one spoke in opposition to it and the motion was approved.

Since that time, a playground and community garden have been established at the center. Also, volunteers have held money raising activities such as the Soul Food, Blues & Jazz Festival, the first in 2013 with another to be held in September 2014. €

Second St. Siloam Missionary Baptist Church

The source for the material in the following article is from the Brewton Standard article for May 10, 2010 by Lydia Grimes "Second St. Siloam Celebrates Centennial,"
<<http://www.brewtonstandard.com/2010/05/30/second-st-siloam-celebrates-centennial/>>.



Photograph of St. Siloam from the Brewton Standard

Second Saint Siloam was listed on the Alabama Register of Landmarks and Heritage in 2010. At a special service on June 13, 2010, the church celebrated both its 100th year of organization and the dedication of the historic marker.

In her article in the Brewton Standard, author Lydia Grimes commented that the Church is listed in the Registry because of its "architectural significance as well as its being 100 years old." Noted are the interior core which forms a cross with a three side cathedral balcony, ceiling, and bell tower. The church retains a lot of its original features according to Grimes.

In the same article, Lee Anne Wofford, on the Alabama Historical Commission at the time, commented, "Second St. Siloam is a wonderful example of an early 20th century African American Church."

As to the history of the church, Jacquelyne Blue, wife of Rev. Willie J. Blue, says she "can remember hearing her grandmother talk about carrying blocks or bricks to help build the church."

Jacquelyne has been a member of the church for many years, and before that her parents and grandparents were also members. Her grandmother also remembered when the parent church of Second St. Siloam was located on the banks of Murder Creek below where Brewton Iron Works and Citation are now.

The church was organized on Nov. 5, 1909 when a group of worshipers gathered in the Congregational Church located on the corner of St. Joseph and Evergreen avenues and organized the Second St.

Siloam Missionary Baptist Church. On June 10, 1910, the congregation dedicated the new church, the church at the present location of East and North streets.

Rev. Williams Franklin, the church's first pastor, is credited with "visualizing the church's unique architectural design, which is based on the cruciform plan and features a balcony which, while being only a few feet wide, makes

several turns around the church to make seven different sections surrounding the regular sanctuary."

Church records show that the first deacons were Peter Blankenship, P.J. Johnson, Johnny Robbins, Alex Allen and Alex Hamilton. The first trustees were S.W. Mills, R.T. Thompson, Jim Dean, L.L. Ingraham, Charlie Smith, Josh Feagan, J.H. Mills and Walker Dacus.

"We had maybe 150 people in our congregation to start with," current Pastor Willie J. Blue says. "We now have around 560 but some of them do not attend on a regular basis. Now that we have come this far, it would be nice to go ahead and try to get placed on the national register, but we may have trouble getting that."

"In the mid-1970s we tied the educational annex to the church, and that may keep us from getting on the national list. The national register is very strict about any changes being made to the original

building."

Another change that has been made is in the bell tower. It once stood one story higher, but it was removed when the bell was removed. The bell has been placed in front of the church.

For more information about the history of the Second St. Siloam Missionary Baptist Church, see ECHOES for August, 2010. €



Jacquelyne Blue in the middle with Rev. Blue in the back looking on. Group is posed in front of the Church's Historical Marker

News and Announcements



Alabama Historical Association Fall Pilgrimage

The Pilgrimage will be in Montevallo and Columbiana October 10-14, 2014.

A link for the online registration form using PayPal can be found at <<http://www.alabamahistory.net/meetings.html>>.

Also, a registration form can be printed from the Association's Fall 2014 Newsletter and mailed in.

For hotel reservations, this information from the Association: "Call the Hampton Inn -- Calera at 205-668-6565 and reserve a room before September 15. Mention the AHA to receive the group rate of \$99 per night."

For updates on the Pilgrimage, check with the Facebook page at "Alabama Historical Association 2014 Fall Pilgrimage - Shelby County," <<https://www.facebook.com/shelbycountypilgrimage>>.



