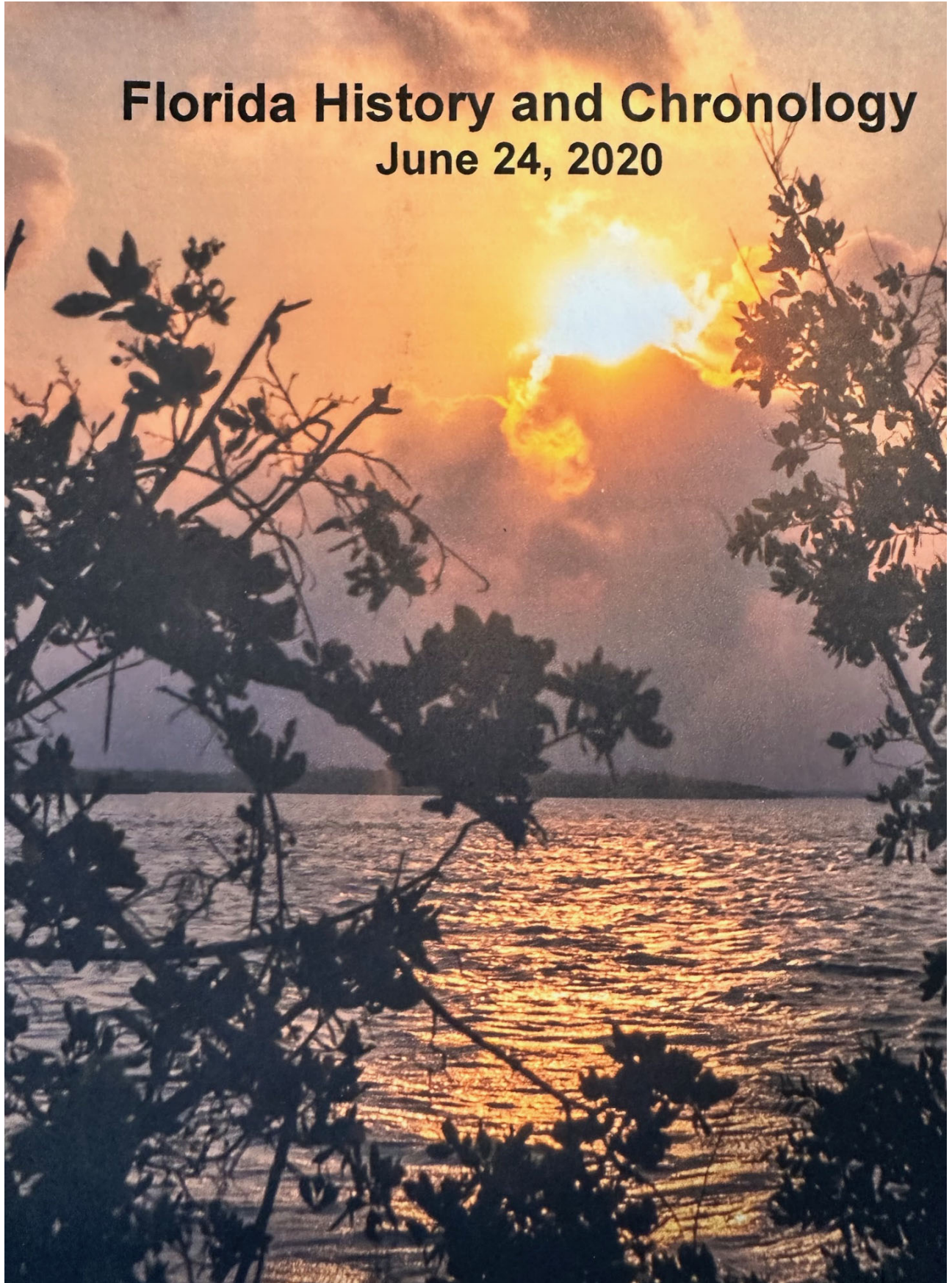


# **Florida History and Chronology**

**June 24, 2020**



## **Introduction**

This is an incomplete study of Florida history. The main purpose has been to learn about the early Spanish explorers and their impact upon Florida's history and culture, as well as a study of the Seminole Wars. Different books which I have read had differing accounts and dates. Even though there may be contradictory information, the overall concept and flavor remains intact.

Other interesting information that I uncovered along the way has also been included. However, the history of Marco Island has been intentionally left out, because of the other booklet I wrote tracing Marco Island's history and development. Only early Marco Island history is discussed.

