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* * *
To explore the field of Florida history, to seek and gather up the ancient chronicles in which its annals are contained, to retain the legendary lore which may yet throw light upon the past, to trace its monuments and remains, to elucidate what has been written, to disprove the false and support the true, to do justice to the men who have figured in the olden time, to keep and preserve all that is known in trust for those who are to come after us, to increase and extend the knowledge of our history, and to teach our children that first essential knowledge, the history of our State, are objects well worthy of our best efforts. To accomplish these ends we have organized the Historical Society of Florida.

GEORGE R. FAIRBANKS.

Saint Augustine, April, 1857

LETTERS OF LIEUTENANT JOHN W. PHELPS,
U. S. A., 1837-1838

[Lieut. John Walcott Phelps (Brig.-Gen., Vols. 1861) of Vermont, served in the Seminole War during 1837, 1838 and 1839. Following these, a score of letters will be published here written by Samuel Forry, Surgeon, U. S. A., to Lieut. Phelps from various forts in Florida during the campaigns of 1837 and 1838. The originals of both series are in the possession of John W. Phelps, of Northfield, Massachusetts, a son of General Phelps; who, through Mrs. Roy V. Ott, of Ocala, has given The Florida Historical Society copies and permission to publish them. A biographical sketch of Lieut. Phelps will appear in an early number of the Quarterly.]

*[Written to John Phelps, Esq., at Brattleboro, Vermont]
Fort Heileman, July 10, 1837*

Dear Father,

I don't know whether you have been interested enough in our affairs to wish for their history; but having some leisure which without books I should find intolerable were it not for writing, I have resolved to give you a sketch of the recent campaign.

Previously to the present war, our government were so ignorant of the intellectual and physical strength of the Seminoles that the general with whom they had entrusted the conduct of the first campaign, was recalled in astonishment to account for its failure. The cause of this ignorance, which has been the source of all the failures that have happened, is to be attributed to the misrepresentations of the Governmental agents with the Seminoles, together with the prejudice that has somehow strangely obtained that a Sergeant's guard might drive the whole nation, from the Floridas. Let any intelligent person pass thro' this country and see how admirably adapted it is to the life of the Indian, how it teems for him with an almost spontaneous subsistence, how easily he can

shelter himself from storm or light up a **fire** from innumerable prostrate pines to dry or warm him when wet or cold, how secure from aggressions of hostile tribes, in fine, how completely he might realize the **golden** age, and he will conclude that the Seminole never wished to leave the soil of his fathers. He **never** wished it, and did any sub-chief or chief ever intimate such, he was led into it by the fawning machinations of unprincipled agents upon whose probity the government were wrong in relying. But when the treaty was once made, the dignity of the body ratifying it required that it should be carried into execution, and against this, with a determination of purpose strengthened by oft repeated wrongs of their agents and the vampyre-like pioneers of civilization who have been fast crowding upon them, the Seminoles have now contended for two successive campaigns. The first has already been made the subject of history, of the second we propose to give the leading events. It was conducted by Generals Call and Jesup.

Call, the present Governor of Florida, and formerly Aid to Gen. Jackson in his war with the Seminoles, was in command of the 500 Floridians who witnessed from across the river Clinch's battle of Ouithlacooche of December 1836. About a fortnight after this, he wrote to his quondam General saying that he should be gratified with the command of the army, and in course of time it was given him. Believing that troops **could** operate here in all seasons, he applied for a summer's campaign, but not being able to raise forces for this purpose, he was obliged to remain inactive till September when a body of volunteers from middle Florida **coming** to his assistance, he dispatched them under Gen. Read to establish a depot as far up the Ouithlacooche as would be practicable for Steam Boat navigation. The object of this was to have such a supply of provisions near the strongholds of the

enemy as to maintain troops there until he was either routed from them or compelled to surrender. With this preliminary he placed himself at the head of the Tennessee brigade and took the field.

Col. Lane, not long since a 2nd Lieut. of the 4th Regiment of Artillery, having attracted the attention of President Jackson by flogging Ewing of Indiana in the streets of Washington, for some alleged obloquies which the representative had thrown out against his father in a speech before the House, was rapidly promoted to a captaincy in the 2nd Regiment of Dragoons, in which rank he served under Jesup in the Creek Campaign. By the first of September this Gen. had terminated the difficulties in Georgia and Alabama in such a manner as to excite the admiration of the people whom he had conquered. In consequence 800 of them volunteered their services to assist him in Florida. These, together with about 80 regulars, he organized into a regiment, officered it with officers from the Army, citizens and chiefs, gave the command to Lane with rank of Col. and sent him to treat, or if circumstances required it, to fight with the Seminoles. This force descended the Chattahoochie and immediately embarked for Tampa Bay. The cantonment upon this Bay had been closely invested by the Indians throughout the summer, and on the night preceding the Colonel's arrival they burnt a house in the immediate vicinity. Learning this, without delaying to disembark any but the regulars, he sallied out and soon fell in with the enemy. An engagement ensued in which two of his men only were wounded. The enemy were repulsed with what loss as usual it was impossible to ascertain. He remained here several days, making occasional excursions of fifteen and twenty miles into the surrounding country, while waiting for Ichu Hadjo, an intelligent chief whom he had sent out with proposals of peace. This chief returning

with an insulting message from the hostiles, about the 10th of October, with ten days' provisions in haversacks, he took up the line of march for the Ouithla-coochee.

We have now two separate commanders in the field, rushing into a strange country, and either apparently fearful that the other might deprive him of the crown that irradiated over the region where Clinch was repulsed, Gaines penned up, and Izzard fell. The consequences of this were, as might perhaps have been expected, disastrous. Call was checked in attempting to cross the river, he was brought to a stand at the edge of a hammock which contained all the women and children of the nation; failing in provisions, he sent a detachment in quest of Gen. Read, which returned without finding either him or his depot, and he was finally obliged to retire for subsistence upon Fort Drane. Finding but a short allowance here, he continued on to Black Creek, 90 miles from the Ouithla-coochee, strewn the way with five or six hundred dead and dying horses. It was affecting to witness the manner in which these famished animals implored their masters for food. Let loose in order that they might pick up what they could find, they would come, sometimes thrusting their heads into the tents, and stand before them in mute silence. Tents, shoes, saddles, harness, wagon covers, and even wagon bodies were devoured by them. Were one so unfortunate as to leave his coat out at night, nothing could be found of it in the morning but the buttons.

Lane crossed the river, had a slight skirmish, and also fell back upon Fort Drane for provisions. And here, finding his rare chance of distinguishment at an end, and being withal affected in the brain from an extreme mental and bodily excitement, he ended his career by self-extermination. No one had observed anything peculiar in him, having finished a long con-

versation with an officer at the Post, he retired to his tent and apparently posed the hilt of his sword upon the ground, kneeled down, and brought his eye to its point, which by thrusting his head, entered his brain. On the occasion of his funeral the Creeks behaved with great decorum. They all assembled neatly dressed, appeared much affected with the loss of their commander, and Jim Boy addressed them in a speech which was strongly imbued with principles of predestination. He said that it was to be regretted that their white brother had left them so soon, but there was no use in lamenting his decease, for all here below, the white man as well as the red, had a certain race set for them to run, certain destinies to be fulfilled, and these must be accomplished. Their white brother had fulfilled his, and now the Great Spirit had called him away from among them. Such was the end of Colonel Lane, a young man who, had there been a field as ample as his ambition, would have probably ranked high among the great ones in the annals of our history.

[Signed] J. W. P.

[Continuation of above letter]

Meanwhile Jesup, after making the necessary arrangements for securing the inhabitants of Georgia and Alabama against any hostile Creeks that might be still lurking in the country, descended the Chattahoochie with 700 troops consisting of Artillery, Marines, and mounted volunteers from Alabama, and arrived at Tampa Bay about the 20th of October. Ascertaining here that Col. Lane, having taken only ten days' provisions, was shortly expected back, he remained in the harbor several days, when, receiving no information of him, he raised steam for the mouth of the Ouithlacooche. Here were vessels employed in provisioning Read's depot, but no intelligence could be obtained of the Army. He continued on to St.

Marks, whence, receiving news of Call's disastrous expedition, he returned to Tampa Bay and commenced preparations for active operations.

The Port here being destitute of supplies, he was obliged to await the arrival of those which he had ordered from New Orleans, Mobile and Appalachicola. Some time was necessary for unlading them when arrived, and building store houses for their reception ; and the delay was still protracted by the wildness of the mules that had been purchased for transportation. A term of three weeks was required to render these animals manageable. While Jesup was thus engaged, Call, having been joined by 300 regulars under Col. Pierce, returned from Black Creek to Fort Drane. Incorporating here the Regiment of Creeks with his command, he took up the line of march on the 11th, and reached the Ouithlacooche on the 12th of November at the head of 3000 men. There he deployed into one extended line the flanks occupied by the Creeks and Tennesseans, and marched towards the bank, with at least a display calculated to promise the second attempt at a passage more success than accompanied the first. On arriving within about 100 yards of the ford, he came to a halt, and after a considerable pause, ordered down a company of regulars to reconnoitre. Lieut. Hale, commanding the one chosen for this purpose, proceeded to the stream, swam it and commenced his investigation on the opposite side. Recent signs having been reported, Col. Pierce with his regulars and the main body of the Creeks was ordered to cross. The river at this point is about 200 yards wide, and fordable only in a path-not much wider than an Indian trail. This being difficult to ascertain, and the current having a considerable velocity, the passage was effected with much difficulty, and danger, even, to those who could not swim,

three of whom were borne from the track and drowned, crying most piteously for help in the deep water below.

Call followed up the right bank, and Pierce thus crossed proceeded up the left. Me recrossed where Fort Dade now stands, and on the night of the 20th, without any occurrence worthy of note, encamped with Call near Dade's Battle Ground. Call in the meantime had had several indecisive engagements, the last of which was in the Wahoo Swamp where the enemy still were, five miles from the encampment. For this swamp the combined forces on the morning of the 21st took up the line of march with scarcely a day's provisions for themselves or forage for their horses. They engaged the enemy and pursued him till brought to a stand at a small stream whose waters on the right and left expanded into two long marshes, covered with a tall sedge grass and averaging about 75 yards in width.

This pass, as it is called, is in one of those vast hammocks that skirt without much interruption, or other than that of marshes, the banks of the Outhla-cooche from its origin to its mouth. Here Yahaloochee, or The Cloud, lived, nurtured by the genius of the place into that spirit of freedom and daring by which he was so strongly characterized. Here were Indian plantations exhibiting truncated oaks pointing their shivered summits wildly in every direction, and tho' assailed by axe, fire and time, still shewed how unrestrained was the exuberance of their growth, and appearing like huge masses of inorganic vegetable matter left here when order was first established amidst the heteroclism of Chaos. Such a rank vegetation as this, supported by a humid soil and rendered lugubrious by a prevailing darkness and the twilight umbrage of an abundant foliage, could not but have an unfavorable moral effect upon the soldiery. Besides this, Nature seems to have employed here the same

principles that are used in modern systems of defense. The stream, itself an intrenchment, was filled with latent cypress knees almost as pointed and dreadful as the stakes of war pits, and numerous vines interwoven with the underbrush, together with quagmires, formed such, entanglements and impediments as the most harassed body of infantry might wish to protect them from the attacks of a pursuing cavalry.

The strategy that led to the choice of this point, and the tactic displayed in its defense reflect much credit upon the skill of the Seminoles. Making at first a demonstration upon the right of our line by which they drew it into an impassible quagmire, and drawing on our left by fleeing before it, they rushed thro' the stream, rendering it so turpid that it was impossible to discover its depth. A few of the most courageous Creeks were first engaged, then a company led by Lieut. R. W. Lee who was fortunate enough to strike the trail, and lastly the regulars and two companies of Tennesseans who had been led by the demonstration into the quagmire. The action now became general, and what with the yelling and whooping of the Indians, the crack of rifles, the peal of musquetry and the groans of the dying, there was an uproar which, from its peculiarity, was perhaps never before surpassed. Cloud, apparently exulting in his element, could every now and then be heard to thunder forth ; "Never mind the dead-carry off the wounded or defend the pass." He bore the brunt of battle with a handful of warriors during the engagement, receiving the direct and cross fires from our whole line, while Jumper, having learnt from experience that our tactics were to out-flank the enemy, and meaning to secure Cloud against such an event, couched his warriors in ambush along on the edges of the marshes. When he had waited for two hours and saw that the whites were not going to cross, he said that he felt

sick. Had they attempted a passage, it is probable that *it* would have proved very destructive, for Jumper had a sufficient force to have cut them all down at a discharge.

