

WALTON COUNTY TOKEN ATTRIBUTED

By: Thomas M McNeill

Several years ago fellow Florida Token Society (FTS) and Southeastern Token Society (SETS) member Charles Booher told me about a few maverick tokens he had that he believed were Florida tokens, from Walton County. They were inscribed C. D. STILLER on the obverse with the reverse only showing a number to designate the denomination. They were round, aluminum, and had been dug in southern Walton County. I later discovered in an old May 1987 issue of TOKENNEWS these 5, 10 25 & 50 issue tokens being reported in Robert A Walters "Florida Mavericks". I understand these also were reported to Walters by Booher.

More recently a metal detecting friend showed me a five-coin set of these same tokens that he had dug some time ago in Walton County. They are round, aluminum 5, 10, 25, 50, & 1.00 issues with diameters of 20, 23, 26, 29, & 31 mm. respectively (See photo/scan below). They suffer from



environmental damage of corrosion and salt water exposure, but the challenge to me was too much! After several quite serious negotiation sessions I was able to acquire them, which set forth my search to identify them. After many failed attempts, I located a "History Detectives" web site from the Walton County Historical Society which gave bits and pieces of information, and several names to contact. From them I got more leads and names; finally locating the stepdaughter of C D STILLER! Here's what I found:

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Charles David Stiller (1910-1989) was one of those rare individuals who seemed to succeed in any of his many different business ventures in the Freeport, Florida area. He owned & operated a combination general grocery store/bar about 5-miles east of Freeport in the 1930's/1940's. He also had a "tarwood" or pulp wood cutting & hauling business in which he paid his workers with tokens that could be exchanged for merchandise in his general store. (Not sure if the business was wood for turpentine "Retort"- processing or pulp wood for paper processing, or a combination of the two.). In any event, the C. D. STILLER tokens were used there. Later he owned and operated the "Bay Grove Cafe", with motel-type cabins and a Pure Oil Company service station, all located near the north foot of the Choctawhatchee Bay Bridge, south of Freeport. I have enjoyed many good meals there when visiting friends at the nearby gulf beaches in the 1960's/1970's. There's no indication that his tokens were used at Bay Grove, but, "Who- Knows"?? Booher also reports having a picture postcard of this business (If he can ever find it!!).

So, Charles Booher was correct; I am certain that the C. D. STILLER tokens can be attributed to the Freeport, Florida area of Walton County! However, he has told me about another different token-----so here we go again!