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## Geography

The Appalachian Mountains were thrust up and worn down, and one last undersea fault caused the Florida Plateau to rise slightly.

When the first humans arrived, Florida was still temperate, but more arid than today.

However, there were still large glacial masses in the polar regions, so sea levels were 200-300 feet lower than today. Because of this, much of the continental shelf was above water, resulting in Florida being more than double the size it is today. This was especially seen on the Gulf Coast where the shoreline extended 75-100 miles farther west.

The first land in Florida was a linear archipelago running north-south along an elevated Florida peninsula near Pensacola.

The limestone base below the surface dissolved over time causing canals, caverns, sinkholes, lakes, and cenotes.

Florida is made up of three geographic regions:

1. North Florida including Tallahassee and most of the Panhandle.
2. Central Portion – Largely flat, poor drainage, with many lakes
3. Southern – Wetlands, exemplified by the Everglades and the Keys.

“Glades” is of English origin meaning “shining” or “bright.”

The Everglades began at Lake Okeechobee.

The Indians originally named Lake Okeechobee Lake Mayaimi – meaning “Big Water.”

The rock beneath Lake Okeechobee is only a few feet above sea level.

The rock beneath the Everglades slopes south at an incline of 6 inches every six miles – hence it has been called “River of Grass”.

The surface of Lake Okeechobee is twenty-one feet above sea level.

Canals constructed in Florida have disrupted the historic water flow of the Everglades.

Four factors which are critical in the water management of the Everglades are:

1. Quality of the water. Farm runoff brings excess nitrates and phosphates which reduce beneficial algae and promote the unnatural growth of marsh vegetation.
2. Saltwater intrusion changes the water quality. When fresh water supplies are low, saline water intrusion changes the aquifer and upsets the ecosystem. Mercury pollution is also a growing problem.
3. Quantity – When there is too much water, it disrupts the wildlife habitat.
4. Distribution - With too little water, the park cannot produce small aquatic organisms that anchor the food web.

## The Calusa

The Calusa capital was likely on Mound Key in Estero Bay. The Spanish called it “Calos.”

In the 1560’s the Calusa controlled over fifty towns.

The Calusa were divided into groups identified as nobles and commoners.

They built homes out of wood and palm thatch on mounds of seashells and soil called “middens.”

The Key Marco site was at the extreme south of the Calusa region in the 10,000 Islands. The artifacts excavated from here were well preserved since the soil was oxygen free.

The Spanish named the Calusa leader Carlos, in honor of the Spanish Emperor Charles V of Spain.

## **Seminole Tribe**

The first Seminoles were Creeks that moved to Florida. The word "Seminole" meant "people of distant fires." To the Spanish explorers, the native Florida peoples were known as "Cimarrones" meaning wild or untamed. Among the Indian people they were known as "Simanoli." Later, the United States citizens called them "Seminole." It meant outlaw or runaway. The name was first documented in 1765, when the Seminoles were treated as an independent tribe.

The Seminole migration was in three phases:

1. 1702-1740: There were raids against the Spanish and their Apalachicola allies, but no settlements.
2. 1740-1812: There were 6 Seminole villages in northern Florida.
3. 1812-1820: Pressures from Alabama and Georgia forced Upper and Lower Creeks, as well as Negro slaves to move to Florida.

By 1724, the Seminoles were divided into three groups: two groups of Lower Creek (lived in the valley along the Chattahoochee and Flint Rivers) spoke Miccosukee; the third group of Upper Creeks spoke Muskogee. They were descendants of the Panzaola, Chalot and Apalachicola in the Panhandle. Apachee were where the Panhandle turned south. The Timucan were the in northern ½ of the peninsula, with the Calusa in the south and Matecumbe Key.

## **Seminole Wars**

### **Precursor to First Seminole War**

1656-1704: San Luis Mission encouraged a mass migration of Creeks and slaves to North Florida.

Before 1770, the town of White King on the Suwanee River was one of several major Seminole communities. "White King" was derived from Creek, meaning White Chiefs. White chiefs ruled civil matters, while red chiefs ruled over war.

1812: The English built a fort at the Prospect Bluff trading post near Apalachicola on the Apalachicola River. It was used as a strong defensive protection against the Americans during the War of 1812.

1812: In the War of 1812 the British used the Red Sticks (the aggressive Creeks), including Billy Bowlegs, in the fight against the United States. The British gave them gifts, presents, guns and taught them military tactics. With the Treaty of Ghent, the Indians were not supposed to lose land, and England wouldn't assist the Indians. However, the United States didn't honor the treaty.