Invitation to Alabama Genealogical Society Fall Seminar

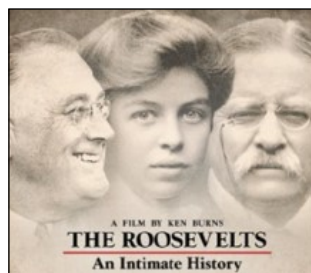
The Alabama Genealogical Society Fall Seminar will be held on Saturday, October 11, 2014, at the Alabama Department of Archives and History in Montgomery. Registration will open at 8:30 a.m. The seminar will end at 3:45 p.m.

The speaker is C. Ann Staley, CG, CGL, a well-known lecturer and consultant. She will speak on Searching, Sharing and Solving. Individual topics are:

- "Overlooked Research Sources: A Gold Mine to be Discovered"
- "Organizing, Analyzing, and Sharing: Using Technology to Your Advantage"
- "Claws or Clues: Scratching for the Elusive Ancestor"
- "Genealogical Research: Online Searches – for Free"

Lunch will be available for those who pay in advance. For additional information and the registration form, go to <http://algensoc.org/main/seminarFlyer.pdf>

The Archives Research Room will be open until 4:30 p.m. on the day of the seminar.



Pre-Premiers of The Roosevelts: An Intimate History

The Center for Alabama Public Television and Alabama Humanities Foundation partnered to offer a rare opportunity to see the pre-premiere

screenings of noted documentary filmmaker Ken Burns' new epic, *The Roosevelts: An Intimate History*.

The pre-premieres were shown in Birmingham and Auburn on Thursday, September 4, 2014 from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. Noted musician Bobby Horton, who wrote the score, attended the Birmingham showing and shared comments and information about his work on the film.

Two scholars spoke at these events about the lasting impact of the three Roosevelts - Theodore, Eleanor, and Franklin - in Alabama. Historian Rebecca Woodham offered commentary at the Birmingham event, and Professor Emeritus of History, Dr. Wayne Flynt, presented at the Auburn screening.

The Birmingham showing was at the Alabama School of Fine Arts and the Auburn showing at Pebble Hill, Auburn University.



A Symposium At The National Archives At Atlanta "Valley of the Dams: The Impact and Legacy of the Tennessee Valley Authority"

5780 Jonesboro Road, Morrow, Georgia
Saturday, September 20, 2014
9:00 – 4:00

The archives invites readers to view the new supporting online exhibit for the symposium entitled at <<http://www.archives.gov/atlanta/exhibits/exhibits-tva.html>>.

The announcement notes that the National Archives at Atlanta is the repository of approximately 13,000 cubic feet of records documenting the impact and legacy of the Tennessee Valley Authority, historic sources ripe for new scholarship and discovery.

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News and Announcements

(Continued from page 5)



October Meeting of West Florida Genealogical Society

Meeting Date: October 4, 2014

Place: West Florida Genealogy
Library, 5740 N. 9th Ave,
Pensacola, FL, 850-494-
7373

Time: 10:00 AM

Topic: The Doy Leal McCall
Rare Book and
Manuscript Library,
University of South
Alabama

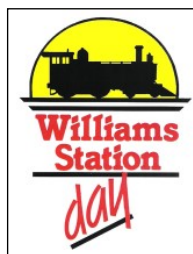
Speaker: Carol Ellis, Director

The Doy Leal McCall Rare Book and Manuscript Library at the University of South Alabama revolves around several families. The mission of this library has been to identify, acquire, appraise, preserve, organize, and describe important historical material relating to the history of the Alabama Black Belt and its families, the history of Mobile and southwest Alabama and its people, and the history of the University of South Alabama.

In her presentation for WFGS, Ms. Ellis will be touching on two specific families whose lives are documented in the collection.