Of the 3000 troops in the vicinity, only about 300 were engaged. Gen. Armstrong refused to charge the hammock with his command because it embraced a large number of young men of the choice families of Tennessee. In consequence of this, a large majority remained behind, 500 guarding the person of Call, two miles from the scene of battle, and the remainder with the baggage train, at the encampment of the preceeding night.

It was growing late, and most of the ammunition had been expended, when some proposals were made to force the pass. The policy of such a step was under consideration, when Call settled all doubts by sending an order to retreat. This was accomplished with bringing off all the dead and wounded excepting Capt. Moniac, a Creek, who, falling in the stream, was covered by the water. Some of the Seminoles followed the retiring troops, discharging their rifles in triumph, and groaning in derision of our wounded. The loss in killed on our side was nine. That of the enemy could not be ascertained, but from the great number of shots made, and from their having been generally well directed, the presumption is that it must have been considerable. Thus ended the Battle of the Wahoo, which, were it worthy of its name, would irradiate with brilliancy. The next morning Call commenced his march for Volusia on the St. John's 60 miles distant, and at the same time, as tho' there were malignant spirits in the Swamp hostile to both parties, the Indians dispersed and moved towards the south. Our dead were borne about 15 miles, where they were buried in the road, and the waggons passed over their graves. Had they been buried within 5

miles of the battle ground, it is probable that they would have been discovered and exhumed.

As this was the last expedition that Call made, it may be well to remark here that he made no use of the depot which he had ordered Gen. Read to establish on the Ouithlacooche a short time previously to his taking the field. Had he assured himself before commencing operations that his depot was well supplied with provisions, he never would have been obliged to retire upon Black Creek and Volusia, indicating his way with famished horses, and instead of ranking low as a General he might now have stood high in the public estimation. Having been joined by Gen. Read before the battle, he knew that at this depot and still 16 miles farther on at the mouth of the river, there were provisions in abundance ; but the news of his first expedition had reached Washington, and the command had been given to Jesup, and it is probable that he intended to avoid this General, in order to gain time to make a last attempt with the view of retrieving his character.

[Another continuation]

Jesup had thus far been obliged to render his plans subordinate to those of Call. He had sent many vessels laden with army stores to Read's Depot (Fort Clinch) and on the 27th of Nov. he commenced crossing the Hillsboro' with the view of following Clinch's trail to the Ouithlacooche. But all the troops had not yet crossed when the Steamer Merchant arrived in the Bay with the intelligence that the command had devolved upon Jesup and that Call had retired from the Wahoo upon Volusia.

The troops were immediately countermarched. Col. Foster, who had arrived the day previous from New Orleans, was ordered with three hundred men to re-establish Fort Alabama on the Hillsboro' about twenty miles from its mouth, and the troops left at

Tampa Bay, amounting to between four and five hundred, were to provision it with 30,000 rations. These arrangements made, Jesup, at the head of four hundred mounted men under Col. Callfield of the Alabama Volunteers, proceeded to Volusia and assumed the command. He found Call busily engaged in fitting out an expedition against King Philip whose tribe inhabited the region about the upper waters of the St. Johns. As the term of service of the Tennesseans would expire on the 31st of December, he soon returned to the vicinity of the Wahoo Swamp. Here he sent out detachments to scour the surrounding country, engaged the Tennesseans in establishing a fort, and in the meantime, ordered Col. Foster twenty miles farther into the interior to erect a fortification on the Big Ouithlacooche. After completing their work the Tennesseans requested permission to name it, and altho' it is situated on Dade's Battle Ground, they called it Fort Armstrong after their leader. They then moved to Tampa where they were discharged by the 1st of January.

Altho' their departure was not much to be regretted, yet Jesup's prospects at this time were anything but flattering. It was in the most favorable **season** for operations, and he had not a sufficient force to warrant success if he took the field. The Creek Regiment, tho' very serviceable in securing camps and convoys against sudden attacks and coups de main, could not be relied upon in a general engagement; the four Regiments of Artillery, no longer anything but a name, could not muster five hundred effective men; the 4th Infantry and the corps of Marines were in equally as bad a state, and besides these, the only available force in the field was about three hundred mounted Alabamians under Col. Callfield. Jesup had issued orders

for the troops which he had left in the Creek country, and had written to Gaines for the 6th Infantry, but these farces had not yet arrived.

Crews from the Navy had been engaged among the keyes and lagoons along the coast in ascending rivers and occasionally in making land expeditions into the country. They could now be employed to more advantage in defending posts. Jesup therefore effected such arrangements with Corn. Dallas that three important posts were garrisoned by sailors. By this means, the field force was augmented by 150 regulars.

Thus circumstanced, having been joined by 200 mounted Georgians under Maj. Nelson, on the 2nd of January he took up the line of march for the north. He assisted Col. Foster in the completion of Fort Dade, crossed the Ouithlacoochee, and on the 10th encamped under Fort Armstrong. Having received expresses during the night from Maj. Norris, who, in scouring the Panasofski Swamp, had captured a party of negroes under Primus, he marched early the next morning and incoated the scouring of the Ouithlacooche. By maintaining a force in the Wahoo, and ordering Col. Foster with five hundred men down the left bank, and passing the troops under his immediate command through the hammocks on the right, he effectually scoured this stream from its branches to its mouth. The result of this was a knowledge that the enemy were not in force in their favorite haunts-their boasted fastnesses. He therefore ordered Col. Fanning who was in the eastern part of Florida, to ascend the St. Johns as far as practicable with what dragoons and recruits he had under his command, and there to establish a depot on the left bank, with the view that he might have a well provisioned post to fall back upon in his intended expedition to the south. He then

returned to Fort Armstrong after having been out, ten days, during which he captured only two children and a few head of cattle.

These children, a boy of ten and his sister of five years, were of a party that had been frightened from one place to another by the approach of Col. Foster, who, it appeared, marched thro' in the true military style, awaking the silence of those vast solitudes to the music of his fifes and drums. The father and mother made their escape by swimming the river.

On his return, Jesup found Maj. Thompson in command of seven companies of the 6th Infantry, amounting to one hundred and eighty men. He immediately organized his forces into two brigades, each about five hundred strong, the whole consisting of Artillery, Infantry, Marines, Volunteers, and Indians, and leaving Col. Foster to beat up the hammocks about the Ouithlacooche, on the 23d of January he proceeded south. He marched thro' Pilaklikaha, the former residence of Miconope, thro' Cooper's town, crossed the Oclawaha, destroyed Cooper, capturing his household, and finally had an engagement with a party of the enemy on the western shore of Lake Tohopkaliga.

Among the prisoners taken in this engagement was an intelligent negro by the name of Ben. He was sent out with proposals of peace, which resulted in an interview with Abraham, and subsequently in one with Miconope's ministers, Alligator and Jumper. After much delay and circumlocution they agreed to a suspension of hostilities, and to meet the General at Fort Dade on the 18th of February, where a council of the chiefs of the nation would decide upon what was to be done. Jesup then returned to Fort Amstrong.

[Signed] J. W. P.

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[written to Miss Helen M. Phelps, 401 Hudson St., New York]

Fort Heileman, Sept. 19, 1837

Dear Sister :

I received yours of the 1st inst. day before yesterday. Not having heard from home for a long time, it relieved me of a great deal of anxiety. I had had dismal dreams and forebodings concerning the family, and I felt very uneasy until you assured me of their well being and prosperity. Lib's return with Ann gave me almost as much pleasure as tho' I had been there to enjoy it. She will experience good effects from her journey, while you, I fear, before the next vacation, will regret that you remained at home. You say that pleasure is to be derived from the performance of duty, but unless it be varied an active mind would become so morbid that it could not be sensible of pleasure. It is impossible for me to say what I would wish upon this subject, but it amounts to this, that seclusion and inaction have a very injurious effect upon an active mind. In proof of which I would refer you to Lib's case last winter. Having remained a long time idle myself, I at last fell into precisely her situation, and my mind carried on its operations in the strangest manner, so that I began to doubt, and (the impression was so deep) do still, the validity of human reason. When the mind has no other resource than the memory, it loses its coldness and becomes softened down into the most tender susceptibility. It is then that there steals thro' it the conviction of the existence of a God,-of a God who treats in silent scorn that light philosophy which we vainly believe to have been lighted up by a spark from his intelligence. But I am metaphysical.

Our situation, relatively to the Indians, for the past summer, you must have remarked, has been very singular. *On* the elopement of Miconope last June, it

was expected that hostilities would be renewed, but nothing of the kind occurred, and both parties seemed tacitly to agree in an armistice. It was policy undoubtedly on both sides; our troops were sickly, and the enemy, reduced in their supplies by a long campaign, evidently needed and desired time to recuperate. They came in at Fort King frequently, and at first appeared so friendly that hopes were entertained that they would be ready to go in the fall. But at last, the rampant Micasookies began to act so impudently that the Gen. was induced to go there to discover, if possible, their intentions. He found several chiefs to whom he talked very plainly, and concluded by telling them that he would extend their time for emigration to the first of October. He however gave Gen. Hernandez orders to scout.

Gen. Hernandez, a militia general in the U. S. service, is descended from the first European settlers of this territory. He lives in St. Augustine near which he has a large plantation. Hearing that the enemy had been seen some miles to the south of him, he collected all the regulars and volunteers he could, and about a fortnight since, sallied forth at their head, animated with the same chivalric feeling that led De Soto through these wilds three hundred years ago. Fortune smiled upon him ; he surrounded and captured between 30 and 40 hostiles, among whom were two important persons-King Philip and Euchee Billy, who have never agreed to *any* treaty. Euchee Billy, when surprised, donned his equipments like a hero, took fatal aim at Lieut. McNeil, and shot him thro' the body. McNeil saw him aiming at him, and he clapped his hand to his pistol; at that instant the ball came and carried away his little finger with it. He died 36 hours after-the only one on our side wounded. The enemy fired but two guns-their loss was two or

three killed. So Gen. Hernandez returned to town with his prisoners. Handbills minutely detailing the affair were immediately posted up, balls and fetes were given, the Gen. got drunk, the captured property was disposed of at a high rate, the officers concerned were astonished at their own chivalry, and there was such rejoicing as was perhaps never surpassed.

Lieut. McNeil was the son of Gen. McNeil, formerly of our Army. What will be the effect of this it is impossible to conjecture. It may provoke immediate retaliation on our defenceless baggage trains, or it may have a favorable effect. If it prove the means of recommencing hostilities so early, we shall be the losers by it. We have not well men enough to escort our provisions, and the preliminaries for the next campaign could not be made so well were we at war as they could otherwise.

Gen. Jesup has just left this post for St. Augustine. This is the second time that he has been here from Tampa this summer; he rides thro' the country, sometimes forty and fifty miles a day, as tho' it were his profession.

Yours ever,
John W. Phelps

* * *

[Written to Miss Helen M. Phelps, 401 Hudson St., New York]

St. Augustine, Nov. 12th, 1838

Dear Sister,

My company is now at the Old Fort St. Marks, being detained by a north east wind from Sailing to Smyrna, a place near the coast, seventy miles south of this, where it has been ordered to re-establish an old Post. The wind is yet strong, and we have the prospectus of remaining here several days longer, since we cannot well venture out in a river steam-boat till the ocean becomes nearly calm. In the mean time,

having brought no books, and not being able to obtain any of interest, we amuse ourselves as well as we can, and fill up all intervals by yawns and snatches of such songs as we may remember-particularly "Love not!" ; tho' there does not appear to be any necessity for such caution here. Notwithstanding, there are a great many young women here, and marriage with its appliances is of frequent occurrence, and a topic of open, most free, and not unoften of indelicate conversation. A young man who is apparently admitted into the first society, tells a woman of the same caste with himself that such and such young women are beautiful, and confirms his assertion with an emphatic oath. He descants upon their ankles, eyes, lips, and so on, going how much farther into details I do not know. The young women themselves are pleased with this, and they manifest a readiness to throw themselves in the way of such men, which would tend, one might suppose, to immoral consequences ; but, I believe, it does not, at least as far as appearances are concerned, and otherwise I have no Armsdens to show me the contrary, provided even that it did exist.