1813: During the Creek War of 1813-1814 the Red Sticks killed five hundred Whites in an attack at Fort Mims on the Lower Alachua River.

1814: Andrew Jackson, with the Lower Creeks, killed eight hundred Red Sticks at the Battle of Horseshoe Bend in Central Alabama. After the defeat, the tribe gave up twenty-two million acres of land in Georgia and Central Alabama.

1814: England put the United States aside since they were recovering from battling Napoleon. With the Treaty of Fort Jackson in 1814, the English abandoned Prospect Fort and gave it to the Seminoles and the Free Blacks for support against the Americans. It was known as "Negro Fort."

- 1814-1815: Slave hunters went into northern Florida to displace the Seminoles and catch the Negroes as slaves.
- 1816: The Indians retaliated by raiding settlements and plantations in northern Florida.
- 1816: Under General Gaines, Fort Scott was built to be a supply depot for the American base in New Orleans, and as an outpost to pursue the Seminoles and runaway slaves in the Spanish territory. Gaines was also known for capturing Aaron Burr, who killed Alexander Hamilton in a duel, Burr was later planning to establish a new country in the Territory of West Florida.
- 1816: Andrew Jackson sent Colonel Clinch with three hundred soldiers and Creek allies to attack and destroy the Negro Fort. 270 Seminoles and Blacks died instantly when their gunpowder magazine blew up. Gascon (the fort's leader) and the Choctaw chief were executed, with the remaining Blacks marching north into slavery.
- 1817: Under direction from Andrew Jackson, soldiers from Fort Scott, commanded by Colonel Gaines and Major Twiggs, attacked the Mikasuki village of Fowltown in southwest Florida.
- 1817: Settlers then moved into the Fort Jackson area. The Whites and Indians stole each other's cattle, burned each other's houses, and murdered each other.

### **First Seminole War: 1817 – 1818**

- 1817: The Mikasuki, Seminole, Creek and Black warriors attacked an American supply boat headed up the Apalachicola River near Chattahoochee. Forty-one men, six women, and four children were killed. This led to the start of the First Seminole War.
- 1818: Andrew Jackson built Fort Gadsden by the ruins of the Negro Fort. He attacked the Indians at Lake Miccosukee, burned their villages, and stole their cattle. Then, with 4,800 men, including 1,500 Creeks, he marched against the 1,000 Seminoles, destroying their settlements and crops. This ended the First Seminole War. Jackson went on to consolidate control of West Florida. In doing so, he conquered Pensacola, leaving St. Augustine as the only city under Spanish control.

### **Precursor to Second Seminole War**

- 1823: With the Camp Moultrie Treaty between the U.S. and 32 Seminole chiefs, the Supreme Court said that Indian title was to be respected until it is legitimately extinguished. The Seminoles gave up twenty-four million acres of land but were to receive moving expenses of \$5,000 per year for 20 years, get paid for improvements in northern Florida, and be provided with a school, blacksmith, and livestock. The United States was to be reimbursed for runaway slaves. The Treaty was never extinguished, just forgotten. The people of Florida did not want a truce – they wanted war and removal or extinction of the Indians. Plans continued to get the Indians out of Florida.
- 1824: President Monroe said that the Seminole should be removed from Florida or put on a reservation. The reservation was marked off between the Peace River, and the Withlacoochee River along with some land north of Ocala.
- 1825 -1827: With the poor land given to the Seminoles as a result of the Camp Moultrie Treaty, a food shortage caused the Indians to steal cattle from the settlers.
- 1827: Fort King was built near Ocala to protect the Indian Agent.

