

Early Schools of Walton County, Florida

By Sam Carnley

Even before there were public schools in Walton County, a number of its families sought education in some form for their children. Typically, the more affluent families with the financial means hired tutors to come into their homes to teach their children, or sent them away to boarding schools or to live with relatives where nearby educational facilities were available to them. The children of families less financially situated however, often had little or no educational opportunities, and even when they did their education often came second to helping out on the farm or other endeavor in which the family made a living. Fortunate were those families in whose communities schools were established to meet the educational needs of their children. One of the earliest in the County for which records are available was Knox Hill Academy established about 1849 in Euchee Valley where it was preceded by the even earlier Henry School of an unknown establishment date. Knox Hill was not a free public school, but a private one funded primarily by the General Assembly of the Euchee Valley Presbyterian Church and its first teacher, Reverend John Newton, was hired by the Church Elders.¹ As was typical of the era, education and religion played equally important roles in the education of children and little distinction was drawn between the two.

Newton's education and training suited him well for the role of a religiously oriented school master. He was a graduate of Amherst College in Massachusetts, which was founded "for the classical education of indigent young men of piety and talents for the Christian ministry."² Additionally, before coming to Florida, he briefly taught school in North Carolina. During his tenure at Knox Hill Academy he gained wide recognition as a highly respected educator.³

He taught there from about 1849 until shortly after the Civil War began in 1861. Relocating to California for the duration of the war, he returned to Knox Hill in 1866, but soon fell out of favor with the patrons of the school who disagreed with his views on ministering to freed slaves. He departed Euchee Anna and moved to south Walton County where he established the town of Mary Esther, now in Okaloosa County, which he named after his daughters, and became its postmaster. At the time of his death in 1893 he lived with his widowed daughter, Esther Newton Axelson, in Pensacola.

Lists of students he taught at Knox Hill and their patrons exist for the periods of September 24, 1849 to December 24, 1854 and March 1867 to July 31, 1868. Stuart Knox Gillis was one of many teachers who served as instructor at the school following Newton's departure. Patrons and students during his tenure are listed for June 17, 1889 through September 13, 1889.⁴ Enrollment at the school was not limited to local students only. Some attended from places such as "Marianna, Quincy and Pensacola, Florida; Geneva, Alabama and the state of Georgia."⁵

Knox Hill Academy continued in operation until 1947. Its student records, however, only date from 1913, part of the reason for which will be explained in due course.

¹ The Knox Hill Academy, Submitted by Clayton Metcalf, *The Heritage Book of Walton County, Florida*, (Heritage Publishing Consultants, Inc., P. O. Box 67, Clanton, Al 35046, 2006), 46-47.

² History of Amherst College, <https://www.amherst.edu/amherst-story/facts/history/node/6694>

³ The Knox Hill Academy, Metcalf, 47

⁴ Ibid, 47-48.

⁵ Ibid, 47

In 1849 when Knox Hill Academy came into existence Eucheeanna was the county seat and site of the courthouse. In May 1885 the courthouse burned and all official records of the county it held were destroyed, including those of the Board of Public Instruction.

Nothing resembling county Boards of Public Instruction existed in the State of Florida prior to the end of the Civil War. They originated under the constitution of 1868 which the former secessionist Confederate State adopted as a requirement for readmission to the Union after the War. ARTICLE VIII, Section 2, of the constitution, mandated the State Legislature to “provide a uniform system of Common Schools, and a University, and provide for the liberal maintenance of the same,” and make instruction in the schools free to all children in each county between the ages of 4 and 21.⁶ Individual county Boards of Public Instruction were integral to the ensuing state-wide public school system established in accordance with the constitutional mandate and became active as soon as the selection of local officials, implementation of applicable regulations and acquisition of office space were possible. Presumably, that occurred about 1869 when John Gillis became the Walton County’s first Superintendent of Schools.⁷ Whether he was elected or appointed is unknown.

Also unknown is what system, if any, existed prior to the advent of the Board of Public Instruction for maintaining lists of schools and collecting and preserving records of students attending them. Obviously, the records of some have survived, partially at least, as is evident of those for Knox Hill, although they apparently are privately held rather than in the possession of the Walton County School Board, all of whose existing records postdate the courthouse fire. No school or student records predating the fire other than for Knox Hill have come to light. One possible explanation for the absence of those records from other schools is that they were not required to preserve student records. It is also conceivable that schools retained them locally instead of forwarding them to a central collection point and they eventually became lost. Another possibility is that they were centrally collected at the courthouse only to be destroyed in the 1885 fire, which would seem to explain the absence of student records from the 1869 origin of the Board of Public Instruction to the date the courthouse burned.

The first post fire loss meeting was held on Friday, 19 June, 1885 in Eucheeanna. The minutes of that meeting through the one of Tuesday, 15 June 1886 are transcribed herein. On 16 February 1886, an election was held to select a new site for the county seat. DeFuniak Springs won and became the new site of county government.⁸ Consequently, the Board of Public Instruction meeting of 15 June 1886 was the first to be held at DeFuniak Springs. At that point in Walton County’s history, it included a number of schools now in Okaloosa County which predated that County’s creation in 1915. The minute books are on file at the District School Board office in DeFuniak Springs and are available for review by the public free of charge. As they include the names of many ancestors of people with Walton and Okaloosa County roots, and the names and locations of schools with which they were associated, these records provide both genealogical and historical information that may be of interest to those wishing to learn about their families’ and the public educational heritage of the two counties.

Walton County’s earliest student records consisted of names hand written on preprinted forms and filed separately from the minute books. They were later copied onto microfiche film which can only be viewed with a special machine. More recently, student records are entered into computers and can be copied to various forms of electronic media for data management purposes. Since the 1960s,

⁶ ARTICLE VIII, Education, Constitution of the State of Florida, Adopted February 25, 1868, <https://fall.fsulawrc.com/crc/conhist/1868con.html>

⁷ School Superintendents, Walton County, Florida, 1869-present, *The Heritage Book of Walton County, Florida*, (Heritage Publishing Consultants, Inc., P. O. Box 67, Clanton, Al 35046, 2006), 42.

⁸ Walton Relations and History newsletter, April 2018, p. 3, <http://www.waltoncountyheritage.org/GenSoc/NL2018Apr.pdf>

Florida student records have been confidential under State law and access to them is strictly limited to students and their parents, school district officials and a small number of other specifically designated specialists and professionals. School Board administrators are responsible for ensuring compliance with confidentiality laws.