The Doctor, attached to our command, went into a shop the other day, where was kept a small circulating library of old volumes, the only public collection of books in town, and asked if they had any books to sell. Yes, they had works of deep interest-Robinson Crusoe, Children of the Abbey. "Have you Crabbes' Synonyms?" "Crabs' what!-naw." And yet, St. Augustine, they say, contains 2600 inhabitants. A large number of these, however, are Minorcans, descendants of those who were enslaved some 50 or 60 years ago by Dr. Turnbull-and they, apparently, do not think it any discredit not to know either how to read or write.

They are turning their attention here more to schools than they have done formerly. There are sev-

eral, one of which is a Catholic institution under the charge of some Sisters of Charity from France.

The war remains the same as ever, so far as regards the probability of its termination. Every one appears to think that the affair is near its end; but if they be asked why, they think that Sam Jones will come in, - the contingency on which the war has hung for 15 months.

Yours ever,
John W. Phelps

OCALA PRIOR TO 1868

Uncommonly colorful in its historical background, Ocala, the seat of justice of Marion county, held a position of unique importance among the towns of central Florida in the early days of our statehood. Among the older settlements and so situated geographically that through it must pass the pioneers pressing southward its influence was soon felt, for interwoven with its sturdy agricultural and industrial progress we find the glamour of a social life that left lasting impress upon educational and political activities throughout a large part of the State.

From the time of the Timucua Indians, found here by those bold adventurers of Spain in 1539, the tale unfolds with vivid scenes of action-Spaniards forcing blood-marked trails through forest and swamp; Seminoles obliterating the Timucua tribes ; negro slaves from nearby states seeking refuge with those savages, who later wreaked cruel vengeance upon the white settlers encroaching upon their domain, and later, following the tragic incidents of a long and costly strife, the mournful farewell of the Indians deported to the West; and the converting of the wilderness into well-tilled plantations, soon to be abandoned by their owners for the battle grounds of the War for Southern Independence.

From across the sea comes our first description of this fair country-side, for several of those accompanying that intrepid warrior Hernando de Soto in his memorable march through Florida recorded. so minutely the journey through the Indian "province of Ocali" that there can be little doubt of his passage

through this locality.¹ Having pressed inland from the Gulf, the Spaniards, lured by stories of the vast wealth of the tribes having as their chief Ocali passed into the province bearing his name, and "at length arrived at the principal village, called after the Cacique, 'Ocali', containing 600 houses." . . .

"Close by the village ran a wide and deep river, with precipitous banks:"² This river was probably the Ocklawaha and it is thought that the Spaniards reached it near the spot where Fort Fowle³ was later situated, some six miles east of the present city of Ocala. In this village were found large quantities of nuts, maize, vegetables and fruits, and after provisioning the army and overcoming the opposition of the Indians, the Spaniards constructed a rude bridge across the river and proceeded on their march.

After the failure of De Soto to establish settlements, the Indians were left in undisputed possession of this portion of Florida for nearly three centuries, but although the name Ocala is of Indian origin, it does not seem possible that it was in continuous use during these years.

Ocali (variously spelled⁴ "Ocali", "Ocale", "Cale" and "Etocale" in the several different accounts of the expedition) is from the Timucua tongue. By 1750 the Seminoles had driven out the Timucua tribes, and their language entirely disappeared. It is commonly thought

¹ Concerning DeSoto's route there is much difference of opinion. John Westcott, surveyor-general of Florida from 1852 to 1859, made a careful study of the description and distances given in the Spanish narratives and places the route through what is now Marion county, passing within a few miles of the site of Ocala. See, Westcott: *DeSoto in Florida. His Route from Tampa Bay to St. Marks*. Palatka, 1888. map No. 3.

² Irving, *Conquest of Florida*, New York, 1851, pp. 98, 101.

³ Old maps show Fort Fowle on the Ocklawaha River about three miles east of Fort King.

⁴ The Knight of Elvas spells it Cale, La Vega Ocali, Ranjel Ocale and Biedma calls it *Etocale*.

that the word Ocala in the form it is now used, means **plenteous or abundant**, but those who have made a study of fragments of this lost language state that its exact meaning is unknown.⁵

Years after the Timucua had vanished, when a name was sought for the new county seat,⁶ Ocala was chosen, probably by someone familiar with the records of the Spanish invaders ; and with rare appropriateness, the name of the Indian village of more than three hundred years previous was restored. There seems no possibility of determining by whom the name was first suggested,⁷ but it is certain that it dates back to the tribes which occupied this portion of the peninsula before the coming of the Seminoles.

Of the events of intervening years. little is known. We read of the establishment of an Indian agency and later a military post "on the southern frontier of Alachua." This agency was located about 1825, and was called Camp King, but in 1827 was designated Fort **King**.⁸ As the town of Ocala did not grow haphazard from gradual increase in population but was carefully planned and laid out as a county seat, county and city history are intermingled, and to understand the latter we must trace its beginning to the little settlement gathered for protection near the fort.

Here, in the attempt to rid this part of Florida of the Seminoles, many stirring events occurred. Nearby were the homes of Osceola, Charlie Amathla, Micano-

⁵ Dr. John R. Swanton, of the Smithsonian Institute, an authority on ethnology, states that the meaning of Ocala, or Ocali, is unknown.

⁶ In 1846.

⁷ Many old residents state that this name was chosen by Mrs. John G. Reardon; others think it was given by David Bruton who surveyed the new town site.

⁸ Records of the War Department.

pah and other Indian leaders,⁹ and at Fort King several important councils took place between representatives of the "Great Father" at Washington and Indian chieftains. Here Osceola was confined for a time, and here, after his release, he directed the killing of the commanding officer of the fort, Gen. Wiley Thompson, together with Lt. Constantine Smith and several civilians. Not far to the southward was Battle Pond, the scene of another ambush in which several other soldiers lost their lives in an unexpected attack by the Indians.¹⁰

Although Fort King was finally abandoned March 25, 1843,¹¹ the trading post and small cluster of settlers remained after the last soldiers had been ordered elsewhere.

The Governor approved an act of the Legislative Council of the Territory of Florida, March 18th, 1844,¹²

⁹ Osceola had his home near Bradley's Pond, about three miles southwest of Ocala. Amathla, or Emathla, as he was commonly known, lived in the western part of Marion county near the little town which yet bears his name. He was killed by Osceola because of his advice to the Indians that they accept the offer of the Government to deport them to the West. Gold which Amathla had received from the sale of cattle was scattered through the woods by Osceola, who scornfully refused to make use of money obtained from their white enemies. There have been many attempts to locate buried treasure here, inspired no doubt, by this story. Amathla's body is said to have been buried in a cedar casket by his white friends, and his grave is near those of his benefactors on the estate of E. B. Weathers, north west of Ocala. Micanopy, a small town just across the Alachua county line north of Ocala, took its name from Micanopah.

¹⁰ Fairbanks and other authorities relate this incident. That of Battle Pond is vouched for by W. E. McGahagin, (son of Joshua L. McGahagin) whose kindly interest and aid have made possible much of this sketch.

¹¹ Records of the War Department.

¹² There were subsequent changes of boundaries, and the county was re-organized July 24th, 1845. Further changes were enacted by the legislature Dec. 25th, 1846, a date frequently quoted in connection with the beginning of the county. These dates are from the Florida statutes, and this information was given by H. Clay Crawford, Secretary of State.

the establishment of the new county of Marion,. and provided that the county seat should be located temporarily at Fort King until a permanent site should be selected by the voters of the county. Here was held a meeting of the inhabitants of East Florida to discuss the admission of the territory as a state, and in the humble log buildings of the little community was held the first court and the first county business transacted.

The location of Fort King, on a grassy knoll in pine timbered country, near a small lake bordered by magnificent oak trees, would seem an ideal spot, and one cannot but wonder that another location should have been desired. Perhaps memories of horrible deeds enacted here urged a change, and attracted by springs and creeks of clear cold water three miles to the westward, the present site of the Marion county court house was chosen.¹³ From then to now this site has been retained although three buildings have successively replaced that first crude structure.

At the time of the selection of a permanent site, Silver Springs was considered as a possible location for the new town, but at that time nearby swamps were undrained and this was not thought to be as healthy a locality as that to the west of Fort King.

An obstacle in the selection of a site was the necessity of taking for the court house a plot of ground not included in the old Spanish land grants, of which there were eleven within the boundaries of the county. Those nearest to the site selected were the Alvarez, Sanchez, Perpall and Hijuelos, all of which were given by the Spanish Governor Don Jose Coppinger to individuals in his favor, or to those having performed some service to the Spanish crown.

¹³ As told by Frank E. Harris, Sr.

A large portion of the present city of Ocala is built upon property later purchased from heirs of Antonio Alvarez, to whom Coppinger made a grant on December 17th, 1817. The Sanchez grant, of December 7th, 1817, was originally made to Don Thomas de Aguilas and afterwards assigned to F. P. Sanchez, and on this same date a grant was made to Dona Catalina de Jesus Hijuelos, mother of Francisca de Entradgo, of the Third Battalion of Cuba, who died from wounds received while in the service of his country. This grant was located in what was known as the Big Hammock (southwest of the present city) near "a river called OKE-COKA, five miles therefrom," and was bounded on the east by the land of Thomas de Aguilas, and on the north by property granted January 12th, 1818, to Don Gabriel G. Perpall.¹⁴

Discrepancies often occur in the old records and in the description of the Hijuelos grant, there is a question as to what stream the name "OKE-COKA, five miles therefrom," was applied, as the Ocklawaha river at its nearest point is twice that distance, while the Withlacoochee is even further from this property.

Alvarez and Sanchez are names perpetuated in streets of Ocala today, and Indian names, derived from old legends, used in designating Ocala streets are Wenona, Watula, Tuscaawilla and Ocklawaha. A beautiful drive, extending across the city is known as Fort King Avenue, and leads eastward towards the site of the old military reservation. Crossing this is Osceola

¹⁴ See *American State Papers. Public Lands*. Vol. IV. Spanish grants other than those mentioned were made to G. I. F. Clarke, J. M. Hernandez, J. E. M. Arredondo, F. M. Arredondo, Thos. Clarke, J. Broward, and S. Fernandez. The grants to Antonio Alvarez and Dona Catalina de Jesus de los Hijuelos were both made on Dec. 7th, 1817 through the Spanish governor, Don Jose Coppinger. For all grants see Marion County records; and those in the Land Office, Gainesville.

street, so called in memory of the fearless leader of the Seminoles.

Governor Wm. D. Moseley on October 31st, 1845, appointed the first board of county commissioners including Thomas Barnes, Abraham Geiger, John Morrison, Cotton Rawls,¹⁵ with John M. McIntosh as chairman. At this time E. D. Howse was appointed sheriff and John G. Reardon county treasurer. A few months earlier, on July 26th, John M. McIntosh had been made judge of probate and Samuel Mattier tax assessor.¹⁶ The earliest minutes of this board are dated Fort King, February 20th, 1846,¹⁷ and at a meeting held six days later the board resolved "that from and after this date the county site shall be known by the name 'Ocala' ".¹⁸

The postoffice was officially put into Marion County September 12th, 1845, and the name changed to Ocala, September 14th, 1847.¹⁹ It is interesting to note, in this connection, that within little more than two years, the postoffice was changed from Fort King, Alachua County, Territory of Florida, to Ocala, Marion County, State of Florida. John G. Reardon was the first postmaster at Fort King, and William Roberts was first postmaster under the name Ocala.²⁰

The greater portion of Marion County was set off from Alachua County (including Fort King) and the first legal instrument appearing in the Marion County records is headed "Alachua county, December 21st, 1844",²¹ and has to do with the transfer of slaves. This

¹⁵ Cotton Rawls was one of those appointed by the governor but there is nothing in the records to indicate that he served on the board of commissioners. But it is known that he assisted David Bruton in the survey of the county seat and otherwise aided in affairs of the county.

¹⁶ Information from H. Clay Crawford, Secretary of State.
¹⁷ From Minutes of the County Commissioners, Book A., p. 1.

¹⁸ Ibid. p. 5 ¹⁹ ²⁰ Records of Postmaster General, Washington.

²¹ First entries in old deed book, Marion County court house.

as well as the second deed, bears the signature of Alexander McLeod, as clerk, although the latter is dated Marion County, April 29th, 1845; showing that business was transacted under the name **Marion County** early in the year 1845.