Those who have relatives or ancestors who lived in southwest Alabama will be especially interested in this program.

Members and guests are welcome to attend. Refreshments will be available at 9:45. Meeting begins at 10:00.



Williams Station Day Atmore, Alabama Saturday, October 25, 2014 9:00 p. m.-5:00 p. m.

From the Atmore Chamber of
Commerce:

October 25th, that's the date to be
in Atmore, Alabama as residents

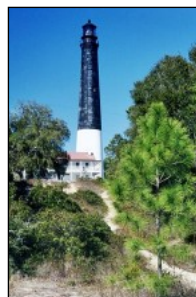
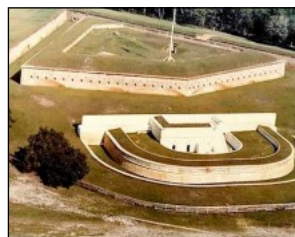
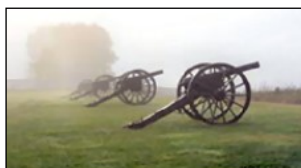
turn back their clocks to 1866 when their community was named Williams Station - just a supply stop along the Mobile & Great Northern railroad.

We guarantee a fun day of family entertainment! Williams Station Day is packed with great venues to fit every taste.

For the young and young at heart we offer an old fashioned sampling of southern heritage seasoned with the blues, arts and crafts, cane milling and heritage displays. Join us!

ECHS Field Trip Sunday Afternoon October 26, 2014 Civil War Tour with "Go-Retro" Tours of Pensacola

The tour is \$18.00 per person, duration is approximately 2 hours. As the tour includes Fort Barrancas (at left), and the Pensacola lighthouse (below left), with museums at both of these locations, there is some walking.



Above is a picture of the interior of the 1930 transit bus used by "Go-Retro." The bus, shown at left, is a modernized Ford 1930 transit bus, the same

type that originally operated in Pensacola during the 1930s and 1940s. It seats 20 passengers.

Go-Retro also uses a Ford 2001 shuttle bus. Each bus is heated and cooled and is outfitted with state-of-the-art video and sound technology.

Details for making the tour specialized to our group and defraying cost by the Society to be worked out. €

Snapshots from ECHS August 2014 Meeting



Snapshots from ECHS August 2014 Meeting



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The ECHS *Journal* Section

Battle of Maliba: Scholars Hope a Two-year Exploration Will Help Find the Site of an Epic Alabama Battle



Illustration of the Meeting of DeSoto and Chief Tuscaloosa from the Bronze Doors of ADAH

*The illustration is one panel from the Bronze doors in the Ocllo Malone Lobby at ADAH
Text and illustration from <<http://www.archives.alabama.gov/brnzdrs/1.html>>.*

Text below from ADAH

Seeking treasure in the New World, the Spaniard Hernando De Soto came into what is now Alabama from the northeast in 1540.

Traveling southward, temporarily taking local Native American leaders as hostages to ensure safe passage, DeSoto and a force of some 600 reached the town of Maubila (or Mauvilla) in southwest Alabama in October of 1540.

Here, the leader of the conquistadores met Tuscaloosa, an imposing Native American leader described by contemporaries as being seven feet in height.

Following an exchange of gifts, a dispute arose.

Although the Spaniards suffered casualties by the score, their superior weaponry, combined with their setting fire to the great village, killed thousands of Chief Tuscaloosa's people.

The following article on the Battle of Mabila (also Maubila or Mavilla) and the current search for the location of the site of the battle is taken from the Alabama Power News Center at <<http://alabamapowernews.com/2014/07/22/scholars-hope-a-two-year-exploration-will-help-find-the-site-of-an-epic-alabama-battle/>>.

Thanks to Tom McMillan for bringing this article to our attention.

On a muggy Memorial Day, in a remote clearing near the Alabama River, three of the state's most eminent anthropologists and one of the state's best-known historians huddle around a hand-drawn map

they hope can take them a few steps nearer to finding one of the most significant historic sites in North America.