- 1830: Andrew Jackson was the first Territorial Governor of Florida. He saw the Indians as the frontiersmen's bitter enemy. He said that all of the Indians in Florida should be shipped to the West. All of the Negroes who were with them should go back to slavery. He attacked the Spanish settlements and killed the runaway slaves. As President, Jackson had Congress pass the Indian Removal Act of 1830 which authorized removal of the southeastern tribes to the Indian Territory west of the Mississippi, including Arkansas and Oklahoma. This eventually led to the Spanish ceding Florida to the United States.
- 1832: Governor DuVal of Florida felt that the land between the Suwanee and Alachua Rivers was one of the richest and most valuable areas in the territory and should belong to the Whites. The Seminoles and Upper Creeks were to be shipped to Alabama or west of the Mississippi.
- 1832: John James Audubon arrived on Indian Key and stayed with Dr. Perrine to study the flocks of birds between Indian Key and Cape Sable. Dr. Perrine had advocated the use of quinine for treating malaria.
- 1832: With the Treaty of Payne's Landing on the Ocklawaha River, Indians were paid \$15,000 for stolen cattle, but had to pay back \$7,000 for each Negro they wouldn't give up. The Indians were to be relocated to an equal amount of land in Arkansas and to give up their land in Florida. The Indians that visited Arkansas said that the conditions there were deplorable. The land was occupied by the Lower Creeks, the enemies of the Seminoles. The U.S. never ratified the agreement. Their intention was to get every Indian out of Florida.
- 1834: After Audubon left Indian Key, Dr. Perrine and the settlers were killed by the Calusa (Spanish Indians) who arrived on Indian Key in seventeen canoes.
- 1834: The U.S. did not obey the 1823 Camp Moultrie Treaty. From Fort Moultrie, 3,824 Indian prisoners were shipped westward from Egmont Key and sent to Arkansas.
- 1834: Wiley Thompson, the Indian Agent, met with the Indians and told them to emigrate. If they didn't leave, Andrew Jackson would take force against them. Those in attendance said that they would leave if they were given land separate from the Creeks, who were their enemies.
- 1835: Thompson captured Osceola's wife and sent her into slavery. Osceola then killed and scalped Wiley Thompson at Fort King.

### **Second Seminole War: 1835-1842**

- 1835: One of the initial outbreaks of the Second Seminole War was when the Seminoles captured a baggage train headed to Alachua, where eight soldiers were killed and six were wounded.
- 1835: Fighting broke out near Bushnell near today's Dade Historical Battlefield. Major Dade went to reinforce Fort King. He and 108 Americans were ambushed and massacred at Payne's Prairie. Led by the Seminole Chief Micanopy, Jumper, and Alligator, the Indian tribes banded together to fight the soldiers. The Dade Massacre started the Second Seminole War.
- 1835: Jackson sent a proclamation to the Seminoles stating, "I tell you that you must go, and you will go!"
- 1837: Colonel Zachary Taylor (who was in command of the Army of Florida with 1,632 men) led the Battle of Okeechobee on Christmas Day against the Indians near Kissimmee, north of Lake Okeechobee. This was the largest battle of the Second Seminole War. The Seminoles were led by Sam Jones, Wildcat, Alligator, and John Horse. Although the Seminoles killed many of the soldiers, then escaped across Lake Okeechobee, the army was said to have won the Battle of the

Okeechobee. Troops surrounded 513 Indians and 165 Negroes (of which 150 were born free in Florida). Many were sent to Tampa for emigration. Some of the Mikasukis, Tallahassee's, Seminoles, and Creeks (all descendants of the Calusa) that avoided capture stayed in Florida.

- 1837: Major General Jessup captured Osceola under a white flag of truce. At St. Augustine, Osceola was sent to Fort Moultrie in South Carolina and died there in 1838. His life epitomized the high-handed injustice of his capture. The Seminoles captured with him were sent to the Indian Territory from Egmont Key by Tampa.
- 1837: King Phillip and his son Coahoochee came in under a white flag but were, in turn, captured and taken to Ft. Marion in St. Augustine. In 1838 they escaped, but Osceola who was also in prison, didn't escape with them. He was too sick with malaria. Coahoochee was recaptured, and his band was taken from Tampa to the West. 1,000 Seminoles remained, along with Sam Jones, Billy Bowlegs and Prophet.
- 1838: 230 Indians, including Chief Tigertail, were captured and shipped to New Orleans. Tigertail committed suicide on the way to New Orleans.
- 1838: Zachary Taylor set up fifty-three posts throughout Florida to disrupt the Seminoles.
- 1838: Called the "The Year of Zachary Taylor's Peace". War was to be over, however the White Men still felt that the Indians had to be driven out of Florida or exterminated.
- 1839: Colonel Harney and his soldiers moved toward Charlotte Harbor. While guarding a post along the Caloosahatchee River near the Cape Coral Bridge at U.S. 41 in Fort Myers, they were attacked by the Seminoles. Many of his men were killed, but Harney escaped back to Cape Sable then to Key West.
- 1840: Colonel Worth's orders were to find the enemy, capture, or exterminate them.
- 1840: A detachment of Marines led by William Tecumseh Sherman was based at Fort Dallas on the Miami River. He sent out Colonel Harney to get the Indians that killed Dr. Perrine.
- 1841: Colonel Harney's men killed and scalped Chief Che-Ki-La who had earlier also killed Harney's men. He led an expedition along a river running south and west to the Gulf. It became known as "Harney River."
- 1841: Wildcat and his men were captured by Major Childs at a meeting at Fort Pierce and were shipped west.  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the Seminoles had been removed, but there was still a formidable force in central Florida.
- 1842: President Tyler ordered Colonel Worth to halt to the Second Seminole War. The war cost \$40 million and forced removal of almost 3,930 Seminoles and Negroes to Arkansas or Oklahoma. The majority of the soldiers died from malaria and other diseases rather than by the Seminoles.