The original survey of Ocala, known as the Old Survey, was made in 1846 by David Bruton,²² as set out by a bill submitted to the county commissioners at their meeting at Fort King, on April 6th, 1846.

This year marked the beginning of a "publick road)"²³ from Ocala to Fort Butler on the St. Johns, and the division of the county into four road districts with commissioners appointed over each.²⁴ The old military road from the northern boundary of the State passed through Fort McCoy and Fort King and led to Fort Brooke, on Tampa Bay, and this and other trails from early army posts gave access to different parts of the county as well as to more distant points."

²² David Bruton was born in South Carolina in 1804 and came to Florida when about thirty-five years of age, settling at Newnansville, Alachua County. He was a lieutenant during the Indian wars and as a surveyor did much work in both Alachua and Marion counties. His name appears on many maps and on the "Old Survey" of Ocala. Recently surveyors found his initials on an old rock section-line marker in the Jewish cemetery. His daughter, Mrs. Sue Bruton Frink is prominent among the few living who have been residents of Ocala since its earliest days. Mrs. Frink was born on the Bruton plantation, nine miles west of Ocala, in March, 1846, the year in which Ocala was established. To Mrs. Frink's remarkable memory and generous assistance the writer is deeply indebted.

²³ Minutes of County Commissioners, Book A, p. 9.

²⁴ From records of County Commissioners, Book A, pp. 8-9. These commissioners were : 1st. District - Edward Dennison, Emanuel Martin, Adrian Waterman. 2nd. District - Jas. Bleach, W. D. Branch, J. J. Willis. 3rd. District - John McNeill, Hoppe Motte and Little Berry Branch. 4th District - Kenneth Morrison, R. H. Williams and J. L. McGahagin.

²⁵ Early maps of Marion County show Ft. King, Ft. McCoy, and Ft. Fowle, all near the Ocklawaha River; Ft. Drane, Ft. Wheelock and Ft. Russell in the vicinity of Orange Lake; Ft. Hook to the westward, and Camp Izzard on the Withlacoochee.

An amusing story is told of the first white man to erect a dwelling upon the spot near which the court house and town were later established. James Cobe was a trapper, and his house, the first to be built in Ocala, was merely a one-room hut standing near the site of the Commercial Bank of to-day. He had been an Indian fighter and like many others of these soldiers was given a government bounty grant of forty acres. He lived for a time in his little shack, but had a poor opinion of his property and disgustingly thrust his pre-emption papers into a gopher hole, declaring that this slow moving animal had more use for the land than he did. Later when E. D. Howse purchased his claim Cobe's respect for his ownership increased, but he could not produce the papers so lightly thrown away and the deal was only effected by obtaining copies of his application from Washington.²⁶

On April 27th, 1847, Abraham Geiger and Thomas Barnes were appointed to receive bids for the court house. This was a one story building, 20 by 80 feet, and the contract was let to James Caruthers for the sum of \$225, with an allowance of \$80.00 for interior fittings. To James Ellis was awarded the contract for jury rooms, for the sum of \$140.²⁷ A log jail was later erected on the northeast corner of the square, but there being much opposition to its location, it was soon moved to the lot now occupied by the city hall.

On the removal of the court from Fort King to Ocala, land surrounding the new site was divided into small tracts and sold at public out-cry. Streets were laid out and the commissioners provided that those bounding the public square should be ninety-nine feet in width, while others were given sixty-six feet, thus looking for future growth. It is regretted that action

²⁶ This story is vouched for by Mrs. R. A. Carleton, Mrs. S. B. Frink and W. E. McGahagin, old residents of Ocala.

²⁷ Records of County Commissioners, Book A, p. 21.

taken some time later reduced these streets to fifty-nine and forty feet respectively. ²⁸ Had these original plans been maintained, the motor traffic of to-day would be a less difficult problem.

Many of the first residents of the county were those hardy veterans of the Indian wars to whom were awarded bounty grants of land from the government. These establishing themselves, sent to the other southern states from which they had come for their relatives. Interested no doubt by the migration of neighbors, many wealthy people from the Carolinas and Georgia moved into this part of Florida. These became large landowners, and among the plantations of Marion County were some of the best in the state. Among these planters we find names which through succeeding years have become a vital force in public life. Those of Marshall, Owens, Keitt, Waldo, Broome, Bullock, Martin, Gary, Pinkston, Helvenson, Vogt, Taylor, Williams, Brantley, Blitch, Harris, Caldwell, Howard, McGahagin, Pyles, Rogers, Foy, Waterman, Badger, Bruton, Harrison, Carleton, Bailey, Allred, Pasteur, Frink, Atkinson, Mitchell, Payne, and others were included among those established within a few miles of Ocala.

Cotton was extensively raised, also sugarcane, corn, and other food crops. Practically every plantation was provided with its gin and sugar mill with all other necessary agricultural equipment and it is said that the slaves here were particularly well trained in the making of farming implements and in building.

By 1846, when the city of Ocala was laid out, the Indians had been pushed to the southward and in the fighting which continued lower in the State, Ocala had many representatives among the troops. St. George Rogers, first a captain, was placed in **charge**

²⁸ *Ibid.* p. 28.

of ten companies with the rank of colonel in the fighting of 1857. Robert Bullock raised and led a volunteer company of Indian fighters, and Joshua L. McGahagin, a plantation owner of Long Swamp (now Belleview), did effective work as captain of a company of scouts in patrol duty on the southern boundary of the county.²⁹

As new settlers arrived and the community grew, there came missionaries and religious leaders. As De Soto's army was accompanied by a number of priests, it is probable that the first Christian services were conducted by them or by others of the Roman Catholic faith, who early undertook the conversion of the Indian tribes. But the first missionary of whom we have authentic record in this county was Isaac Boring,³⁰ Methodist, who visited "Camp King" in 1828, and gained permission to talk to the soldiers on "the Sabbath" but was not given an opportunity to address them as his visit happened to be on a week-day.

One of the earliest to make a regular circuit through Ocala was Rev. John C. Ley of the Methodist faith, whose route, covered on horseback, extended from Pilatka to Tampa, and whose yearly remuneration was but \$38.50. Mr. Ley in writing of his work gives a picture of the village in 1849.³¹

The most important place in the circuit was Ocala. In 1846 the county seat was moved there. At the time *I* came to

²⁹ Robert Bullock (father of Judge W. S. Bullock and R. B. Bullock, prominent attorneys of Ocala) was born at Oxford, N. C., in 1828, and came to Fort King when only sixteen years of age. He was a leading figure in all matters pertaining to the growth of Ocala and held many public offices. J. L. McGahagin came to Marion County from Georgia in 1842 and settled at Long Swamp where he had a large plantation. He and his brother Wm. McGahagin (for whom his son W. E. McGahagin, of this city, is named) took active part in affairs relative to county administration.

³⁰ From Boring's diary, quoted in *Fifty-two Years in Florida* by Rev. J. C. Ley, Nashville, 1899, p. 42.

³¹ *Ibid.* p. 74.

the circuit there was a court house built of pine poles, which served for all public purposes. It served as a church for all denominations, also as a public hall and theatre. There were three stores, kept by Messrs. Tison and Harris, E. D. Howse, and A. D. Waterman, a doggery ³² and post office south of the square kept by Wm. Roberts, and a small hotel where the Ocala House now stands. I suppose fifteen families constituted the town. A missionary had been there and a society organized.

The first marriage license recorded in Marion County was issued to James C. Ballard and Adeline Beall, November 29th, 1845, by Alexander McLeod, Clerk. ³³ Here we find the name of John Tucker, "minister of the Gospel" as having performed the ceremony. Although nothing is known of this early divine, two names frequently appearing in connection with the first marriages in the county are those of S. F. Halliday, ³⁴ a Presbyterian minister who was one of the first county commissioners, and that of William Connell, a Baptist preacher, who was an early comer from Barnwell, S. C., and was grandfather of Mrs. Sue Bruton Frink of Ocala. In those days it was often difficult to secure a minister, so when one could be had double and even triple weddings often occurred, the guests coming from near and far.

The Methodist was the first congregation to erect a house of worship, and secured for its church a large lot one block south of the court house. ³⁵ Here, in 1850, the first church in Ocala was built, and although a fine brick edifice has replaced the original little pine

³² Doggery - a place where liquor was sold.

³³ Old license book p. 1, office of county judge.

³⁴ S. F. Halliday was born in Schraalenburgh, N. J. in 1811, and became a Presbyterian minister, serving at Jacksonville and Mandarin in 1837. He settled at Lake Weir, sixteen miles south of Ocala, in 1841. He was not only a member of the first board of county commissioners, but was first elected clerk of the circuit and was appointed receiver of moneys in 1849.

³⁵ Data secured from old residents and from history of Methodist Church by Mrs. J. B. Ley, published in Woman's Club Edition, Ocala Star, April 7th, 1912.

structure and the frame building which succeeded it, the site has never been changed. This church was organized with a membership of ten, of which Ebenezer J. Harris ³⁶ was chairman of the board and was prominent in all affairs of organization and building. The labor of construction was done by slaves and like many other churches of this time it contained a gallery of seats for them.

The Baptist church was next to organize (1850) and was composed of five charter members. In 1851 a lot was secured and shortly afterwards a church erected. ³⁷ In this undertaking the leading spirit was Mrs. Frances Rosa Gary, wife of S. M. G. Gary. ³⁸ Both Mr. and Mrs. Gary were active in every civic undertaking and for their wisely directed and unceasing efforts towards the advancement of public welfare, Ocala owes a lasting debt of gratitude. A number of other denominations were represented, but these were the only two church buildings in Ocala until after the War, and use of them was freely granted

³⁶ Ebenezer J. Harris, early resident of Ocala, was prominent in many activities. For many years he owned the Harris Hotel (later known as the Ocala House), and owned a large tanyard. His interest and support of the Methodist church is attested by a memorial placed in two of the stained glass windows of the present building, one of which bears the picture of Mr. Harris and one that of his wife. He was uncle of Frank E. Harris, Sr., of the Ocala Banner.

³⁷ Information verified by papers in the possession of W. T. Gary, of Ocala, son of S. M. G. Gary.

³⁸ S. M. G. Gary was born in Cokesbury, S. C. in 1828. He was a lawyer by profession, moved to Ocala, in 1850 and took active part in its civic life. He represented Marion County in the Florida secession convention and at the beginning of the War commanded a company of infantry. When wounded, after a year's active service, he was transferred to cavalry and acted as aide to his brother, Gen. M. W. Gary (who was with Lee at the surrender). At the close of hostilities, he held the rank of colonel and returned to Ocala where he again took a prominent part in public affairs. Col. Gary was the first to advocate the planting of citrus trees for profit and named the famous Parson Brown orange. He died in Ocala in 1886.

for services of all creeds. The first Sunday school was a union one held in the Methodist church with Mrs. Gary as superintendent.

The oldest cemetery in Ocala is Evergreen, where mellowed stones mark the resting places of many early settlers. The first grave dug here was for a newcomer, a man named Thigpen, who died in 1850.³⁹ His given name was unknown and all efforts to locate his relatives were unavailing. He, no doubt, like many others who braved the hardships of pioneer days passed into the beyond unmourned. But a permanent marker has been placed on his grave, and in the care given it one is reminded of the fellowship and generosity which characterized these early **years** when hospitality was freely accorded to both friend and stranger.

That Ocala soon took an important place politically is evidenced by its newspapers, for in less than a year after the town was established a weekly paper was put into circulation, and several other publications, including the only agricultural paper in the State, were printed here prior to the War. The first of these was the Ocala Argus,⁴⁰ established in 1847, published and edited by George M. Grouard, Jr. A copy of this paper is in the possession of Frank E. Harris, Sr., bearing the date line "Ocala, E. F., Thursday, Jan. 4th, 1849, Vol. 2, No. 26." Under its name are these words: "Devoted to Justice-Judge from our Acts-the Ends we aim at are our Country's, God's and Truth's".

A competitor to the **Argus**, the **Marion Star**, was launched in 1851 with D. M. McCrimmon as editor

³⁹ Mrs. Sue Bruton Frink tells of the effort to locate relatives of Thigpen. Mrs. Frink, whose home is near the old cemetery, has given it through the years devoted care and assisted in the marking of this first grave.

