

the site overlooks tree covered smaller hills and valleys for miles around." James Bright, a one-time North Carolina militia colonel, built a large three-story home on his plantation. The mansion was known locally as "Bright" or "Vallombrosa Mansion".

21. Pine Log State Forest

N 30 25.750, W 085 52.955

Florida's first state forest, Pine Log was purchased in 1936. Pine Log State Forest is home to a diverse mixture of animal and plant species. There are various natural communities found on the forest that include sandhills, flatwoods, cypress ponds and titi swamps. Pine Log has three named streams as well as several small lakes and ponds.

22. Captain Fritz & Cowford Crossing

N 30 28.239, W 085 52.526

The Captain Fritz, built in Mississippi, operated on the Holmes Creek-Choctawhatchee run perhaps longer than any other vessel. She was one of the larger boats. She burned in 1936 near Ebro, where part of her superstructure may still be seen during periods of severe drought today.

The Indians used Cowford's Crossing long before the Spaniards, British or Americans used it as a crossing place. It was on the route of the Military Road that, early in the U.S. Territorial Era led from Pensacola to St. Augustine, with branches extending to many other places. Cowford's usefulness as a crossing place ended with the construction of the State Road 20 Bridge later known as the Ferguson Bridge.

23. Cedar Bluff

N 30 24.473, W 085 54.611

On February 6, 1864 this was the site of a Union raid on a Confederate outpost, later to be known as Red Head. The Cedar Bluff raid was among the first of several undertaken in 1864 by troops of Brigadier General Alexander Sandor Asboth, Union Army Commander of the District of West Florida.

SOUTHEAST QUADRANT

24. Vernon Cemetery

N 30 37.394, W 085 42.524

Across the grounds can be found gravestones of veterans of the Second Seminole War, the Civil War and the wars of the 20th Century. Some stones have eroded and are difficult to read. Vernon Cemetery is the burial site of Stephen J. Roche, Washington County delegate and signer of the first Florida Constitution at St. Joseph, FL 1838-1839.

25. Weaver Coach

N 30 37.505, W 085 42.722

Gene Weaver delivered mail on a daily route that took him a distance of 180 miles round trip between Vernon, Chipley, Miller's Ferry, Ebro, Wausau, and Bonifay. After 1951, he also delivered passengers.

26. Moss Hill Church

N 30 35.046, W 085 40.636

This church was organized from the Holmes Valley Methodist Mission, established between 1821 and 1825. The building that stands today had been in use since its construction in 1857 and is a historic landmark in Washington County.

27. Sylvania A.M.E. Church

N 30 36.810, W 085 40.307

After the Civil War, emancipated slaves established their own churches. One of the earliest was the Sylvania A.M.E. Church. Sylvania also served as a school for the education of African American children. The graveyard contains stones that commemorate the early members of the church.

28. Daniel's Lake

N 30 31.745, W 085 39.654

One of Washington County's many beautiful lakes, Daniel's Lake is the location of the island that Chief Holmes is said to have escaped to after being wounded by Captain Bowles and his men. It is also the home of the Shipes House that was relocated here after the widening of State Hwy 79 through New Hope, FL.

29. Gap Pond Freewill Baptist Church

N 30 32.582, W 085 34.005/N 30 32.834, W 085 33.997

The Church and Cemetery were created and built by the Taylor and Finch families. The first person interred there was Mrs. W.M. Finch in 1899. She was a member of the Taylor family that helped to settle the area. The church was considered a "family church" and only family can be buried there to this day.

30. Gainer Cemetery

N 30 27.223, W 085 32.688

George Franklin Gainer, Sr. discovered this area in 1818 while serving as a surveyor and mathematician with the US Forces under the command of General Andrew Jackson during the campaign against the Spaniards occupying Florida. George Franklin Gainer, Sr. drew the direct line, which leads from the Emerald Springs of Econfina Creek to the Sand Hills of Holmes Valley.

31. Econfina Creek

N 30 28.930, W 085 31.507

Over one thousand years ago, Creek, Cherokee and Seminole Indians drew water from the icy clear spring... they called it "Econfina" or "Natural Bridge" for a natural limestone arch, which crossed the sparkling creek at the mouth of the spring. Hundreds of years later, General Andrew Jackson and his Army crossed Econfina in Northwest Florida en route to Pensacola. One of his surveyors, William Gainer, decided to stay. He built his home on the banks and from that point forward the springs were known as Gainer Springs.