### **Precursor to Third Seminole War**

- 1852: President Millard Fillmore allocated funds to survey Florida and sell the Seminole land. Surveyors came onto Chief Billy Bowleg's property and destroyed his banana patch. He wanted them to pay for the damage, but they wouldn't.

### **Third Seminole War: 1855-1858**

- 1854: In the Big Cypress area, near Fort Myers, 30 Seminole warriors, under Chief Billy Bowlegs, as retaliation, opened fire on a United States military detachment killing

four soldiers and wounding many others. This, along with a trade embargo against the Seminoles, marked the beginning of the Third Seminole War.

- 1854: Using flat bottomed boats called "alligator boats" the troops sailed toward Lake Okeechobee, captured Seminole prisoners, and sent them to Fort Myers for a large reward.
- 1854: The Secretary of War, Jefferson Davis, wanted to impose an embargo on the Seminoles, survey and sell their land as well as provide a military presence to protect the settlers. If it didn't work, they would be removed by military force.
- 1856: The government amassed an army with odds of 14:1 against the Seminoles.
- 1856: A treaty was negotiated where the Seminoles got 2,170,000 acres of land (not Creek land), an annuity of \$3,000 per year for 10 years, \$2,200 for blacksmiths and \$250,000 invested with 5% annual interest.
- 1857: Abner Doubleday (baseball fame) noted that the Seminoles were not particularly interested in fighting at this time.
- 1858: Colonel Harney declared the Third Seminole War was over, with 164 Seminoles and Billy Bowlegs being shipped from Egmont Key to Oklahoma. Two hundred Seminoles remained in the Big Cypress and Everglades. By the end of the Third Seminole War, 98% of the Florida Native Americans that didn't die of disease were relocated west of the Mississippi.

## Pre-history and Early Settlement

14,000 BC: Civilization crossed the land bridge from Siberia to Alaska.

10,000 BC: Mastodons, mammoths, giant bison sloths sabretooth tigers, and nomads (Paleo-Indians) arrived in North America through the Bering Land Bridge.

8,000 BC: The Pre-historic animals became extinct.

The Ice Age ended creating Florida's peninsula at its current width. The earliest fossils have been found along the I-75 corridor traversing Gainesville.

It was about 12,000 years ago when the first humans arrived, which coincided with the mass distinction of the large animals. This left the deer, sandhill crane, black bear, panther, and manatee.

7,500 BC: The Paleo-Indians evolved into a distinct Florida culture, called "Archaic". The Archaic cultures were throughout most of Florida. They were hunters-foragers originally from Asia, living near wetlands and sources of water. Their tools were made from shark and wolf teeth, and fabrics were made from weaving palmettos and sable palms.

5,000-4,000 BC: There was evidence of the Archaic Indians being on Horr's Island and the high dunes at Caxambas. The Horr's Island Village is the oldest known occupied coastal village in the southeastern United States.

3,000 BC: Pottery begins in America.

Sawgrass begins to grow in the Everglades.

2,500 BP: The Archaic Period ended.

2,500 BP: The heart of the Calusa Territory was in the Glades Region, around 500 BC.

The Glades people were cut off from migration and developed their own civilizations in three regions:

Western: From north of the Caloosahatchee River, through the 10,000 Islands, to Cape Sable. They were the Calusa.

The people who moved to Lake Okeechobee were called "Mayaima." Mayaimi means "wide."



Those on the East Coast beaches were called "Jeaga." The Spaniards later called them the "St. Lucies." The Indians from Boca Raton south to Biscayne Bay were called the "Tekesta" by the Spaniards.

700 BP: The Calusa absorbed the Glades People. Marco Island fell under the domain of the Calusa.

500 BC: Regional Florida cultures emerged – The Belle Glade Culture developed around Lake Okeechobee.

600 AD: The Late Pre-Columbian Culture emerged from the southeast to southwest Florida.

## Exploration in the 1400's

1420: Prince Henry of Portugal gathered maps of the Western Ocean (the Atlantic) from the geographers of Europe, including the Knights Templar. Prince Henry was known as "Henry the Navigator." He believed that the Earth was round. He died in 1460.