In 1983, the late Donald Duane Bishop, General Supervisor of Walton County Schools, compiled a list of schools with the beginning and ending dates of student records on file for each. Those records with ending dates presumably corresponded with the closing dates of the schools and those without ending dates signified schools then still in operation. He assigned numbers to the schools and notated the numbers on a map of Walton County corresponding to the locations of schools as a cross index between the list and the map. A transcript of Bishop's school list and his annotated map are included herein.

A comparison of schools approved by the Board of Public Instruction in the minutes of its meetings from June 1885 to June 1886 to those in Bishop's list reveals long gaps of time between school approval dates in the minutes and beginning student dates per Bishop. The reason for these differences is unknown, but Bishop's student record beginning dates clearly are not school approval dates in every instance as the minutes demonstrate. Furthermore, school approval dates per the minutes are not in every instance the original school establishment dates as many of the schools listed originated long before 1885/86, of which Knox Hill Academy is a case in point. As previously indicated, it was established about 1849, whereas its student record beginning date was 1913, a gap of 64 years.

Bishop's list includes a total of 102 documented schools which have existed in Walton County, but the appearance in the Board of Public Instruction minutes of 1885/86 and later of schools not listed by Bishop indicates the number throughout the County's history was even greater. A number of them were in today's Okaloosa County, and no one knows how many community schools might have sprung up and then disappeared overnight without any documented record of their existence. Among those not listed by Bishop but included in the Board of Public Instruction minutes of 19 November 1888 is a school with the colorful name of Punch Bowl,⁹ which was located on the pond of that name a short distance south of Gaskin and west of Hwy 83. The number of schools had shrunken dramatically to less than a dozen as of the 1983 date of Bishop's list and included Paxton, Freeport, Maude Saunders, West DeFuniak, Walton Vocational, Walton Senior and Walton Middle School. As of 2019 the Walton County School District website lists 21 schools, including the Emerald Coast Technical College, Walton Virtual School, The Wise Center, Walton In¹⁰city School of Excellence and Walton Learning Center.¹⁰

At the meeting of 13 July 1885, the Board of Public Instruction enrolled a school at Freeport, no. 22 and another at De Funiak, no. 25. At the meeting on the 27 of that month, a school named Funiak (c), no. 29 and one named De Funiak Springs, no. 30, were enrolled. The two schools named De Funiak and De Funiak Springs may have been predecessors of Walton Senior High School. The schools at Freeport, and Walton Senior High School are still in operation and may therefore be the longest continuously operating schools in the county.

⁹ Walton County Board of Public Instruction Minutes Book 1, p. 26-27, 19 November 1888, District School Board Office, DeFuniak Springs, Florida. Transcribed by Sam Carnley, 7/27/2014

¹⁰ Walton County School District, Schools, <https://www.walton.k12.fl.us/schools>

Transcript of BPI Minutes of Meetings, 19 June 1885-15 June 1886

1. The Board of Public Instruction for Walton County met at Eucheeanna on Friday June 19th A. D. 1885. Present were Mr. Gillis, Chairman, and Messrs. Darby, Ray, and Cawthon.

Ordered, that W. M. King, Josiah Miller, and J. Gillman be appointed Trustees of School No. 2 at New Prospect Church.

Ordered, that J. C. Douglass be allowed \$2.00 per day and mileage for 6 days services as County Superintendent, and seventy cents for stationery.

Ordered, that the examination of teachers this year be conducted in writing, and that questions on the different branches of study be revised and arranged by the County Superintendent and chairman of the Board by the time of the next meeting.

Ordered, that Mr. Allen McDonald, who claims pay for teaching a public school on Black Creek, last year, be examined. Examination sustained, certificate granted, and a warrant issued to Mr. McDonald for fifty two and 10/100 Dollars for his services as Teacher of Public School No. ___ on Black Creek last year, and that the claim of Mr. Settles be no longer recognized.

Ordered, that the Board meet on Monday 13th July 1885, for the purpose of establishing and organizing schools; and on the 14th July 1885 at 10 o'clock A. M. for the examination of Teachers.

Adjourned to, July 13th/85.

C. C. Gunn
Sec'y & Co. Supt.

Daniel Gillis
Chairman, Bd. Pub. Ins.

2. The Board of Instruction for Walton County met pursuant to adjournment at Eucheeanna on Monday, 13th July/85 at 9.30 A. M. Present were Mr. Gillis, Chairman, and Messrs. Darby, Ray and Cawthon.

By regular order of proceeding, the following schools were enrolled, viz:

Sandy Creek	No. 1.	Rocky Creek	No. 14.
New Prospect	" 2.	Macedonia (c)	" 15.
Bells Schoolhouse	" 3.	Big Swamp	" 16.
Limestone	" 4.	Cluster Springs	" 17.
Yellow River	" 5.	Eucheeanna	" 18.
Crestview	" 6.	Valley Church	" 19.
Argyle	" 7.	Ebenezer	" 20.
Alaqua Church	" 8.	Oak Grove	" 21.
Upper Alaqua	" 9.	Freeport	" 22.
Portland	" 10.	Hickory Spring	" 23.

Center Ridge	“ 11. Mount Olive (c)	“ 24.
Knox Hill	“ 12. De Funiak	“ 25.
Boggy Bayou	“ 13. Saint Paul (c)	“ 26.

Board proceeded to examine Teachers on Tuesday, 14th July.

Ordered, That warrant be issued to C. C. Gunn for five dollars and seventy cents cash expended for record book, Express charges on package of blanks and stationery for the use of the Board in examination of Teachers.

Ordered, That the Board meet again on Wednesday 27th day of July 1885, for the benefit of those neighborhoods which have not presented their claims for schools, nor teachers for examination.

Ordered, That, the Secretary be instructed to write to the Trustees of school no. 6 at Crestview informing them of the conduct of Mr. King, their teacher towards this Board.

Ordered, That, Mr. James A. McLean, a merchant of Eucheeanna, be authorized to act as agent for the sale of the student text books of this county.

Certificates were issued to the following teachers, viz:

Second Grade: T. J. McDade, A. F. Ollinger, D. A. McDonald, Lucius Reeves, A. R. Campbell, N. A. Monroe, T. J. Walden, Miss S. A. Bowers, Miss Christian McLeod, Miss Maggie McLeod, Miss Sarah D. McLeod, Mrs. Ellen Barnett.

Third Grade: W. D. Williams, Will J. See, N. P. McDonald, S. S. Scipline.

Note: for names of Trustees and assignments of Teachers, see Index pages of this Book.

Adjourned to, July 27th, 1885.