On Oct. 18, 1540, an armed force led by Spanish explorer Hernando de Soto clashed with Indian warriors led by the famed chieftain Tascalusa. The ferocious encounter decimated Tascalusa's people and left the fortified Indian village in ruins. But it also proved to be a fatal blow to De Soto's expedition. Severely weakened, De Soto led his battle-

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Battle of Mabila: Scholars Hope a Two-year Exploration Will Help Find the Site of an Epic Alabama Battle

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scarred troops deeper into the unmapped continent. He would not survive, and the remnants of his army were ultimately forced to find their way back to the relative safety of Mexico.

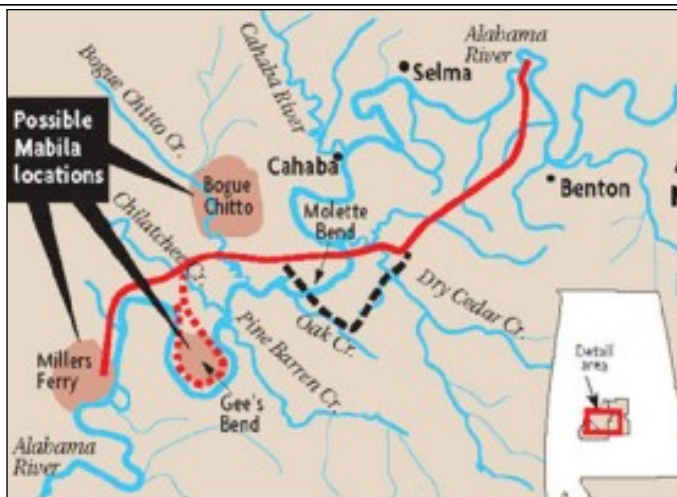
To this day, the precise location of this epic battle, at the lost Indian town of Mabila, remains a vexing mystery. But the allure of Mabila – which some experts believe could rival Antietam as the deadliest day of combat on U.S. soil – is undeniable.

Now, with the support of the Alabama Power

Foundation, a two-year, three-university archaeological expedition is getting underway. The hope: to get closer to finding Mabila – a discovery that would cement Alabama's importance as the site of one of the most important battles in the history of the western hemisphere.

In the quest for Mabila, "we will be examining one of the most important archaeological sites on the Alabama River," said Greg Waselkov, professor of anthropology at the University of South Alabama and lead researcher for the expedition.

The location to be scrutinized is not Mabila, but another site where De Soto's troops may have crossed the Alabama River on their way to the village. If the two-year dig can confirm that, then scholars can use the historic chronicles of De Soto's journey, written by others who accompanied the famous explorer, to hopefully pinpoint – once and for all – the location of Mabila.



Possible Sites of Mabila and Routes of de Soto in Area

The possible routes of de Soto are shown as the solid red line, the broken black line, and the broken red line.

The three possibilities for Mabila are shown as orange circles.

Illustration from *Birmingham News* at http://blog.al.com/Birmingham-news-stories/2009/09/experts_closing_in_on_site_of.html.

The Making of an Expert Dream Team

Waselkov's dream team includes anthropologist Jim Knight, recently retired from the University of Alabama and considered one of the nation's top Mabila scholars, and Craig Sheldon, distinguished professor emeritus of anthropology at Auburn University Montgomery.

Along for the ride on the Memorial Day outing was historian Leah Rawls Atkins, co-author of *Alabama: The History of a Deep South State* and a longtime student of Mabila. "It's tremendous-

ly exciting to see some of the top experts on Mabila coming together in hopes of finally finding this incredibly important site," Atkins said.

During the Memorial Day visit, the team found encouraging signs they hope will point to future success when the full-scale expedition kicks off in the fall. Although the site was explored in a limited way in the 1960s and 1970s, no digs have taken place since then. Using a hand-drawn map from the earlier excavations, the team quickly found the specific locations of the prior digs.

