

WALKER – A HISTORICAL SKETCH

It is said that the state of Louisiana is one of the richest states in the nation in history, in culture, in natural resources, and in industrial potential. The Town of Walker and its surrounding areas have played an important role in development in each of these fields.

The Town of Walker is situated in the Northeast section of Livingston Parish and is serviced by the Illinois Central Railroad system, Louisiana U.S. Highway 190, and U.S. Interstate Highway I-12. The town is well located approximately midway between Hammond and Baton Rouge, Louisiana and about six miles west of the present parish seat known as the Town of Livingston.

Historically, the year 1825 has special significance in the founding of Walker, for it was in that year that Michael Milton and his wife, Martha Clark, along with several slaves, blazed a trail from the Amite River near Benton Ferry Landing and founded the Town of Walker. The resulting village that grew up was first named Milton Old Field and later named Walker in honor of a congressman from the district.

The Town of Walker became a municipality under the State's Lawrason Act [136 of 1998] on July 9, 1909, and as such, was largely sustained by early timber activities in the area along with many small cotton and sugarcane farms. Among some of the most prosperous homesteaders were the Crotwell Brothers [Ad and Will]; Walter Milton, Joel and Mathew Lockhart; Jesse Ellis; Jim Courtney; Elliot Milton; John, Steve, Euel, Robert, Joe, and Wiley Stafford; Gilliam Barnett; the Peak Brothers; Felix Smith; John Sides; Willie Milton; Robert Pendarvis; and Ross Coxe. The cotton gin that serviced these planters was owned and operated by Issac Minton. On October 29, 1903, his wife met a tragic death in this same gin. She tripped and fell onto the conveyor belt and was pulled in the engine. Willie Milton later operated a gin in Walker.

Some years later, Fieldon D. Courtney established the Courtney Lumber Company, thereby giving employment to many who were otherwise unemployed. He subsequently furnished heavy timbers to aid in war efforts during the war years. Prior to this venture, he set up a mercantile and produce industry. In his later years, he was successful in the raising of Brahmau cattle.