C. C. Gunn
Sec'y & Co. Supt.

Daniel Gillis
Chairman, Bd. Pub. Ins.

3. The Board of Instruction for Walton Co. met, pursuant to adjournment, at Eucheeanna on Monday 27th July 1885 at nine o'clock A. M. Present, Mr. Gillis, chairman, and Messrs. Ray, Darby, McSwain and Cawthon.

The following schools were enrolled, viz:

Shady Grove	No. 27. St Paul	No. 31.
Clyde	“ 28. Universalist Ch.	“ 32.
Funiak (c)	“ 29. Silver Creek	“ 33.
De Funiak Springs	“ 30.	

Certificates were issued to the following teachers, viz:

Second grade: Miss Kate Charles, J. L. McKinnon, S. P. Darby, C. C. Gunn.

Third Grade: H. G. King

Ordered, That the Board meet on First Monday, (4th day) of January 1886 to organize schools for the year 1886.

Resolution adopted: returning the thanks of the Board to the Superintendent for services rendered by him in the examination of teachers.

Ordered, that the Superintendent may, at his discretion, examine such teachers as may come before him properly recommended and grant certificates to such as pass a satisfactory examination.

Adjourned to, Saturday, 5th December, 1885.

C. C. Gunn
Sec'y & Co. Supt.

Daniel Gillis
Chairman, Bd. Pub. Ins.

Note: Above date changed to Saturday, Nov. 28th, 1885.

4. The Board of Education met at Eucheeanna, Fla. on Saturday, November 28th, 1885. Present Mr. Gillis, chairman, and Messrs. Ray and Cawthon. Minutes of last meeting were read and approved.

Warrants were drawn on the Treasurer of the School Fund as follows:

Willis Scott	Holmes Co.	Transfer pupils	22.50
Ella Patton	Ala.	"	31.50
J. T. Registser	"	"	38.00
Wm. Stoneman	Holmes Co.	"	38.50
C. C. Gunn		Printing	4.60
			<u>137.10</u>

T. J. McDade	School No.	2.	127.10
A. F. Ollinger	"	3.	101.50
Kate Charles	"	6.	91.00
C. C. Gunn	"	7.	59.50
W. D. Williams	"	9.	126.00
L. J. Reeves	"	10.	94.00
S. P. Darby	"	11.	122.00
A. R. Campbell	"	12.	91.00
A. A. McLeod	"	14.	45.50
S. S. Scipline	"	15.	112.00
S. D. McLeod	"	16.	70.00
D. R. McDonald	"	17.	63.00
S. A. Bowers	"	18.	73.50
Christian McLeod	"	19.	94.50
Ellen Barnett	"	21.	112.00
N. A. Monroe	"	22.	136.50
Texanna Thomas	"	24.	108.50
T. J. Walden	"	25.	108.50
N. P. McDonald	"	26.	73.50

H. G. King	"	28.	136.50
M. G. Campbell	"	31.	56.00
A. S. Fisher	"	32.	56.00
J. A. Morrison	"	34.	80.00
J. L. McKinnon	"	30.	154.00
			<u>2,369.60</u>

Ordered, That One Hundred dollars be allowed to C. C. Gunn for services as County Superintendent of Schools for six months from May 15th 1885 to Nov. 15th 1885.

Adjourned to Monday Jan'y 4th 1886.

C. C. Gunn
Sec'y & Co. Supt.

Daniel Gillis
Chairman

Note: No Quorum present on Jan'y 4th, 1886.

5. The Board of Instruction met at Eucheeanna, Fla. on Saturday January 16th 1886. Present Messrs. Gillis and Ray. Proceedings of last meeting read and approved.

Ordered, That the following regulations shall be observed in the management of Public Schools for this year:

1st Teachers will be paid by contract at so much per month and the funds divided pro rata among the schools in the County.

2nd Term may begin at any time, but all schools must close by 30th September.

3rd Trustees will select competent teachers and apply to the Chairman & the Board, or the County Superintendent either of whom is authorized to contract.

4th All teachers who have heretofore held third grade certificates will be expected to undergo examination for 2nd grade this year but 3rd grade certificates may be issued to persons applying for the first time without any previous experience in teaching.

Apportionments were made to the several schools as follows:

No. 1.	Sandy Creek	75.00
" 2.	New Prospect	60.00
" 3.	Bells	60.00
" 4.	Limestone	60.00
" 5.	Yellow River	60.00
" 6.	Crestview	75.00
" 7.	Argyle	85.00
" 8.	Alaqua Ch.	60.00
" 9.	Upper Alaqua	75.00
" 10.	Portland	80.00
" 11.	Center Ridge	80.00
" 12.	Knox Hill	85.00
" 13.	Boggy Bayou	45.00

" 14. Rocky	45.00
" 15. Macedonia (c)	60.00
" 16. Big Swamp	60.00
" 17. Cluster Springs	71.00
" 18. Eucleeanna	60.00
" 19. Valley Church	60.00
" 20. Ebenezer	75.00
" 21. Oak Grove	75.00
" 22. Freeport	120.00
" 24. Mount Olive (c)	75.00
" 26. Saint Paul (c)	51.00
" 28. Clyde	90.00
" 30. De Funiak Springs	120.00
" 32. Universalist Church	51.00
" 33. Live Oak	60.00

Adjourned Sine Die.

C. C. Gunn
Secretary

Daniel Gillis
Chairman

6. The Board of Instruction met at DeFuniak Springs on Tuesday, 15th June 1886. Present, Mr. Gillis, chairman, and Messrs. Ray, Darby and Cawthon. Minutes of last meeting approved. Schools were established as follows:

Mount Olive	No. 36.	J. M. Edge & W. J. Bridges, Trustees.
Mushy Bend	" 37.	J. P. Vaughn, M. L. Lassiter, N. J. Mckinnon, Trustees
Natural Bridge	" 38.	Henry Wilkinson, Elisha Wilkinson, Wm. Akerman, Trustees
Pond Creek	" 39.	T. J. Hinote, G. W. Nichols & E. D. Jones, Trustees
Pine Orchard	" 35.	Alex McSwain and La Fayette Cawthon, Trustees
Black Creek	" 40.	Henry Evans and Newton Tarance, Trustees

Appropriations were made to schools as follows:

Mount Olive \$51.⁰⁰, Mushy Bend \$51.⁰⁰, Black Creek \$51.⁰⁰, De Funiak \$45.⁰⁰, Pond Creek \$51.⁰⁰, Natural Bridge \$60.⁰⁰. An additional appropriation was made to Valley Church School of \$15.⁰⁰. Schools No. 16 and 17 were consolidated and schools allowed this year at Cluster Springs only, for both communities. The amount heretofore allowed to Cluster Springs was increased to \$75.⁰⁰ by additional appropriation of \$24.⁰⁰. George Danielly was appointed Trustee of Limestone School in place of Ramsay who has moved away.