They also found Indian pottery fragments dating to at least the 18th century, when natives living near the site traded with French convoys traveling the river between Mobile and Fort Toulouse, in present-day Elmore County. Sheldon said the digs decades ago at the site yielded a wealth of material, from early archaic Indian artifacts dating to 6,000 B.C. to trading beads and pottery, to French flintlock rifles, cannonballs and coins.

A key question the team hopes to answer with the

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Battle of Mabila: Scholars Hope a Two-year Exploration Will Help Find the Site of an Epic Alabama Battle

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new expedition: whether the site, which has been active off and on for thousands of years, was in use during the time of the Spanish explorers in the 16th century.

That the site visit took place on Memorial Day also seemed prophetic. After all, the team is searching for a famous battlefield where native Americans died in a desperate fight to defend their homeland from a Spanish force intent on conquest.

Should Mabila be located, the impact for this rural section of Alabama could be significant. Finding Mabila could help attract more scholars and research grants to the area, not to mention the potential for

tourism and economic development in connection with the historic site.

"One can rightfully say that the lost battle site of Mabila is the predominant historical mystery of the Deep South," Knight wrote in *The Search for Mabila*, a 269-page volume about the quest published by The University of Alabama Press. The book, edited by Knight, was the product of a three-day gathering of Mabila scholars hosted by the university in 2006. Perhaps soon, with a little luck and some hard work, scholars can peel away some of the mystery that shrouds the lost village and battlefield of Mabila. €

An Account of the Battle of Mabila

The following excerpt recounting the battle is taken from "Experts Closing in on the Site of the Bloody Battle of Maliba" by Patrick Hickerson.

De Soto, a veteran of Francisco Pizarro's conquest of the Incas in South America, arrived in Florida in 1539 and set up a winter camp in Tallahassee, the best-documented archeological site from the expedition.

In 1540, he set out north into Georgia and the Carolinas then headed back south. After entering Alabama, he encountered Chief Tascalusa, "an Indian so large, that to the opinion of all, he was a giant," a chronicler of the expedition wrote. De Soto asked Tascalusa for laborers to bear the army's supplies. Tascalusa refused but said that in another town under his control he would comply with the request.

De Soto took Tascalusa captive and traveled

The Effect of the Battle on the Native Americans and the Spanish

As many as 5,000 Indians fell to Spanish swords and burned in the fires the Spanish set to destroy the palisaded town. The defeat and subsequent spread of European disease toppled a complex and sophisticated Mississippian Indian culture that had dominated the Southeast for centuries.

Meanwhile, the damage inflicted on De Soto's 600-man expedition -- 20 killed, 250 wounded and supplies and a store of treasure lost -- led ultimately to the demise of the expedition and crippled Spanish dreams of colonizing the Southeast (http://blog.al.com/birmingham-news-stories/2009/09/experts_closing_in_on_site_of.html).

deeper into Alabama, through other Indian settlements with Tascalusa in tow, the giant walking beneath a large shade made of bird feathers carried by an attendant.

When the army reached Mabila, the advance guard of the army entered the walled city and soon found that, hidden in the houses, were thousands of Indians ready for battle.

A Spaniard drew his sword and cut off the arm of an Indian, and the attack began. The Spaniards fought their way out of the village but had to abandon their supplies, which included a large

cache of pearls they'd intended to use upon their return to Spain to demonstrate the riches of the territory.

The Spanish regrouped, surrounded the city and laid siege, cutting off all escape routes and setting it

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An Account of the Battle of Mabila

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afire.

Beyond the body count from the battle, the

Spanish left behind disease, including smallpox to which the Native Americans had no immunity. The defeat and the subsequent plague appear to have decimated the Indian civilization that had dominated the Southeast. €

Hernando de Soto's North America Expedition



The Red Line on the map shows de Soto's exploration route with what is called "the best location for Mabila" marked near Miller's Ferry. This red line ends with de Soto's death and his body supposedly buried in the Mississippi River in present day Arkansas.