The Portuguese maps were available to Columbus since he married Henry the Navigator's daughter.

A map, dated 1435, was discovered showing four islands to the west:

"Antilla" – the island opposite Cuba

"Reylla" – the Kingly Island, Jamaica

"I in Mar" - one of the Bahamas

"Salvagio" – the Savage Isle, Florida

The Irish and English identified another island west by northwest of Portugal and named it "Brasil."

Portugal did not accept Columbus' offer to share the Asiatic Kingdoms that he intended to discover. They were fixed on Africa and Asia because they were known quantities. Also, they were afraid if Columbus reached Cathay and claimed land, Portugal could find themselves fighting with the Great Khan. In Europe there was a trade imbalance with the Orient. Renaissance Europe coveted porcelain, silk, and spices. Getting these was difficult, using the Silk Road, Spice Road, or the Mediterranean Sea, so finding another route to Asia was to be critical.

Also, King John II felt that Columbus asked too much for his services.

1492: King Ferdinand drove the Moors from Spain. Spain was reborn.

1492: Columbus sailed three ships west under the banner of Castile & Leon from Palos, Spain. He made landfall in the Bahamas, naming the island San Salvador; where he met the Arawak's. Columbus called the great island that he discovered "Hispaniola" and established a settlement. He then left and settled La Isabella in the Dominican Republic. He also named Cuba "Fernandina" after King Ferdinand. Columbus couldn't find gold, but made money growing sugar cane, Sugar was scarce in Europe. Indians were used as slave labor in growing sugar cane.

1493: Columbus made his second voyage to America accompanied by Ponce de Leon (who was nineteen at the time). Columbus introduced oranges to Florida with this cruise. When he landed in Hispaniola, he found the crew that he had left were dead, and the settlement destroyed. However, in the first 10 years after Columbus discovered Haiti and Puerto Rico, the Spanish killed almost one million Indians by fighting and enslavement.

- 1493: Pope Alexander gave Spain the lion's share of the unknown world and excluded all men and kingdoms but Portugal from the new land, whatever it turned out to be.
- 1494: During Columbus's second voyage was the first recorded hurricane.
- 1498: England sent John Cabot to discover new lands. Cabot sailed southeast and touched land in Carolina, then moved down the coast to Florida. England was upset that the Pope cut them off from having a chance at reaching India or Cathay.

## Exploration in the 1500's

### Background:

Spain wanted to secure Florida to protect homebound ships from Mexico and South America, as well as expand their possessions in America northward.

France wanted to have a position in Florida to attack the Spanish treasure ships.

They also saw Florida as a refuge for their Huguenot religious minority.

England saw the land as a way to repay loyalists after the Revolutionary War.

1500: Portugal claimed Brazil.

When Ponce de Leon landed in Hispaniola, the Haitian people were already dying. He was so successful in capturing and killing Haitians, he was given permission to go to Puerto Rico to conquer the docile people and the gold that was reported to be there. He was not looking for the Fountain of Youth, but for gold, silver, and slaves. The Arawaks were taken as slaves to mine gold, raise cattle and work in the cane fields. They died like flies. The Caribs of Cuba were hunted, brought in long chain files to the mines and fields, and then exterminated. They, too, couldn't withstand the toil, lash, starvation, overcrowding and disease. The Europeans brought smallpox, malaria, diphtheria, typhus, and tuberculosis which killed the Indians. The Indians gave the Europeans syphilis. The trafficking of Indian slaves was lucrative, with small slaving vessels being common.

1509: Ponce de Leon was named the Governor of Puerto Rico. First, he became a blood brother to the chief of the island, then took all the treasure and killed or enslaved those who wouldn't submit. Soon, there was a manpower shortage, and the slaves escaped to lower Florida. "**San Juan,**" **Puerto Rico** was named after **Juan** Ponce de Leon. Ponce de Leon was removed from office by Admiral Diego Columbus who wanted a piece of the action for his own men. King Charles V, the Holy Roman Emperor gave him a patent authorizing his expedition to claim land and confront the English on the east coast of Florida.