Adjourned.

C. C. Gunn
Secretary

Daniel Gillis
Chairman

List of Walton County Schools as of 1888¹¹
With Annual Appropriations.

<u>No.</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Amt.</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Amt.</u>
1	Sandy Creek	112.00	29	De Funiak (c)	51.00
2	New Prospect	120.00	30	De Funiak	210.00
3	Bells	77.00	31	St. Paul	60.00
4	Limestone	60.00	32	Water Oak	103.00
5	Magnolia	110.00	33	Basin Bayou	60.00
6	Crestview	86.00	34	Live Oak	73.00
7	Argyle	103.00	35	Gum Creek	68.00
8	Alaqua ch.	99.00	36	Mt. Olive (W)	86.00
9	Upper Alaqua	110.00	37	Mossy Bend	86.00
10	Portland	120.00	38	Nat. Bridge	60.00
11	Center Ridge	94.00	39	Pond Creek	99.00
12	Knox Hill	73.00	40	Black Creek	81.00
13	Boggy Bayou	68.00	41	Camp Creek	60.00
14	Rock Bayou	73.00	42	Mossy Head	103.00
15	Macedonia (c)	86.00	43	Punch Bowl	64.00
16	Sweet Water	60.00	44	Upper Alaqua (No. 2)	65.00
17	Cluster Springs	90.00	45	Bluff Springs	64.00
18	Euclia Anna	68.00	46	Indian Creek	90.00
19	Valley ch.	60.00	47	Murder Creek	68.00
20	Ebenezer	120.00	48	Pine Level	60.00
21	Oak Grove	64.00	49	Arborvitae	60.00
22	Free Port	120.00	50	New Home	60.00
23	Hickory Spring	60.00	51	New Harmony	60.00
24	Mt. Olive	129.00	52	Cedar Grove (c)	68.00
25	De Funiak (No. 2)	120.00	53	McLendon	73.00
26	St. Johns	81.00	54	Carnleys	60.00
27	Pine Grove	81.00	55	Middle Creek	68.00
28	Lower Knox Hill	81.00			

¹¹ Walton County Board of Public Instruction Minutes Book 1, p. 26-27, 19 November 1888, District School Board Office, DeFuniak Springs, Florida. Transcribed by Sam Carnley, 7/27/2014.

Walton County, Florida

A List of Schools by Dwan Bishop, March, 1983.

Map Number *	Name	Time Period **	Map Number *	Name	Time Period **
<u>Paxton, New Harmony, Area</u>			<u>Glendale, Northeast, Southeast to Holmes County</u>		
29	Children's Home	1912-49 (1)	44	Glendale	1912-77
30	Clear Springs	1911-37	46	Gum Creek	1911-20
32	Crumpley	1920-42	87	Sandy Creek	1915-19
54	Lakewood	1911-37	16	Blue Pond	1921-22
45	Gordon	1912-36	64	McLane	1920-21
68	Mt. Zion	1917-67	52	Juniper Bay	1915-42
62	McDuffie	1912-13	72	New Prospect	1915-35
69	Natural Bridge	1910-36	99	Union	1911-18
77	Pine Log	1913-15 (2)			
76	Paxton	1912			
33	Culliver	1913-26			
<u>Gaskin, Darlington Area</u>			<u>Mossyhead, New Harmony Area</u>		
43	Gaskin	1907-69	66	Mossyhead	1909-51
20	Burgess	1921-24	80	Pond Creek	1913-47
31	Connor	1919-20	93	Shoal River	1912-25
74	Oak Grove	1911-52	35	Deerland	1908-14
58	Limestone	1912-45	70	New Harmony	1916-51
28	Chestnut	1910-23			
105	Yawkey	1913-20			
34	Darlington	1912-83			
<u>Liberty, North Area</u>			<u>DeFuniak Area</u>		
97	Sweetwater	1921-28	61	Maude Saunders	
24	Caney Creek	1911-38	104	West DeFuniak	1962
57	Liberty	1916-69	98	Tivoli	1912-69
21	Campbell Rest	1915-27	103	Walton Vocational	1973
51	Jackson Camp	1928-30	101	Walton Senior	1911
			102	Walton Middle	1971

Notes:

* Corresponds to circled number on map.

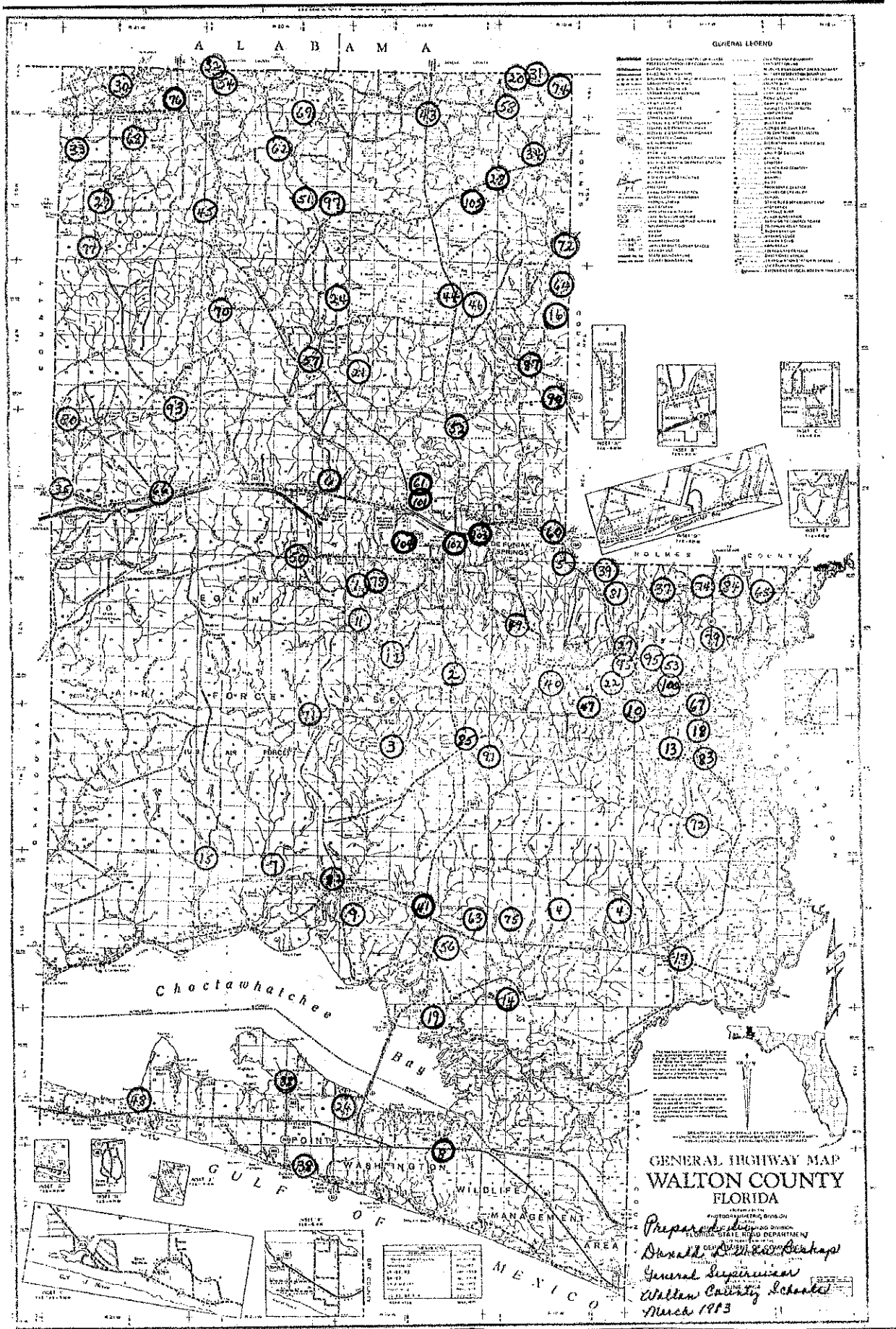
** The time period for which student records are on file.