⁴⁰ *The Argus* is mentioned in records of the county commissioners in 1847.

and J. A. Anderson and Co. as publishers.⁴¹ This was succeeded in less than a year by *The Conservator*,⁴² owned and managed by Lewis C. Gaines, an ex-Indian fighter. We do not know how long the *Conservator* existed, but in the following year, we find frequent mention of the *Tropical Farmer*⁴³ referred to as "the only agricultural paper south of the Potomac", issued by Mr. Gaines. However exaggerated this statement, the establishment of this sheet was of no small moment, for Marion County was already making marked progress in agriculture, and its support of a newspaper devoted to the interests of the planters is significant of the scale of their operations.

Other newspapers following these were the *Ocala Mirror*⁴⁴ in 1857, the *Cotton States* and the ***Florida Home Companion***.⁴⁵ The latter was established shortly before the war between the states and was published by Chas. Reynolds. Later it was bought by T. F. Smith, its name changed to ***The Ocala Banner*** and in 1866 was taken over by Frank E. Harris, who has the distinction of having been its owner and editor for more than sixty years, during which time he has won the respect and admiration of the people of all Florida.

Reflected in the press we find forebodings of the

⁴¹ No copies of this paper have been found, but its appearance is mentioned in the *Floridian* and *Journal*, Tallahassee, June 14th, 1851; also in the *Ancient City*, St. Augustine, of the same date. All references from the *Floridian* and *Journal*, and the *Ancient City*, are made from copies of these newspapers in the library of J. C. Yonge, of Pensacola.

⁴² *The Conservator* is mentioned in the *Ancient City*, St. Augustine, Sept. 27th, 1851.

⁴³ *The Tropical Farmer* is mentioned in the *Ancient City*, St. Augustine, Oct. 23rd, 1852.

⁴⁴ *The Ocala Mirror* is mentioned in records of the county commissioners in 1854, and references to the *Cotton States* are found which show that it was published during the War, but the exact dates cannot be ascertained.

⁴⁵ Information as to the *Florida Home Companion* and the *Ocala Banner* supplied by Frank E. Harris, Sr.

gathering storm. In its prospectus, in 1851, the *Marion Star* ⁴⁶ declares itself "Devoted to the rights of the South, the Constitution, and the Union", urging that party politics be hushed, and that foes to constitutional freedom and southern liberty "be spared not." On March 13th, 1850, a public meeting was held in Ocala, at which resolutions were passed inviting delegates from East Florida to assemble here on April 25th for the purpose of selecting representatives to attend a meeting in Nashville, Tennessee, in June following. The Nashville Convention was "earnestly commended to the attention of Southern people, its object being to promote harmony in Southern action against the hostile and dangerous tendencies of Northern fanaticism". The Ocala gathering was presided over by C. M. Mitchell, with John G. Reardon as secretary. The committee on resolutions was composed of M. J. Paine, W. S. Haines, J. G. Reardon, D. Provence and Stephen Bryan. ⁴⁷

Despite the disquiet thus voiced we find the proverbial calm before the tempest, for in 1850 the community was entering upon an era of prosperity and progress. Perhaps the single event of greatest importance in its history was the locating in Ocala of the first public institution of learning established by the State. In 1851 the legislature decided to found two seminaries, one east, and the other west of the Suwannee River. ⁴⁸ Influenced by its central location and by the generous offers made ⁴⁹ by the people

⁴⁶ Quoted in the *Ancient City*, St. Augustine, July 5th, 1851.

⁴⁷ *Ancient City*, St. Augustine, Mar. 25th, 1850.

⁴⁸ Act passed Jan. 6th, 1853.

⁴⁹ The inducements offered by the town of Ocala through S. S. Burton, who already conducted a small school -here, included "16 town lots in a square, valued at \$200 each, also a building standing thereon ... together with two other buildings erected on said lots, the three valued at \$3,800, also \$1,600 in money." *Senate Journal*, 1854, p. 329.

of Ocala through their agent, S. S. Burton, the East Florida Seminary was established here in 1853, and antedated by several years the founding of the seminary in West Florida.

The Seminary opened under S. S. Burton as principal, and its board of education was composed of L. C. Gaines, J. E. Williams and John M. Taylor.⁵⁰ Its faculty numbered four, and during its first year some sixty students were enrolled. The institution was co-educational, and had a wide curriculum, including Greek, Latin, and arts, as well as all routine subjects. It grew rapidly and for many years was a coveted asset. Its second principal was J. G. Bowman, and another of prominence who served for several years as its head was S. D. McConnell. Others on its educational board during its infancy were W. S. Harris, J. M. McIntosh, S. M. G. Gary and Dr. Tommey.⁵¹

Until 1857, when the county commissioners first made provision to assist in the support, there were few schools and the Seminary was of inestimable value to the community. There were at this time several private schools, one of which was the Freestone Springs Academy a few miles southwest of Ocala, conducted by Chas. H. Bernheim, a Lutheran minister.⁵² There was private instruction given at several of the plantations, tutors in the families of the planters often including in their classes children from neighboring localities.

In 1858 H. L. Hart established a six horse stage coach between Pilatka (the town's early spelling)⁵³ and Ocala. Later, stages were in use between Gainesville,

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵¹ *Senate Journal - 1854-1859.*

⁵² Told by W. E. McGahagin.

⁵³ Verified by items in Minutes of County Commissioners, May, 1858.

Ocala, Brooksville and Tampa, these taking the place of riders for mail service.

Ocala was the gateway through which many newcomers passed and soon became of importance commercially, supplies being shipped in large quantities to settlements in South Florida. Silver Springs, some six miles to the east, a spot of surpassing beauty, afforded a deep basin and navigable stream to the Ocklawaha river; and not many years after placing stages in use, Mr. Hart headed a company which operated steamboats from Palatka via the St. Johns into the Ocklawaha River and thence to Silver Springs. The boats carried both passengers and freight and brought visitors to Ocala long before the advent of railroads.

Industrially, Ocala had in addition to her rich crops, varied activities. For many years there was a tanyard here owned by E. J. Harris, with a prosperous business. Brick manufacturing was done on a large scale, and a steam mill (a rare piece of machinery in this part of the state at that time) cut lumber and also served to grind corn.

Estimates that have come down to us as to Ocala's early population vary. It was a thriving community during the '50's, but any attempt to number its residents of that date would be difficult, for included in the settlement were plantation holders scattered over a wide area ; and having no defined civic boundaries there is much difference of opinion as to its population before the War.

In an address made by S. S. Burton, first principal of the East Florida Seminary, in 1852, he states that Ocala then had 1,000 inhabitants, and Marion County 7,000. This must have been much in excess of the actual number, particularly in regard to the county, for the first Federal census for Marion gives it 3,338 residents in 1850 ; that for ten years later shows 6,609. The first Federal census for the city

was taken in 1870, giving it a population of 600. As the War greatly retarded its prosperity it is reasonable to believe that Ocala formerly had a much larger number of residents.

Populated by people of refinement and culture, and having the advantage of being an educational center, social life in this community was full of pleasure, in these quiet years before the War, and held much of the charm pictured by writers of ante-bellum days. In worn scrapbooks we read of large gatherings and tournaments which were a part of the festivities of the times, attended by residents of all parts of Marion and adjoining counties, ending in a ball in which the queen, chosen by the successful contestant, was crowned.

Business houses faced the square, and from the very beginning of the town what since has become one of the best known hostelries in the state overlooked the court house green. This is the Ocala House which for nearly four score years has stood on this spot. It was first known as the Harris House and was owned by E. J. Harris, who was so prominently identified with Ocala during his long residence here. The original frame building was replaced by a more substantial brick structure, and through its welcoming doorways have passed many a famous visitor, while within its walls have occurred conferences of far-reaching import.

Dr. Willis J. Spann who served Marion and nearby counties was physician here between 1846 and 1849, when he died at the age of thirty years. Other early ones were Doctors Thomas P. Gary, Ze Butt, Moody, Peck, Hurd, Wilson and Floyd. The last two named were killed during the War. Robert Bullock, S. M. G. Gary, St. George Rogers, E. M. L'Engle and S. D. McConnell were prominent lawyers of this period.⁵⁴

⁵⁴ James supplied by early newspapers and by old residents.

Ocala has one of the oldest Masonic bodies in the State, the charter for Marion Lodge No. 19, F. and A. M. having been granted by the Grand Lodge at Tallahassee on January 8th, 1849. Paul McCormick was first master of this lodge, with Robert P. Robinson and Stephen Bryan as senior and junior wardens.

In the debates which preceded the outbreak of the War for Southern Independence Marion's voice was heard. Dr. Jas. B. Owens was chosen to speak at the Democratic convention at Charleston, S. C. in 1860,⁵⁵ as representing slave-holding Southerners, and he, with S. M. G. Gary and William McGahagin,⁵⁶ participated in the Florida secession convention of 1861. Secession is foreshadowed by the record found in the journal of the Florida House of Representatives, session of 1860, of a mass meeting held at Ocala in November of that year; the matter having been brought to the attention of the House by Dr. Daniel A. Vogt, who for several terms was a representative from Marion County:-

Saturday, December 1, 1860

Mr. Vogt presented the following proceedings of a mass meeting held at Ocala, 26th November, 1860:

At a Mass meeting of the citizens of Marion County, held at Ocala, this 26th day of November, 1860, on motion, General J. M. Commander was called to the Chair, and S. D. McConnell and W. McCaslan, Esqrs., appointed Secretaries; whereupon the following Preamble and Resolutions were unanimously adopted:

⁵⁵ Told by Hon. W. T. Gary. James B. Owens, Baptist minister, was one of the most prominent of the plantation owners of Marion County, and took a leading part in public affairs. He was an orator of distinction and his eloquence and zeal in behalf of the South gained for him a reputation far beyond the confines of his county and state. Three of the noteworthy pioneer families of Marion County, Martin, Owens, and Waldo have a representative in Ocala today in the person of Mrs. Mary Waldo Harriss.

⁵⁶ William McGahagin, brother of Joshua L. McGahagin, served the county as judge of probate between 1850 and 1852.

WHEREAS, for many years a political party having existence only in the Northern States of this Union, notoriously hostile to the Southern States, their institutions and dearest interests, has been growing most surely and rapidly, gaining finally, after a long course of determined unconstitutional aggression, the election which has recently taken place throughout the Union for Electors for President and Vice President of the United States, has resulted in the triumph of this party by a large majority, and in the virtual choice of the sectional candidate of this party for President and Vice President, who have avowed their intentions to wage against these Southern interests and institutions a war, "irrepressible, irreconcilable, and everlasting," until their fatal purpose shall be effected in the abolition of negro slavery in America. And whereas, this Confederacy has ceased to answer the purposes for which it was instituted, namely the promotion of the happiness and prosperity of the several states composing it, And whereas, We recognize the right of each State to resume at pleasure all the rights and sovereignty which were delegated to the General Government for the purposes specified in the Constitution of the United States. Therefore,

Be it resolved, That we, the citizens of Marion County, ignoring all party names and past issues, do earnestly recommend the General Assembly of the State of Florida, now in session, immediately to enact a law providing for the meeting at an early date of a Convention of Delegates from the several counties of the State to take into consideration the expediency of dissolving our connection with the Federal Union, giving to the said convention plenary powers to effect such dissolution and to do such other things, and to aid the General Assembly in providing such guarantees for our future peace and security as may be demanded by the exigencies of our situation.

Be it further resolved, That we do also recommend to the said General Assembly,

1st. The enactment of such laws as may be necessary to alleviate any unusual embarrassments of the commercial interests of this State consequent upon the present political emergency.

2nd. That an amount of money be immediately raised sufficient to arm the Militia of the State, that a committee be appointed to select and purchase such arms, and that they be deposited at some convenient place in each Brigade in charge of Brigade armorers,

3rd. That the Senators and Representatives of the State of Florida in Congress be requested by resolution to resign therefrom immediately.

4th. That no election be held for U. S. Senator to fill the vacancy which will take place on the 4th of March next, by the expiration of Mr. Yulee's term.

5th. That the State of Florida make common cause with each and every Southern State, that may secede from the Union, and that any attempt by the United States Government to coerce any seceding Southern State, be regarded as a declaration of war against this State, and that the Governor of the State of Florida be requested forthwith to communicate this resolution to the Governors of the several Southern States.