1513: Ponce de Leon sailed three ships from Puerto Rico to the Bahamas. In 11 days, he landed in Guanahani, the first island discovered by Columbus. He was the first discoverer of the Florida peninsula looking for gold and slaves but found none. He landed on the Florida coast, near Cape Canaveral. Arriving during the Easter season, Ponce de Leon named it "La Florida" because it was discovered it in the time of the Flowerly Festival. The Indians that he found were hostile. He took hostages and went down to a stream called La Cruz (probably the Jupiter Inlet) and sailed further down the coast to Biscayne Bay to Tekesta, the Indian village where Miami stands – then to Key Largo, Key West and the Tortugas. His expedition moved north to the mouth of the Caloosahatchee, back to Tortugas,

- Biscayne Bay, the Bahamas, and Puerto Rico. He never found the island of Beniny (Bimini) that he was seeking and found no treasure or slaves.
- 1513: Ponce de Leon named Sanibel "Costa de Caracoles", Coast of Seashells. He then landed in Charlotte Harbor where he fought with the Indians in southwest Florida, then returned to the island for water (probably at Cape Romano). They knew of two artesian freshwater springs near Caxambas. It was a landmark for seagoing canoes. Caxambas is one of the oldest places named in North America.
- 1519: Balboa conquered Mexico.
- 1520: Magellan left Spain with five ships to go around the world, continuing his conquest in South America and into the Pacific. He was killed in the Philippines, but his crew completed their voyage in 1522.
- 1521: On his second trip, Ponce de Leon set out on an expedition with two ships from Puerto Rico to establish a settlement near Port Charlotte; including two hundred men, priests, missionaries, fifty horses, cows, sheep, goats farming tools and seeds for planting crops. The slavers had stripped the Bahamas of slaves for the Spaniards. Ponce de Leon was attacked by the Indians when he landed, was shot by an arrow between his armor, and was taken back to Havana where he died. Other Spaniards escaped leaving their seven Andalusian cattle (ancestors of the Texas longhorn cattle) which were brought from Spain for food. These were the first domesticated cattle in North America. Spain also introduced oranges to Florida.
- 1526: The Spaniard, Lucas Vasquez de Ayllan, sailed to Georgia and the Carolinas with six ships and six hundred colonists bringing along the first African slaves.
- 1527: Navarez sailed to America with the second group of slaves in the New World. Navarez heard about the mystery of Florida and was given the right to discover and conquer people from northern Mexico to the end of Florida. King Charles V heard about the atrocities to the Indians and made Navarez bring Christian men and priests. They landed south of Tampa Bay. He was to build two colonies and three forts and would become Governor/Captain General of the colonies. His pay was to be 250,000 maravedis, to be paid from revenue of the county, 4% of the tax levies, 101 acres of land and profits from the sale of rebel Indians.
- 1539: Hernando De Soto sailed from Cuba to Florida, bound for Tampa Bay (Bahia del Espiritu Santo – the Bay of the Holy Spirit). He was given Governorship of Florida and Cuba, as well as having conquered Peru. Hernando De Soto married the daughter of Balboa. De Soto was the first to introduce pigs to North America. Many escaped and led to them becoming feral pigs.
- 1540: De Soto also explored north and west Florida, as well as christening the Mississippi River, where in 1542 he eventually died near the Louisiana border.
- 1545: When a Spanish ship was sunk off the Keys, most of the crew were lost. A survivor was Escalante de Fontaneda. He lived with Chief Carlos of the Calusa for 17 years, and eventually wrote the first recorded source of Florida and Everglades history.
- By 1547: French pirates invaded Honduras and captured 9 Spanish treasure ships outside of Cartagena. Spain was losing control of the seas. The wealth of Mexico and Cartagena was collected before the ships would return as a fleet. Hurricanes would destroy many ships between June and December. From the shipwrecks, the Indians would gather the gold and silver from Montezuma.
- 1549: Father Cancer, a Dominican Friar, was sent to Florida. He was supposed to go to the north and east coast of Florida but landed just north of Cape Romano. He was to create a mission and pledge Indian freedom. Instead, he was killed by the

Indians. This reinforced the Spanish belief of the “treachery, savagery and ferocity of the Florida Indians.” After this, Spain didn’t venture to conquer or approach the Indians for many years.