De Soto, before his death, had appointed one of his soldiers, Luis de Moscosco, to be the leader of the expedition.

The chronicles of the survivors tell that the expedition members voted whether to try to reach Mexico by land or to build boats and go down the Mississippi. The decision was to go over land because building boats would be hard and time consuming. They did not realize how close they were to the Gulf of Mexico.

However, after traveling by land and reaching what is today Texas, they were confronted with a landscape which provided little food or water and no Native Americans tribes and villages to provide guidance or food supplies.

They retraced their route. The green line indicates this rout overland and the retreat back to the Mississippi.

Returning to the Mississippi river, using crude boats, they went by water to the Gulf and reached Mexico. Less than half of the 600-plus expedition survived and reached Mexico.

The following material on the de Soto expedition by Neal Lineback and Mandy Lineback Gritzner is taken from the website [Geography in the News](#).

Briefly, the De Soto party arrived on the west coast of Florida probably at Tampa Bay in May 1539 and spent the first winter near present-day Tallahassee, Fla.

In the spring of 1540, they headed northeast into South Carolina and North Carolina and crossed the Appalachian Mountains into Tennessee.

They then turned southward toward Montgomery, Ala., and followed the Alabama River to Mabila. In general, the trail through Alabama after Montgomery

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The ECHS *Journal* Section

Hernando de Soto's North America Expedition

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is in dispute.”

. . . . After the Battle at Mabila, the Spanish dead soon were buried and the wounded recovered. The expedition departed the area four weeks later, heading northward and eventually crossing the Mississippi River.

The Spaniards ventured into Arkansas, then back to the Mississippi River. De Soto died of a fever in 1542 and his body was placed in the Mississippi River.

The remaining group led by Luis de Moscosco made another westward loop into Texas before returning to the river once more. In crudely constructed boats and canoes, mostly stolen from local tribes, they floated down the Mississippi, then westward around the Gulf Coast to Northeast Mexico, where they joined other Spaniards.

Upon completion of their epic journey [in 1543], they arrived with barely any clothes on their backs and nothing material to show for three years of their epic journey (from <http://newswatch.nationalgeographic.com/2014/06/14/geography-in-the-news-hernando-de-sotos-famous-battle/>). €

Funerals & Chicken Broth

By Darryl N. Searcy

Recently I visited the area of Flomaton for the purpose of locating a cemetery called Damascus. An old black soldier had died in Atlanta and his body was being shipped to Flomaton for burial. The Presley-Fluker Funeral Home in Evergreen were handling the arrangements.

The old soldier was scheduled to receive full military honors and a group of local “Patriot Guard” Riders had planned a special salute for him, which is the “Guard’s” express purpose. Apparently the man had been awarded a couple of Purple Heart medals during WW-II, thus the full honors and a special salute.

Aside from a proper burial with military honors, none of this was out of the ordinary. What was extraordinary were the tribulations I had finding the cemetery, which I had planned to later survey, photograph and insert on the Historical Registry of undocumented African-American cemeteries.



**Photo of Entrance to
Damascus-Fanny Cemetery
+Photo contributed by Claire at
<[http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?](http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=cr&CRid=2331791)
[page=cr&CRid=2331791](http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=cr&CRid=2331791)>.**

I knew where the Damascus Church was located on Martin Luther King Drive (opposite the former Flomaton water treatment plant), but there was no evidence of a cemetery, so it had to be in another part of this all-black community along the north side of Big Escambia Creek.

I knew of a black cemetery known as Pleasant-Jordan, which was a few hundred yards north of the church, but surely that cemetery would not have changed names as it was located on private land

previously donated by the Pleasant and Jordan families.