Be it further resolved, That Gen. J. M. Commander be specially delegated to furnish the Senator and Representatives of Marion County in the General Assembly with a copy of these resolutions, and that they be requested to lay the same before their respective Houses.

J. M. COMMANDER, Ch'n.

S. D. McConnell,
W. McCaslan,
Secretaries.

Which was read.

The first company organized in Marion County went to the conflict under Capt. W. L. Fletcher. Other commands were in charge of W. A. Owens, Robert Bullock, S. M. G. Gary, Jacob Eichelberger, Wade Eichelberger, J. L. McGahagin, J. W. Pearson, John Hopkins, J. M. Martin, E. D. Howse, and Capt. Rou. These companies were soon absorbed into regiments, and in many instances, commands were changed. A cavalry company organized by W. A. Owens was taken over by Capt. Wm. Chambers, and Capt. Owens remained as head of one of the companies kept as home guard. S. D. McConnell, who went as a lieutenant, was shortly after placed in charge of a company of infantry.⁵⁷

⁵⁷ Names given by W. E. McGahagin and John Pasteur, Confederate veterans.

One of the best known companies from Florida was the Marion Light Artillery, first led by Capt. John Marshall Martin,⁵⁸ of Ocala, who, after having been wounded in action, retired and became a member of the Confederate Congress. Later, with the rank of colonel, he returned to active service and remained with the troops until the close of the War. The colors carried by this company were made by the women of Orange Lake (a few miles north of Ocala), the material for the silken flag was a crimson shawl, and the rings and ferrule were molded from their silver trinkets. Presentation of the colors was made April 8th, 1862, through James R. Owens.⁵⁹

A similar occurrence⁶⁰ was the presentation of colors to the Ocala Guards by Jeffersonia Crutchfield, and they were accepted by Edward N. Badger, a fighter of the Indian wars, who later became lieutenant-colonel of the 4th Florida Regiment.

J. J. Dickison left Ocala as 1st lieutenant in the Marion Light Artillery, but was soon given the rank of captain and placed in charge of companies having

⁵⁸ John Marshall Martin was born at Beaufort, S. C. 1832, and after graduating in his twentieth year, came to Marion County and was a successful planter until the War. Entering service as captain of the Martin's Artillery he served until 1862, when he was elected to fill the unexpired term of Judge Dawkins in the Confederate Congress. He served the term out but declined re-election, believing that older men should be sent to Congress and the younger to the field. He returned to the service as colonel of the 9th Fla. regiment and served until the close of the War; after which he returned to Ocala, and was the last surviving member of the Confederate Congress. Col. Martin died Aug. 10th, 1921, at the age of 89. John Marshall Martin and James B. Owens were grandparents of Governor John W. Martin. Two members of Martin's Light Artillery are still living—Robert A. Carleton, of Ocala, and George Pasteur, of Anthony.

⁵⁹ Dickison and His Men, by Mary Elizabeth Dickison, p. 25.

⁶⁰ This incident related by Mrs. Otis T. Green of Ocala. Mrs. Green is a daughter of Col. E. N. Badger, who was born in Charleston, S. C. in 1841, came to Marion Co. when a boy, and later served with distinction in the Indian and civil wars.

special duty within the State. Dickison was looked upon as the protector of central and eastern Florida and when efforts, inspired by his bravery and remarkable accomplishments, were made to obtain promotion for him he refused to leave the work which he had undertaken. But in recognition of it he was given the rank of colonel at the close of the conflict.

An interesting incident which occurred just before the end of the war was the assistance given by Capt. Dickison to John C. Breckinridge, Confederate secretary of war, who took flight southward in an endeavor to join the trans-Mississippi armies which had not yet surrendered. Breckinridge, having arrived at Gainesville, appealed to Dickison for aid and was taken to the home of Samuel Owens, near Ocala, for the night, while Dickison dispatched men to Palatka to obtain a life boat (from the Federal gun-boat *Columbine* captured in the St. Johns river). The following day, while his small boat was being brought to the point where the Ocklawaha flows into the St. Johns, Dickison accompanied Breckinridge and his escort to Silver Springs where the latter embarked, via Silver River and the Ocklawaha, to meet the men bringing the life boat in which they continued their journey. After a hazardous voyage they safely reached Cuba.⁶¹ Judah P. Benjamin, Confederate secretary of state, joined Breckinridge in his flight and took refuge over night in the Bullock home in Ocala.

All Florida is proud to honor the name of Robert Bullock, of Ocala, whose notable achievements during the War earned for him the rank of brigadier-general. His memory is to be perpetuated on Stone Mountain, for he is one of those generals of this state whose likenesses are to be engraved on that memorial.

⁶¹ *Dickison and His Men.* p. 225.

While little actual fighting occurred near Ocala, the war took all its able-bodied men, and those who lived to return found their plantations overgrown and on every hand evidences of neglect and decay. Lacking help in their fields, the task of beginning anew was one to awe the most courageous. For several years the town was under carpet-bag and negro rule, and for a time was garrisoned by negro troops under Captain Brower. An office of the Freedmen's Bureau was opened here, and whites and negroes alike were arrested for petty offenses. Negroes were often punished by cruel methods, frequently hanging by the thumbs. Conditions were chaotic and courts *all* but abandoned. Marion County was once represented by negroes in both branches of the state legislature, and negroes served in various other public offices.⁶²

In 1866 the East Florida Seminary was moved to Gainesville, and the community seemed handicapped by almost insurmountable difficulties. A heartening event in the midst of many discouragements was the establishment of wire communication between Ocala and Gainesville by the International Telegraph Company, an account of which is found in the *St. Augustine Examiner*, of June 1st, 1867:

By the correspondence which we publish, says the Gainesville Era, it will be observed that the cable reached Ocala on Monday last, the 13th inst. We learn that a large number of employees are regularly engaged in prosecuting this important enterprise to completion.

By the 13th day of next month, we doubt not communication by telegraph will be had between this point and Havana.

Messages were exchanged between the mayors of the two cities, the first sent over the newly erected cable:

⁶² Told by McGahagin and other residents. W. A. Chandler, a negro, was senator from this district; Scipio Jasper and Samuel Small were colored representatives from Marion County.

Ocala, May 13th, 1867.

Col. Spencer, Mayor of Gainesville:

Ocala sends her first greetings to Gainesville, and will be the last to sever the bond of union.

S. M. G. Gary, Intendant.

Gainesville, May 13, 1867.

Col. Gary, Mayor of Ocala:

Gainesville accepts your cordial greeting, hoping the union by the wire will soon be strengthened by the rail: and as our towns are mutually proud of our beautiful ladies and commendable gentlemen, may the union of the sexes make a threefold cord, which cannot be broken.

S. Spencer,
Intendant-Elect.

It appears that S. M. G. Gary was one of the earliest, if not the first "intendant" of Ocala. During reconstruction days following the War there was no stable city government and there exists no authentic record of those who served as mayor during those perplexing and troublous years. The first name in the records of the city clerk as mayor is that of Dr. Thomas P. Gary, brother of S. M. G. Gary, who began the first of many terms in this capacity in 1877.

In 1868 Ocala was incorporated ⁶³ and its people, zealously laboring to overcome the loss and stagnation brought about by war, were rewarded a score of years later by a flourishing city which was the gathering place of several conventions of national importance, and was again foremost among the cities of central Florida.

ELOISE ROBINSON OTT.

⁶³ From records at city hall, Ocala.

THE RUINS OF FORT SAN LUIS NEAR TALLAHASSEE

In western Florida there are many places of historic interest whose physical remains have been obliterated by the action of the elements, and the memory of man may have long since ceased to know them. Now and then the student searching historical material finds bits of information left by the pens of long ago concerning them. Here are some of these fragments relating to Fort San Luis.

From Spanish records historians ¹ have learned that Fort San Luis, established about 1640, was not only a place for safety but also the mission center from which the Franciscan friars carried on their work of conversion. The territory included by the workers from this mission embraced at least northern and western Florida, Georgia, and Alabama. From the same sources it has been learned that within a radius of twenty miles there were several missions dependent upon San Luis, but the exact location of few is known today. That they were established at points of vantage for work among the Indians is certain, and we hope that further study may mark their definite location.

At the present time there is nothing to show definitely the location of this old mission-fort, San Luis ; however, the writer believes that in the spring of 1926 bricks forming two of the corners were found, thus partially identifying its location. The site is on the right side of a road now leading westward from Tallahassee at the top of the second hill. In his journal, Andrew Ellicott ² refers to this place, when in 1798-

¹ Jeannette Thurber Connor and Herbert E. Bolton.

² *Journal of Andrew Ellicott*, Philadelphia, 1803, p. 240.

1800 he was serving the United States government in running the boundary in compliance with the treaty of San Lorenzo with Spain (1794) :

Some miles north of St. Marks, there is a tract of country though not extensive, which is tolerably good, and here the Spaniards had a small settlement or colony; it was conquered about sixty years ago, by an enterprising party from Charles Town, South Carolina; it is now totally abandoned and scarcely a vestige of the settlement now remains, except the ruins of a fort, one or two pieces of old artillery, almost, in a state of decomposition.

In the issue of the *Pensacola Gazette and West Florida Advertiser* of November 27, 1824, the location of Fort San Luis is aptly described as:

. about twenty miles from the coast. It is the only high and perfectly commanding spot in this part of the country; a narrow winding ridge rises gradually for half a mile, ending in a very high bluff, surrounded by a deep swamp, on this bluff the fort was erected.

When the capital of territorial Florida was located much interest was shown in the natural beauties of the country which surrounded this new "city in the wilderness". The ruins of Fort San Luis received their share of attention, not only in newspaper articles but also in the writings of travellers passing through the region. A letter ³ from Judge H. M. Brackenridge, of Florida, to Colonel White the delegate from the Territory, tells of the destruction of San Luis, thus :

The appearance of a dense population, which seems to me to have covered the country has induced me to make some inquiry . . . While in Havana I could learn nothing; but while in Charleston I met with an English work, Robert's account of Florida 1763, which gives a piece of history apparently little known. The district of Apalache, it appears was in-

³ Washington, D. C., Jan. 14, 1827; in the *Pensacola Gazette and West Florida Advertiser*, Mar. 23, 1827.

habited by a race called Atimaco Indians with whom the Spaniards became intermingled. The Yamassee Indians who lived near St. Augustine backed by those of Apalache made frequent excursions into the new settlements of South Carolina threatening them with total destruction. In consequence of this Col. Moor, Governor of that State, made three inroads into their country, in the years 1702, 1704, and 1706 marching to the Flint River, then taking a direction south towards Tallahassee. In the last expedition, he entirely defeated the Spanish Governor, the don Juan Mexia, killing and taking prisoners above 800 of the Spanish and Indians—Don Mexia himself being one of the prisoners—Col. Moor transported 1400 of the Indians and fixed them in a settlement near the Savannah River. The settlements were entirely destroyed. This agrees tolerably well with the traditionary account of the old Indian, Chefixico, who says that his father told him the settlements formed by the intermarriage of the Spanish and Indians had been destroyed by a great warrior after three different invasions. Chefixico says that when a boy, the country was so open as to be scarce of game, and was not resorted to by the Indians until the forests grew up; that it was then full of orange and fig trees, and the roads and bridges still to be seen.

Another description of the destruction is given in the Pensacola *Gazette*⁴ as follows :

From Capt. Burch who has lately returned from surveying the ground for the national highway from Pensacola to St. Augustine, I have learned some very interesting particulars.