32. Dykes Cemetery

N 30 30.708, W 085 39.520

Within the cemetery is the headstone of Greenhead Postmaster John Davis Dykes; who was lynched April 15, 1916, in Vernon. His was among the first graves in the cemetery near Greenhead on land given by G.W. Dykes, the village postmaster's father.



Washington County

HERITAGE



Geocaching is a modern day treasure hunting game for adults and families that spans across the world. It provides a way to experience the culture and natural beauty of an area through an adventurous game!

The Washington County Heritage GeoTrail is based on historic locations throughout Washington County. For extended history on all 32 sites, please visit www.visitwashingtoncountyfl.com/geocaching. To win the game, simply complete 15 of the 32 sites. You must complete 4 sites in the Northeast, Southwest, and Southeast quadrants and all 3 sites in the Northwest quadrant to qualify. Don't forget to sign your name on the log sheets!

NORTHEAST QUADRANT

1. Falling Waters

N 30 43.526, W 085 31.726/N 30 43.587, W 085 31.880

The centerpiece of Falling Waters is a unique disappearing waterfall and several sinkhole entrances leading into limestone caverns. Duke Horne, a pioneer and resident of Orange Hill, harnessed the waters of the waterfall to power the gristmill for grinding corn in the era a few years before and after the Civil War. Another early industry at this site was a whiskey distillery owned by B. W. Berry. The distillery furnished the hard spirits for Berry's Wine Shop established in 1881 to meet the demands of the frontier railway construction site that was to become Chipley. The wine shop was the new town's first business enterprise.

Falling Waters was also the first site for oil drilling in the state of Florida in 1919. Drillers hit a depth of 4,000 feet and false rumors of a gusher spread through town. The drilling effort ended in disappointment when drillers were unable to recover oil in commercial quantities and it was finally capped in 1921.

2. Chipley Monument

N 30 46.813, W 085 32.230

The monument is for Colonel William Dudley Chipley in which the city of Chipley gets its namesake. The monument was dedicated on November 19, 1988. It includes information on Colonel Chipley's life and accomplishments.

3. Kudzu Plaque

N 30 46.649, W 085 33.089

This marker attests to the historic significance of the development of the fast growing Kudzu plant in the early part of the 20th Century. It was erected in 1967.

4. Possum Monument

N 30 37.825, W 085 35.374

The Possum Festival, originally known as "Fun Day" began in 1970. This granite monument was erected in 1980 in the town of Wausau, FL in honor of the marsupial.

Washington County HERITAGE GeoTrail Sites

A grid sheet can be downloaded from the Washington County Tourist Development Council's website provided above or you can pick one up at the visitor's center located at 672 5th Street in Chipley. Return the completed grid sheet with all 15 sites logged and you will qualify to receive a pathtag series.

5. Orange Hill United Methodist Church & Cemetery

N 30 41.327, W 085 31.289

This church traces their history to a "church house" built in the later half of the 19th Century. Orange Hill Cemetery was founded in 1890 and a white frame building was erected in 1898 to house two congregations that had decided to merge. This was the site of the old Orange Hill Academy. It served the congregation for over 70 years. The present structure was built in 1970 and the first worship services were held in 1971.

6. Rock Hill Church & Cemetery

N 30 45.117, W 085 27.546

The oldest grave identifiable in the cemetery is dated 1889. It is likely that others may have been buried earlier, but no permanent markers were placed. After the road was relocated in about 1938, the men of the community used logs and mules to rotate the building, making it face north.

7. Chipley Livestock & Auction

N 30 46.926, W 085 30.387

To meet the marketing need for an invigorated livestock industry, Mr. & Mrs. E.D. Neel established the Chipley Livestock Market in 1954.

8. Hard Labor Creek Church & Cemetery

N 30 40.445, W 085 36.585

On this site Union and Confederate forces met in a brief standoff. A number of Washington County men from the Vernon Home Guard were taken prisoner, but others retreated at full speed back down the road to Vernon. Participants in the fight later described how they dodged bullets while riding hard for town with Union soldiers on their heels.

9. Limestone Cemetery

N 30 45.946, W 085 34.122

This was the cemetery connected with Limestone Church, which sat adjacent to it. This was also Chipley's first school. The forest had almost reclaimed Limestone Cemetery in 1988. Markers identified few of the graves. Inscriptions on some were illegible. The Washington County Historical Society worked to identify the location of numerous other graves. Community legend said that

one of the graves is that of Aunt Sukey Brock, a midwife, who in her lifetime delivered 400 babies.