(1) Not the first school of this name. The first one was established in 1907 at a different location and closed about 1910.

(2) Originally known as "Carnleys" established as of 1888 or earlier. Renamed "Pine Log" about Oct. 1891

Walton County, Florida
A List of Schools by Dwan Bishop, March, 1983.

Map Number *	Name	Time Period **	Map Number *	Name	Time Period **
<u>Alaqua, West to Okaloosa, Rock Hill</u>			<u>Argyle South, Red Bay, Seven Runs, East to Holmes County</u>		
1	Alaqua	1913-54	5	Arcadia	1912-42
6	Attica	1916-27	39	Ebenezer	1909-14
50	Iona	1912-42	60	Macedonia	1916-48
78	Pleasant Ridge	1918-23	49	Indian Creek	1915-30
71	New Home	1916-44	40	Eucheeanna	1913-49
3	Alice Creek	1915-42	81	Poplar Springs	1915-54
12	Bell	1912-51	37	Douglass	1927-37
85	Rock Hill	1921-22	47	Hickory Springs	1915-30
2	Albert's Temple	1916-45	74	Oak Grove	1911-52
11	Beechwood	1912-16	84	Reedy Creek	1927-
91	Sellar's Still	1912-16	65	Moores	1911-48
<u>Freeport and East, South to Bay</u>			27	Chapel Hill	1954-68
41	Free Port	1917	95	St. Johns	1914-54
56	Liberia	1912-54	22	Campellville	1914-26
4	Antioch	1913-31	10	Beech Grove	1911-50
17	Bruce	1915-54	53	Knox Hill	1913-47
63	McKenzie	1928-	100	Valley View	1950-68
75	Padgett	1911-	79	Pleasant Valley	1914-42
14	Black Creek	1916-37	67	Mt. Olive	1914-16
19	Bunker	1921-22	18	Bruce Creek	1915-54
<u>Free Port to West Line, North to Rock Hill, South to Bay</u>			13	Black Branch	1913-37
82	Portland	1914-54	83	Red Bay	1905-65
7	Basin	1909-30	92	Seven Runs	1911-24
15	Black Oak	1909-24	<u>South of Bay</u>		
9	Bay View	1913-21	8	Bay	1914-
			88	Santa Rosa	1913-53
			26	Central	1911-20
			38	Draper	1915-18
			48	Horseshoe	1913-16

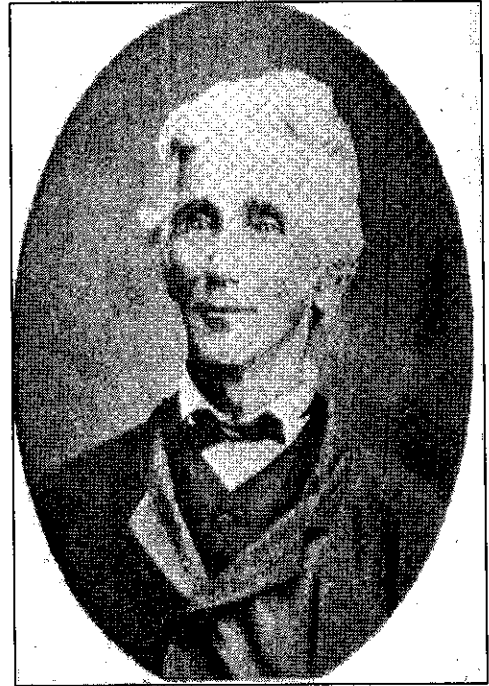


Reverend John Newton

By Marla Drake Dooley and Bob Newton
(Selections From the "Heritage of Walton County, Florida")
Transcribed and edited by
Sam Carnley

John Newton was born April 22, 1814 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Of Scottish descent, he attended Amherst College and taught school in North Carolina before migrating to Pensacola, Florida, where, in 1848 he met members of the McKinnon family. Learning that he was a school teacher in search of employment, they invited him to accompany them to their homes in Walton County. He accepted the invitation and traveled with them aboard the schooner "Henrietta" to Freeport. From there he was taken to the Eucheeanna home of Colonel McKinnon who was so impressed with him that he took him to the Valley Church and introduced him to the elders. Newton later recalled of that meeting:

. . . There were quite a number of old Scotch elders and others in their substantial homespun jeans, suits of blue and dark brown; some sitting on the long door-steps basking in the sunshine, while others stood around them under and leaning against the great oaks that stood in front of the church. The Col. introduced me to all of them, telling them where I was from and how I came. I received a handshake welcome that I rarely met with in any other country.