. . . traces of Spanish settlements are found. The first is a fort St. Louis, at least its ruins, situated about six miles east of Ocolockony and north by west 25 miles from St. Marks. This place has more of the appearance of having been a fortified town than a mere fortification. . . . Fort St. Louis

⁴ By an act of Feb. 28, 1824, Congress provided for the opening of a public road from Pensacola to St. Augustine. It is definitely stated in the act (*United States Statutes at Large*, Little Brown Co., IV, p. 6) that the road shall pass "the site of Fort St. Lewis". Capt. Burch was appointed to take charge of the survey. In the *Pensacola Gazette*, April 25, 1824, note is made of his having "lately received orders" for the work, and "it is calculated that this force [200 men] will enable him to reach Tallahassee . . . by the first of June next". *Pensacola Gazette*, Oct. 9, 1824; "Old Settlements in Florida" copied from the *National Intelligencer* (no date, or author) implies that the work of Capt. Burch had been completed.

was built on an elevated spot of ground around a hollow; from the bottom of which issue two springs that furnish an abundant supply of water, but which after running but a few yards, again sink into the ground. One of these on being opened by Capt. Burch, displayed a wooden box or trunk in which it had been enclosed; they were overshadowed by a beautiful live oak tree. . . . Capt. Burch met with an old Indian near Tallahassee of the Creek Nation, who appeared to be of great age and who informed him that he had been in a war which destroyed these settlements. His age could not be precisely determined, but from circumstances it was thought that it could not be less than one hundred and thirty or forty. . . . At the time of the war with the Spanish he was in the prime of life and recollects very particularly all its circumstances. . . . The Indians made repeated attempts at St. Louis, and were as repeatedly repulsed, being unable to withstand the cannon. They then mustered their whole force and after laying waste the whole country, they made a final effort by investing the fortified places; and endeavoring to starve them out. They were encamped principally on the North side of the Fort; the Spanish prepared everything for evacuating it, and retired in the night to the fort on the Ocolockony. The first intimation to the Indians of the retreat, was the explosion of the Fort: the cannon were so broken and injured as to be unfit for use, and is still to be seen. The country having thus fallen into their hands, together with the Yamassy tribe of Indians, with whom the Spanish had intermarried, and lived on a most friendly footing; the males were all destroyed, and the women taken for wives or slaves.

But the country had been so entirely cleared, that there was no game, and the domestic animals having been destroyed during the war, the great body of Indians returned to their nation. The Indians who remained formed a new race, who were called Seminoles, which in the Hitchy language signifies run wild. The old Indian himself went to the Apalachicola Indian lived near St. Louis-until the forests grew up, when he returned about the time the Tallahassee and Mikasuky towns were built. He represents the Spanish population to have been very numerous, but could give no precise idea of their numbers. . . . The Indians had no firearms being armed with bows and arrows and clubs. In order to protect themselves from the effect of the shot, they suspended thick boards about their necks and which did not always answer the purpose. The Indians have preserved a superstitious story which keeps them

at an awful distance from San Luis. They say that the Spaniards, on quitting San Luis, buried their church ornaments, and with them some bottles of medicine (magic) which would prove fatal to them if they were touched. They cannot be prevailed upon to 'accompany the whites there even to show the place.

Of the appearance of the ruins at about the time Tallahassee was established as the territorial capital, we find several other reports. John Lee Williams, who was one of the commissioners appointed to select the site for the new capital, wrote to Richard Keith Call as follows : ⁵

Among the curiosities of the country we discovered an old Spanish Fort on a commanding hill about half way from Oclockney to Tallahassee. The south line of it measured 71 paces, the north 55, the east and west ends about 46. It had bastions near the angles, and in the spring about fifty feet down the ravine, east of the works, we discovered the breach of a six-pound field piece, and near it another piece of the same dimensions, from which the muzzle was broken. An ancient Indian of old Tallahassee, told us that the fort was taken by the Creeks, when he was a boy, near a hundred years ago, that the country tho thickly settled with the Spaniards was broke up, that the Yamassee Indians then called Bone, were friends of the Spaniards and also cut off.

In a **View of West Florida** ⁶ the same writer speaks more at length regarding this ruin and its appearance :

Extensive forts were erected, on many commanding eminences. Fort St. Lewis was situate two miles west of Tallahassee. Its form was an irregular parallelogram; the eastern and longest side was fifty-two paces. Within the moat, two brick edifices had been erected; one sixty by forty, the other thirty by twenty feet. There were bastions at each corner. The outward defenses are extensive. A covered way led to a spring, in a deep ravine, under the north-east wing of the

⁵ Brevard, Caroline, History **of Florida**, I. p. 263. Letter dated St. Marks, Nov. 1, 1823.

⁶ Williams, John Lee **A View of West Florida, etc.** Philadelphia 1827 p. 32. The *Pensacola Gazette* April 24, 1824 contains similar statements.

fort. Here were discovered two broken cannon, one of them having only the muzzle broken off; this has been removed to Tallahassee, and again awakens the echoes of the distant hill on days of rejoicing. Many articles of old iron have been discovered about this old ruin. Before it, trees and grape vines grow, in the order in which they were planted: the rows are distinctly traced, although overrun with a more recent forest.

A few sentences found in the *Pensacola* Gazette of April 2, 1825 add another fragment to the picture on this hill top as seen in the early twenties:

These [the two brick edifices] are in total ruins, and nothing but the mound appears where the walls stood, composed wholly of broken bricks, which had been composed of a coarse sandy clay and burned in the modern fashion. Yet on the very walls of these buildings are oaks eighteen inches in diameter. On the same hill, and in fact within the outworks of this fort, are to be seen grape arbors in parallel lines, which still maintain their pristine regularity.

In early territorial days the attraction of Fort San Luis was not alone its traditions and its power to arouse in the imagination a vision of another era, but its natural beauties made it a delightful place, and many were the merrymakings held there according to the traditions of our own Tallahassee. It was here that Prince Murat ⁷ and Mrs. Catherine Dangerfield Gray first met. The fascination of the Priest's Spring ⁸ must be felt as long as its peaceful beauty is undestroyed by the hand of man.

VENILA LOVINA SHORES

⁷ Long, Ellen Call, Florida *Breezes* p. 156. "I met Kate the first time at a picnic. It was at old Fort St. Luis; her shoes were so much too large for her that one slipped off, I did seize it and drank to her health" so says Prince Murat.

⁸ So Jeannette Thurber Connor very aptly called the spring on first seeing it in March, 1926.

GOVERNORS OF SPANISH EAST FLORIDA,
1784-1821 ¹

I, Antonio Alvarez, Keeper of the Public Archives of East Florida, duly qualified and commissioned by the President of the United' States of America, do hereby certify that, on an examination of the documents in, my possession, it appears that the following named persons have acted as civil and military Governors of the then Province of East Florida, between the years 1784 and 1821, to wit:

Vicente Manuel de Zespedes, from July 12, 1784 until July, 1790.

Juan Nessimuceno de Quesada, from July 1790 until March 1796.

Bartolome Morales, from March 1796 until June of the same year, pro tern.

Enrique White, from June 1796 until March 1811.

Juan Jose de Estrada, from March 1811 until June 1812, pro tern.

Sebastian Kindelan, from June 1812 until June 1815.

Juan Jose de Estrada, from June 1815 until January 1816, pro tem.

Jose Coppinger, from January 1816 until July 10th, 1821.

In testimony whereof I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the Seal of my office at the City of Saint Augustine, this 2nd day of December A. D. 1829.

ANTONIO ALVAREZ
Keeper of the Public Archives.

¹ Original in Bureau of Index and Archives, State Department, Washington, D. C.

GOVERNORS OF SPANISH WEST FLORIDA,
1781-1821 ¹

I, Joseph E. Caro, keeper of the public archives, of West Florida, duly qualified and commissioned by the president of the United States of America, do hereby certify, that, on an examination of the official acts in my possession of the governors of West Florida in the original records, it appears that the following named persons have acted as civil and military governors, to-wit :

Arturo O'Neill, from May, 1781, until November, of the year 1792.

Enrique White, from August, 1793, until November, of the year 1795.

Francisco de Paula Gelabert, from May 1796, until September, 1796, as ad interim.

Vizente Folch y Juan, from November, 1796, until March, of the year 1809.

Francisco Maximiliano de St. Maxent, from March, 1809, until May of the same year, as ad interim.

Vizente Folch y Juan, from May, 1809, until October, of the same year.

Francisco Maximiliano de St. Maxent, from December, 1809, until October, 1810, as ad interim.-

Francisco Collell, from October, 1810, until February, 1811, as ad interim.

Francisco Maximiliano de St. Maxent, from April, 1811, until June, 1812, as ad interim.

Mauricio Zuniga, from July, 1812, until April, of the year 1813.

¹ White, *Collection of Laws of Great Britain, France and Spain Relating to Cession of Land in their Respective Colonies*, Philadelphia 1839, II., 255.

Matheo Gonzales Maurique, from May, 1813, until August, of the same year.

Matheo Gonzales Maurique, from August,. 1814, until February, 1815.

Joseph de Soto, from February, 1815, until March, 1816.

Mauricio de Zuniga, from March, 1816, until September, of the same year.

Francisco Maximiliano de St. Maxent, from September, 1816, until November, of the same year, as governor ad interim.

Joseph Masot, from November, 1816, until May, of the year 1818.

Joseph Maria Callava, from February, 1819, until July, 1820 [1821?]

In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my hand, and affixed the seal of my office at the city of Pensacola, this 3d day of December, in the year of our Lord 1828.

JOSEPH E. Caro,

[L. S.]

Keeper *of the Public Archives.*

NOTES AND COMMENT

The Society has received from Mr. George Cole Scott, of Richmond, Virginia, through Admiral Victor Blue, a member, a copy of a map of the greater part of East Florida showing grants of land made to an unknown date during the English occupation, together with approximate locations and exact acreages. The original of this map is in the possession of Sir Arthur Grant, of Scotland, to certain ancestors of whom some of these grants were made. It is drawn to a scale of four miles to an inch and hence is large and clear. An interesting feature of the map is that it indicates every grant which was then occupied and seems to show the important plantations prior to the English grants. A memorandum taken from the map and a letter on the subject follow:-

An Exact Plan of the River St. John in East Florida.*A Scale of Four Miles to an Inch*

[LEFT BANK OF ST. JOHNS RIVER, from the mouth, in order:]	
J. Tucker Esqr.	10,000 acres
J. Cross [house]	500 acres
J. Beaumier Esqr.	10,000 acres
Ferry House [near Jacksonville]	
Thos. Philipot Esqr.	10,000 acres
F. Rolphs Esqr.	5,000 acres
Doctors Lake	
Capt. Skinner	3,000 acres
B. Creek	
Patrick Tonin Esqr.	20,000 acres
Messrs. Nooney & Frazer	20,000 acres
Wm. Mills Esqr.	20,000 acres
J. Crisp Esqr.	15,000 acres
James Bryant [house]	500 acres
Jos'h. Gray [house] [Palatka]	1,500 acres
Hen. Middleton	6,000 acres
Earl of Moira	20,000 acres

Mr. Spalding's Indian Store	
J. Tucker Esqr.	20,000 acres
Oglewaha Creek [Ocklawaha R.]	
J. Fortry, Esqr.	10,000 acres
J. Morris Esqr.	5,000 acres
Bell I. [island]	
Frayton I. [island]	
Lake George	
Mr. Spalding's Upper Indian Store	
[RIGHT BANK, from the mouth:]	
N. Wood Esqr.	10,000 acres
J. Hassard [house]	
P. Heslit [house]	
N. Conant [house]	
J. Forbes [house]	
J. Thorno [interior]	10,000 acres
Fatio Esqr. [house]	
J. Ready [house]	
W. Jones [house] [South Jacksonville]	1,000 acres
J. Davis's [house] [Mandarin]	
Fr. Levett Esqr. [house]	10,000 acres
J. Johnson Esqr.	10,000 acres
Dr. Cunningham	5,000 acres
Remains of Dapuppo Fort	
J. Callinder Esqr. [house]	1,000 acres
Capt. C. Rainsford, Saw Mill [house]	
Nathaniel Jackson Esqr.	5,000 acres
Piccolata Fort	
Capt. H. Hunt [house]	10,000 acres
Rev. Forbes	1,000 acres
Jos. Wilson Esqr. [west of St. Augustine]	10,000 acres
Coll. Wm. Taylor	5,000 acres
Dennis Rolle Esqr. [houses]	20,000 acres
Henlough [house]	1,000 acres
Lord Adam Gordon	20,000 acres
Rich. Pratt Esqr.	10,000 acres
J. Tucker Esqr.	500 acres
Mr. Tucker [house]	
Lord Egmont	1,000 acres
Mr. Tuckers	500 acres
Mount Royal, Earl of Egmont [house]	10,000 acres
Luke Lillington Esqr. [house]	10,000 acres
Govr. Grant	600 acres

Lake George	
Andrew Turnbull	5,000 acres
Miss Mary Turnbull	5,000 acres
Earl of Moira	10,000 acres
Earl of Cassilis	20,000 acres
Coll. James Robinson	17,000 acres
R. Hon. I. Beresford	20,000 acres
Wm. Crowle Esqr.	10,000 acres
Earl of Tyrone	20,000 acres
Mineral Spring	
Duncan Grant Esqr.	20,000 acres
Lake Grant	
Sir Arch. Grant	20,000 acres
Dr. Stork	1,000 acres
Sir Alexr. Grant	20,000 acres
Hon. & Revd. Wm. Beresford	20,000 acres
Sir Wm. Duncan	20,000 acres
Hon. & Revd. Wm. Beresford	20,000 acres
Lake Barrington	20,000 acres
Capt. John Jervis	20,000 acres
Wm. Henry Ricket Esqr.	20,000 acres

ATLANTIC COAST

Halifax River	
The Hon. Charles Townshend Esqr.	20,000 acres
Doctor Turnbull	1,000 acres
Major Moultrie [house]	
Tomako River	
Richard Oswald Esqr. [house]	20,000 acres
Arthur Jones Esqr.	5,000 acres
Peter Taylor Esqr. [house]	10,000 acres
James Penman Esqr.	10,000 acres
Mosquito Inlet, New Smyrnea	
Doctor Turnbull [houses]	20,000 acres
Sir Wm. Duncan	
Hillsborough River	
Mr. McDugall [house]	
Capt. C. Bissett [house]	
Mr. Elliott [house]	
Lake Gordon [Crescent Lake]	
J. Grayhurst Esqr.	