Obviously, I would have to stop somewhere and ask directions to the Fanny-Damascus cemetery and I planned to do that at the first house I saw where someone was outside working or resting. I saw such a house at which an old woman was raking leaves onto a burn pile. I parked and walked to her, telling her my predicament, and expressing hopes that she

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might tell me where the cemetery is located. Unfortunately, she didn't know but asked me to follow her toward the back yard where others were working and maybe one of those people would know. I obediently and respectfully followed.

At the rear of the house were three older women and a man working at a bench on which three large tubs were placed. Two of the tubs contained fresh water that had been poured from a nearby hose that was connected to a hydrant. In the first tub was several grown chickens that had been plucked but the head, feet and entrails had not been removed.

The first woman was chopping off the head and feet and slicing the bird down the middle along the breast bone to the stomach cavity. The entrails were then dumped into a pail. An old man had been digging shallow holes in a small garden. When the pail had a couple of chicken innards in it he emptied the contents in a hole and covered it.

Having gutted the chicken, washed clean of blood and excess feathers with the water hose, the woman dropped the butchered fowl in another tub of fresh water, where it was again washed and cut into various parts and the pieces were thrown into the third tub of water. The parts containing bones were taken out and a woman expertly sliced into the thighs and drumsticks with a boning knife and removed the bone. The bones were tossed into a pail of fresh water along with the neck, backbone and rib cage.

I pointed to the bony parts and asked what would happen to them. The woman said the large bones would be boiled, cracked and all the parts would be used to make a heavy stock. The stock would be used in a canning process, whereby the boneless meat would be packed into canning jars, covered with rich stock and placed in a pressure cooker. The preserved chicken in stock would be good for several years.

The old woman explained the principal: Place large carcass bones in a stockpot. Add enough water to cover the bones. Cover the pot and simmer for about a half hour or until any



A Patriot Guard Unit
From Google.com

remaining tidbits of meat around the bones will easily fall off. Remove the large bones and crack them to remove the marrow.

Return the marrow and small pieces of meat to the cooled broth and discard excess fat, if desired. Remove the tiny pieces of meat trimmings and add them back to the broth. Reheat the broth to boiling and pour strained liquid into the meat-filled jars. Process

the jars of raw meat in a pressure cooker for a specified time. Fill other jars with the left over hot broth and process it for later use in soup and stews.

The home canning of fresh chicken was a mighty interesting distraction but I knew I had to get moving if I expected to find the cemetery. The "chicken carvers" apparently knew the cemetery but I got differing directions from all of them.

The consensus was that I should get back on the Hwy-31 four-lane and drive in the direction of Brewton; cross the rail line overpass and turn right at the next paved road (Fanny Road). After a short distance, turn left onto another paved road, cross another set of "tracks" and follow the road to the cemetery. Sounded easy enough. I knew that the Fanny bridge that crossed Big Escambia Creek was out so I must not travel too far as I would lose precious time turning around and retracing my tracks.

That aside, I turned onto Fanny Road and a few hundred yards south was a paved road to the left. I turned onto Hollywood, crossed the rail tracks and continued onward through the swamps, made a sharp turn to the left and there stood a chain-link fence around a cemetery. Now what? The sign read "Hollywood Cemetery, no traffic inside, etc., etc." Obviously, this was not Fanny-Damascus!

I turned the vehicle around and headed back toward the four-lane. Along the way was an auto salvage yard (University Auto Recyclers). I pulled into the yard and approached a young woman at the desk. She offered to call a policeman that she knew, as she had worked with him some years back. Her call was answered, but the poor fellow had been on night shift and was sleeping.

His wife awakened him and after exchanging some

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niceties about getting him out of bed, he told her that the Fanny-Damascus cemetery was behind the Hollywood and the two cemeteries were divided by a single fence line. If I drove along the western edge of the Hollywood Cemetery I would see a tall arched sign that read "Fanny Cemetery." That cemetery is also known as Fanny-Damascus.