10. First United Methodist Church

N 30 46.756, W 085 32.408

The exact date the Methodist Church had its beginnings has been lost, but early members passed on to their families the date 1885. In early 1889, a cyclone blew the first church building down. It was a small wooden building. It had also been used as a schoolhouse, called the Academy, established in 1886. In 1903, the congregation approved the building of a new church. The solid oak pews built and placed in the church at the time of construction are still in use today. The beautiful art glass windows, often confused with stained glass, were made in Antwerp, Belgium. The blocks for the new church were made on site by the preacher Rev. G.N. Winslett and members of the church.

11. The Florida National Egg Laying Test

N 30 46.957, W 085 29.476

The Florida National Egg Laying Test was placed in Chipley in 1926, because of the poultry interest and spirit of cooperation existing in the community. E.F. Stanton, later widely known as the father of the commercial poultry industry in West Florida, was instrumental in getting the testing center established.

12. Stanton Church Furniture Company

N 30 49.720, W 085 31.620

Started in 1952 as a cabinet shop that later became Stanton Church Furniture Company. The business continued operation until 1988 under direction of Samuel Stanton, son of the founder.

13. Magnolia Memorial Lane

N 30 44.114, W 085 32.283

The plantings were made in 1960. The lane of Magnolias were meant to connect Chipley with the then proposed state park. The Magnolia Memorial Lane stands as a memorial to the members of the 13th Field Artillery Brigade who died in Africa and Europe during WWII. The Chipley Kiwanis Club help to sponsor the efforts of E.W. Carswell who had served in Africa where he wrote "The Barracks Bag Express" which was published daily sometimes.

NORTHWEST QUADRANT

14. Caryville

N 30 46.549, W 085 49.562

The town was named Caryville for R. M. Cary, Pensacola & Atlantic now CSX company secretary. Caryville is best known as a "sawmill" town. The community boomed quickly as a construction camp for the railroad. In 1903, Caryville boasted "one of the most gigantic and best equipped sawmills plants in the South".

15. Hinson's Crossroads

N 30 40.113, W 085 50.545

In approximately 1887, two brothers, Harrison and Joshua, and Joshua's son, Oscar, brought five hogs to the area. They left the hogs and returned to their homes in Jackson County. Later when they returned, noting that the hogs had flourished, they relocated their families to the area we know as Hinson's Crossroads.

16. Pate Lake

N 30 41.478, W 085 45.341

Pate Lake was first called Yates Lake, most likely due to its proximity to the Yates Homestead. On the east side of Pate Lake, buried one quarter of a mile off Yates Settlement Rd in an area locally known as the Hammock, are the remains of an unpainted clap board cabin. This remote and historic hide-away has etched its way into the heritage of Washington County. It was first the home of a pioneer Washington County lady, Lorenza Yates, whose family was some of the area's first settlers. The land also contributed to the economic growth of the region with its virgin timber, which was turpintured for the naval stores industry and logged for the sawmills.

SOUTHWEST QUADRANT

17. Miller's Ferry

N 30 34.368, W 085 50.677

William "Billy" Miller, Jr. moved to the territory around 1824 when the area was still a territory and not yet a state. William was granted by the territorial Governor the right to operate the ferry across what is now called "Miller's Ferry" over Holmes Creek and provided crossing services until 1951 when replaced by the Olin G. Shivers Bridge.

18. Shell Landing

N 30 32.304, W 085 51.760

OkChoice, an Okchai Indian village was located at Shell Landing along Holmes Creek. During the Steamboat Era, it was a shipping port and supported a community there.

19. Boynton Cutoff

N 30 31.446, W 085 52.297

Boynton Cutoff Landing is one of the most secluded spots in Washington County. It was the hiding place for Creek Indians during the Creek and Seminole Wars and it was a rendezvous point for bushwhackers and a hideout for deserters from both armies during the War Between the States. It was a center of moonshine whiskey making during the Prohibition Era and a haven for fisherman and a sanctuary for seekers of sylvan seclusion in the meantime.

20. Vallombrosa

N 30 34.685, W 085 48.602

This site, with a view possibly unmatched in Florida, was in the heart of the state's panhandle. "The autumn view from this Territorial Era village site is exquisitely beautiful. On the brow of a giant lion's paw of a hill that forms the western terminus of the Holmes Valley escarpment, the area's dominant land feature,

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