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WATSON & PASCO & BROWN
LAWYERS
PENSACOLA, FLORIDA

September 14, 1927.

Mr. Julien C. Yonge,
Editor, Florida Historical Society Quarterly,
Pensacola.

Dear Mr. Yonge:-

I have your letter in regard to English grants in East and West Florida, suggesting the inquiry whether Spain after the treaty of 1783 confirmed English grants only to those who became Spanish subjects.

The terms of the treaty of 1783 itself gave a period of grace to the holders of British titles in which they might make conveyances to persons entitled to hold real estate in a Spanish Province.

The provisions in the treaty of 1819 ceding Florida to the United States seem to have been considerably more favorable to the holders of Spanish grants than the provisions of the treaty of 1783 between Spain and Great Britain with reference to British grants. Under the treaty of 1819 the grants were made as valid as if the territories had remained under the dominion of Spain, and under Article 6 the inhabitants of the territories were to be admitted to the privileges of citizens of the United States.

Under Article 3 of the Spanish-British treaty of 1783 it was provided:

His Britannic majesty shall cede to his Catholic majesty East Florida, and his Catholic majesty shall keep East Florida, it being well understood that there shall be granted to the subjects of his Britannic majesty, who are established, as well in the Island of Minorca, as in the two Floridas, the term of eighteen months, which shall be counted from the day of the ratification of the definitive treaty, to sell their property, recover their debts, and transport their effects and persons without molestation on account of their religion or under any other pretext whatsoever except that of debts or criminal causes.

Article 5 of that treaty provided:

His Catholic Majesty agrees that the British inhabitants, or others who may have been subjects of the King of Great Britain in the said provinces, may retire in full security and liberty, where they shall think proper, and may sell their estates, and remove their effects, as well as their persons, without being restrained in their emigration under any pretence whatever, except on account of debts or criminal prosecutions; the term limited for this emigration being fixed to the space of eighteen months, to be computed from the day of the exchange of the ratification of the present treaty; but if, from the value of the possessions of the English proprietors, they should not be able to dispose of them within the said term, then his Catholic Majesty shall grant them a prolongation proportioned to that end.

It was found that the eighteen months period was too short to allow the English settlers to dispose of their property and to leave the provinces and the time was extended for four months, which period expired on June 19, 1785. The report of the Commissioners for West Florida (4th *American State Papers, Public Lands*, 154)) evidently written by Jos. M. White, construes the treaty. White points out that the effect of the treaty was to cede the holdings of British grantees where the claimants failed to dispose of them within the period limited by the 'treaty or by the extension given for such purpose, This evidently was the construction of the Spanish authorities, as shown by a decree of the Governor 'holding invalid an attempted conveyance under power of attorney by one Johnson, because the power was not shown (2nd White's New Recopilacion, 309). This document shows that the Spanish authorities regarded as forfeited British holdings not disposed of within the period or recognized in some formal manner by them. It says:

And whether it be inadvertence, ignorance of the laws, or any other motive whatsoever, which may have induced said

Don Roberto Payne to fail in so essential a point, the property of Don Thomas Nixon cannot be exempted from sharing the same fate as that of several other British subjects who have abandoned their immoveable property without taking measures to sell it; and the same happened to several Spaniards, when, in the year 1763, this province, was ceded to Great Britain, the abandoned possessions falling then to the king of England, in *the same manner as they now devolve to the king my master*, the primitive term of eighteen months, and the succeeding prolongation of four months stipulated for in the last definitive treaty of peace, having ended on the 19th of June last. (*Italics ours*)

In some instances there were forfeitures of the rights of Englishmen after the expiration of the treaty time limit because of leaving the Spanish territory. A decree dated November 22, 1792, makes such a forfeiture. This decree appears at page 253 of 4th American State Papers, Public Lands, and recites that under the Spanish laws foreigners could not hold real property "unless they are established in our dominions."

At page 307 of White's second volume appears a Royal Order of April 5, 1786, showing that the Spanish authorities made additional provision "for British settlers who desired to remain in the provinces. The pertinent portion of this order, which expresses the Royal will as to both English and American families. established at Baton Rouge, Mobile, Pensacola and Natchez, as well as to the inhabitants of East Florida, is as follows:

that the permission be continued to them of dwelling where they are established on the condition that for the present and as indispensable circumstances they take a solemn oath of fidelity and obedience to his majesty, and that they go not out of the limits where they are actually situated without the power of going to other parts, not having an express license of the government. That those who shall not comply with these just conditions depart by sea for the colonies of North America at their expense, or in defect of that at the expense of the king,

who shall be reimbursed from their effects as far as possible. That this same concession be extended to the inhabitants of East Florida as far as it may be adapted to it; and that in Natchez and other places of both Floridas, where it is convenient, parishes of Irish clergy be established in order to bring said colonists and their children and families to our religion, with the sweetness and mildness which it advises."

From the above it will be seen that while in the British-Spanish treaty of 1783 the right was secured to the holders of British grants to dispose of them within a limited period, the Spanish, apparently as an act of grace, gave them the right to remain and take the oath of allegiance. Wherever they took such oath, the Spanish seem, either expressly or by implication, to have confirmed their grants. An examination of the proceedings of the Commissioners of East Florida in dealing with claims emanating from British grants (Report 5, page 243, et seq. 4th American State Papers, Public Lands) shows that in many cases it was expressly recited that the claimant under the British grant had taken the oath of allegiance to his catholic majesty, which, of course, was equivalent to becoming a Spanish subject.

The report of the West Florida Commissioners on British claims is very specific that no British title which had not received the recognition of the Spanish authorities could be confirmed by the Commissioners, that report stating that the Spanish authorities re-granted whenever applications were made to that effect. (ibid. p. 156.)

Report No. 7 of the Commissioners for East Florida is of British titles which do not appear to have been recognized by the Spanish government. Very large British claims were presented to the Commissioners for East Florida by the Earl of Grosvenor, Lord Templeton, and others, which were rejected because they were not shown to be bona fide citizens of

the United States and because they had not shown that they had not been compensated by the British government.

Reports "D" and "E" of the West Florida Commissioners appear to be of gratuitous concessions made by the Spanish and British governments. The note appended to Abstract "D" shows that those emanating from British grants were afterwards sold to Spanish subjects within the time prescribed by the Capitulation of 1781, the treaty of 1783 and the subsequent Royal Order. Some also appear to have been British grants which had been recognized by the Spanish authorities after the expiration of the treaty time limit. Apparently the commissioners did not confirm any British grants except those emanating from holders who disposed of their right within the treaty period to persons entitled to hold real property in Spanish territory, or those British grants whose validity had been subsequently recognized by the Spanish authorities expressly or impliedly. In a few instances perhaps after the treaty period and the extension by the Royal Order, the holder of a British grant sold the property affected, passing the title through the Spanish office having charge of such matters. Where that was allowed to be done, it appears to have been treated as a Spanish recognition of the validity of the British grant.

From the foregoing, the Spanish appear to have dealt with the British grants as follows:

(a) The grant was treated as valid where the holder, within the treaty period as extended by the Royal Order, disposed of the property to a person competent to hold real estate in a Spanish province.

(b) Where the holder of the British grant remained in the province and took the oath of allegiance and applied for and obtained a confirmation of his grant.

(c) Where the holder of the British grant remained in the province and ***through the Spanish offices*** handling the transfers of real estate, sold and conveyed, without having obtained any confirmation of his grant, though such sale and conveyance was ***after*** the expiration of the treaty period as extended by the Royal Order.

The Commissioners under the Act of 1822 "An Act for Ascertaining Claims and Titles to Lands Within the Territory of Florida" and Acts supplementary thereto, had no option with reference to those British claims, the validity of which had not been recognized by the Spanish authorities. Section 4 of the Act whose title is above quoted provided among other things that

Every person * * * claiming titles to lands under any patent, grant, concession or order of survey dated previous to the 24th day of January, one thousand eight hundred and eighteen, *which were valid under the Spanish government*, or by the law of nations, and which are not rejected by the treaty ceding the territory of East and West Florida to the United States, shall file before the Commissioners his * * * claim; * * * and said Commissioners shall proceed to examine and determine on the validity of said patents, grants, concessions and orders of survey agreeably to the laws and ordinances heretofore existing of the governments making the grants respectively, having due regard in all *Spanish claims* to the conditions and stipulations (*Italics ours*)

of the treaty of February 22, 1819. That section further provided

That in all claims submitted to the decision of the Commissioners where the same land or any part thereof is claimed by titles emanating both from the British and Spanish governments, the Commissioners shall not decide the same, but shall report all such cases with an abstract of the evidence, to the Secretary of the Treasury.

There were thirty of these conflicting British and Spanish claims reported at Pensacola. All of

them by the Act of April 2, 1826, were confirmed to the Spanish claimants in possession. This was undoubtedly because the Spanish authorities had not recognized the validity of the British grants, either because the holders had left the province and had not made any disposition of them within the treaty period as extended, or because the claimants, if they had not left, had not taken the oath of allegiance prior to the making of the Spanish grants.

Section 5 of the Act of 1822 made an express limitation with reference to British grants, providing:

That the Commissioners shall not act on or take into consideration any British grant, patent, warrant or order of survey but those which are bona fide claimed and owned by citizens of the United States and which have never been compensated for by the British government.

In the Act of March 3, 1823, which was supplementary to the last mentioned Act, Commissioners for East Florida were provided for, it having been found that one set of commissioners could not conveniently act both for West Florida and East Florida. The East Florida Commissioners were authorized by Section 2 of the Act to confirm all claims of less than thirty-five hundred acres

the validity of which has been recognized by the Spanish government and where the claimant or claimants shall produce satisfactory evidence to his, her, or their right, to the land claimed.

Yours very truly,

WHW :W

W. H. WATSON.

Those who have recently become members may not know that the Society published last year **A History of Jacksonville, Florida**. Through many years search of all known sources Mr. T. Frederick Davis, of Jacksonville, gathered together all available materials re-

lating to that vicinity ; and from a selection of such only as are of historical value he has made a volume of more than five hundred pages which, it is believed, will always be the most authentic and the most nearly complete record, of what is worth while in the first century of the city's history; Mr. Davis generously gave this labor of years outright to the Society; It has been published and copies are for sale by the Secretary.

New members are the life of the Society. Youth is engaged almost wholly with the present and the future, hence we must expect many of our members to pass on every year; and if the Society is to live they each must have a successor. Other continual losses from membership are those whose interest proves to be only temporary. These also must be replaced. New members nearly always come through interest aroused personally and directly ; and several of our members, to whom the Society is grateful, are helping the body forward in that way. One, Judge L. L. Parks. of Tampa, has interested more than half a score who have joined with us.

The following have become members during the past quarter-

Fleming, Miss M. A.	Hibernia
Grant, Mrs. John	Fort Lauderdale
New Smyrna Public Library	New Smyrna
Rahn, Claude J.	Brooklyn, New York.
Summerall, Charles P.	Washington, D. C.
Taylor, H. Marshall	Jacksonville
Thorburn, Charles	Pensacola
Whitner, Charles F.	Atlanta, Georgia
Barrow, D. C.	Pensacola