Now I knew I had located the right cemetery as there were several red flags placed denoting that a burial was to take place. I had now found the cemetery, so it was time to make plans to attend the burial portion of the old soldier's final services. I had never seen a veteran's burial at which the Patriot Guards would stand watch while the military honors were trooped.

I arrived at the cemetery early in order to find a choice parking spot beneath a large oak tree at the eastern edge of the cemetery, being careful not to hinder access to graveside, as that would be reserved for family and official vehicles. The first to arrive were seven national guardsmen, splendid in dark blue military uniforms complete with bibbed hats, black shoulder straps (passant), polished black boots and gold braids. Three men carried carbine rifles, also slung with a black strap. All the men took their place some distance away from graveside, but four soldiers later moved closer in order to blanket the casket with the American flag, which flag would be removed later and folded according to military tradition with 13 stars visible at the last fold.

As I waited for the ceremony to begin, a deafening roar arose from a distance, soon becoming visible as two dozen motorcycle riders rode into the cemetery, each rider wearing a shirt decorated with red, white and blue stripes. These were the Patriot Guard Riders leading the funeral procession come to honor their Hero from the Greatest Generation.



Picture of a Patriot Guard Unit from the website Photobucket.

Here was the primary reason for my attending the funeral and burial of Pvt. Allen Carter - to witness not only the military honor guard, but to support the presence of the Patriot Guard Riders. These riders make up an organization based in the United States whose members attend the funerals of members of the U.S. military, fire-fighters, and police at the invitation of a decedent's family.

The group forms an honor guard at military burials, and stand ready to assist family members and mourners. They fill out the ranks at burials of indigent and homeless veterans. In addition to attending funerals, the group also greets troops returning from overseas at homecoming celebrations and performs volunteer work for veteran's organizations such as homes for special needs veterans.

From a local newspaper the Patriot Guard issued a statement: "It is with a heavy heart that we inform you that America has lost another True American Hero from the Greatest Generation. The Family of Pvt. Allen Carter has requested that we stand in honor of their loved one. Pvt. Carter served in the US Army during World War II, fighting for our freedoms in the largest military conflict of all time.

"This Hero was awarded the Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal, the WW II Victory Medal, and the Army Good Conduct Medal. He put his life on the line to defend our nation and our way of life. The Patriot Guard Riders are honored to escort our Hero from the funeral home to the church and then stand a silent flag line. Following the service at the Fanny-Damascus Baptist Church we will escort Pvt. Carter to his final resting place." €

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Fruithurst, from Forgotten Alabama

At the right top, the Fruithurst Resort/Inn, Claiborne County

Comment from the website: "The Fruithurst Resort Inn drew visitors from around the world and the food and wines served received international acclaim."

Rick Bozeman added the information that the resort was named for the wineries that had been in the area since the 19th century. The resort cost \$40,000, had 80 rooms, central steam heat, a restaurant, running water, billiards, bowling, and a barber shop.

It was also noted that there were 3000 acres of vineyards in the area making 23,000 gallons of wine in 1898

The picture courtesy of the Fruithurst Winery <www.thefruithurstwineryco.com>. Wayne Ruple's photo at <<https://www>.



Train Depot, Fruithurst, Probably Early 1900s

Picture courtesy of Charlotte Funderburk at <<https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=10204404864023240&set=>



The E.B. Hammitt and Company Grape Packinghouse in Fruithurst.

Picture courtesy of Charlotte Funderburk at <<https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=10204404875703532&set=0.193315614125761&type=1&theater>>.

Fruithurst Public School

The school had a total of 106 students enrolled.

Picture and text courtesies Fruithurst Winery at <<https://www.facebook.com/ForgottenAlabama>>.



ECHOES
THE NEWSLETTER FOR
THE ESCAMBIA COUNTY
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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<u>Flomaton Centennial Scrapbook</u>	\$30.00	\$25.00
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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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