Reverend John Newton
(Source: "The Heritage of Walton County, Florida")

A meeting was held the next day to hash out the particulars of Newton's employment as a teacher and the plans for a new school building. Knox Hill in the center of the Valley and one of the most elevated places in the county with an all-around view was selected as the location. The new, two story building had blackboards set in the walls, and large maps of both hemispheres hung upon the walls in the back of the building.

The school grew until there were about 100 students. The larger students were put upstairs on their good behavior; the younger ones were kept below under the watchful eye of the teacher. When there was trouble above, the troublemakers were brought down and given seats in the front of the lower room.

This new school, completed in 1849, was built by the parents, relatives, and friends of the students to be served. Although the Presbyterian Church was the School board, Methodists, Baptists, and Roman Catholics attended from places as far away as Pensacola and the neighboring states. The state and Federal governments neither helped nor hindered the school. No union or ACLU was breathing down its neck, proving once again that educated, intelligent, and dedicated teachers coupled with motivated parents make successful schools, not money and the fads of the day.

In 1858 at about age 34, Newton married Margaret Campbell, granddaughter of Daniel Campbell, one of the early settlers. Their first child, Angus Campbell, was born in 1859 and died about five months later. In 1863 they had a daughter, Mary Christine, who died in 1937. Esther Newton, who married Gustav Axelson, was born in 1861 and died in 1931 [in Pensacola]. Ten years into their marriage,

Geo. F. Bagley

West Hill Academy St.

Account with John Newton

East B.	Forty five acres of land	100.00
	Twenty six desks	100.00
	Iron table	10.00
	Iron book case	10.00
	Blackboard platform and stools	30.00
	Library and books for school	11.50
	To J. G. Deane for apparatus	57.00
	Freight on apparatus	2.50
	Geo. Maps	60.00
	Comp of wire chairs sold for fund by	50.00
	J. M. Price account for work	29.50
	Quincy and hardware	20.19
	Paid to Susan M. Dean	65.00
		<u>384.57</u>

West Hill Academy St.

By money from Dist. Board of Edu.

1850	Nov 25	From Protestant Board of Education	37.50
1851	June 10		37.50
1852	Aug 15		74.75
1853	April 30		56.25
	Aug		18.75
	Dec 1853		18.75
	April		18.75
	Aug		18.75
	Dec 15		18.75
1854	April 14		43.75
	April		25.00
		Subscription of John Newton	50.00
		From Protestant Board of Education	50.00
			<u>500.00</u>

Trus. Halls July 30th 1855

Subscription for paying the debts of the and hearing and additional improvements		\$	c	
Samuel D. Campbell		14	00	Paid
John P. Campbell		2	00	
John Mearns		5	00	advised
Daniel G. Gunn		7	50	Paid
Alexander M. Wood		2	00	
John Smith		1	00	Paid
John Ellis	in labor	2	00	

Newton's wife Margaret died in 1868 and was laid to rest in the Euchee Valley [Presbyterian Church] Cemetery.

He was not a physically large man, but he was a person who stuck by his guns and his convictions. He put a piano in the school to teach the young ladies how to play. He also encouraged them to become more used to fashionable but simple attire. His motto was "You must learn and obey." In 1854 when the trustees of his school told him to restrict the use of some of the books he had for his library because they thought the books had abolitionist leanings and were favorable to economic principles with which they disagreed, Newton said he would use the books in his school as he wished or leave the school. The equally stubborn Scots wouldn't back down and Newton resigned and left for California. He later returned to Florida and taught in Marianna and Orange Hill. By 1859 he was back in Eucheeanna, had taken a wife, fathered his first child and he and the trustees had moved the old Knox Hill Academy and started over again.

[It is generally believed] that Knox Hill Academy and other schools Newton founded and taught graduated well-educated students who did well in law, government, medicine and education. In 1853 he was one of four Floridians in the American Association for the Advancement of Science. Although his application only claimed 'ESPECIAL INTEREST' in five fields, he was accepted in the nine fields recognized by the Association at that time. Every time he changed schools, parents changed their children to go to his schools. [An early believer in continuing professional education,] he continued his in Atlanta and Michigan and became an ordained minister as well as a teacher. [One of the places where he served as minister was the Euchee Valley Presbyterian Church, whose elders were among the first to welcome him on his arrival in the county.]

Unfortunately, much of the good work in the county he had done in educating the young men of the area was wasted by the carnage and deaths resulting from the War Between the States. He did not believe in slavery but that did not deter him from marrying two women who were the daughters and granddaughters of two of the county's major slave holders. He didn't favor secession either and in this he was in step with the rest of the county which voted against it. [His rationale for tolerating both] slavery and secession apparently was that he was a part of the community he lived in. However, he didn't trim his sails to meet popular opinion and the more thoughtful residents of the area -- who were also the major slave holders -- respected his opinions and supported him as a teacher. Reverend Robert Quarterman Baker, a Confederate veteran from Georgia who served until the end of the war, was a staunch friend and admirer whose daughter married Newton's son.

Newton taught during the first three years of the war, but as more of his best students were killed, his first child [having] died in 1860 when only a year old, and feelings about the war running higher and higher, he resigned again and went to California a second time. [Apparently, he made a side trip to the mid-west during this absence from the county because the birth place of his second daughter, Mary Christine, born in 1863, was Illinois.]

[He did not remain out of county for long though.] By 1866 he was back teaching again in Marianna, two years before his first wife, Margaret died. In 1867 he resumed teaching at Knox Hill. He also felt it his duty to minister to the spiritual and educational needs of the freed slaves. In 1868 he left again--this time for Missouri. In 1870 he returned, and married his sister-in-law Mary Catherine, [she was listed as a member of Newton's household under her maiden name of Campbell on the 1870 U. S. census of Walton County] after which he moved to Camp Walton in Santa Rosa County, where he established a school and a church. [On 10 October 1871, he established the community's first post office and was appointed postmaster. He named the post office Mary Esther after his two daughters which also became the name of the town that grew up around it.] It is where his son, John Daniel Campbell was born the following November 20th and his second wife died the day after she bore the child and was buried at the Euchee Valley Presbyterian Church Cemetery.

[As of the U. S. census of 1880 (Figure 1) and the Florida State census of 1885, (Figure 2) Newton and his two daughters were living in Santa Rosa County. Curiously, his son, John Daniel Campbell did not appear in his household in either of those censuses, both of which gave the birth place of his daughter Mary Christine as Illinois.]

Name: John Newton, 1880 U. S. census
 Event Type: Census
 Event Date: 1880
 Event Place: Precinct 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11, Santa Rosa, Florida, United States
 District: ED 138
 Gender: Male
 Age: 66
 Marital Status: Widowed
 Race: White
 Race (Original): W
 Occupation: School Teaching
 Relationship to Head of Household: Self
 Relationship to Head of Household (Original): Self
 Birth Year (Estimated): 1814
 Birthplace: Pennsylvania, United States
 Father's Birthplace: Delaware, United States
 Mother's Birthplace: ---
 Note:
 Sheet Letter: D
 Sheet Number: 220
 Sheet Number and Letter: 220D
 Household ID: 11557278
 Person Number: 0
 Volume: 1
 Affiliate Name: The U.S. National Archives and Records Administration (NARA)
 Affiliate Publication Number: T9
 Affiliate Film Number: 0132
 GS Film Number: 1254132
 Digital Folder Number: 005157345
 Image Number: 00205

Household	Role	Sex	Age	Birthplace
John Newton	Self	M	66	Pennsylvania, United States
Ester Newton	Daughter	F	19	Florida, United States
Mary C Newton	Daughter	F	17	Illinois, United States

Citing this Record
 "United States Census, 1880," database with images, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CSK3-3HG?i=29&cc=2017>), Mary C Newton in household of John Newton, Precinct 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11, Santa Rosa, Florida, United States; citing enumeration district ED 138, sheet 220D, NARA microfilm publication T9 (Washington D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, n.d.), roll 0132; FHL microfilm 1,254,132. Downloaded by Sam Carnley, 3-10-2018.

Figure 1. The John Newton Household on the 1880 U. S. Census of Santa Rosa County, Florida.

1883) and Margaret Hunter (1825 Scotland-1887). The Axelson family owned a shipyard at Miller Point in Santa Rosa County. Gustav and Esther Axelson made their home in Pensacola on Florida Blanca Street. He was captain of "Donna Christine," a three-mast schooner, in the early nineties. In December of 1910, Gustav was aboard his ship "Dois" off Belize, Honduras, when he fell overboard during a storm and lost at sea. [Esther, who never remarried, continued living in her home at 318 South Florida Blanca Street in Pensacola until her death in 1931.]

In 1885, John Newton was asked by the founders of the Florida Chautauqua to take an active role in its creation. He declined with thanks because of his age and his work -- teacher, preacher and postmaster. He and his daughter [Mary Christine, who never married,] remained in Mary Esther until 1889 when they moved to Pensacola [to live with Esther and Gustav Axelson.] Newton lived there until his death in 1893. [According to his death certificate, he died of endocarditis, which "generally occurs when bacteria, fungi or other germs from another part of your body, such as your mouth, spread through your bloodstream and attach to damaged areas in your heart." The place of

Name: Jno (John) Newton, 1885 Florida State Census
 Gender:
 Residence Place: , Santa Rosa, Florida
 Age: 71
 Age (Months):
 Birth Year (Estimated): 1814
 Birthplace: Pennsylvania
 Death Date:
 Father's Birthplace: Pennsylvania
 Mother's Birthplace: Pennsylvania
 Marital Status: Married
 Race (Original): W
 Race: White
 Schedule Type: Population
 Line Number: 30
 Sheet Number:
 Sheet Letter: D
 Relationship to Head of Household: Self
 Family Number:
 House Number:
 GS Film number: 888972
 Digital Folder Number: 4280075
 Image Number: 00516
 Page:

Household	Role	Sex	Age	Birthplace
Newton, Jno	Self	M	71	Pa.
Esther	D	F	23	Fl.
Mary C.	D	F	21	Ill.

Citing this Record
 "Florida State Census, 1885," database with images, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CSK3-3HG?i=29&cc=2017>), Jno Newton, Santa Rosa, Florida; citing p. , sheet letter D, number, line 30, NARA microfilm publication M845 (Washington D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, n.d.); FHL microfilm 888,972. Downloaded by Sam Carnley, 3-10-2018.

Figure 2. The John Newton Household on the 1885 Florida state Census of Santa Rosa County.

His oldest daughter, Esther, married Gustav Axelson at her father's home in Santa Rosa on 17 January 1883. [Her father probably performed the ceremony. The year of the marriage is questionable because Esther was still a member of her father's household on the 1885 Florida State census.] Gustav was born April 10, 1858 in East Bay, Santa Rosa County, son of Frederick A. Axelson (1825 Sweden-

death was identified as "cor. (corner) Zaragosa & F. Blanca St., which was the address of the Axelson home. His remains were "Shpd. to DeFuniak Sprgs" (Figure 3)] and he was buried in the Eucheeanna Presbyterian Cemetery with his son, wives, daughters, grandson, and one great grandchild.

Certificate of Death

Pensacola, Fla. 1893

Name: John Newton

Race: White Sex: Male

Age: 84 years — months — days

Place of birth: _____

Occupation: Minister

Marital, Single or Widowed: _____

Date of Death: Nov. 25th

Cause of Death: Endocarditis

Place of Death: Cor. Zaragosa & F. Blanca St.

Time in State: _____

Birth place of Father: _____

Birth place of Mother: _____

Physician: Dr. Ogilby

Undertaker: W. H. Wood

Cemetery: Shpd. to DeFuniak Sprgs

REMARKS: _____

1792

Charles W. Ogilby M.D.

Figure 3. John Newton's Death Certificate
 "(Source: Florida Death Index, 1877-1998," database, FamilySearch (https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:VZ H-NQW : 25 December 2014), John Newton, 1893; from "Florida Death Index, 1877-1998," index, Ancestry (www.ancestry.com : 2004); citing vol. , certificate number , Florida Department of Health, Office of Vital Records, Jacksonville. Downloaded by Sam Carnley, 3-10-2018.)

Name: Esther Axelson, 1920 U. S. Census

Titles and Terms: _____

Event Type: Census

Event Date: 1920

Event Place: Pensacola, Escambia, Florida, United States

District: ED 29

Gender: Female

Age: 58

Marital Status: Widowed

Race: White

Race (Original): White

Can Read: Yes

Can Write: Yes

Relationship to Head of Household: Head

Relationship to Head of Household (Original): Head

Own or Rent: Own

Birth Year (Estimated): 1862

Birthplace: Florida

Immigration Year: _____

Father's Birthplace: Pennsylvania

Mother's Birthplace: North Carolina

Sheet Letter: A

Sheet Number: 26

Sheet Number and Letter: 26A

Household ID: 631

Line Number: 11

Affiliate Name: The U.S. National Archives and Records Administration (NARA)

Affiliate Publication Number: T625

Affiliate Film Number: 219

GS Film Number: 1820219

Digital Folder Number: 004964401

Image Number: 00996

Household	Role	Sex	Age	Birthplace
Esther Axelson	Head	F	58	Florida
Christina Axelson	Daughter	F	26	Florida
J N Axelson	Son	M	23	Florida
Mary C Newton	Sister	F	35	Illinois

Citing this Record
 "United States Census, 1920," database with images, FamilySearch (https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:MNYN-D5V : accessed 11 March 2018), Mary C Newton in household of Esther Axelson, Pensacola, Escambia, Florida, United States; citing ED 29, sheet 26A, line 14, family 631, NARA microfilm publication T625 (Washington D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1992), roll 219; FHL microfilm 1,820,219. Downloaded by Sam Carnley, 3-10-2018.

Figure 4. The Esther Axelson Household on the 1920 U. S. Census of Escambia County, Florida.

[As of the 1920 U. S. census of Escambia County, Mary Christine was listed in the household headed by her widowed sister, Esther Axelson. Mary's place of birth on that census was also Illinois (Figure 4). When Esther died in 1931, her home went to her children. They allowed Mary to continue living there until her death on 22 July 1937, as evidenced by her residence of 318 S. Fla. Blanca St. listed on her death certificate. It identified her as Miss Mary Christine Newton, single white female. Her age was listed as 73 years, 10 months and 10 days. Parents - John Newton and Margaret Campbell. Cause of death was Chronic Cardiac Valvular Disease (Figure 5). Her remains were returned to the Euchee Valley Presbyterian Church Cemetery for burial with other members of her family.]

[The Gustav Axelson House is now an historic land mark in Pensacola (Figure 6). Evidence that it was the place of John Newton's death is provided by a photo of the house with street signs in front reading "Zaragosa St. and Florida Blanca St.," as stated on his death certificate.]

Angus Campbell Newton (First Child)

Birth: 3 Oct 1859

Death: 20 Mar 1860 (aged 5 months)

Burial: Euchee Valley Cemetery, Eucheeanna, Walton County, Florida, USA

Memorial #: 30239891

Created by: Ann Ward (47055608)

Added: 1 Oct 2008

URL: <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/30239891/angus-campbell-newton>

Citation: Find A Grave, database and images (<https://www.findagrave.com> : accessed 11 March 2018), memorial page for Angus Campbell Newton (3 Oct 1859–20 Mar 1860), Find A Grave Memorial no. 30239891, citing Euchee Valley Cemetery, Eucheeanna, Walton County, Florida, USA ; Maintained by Ann Ward (contributor 47055608) .

Esther Newton Axelson (Second Child)

Birth: 12 Jul 1861

Death: 11 Nov 1931 (aged 70)

Burial: Euchee Valley Cemetery, Eucheeanna, Walton County, Florida, USA

Memorial #: 33327507

Added: 28 Jan 2009

URL: <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/33327507/esther-axelson>

Citation: Find A Grave, database and images (<https://www.findagrave.com> : accessed 11 March 2018), memorial page for Esther Newton Axelson (12 Jul 1861–11 Nov 1931), Find A Grave Memorial no. 33327507, citing Euchee Valley Cemetery, Eucheeanna, Walton County, Florida, USA ; Maintained by David Woody (contributor 46846767) .

Mary Christine Newton (Third Child)

Birth: 12 Sep 1863

Death: 22 Jul 1937 (aged 73)

Burial: Euchee Valley Cemetery, Eucheeanna, Walton County, Florida, USA

Memorial #: 33328426

Created by: David Woody (46846767)

Added: 28 Jan 2009

URL: <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/33328426/mary-christine-newton>

Citation: Find A Grave, database and images (<https://www.findagrave.com> : accessed 11 March 2018), memorial page for Mary Christine Newton (12 Sep 1863–22 Jul 1937), Find A Grave Memorial no. 33328426, citing Euchee Valley Cemetery, Eucheeanna, Walton County, Florida, USA ; Maintained by David Woody (contributor 46846767) .

Mary Catherine Campbell Newton (Second Wife, and sister of first wife)

Birth: 13 Nov 1842

Death: 21 Nov 1871 (aged 29)

Burial: Euchee Valley Cemetery, Eucheeanna, Walton County, Florida, USA

Memorial #: 33328425

Created by: David Woody (46846767)

Added: 28 Jan 2009

URL: <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/33328425/mary-catherine-newton>

Citation: Find A Grave, database and images (<https://www.findagrave.com> : accessed 11 March 2018), memorial page for Mary Catherine Campbell Newton (13 Nov 1842–21 Nov 1871), Find A Grave Memorial no. 33328425, citing Euchee Valley Cemetery, Eucheeanna, Walton County, Florida, USA ; Maintained by David Woody (contributor 46846767) .

John Daniel Campbell Newton (Fourth child, first with with second wife)

Birth: 20 Nov 1871

Death: 2 Jan 1919 (aged 47)

Burial: Euchee Valley Cemetery, Eucheeanna, Walton County, Florida, USA

Memorial #: 33328421

Bio: 1919 J D C Newton, died at Pensacola Thursday morning. Services at Valley Church on Friday afternoon, the remains brought from Pensacola to Argyle and from there taken to the cemetery. Mr Newton was a nephew of Judge Daniel Campbell and a cousin to Mrs C B McKinnon, Judge A G Campbell, Mrs John McKinnon, Miss Emma Campbell, Mr Bowers and Mr Ralph Campbell. He was raised in the Eucheeana Valley, his father being Rev. John Newton. Mr Newton was 45 was survived by his wife Miss Maria Baker, daughter of Rev R L Baker and young son Robert, 2 sisters Mrs G Axelson and Miss Christian Newton, aunt, Mrs Harrison, and uncle, Judge Daniel Campbell.

Created by: David Woody (46846767)

Added: 28 Jan 2009

URL: https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/33328421/john-daniel_campbell-newton

Citation: Find A Grave, database and images (<https://www.findagrave.com> : accessed 11 March 2018), memorial page for John Daniel Campbell Newton (20 Nov 1871–2 Jan 1919), Find A Grave Memorial no. 33328421, citing Euchee Valley Cemetery, Eucheeanna, Walton County, Florida, USA ; Maintained by David Woody (contributor 46846767) .

© 2018 Walton County Heritage Association, Inc. ~ www.WaltonCountyHeritage.org
Walton Relations & History is a publication of the Walton County Heritage Association, Inc.,
Sam Carnley, editor. Distribution is encouraged! For more information or to submit an article, please email
its editor at wsamuelcarnley@gmail.com or phone at 850-209-3778.