- 1562: The French, under Jean Ribault, a Huguenot, founded the colony of Port Royal near Jacksonville, just north of St. Augustine. He placed a stone monument at Port Royal claiming the land for the French king. Jacksonville was originally named Cowford, because it was a low point in the river for cows to cross. The Huguenots left France for religious freedom. However, Ribault had no support from France. The settlement failed, and he returned to France.
- 1564: The French then built Fort Caroline, near St. Augustine. Fort Caroline was a perfect base for the French to attack Spanish treasure ships. The French made a second attempt for settlement. They tried to develop friendly relations with the Native Americans, but they then decided not to settle there.
- 1565: Catherine de Medici felt that France had gone to Florida before the Spanish because of the exploration of the French in Nova Scotia at the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> Century, when the land was claimed by Cartier.
- 1565: Spain countered this. Spanish Captain General Pedro Menendez de Avilles was sent ashore at the northern tip of the Florida River. He named the settlement St. Augustine because he came ashore on the festival day of San Augustin. He brought cattle to feed the garrison, brought sugar cane and planted orange groves. He also attacked Fort Caroline from the French and renamed it San Mateo. In doing so, he killed all of the prisoners who were not Catholic, and beheaded Ribault. Ribault had ignored the Spanish because he had recognized the settlement and voyage of Sebastian Cabot for Henry VII of England. The place of the massacre was known as Matanzas, “the Place of Slaughter.” By 1565, Menendez had established five hundred miles of small forts along the northern border of Florida.
- 1565-1573: Franciscan missionaries taught the Apalachee Indians around Tallahassee to cultivate maize, wheat, beans, pumpkins, tobacco, and cotton. They also taught weaving, carpentry, reading and writing to the Indians. By 1573, there were thirty-one missions of Roman Catholic faith. In addition, the Indians were forced labor for the Spanish people, growing food for the Spanish garrisons and manual labor for building construction, being burden bearers carrying goods between settlements.,
- After 1565, there were more than 30 Spanish cattle ranches along the St. John’s River and from Gainesville to the Suwannee River. St. Augustine was connected to Gainesville by the Camino Royal (the Royal Road), which supported the Franciscan missions.
- 1566: Menendez met with the Calusa chief, Carlos, and set up a small garrison on Mound Key. At first, the Calusa were friendly, but when Menendez wouldn’t marry the chief’s sister, things deteriorated. Eventually, the Spaniards killed Chief Carlos.
- 1567: The town of Fernandina was settled on Amelia Island. This is the second oldest continuously occupied city in the United States. It was a conduit for smuggling slaves into the U.S.
- 1567: Menendez sailed into Tampa Bay. The soldiers that he left there had all been killed by the Tacobagans. After that, there was little exploration by the Europeans for decades.
- 1586: Sir Francis Drake (English) arrived in St. Augustine and destroyed the city. He was known by the English as “The Prince of the Privateers.” When Drake

destroyed St Augustine, he took the Spanish tools and implements for Sir Walter Raleigh to use in Roanoke, Virginia.

### Exploration in the 1600's

- 1633: The largest Spanish mission in Florida was San Luis de Talimari. The main purpose was to protect the treasure of gold and silver taken from the Incas to Spain, as well as keep England out of Florida. By the middle of the 17<sup>th</sup> Century, the Interior Mission Trail was comprised of seventy missionaries, thirty-eight churches and 26,000 Christian converts.
- 1639: The Spanish opened a sea route between the St. Marks River and St. Augustine. They built Fort San Marcos de Apalachee for protection. However, in 1682, the pirates attacked, showing how vulnerable the Spanish outposts were.
- 1656-1704 the San Luis Mission encouraged the mass migration of the Creek Indians and escaped slaves to come down from the north.
- 1658: The English settled in South Carolina and again raided St Augustine in 1665 and 1668.
- 1670: The British settled Charlestown, which was an ideal location for growing rice and sugar cane. South Carolina became one of the wealthiest colonies.
- 1672: The **Castillo de San Marcos** (the Castle of St. Marks) was constructed in St. Augustine. This was the 10<sup>th</sup> Spanish fort on the site. The Spanish built Castillo de San Marcos to defend St. Augustine against the French and English threats. It was named after St. Mark, a disciple of Jesus. Eventually, it was renamed **Fort Marion** after Francis Marion, the Swamp Fox, famous in the Revolutionary War. During the Revolutionary War British loyalists sought refuge in St. Augustine. Fort Marion was controlled by the Confederacy during the Civil War, held Indian prisoners in the 1870's, and was a military prison during the Spanish-American War.
- 1679: Spanish Fort was built twenty miles south of Tallahassee to protect the Spanish missionaries from kidnapping by the pirates. During the First Seminole War, it was to be a base of operations for Andrew Jackson.
- 1650-1730: The "Golden Age of Piracy". This included Blackbeard and Captain Morgan, who later became the Governor of Jamaica.
- 1698: Pensacola was founded, protected by Fort San Carlos de Austria, to protect Pensacola from the French.

### Exploration in the 1700's

- 1704: Captain James Moore, the British Governor of Carolina, with 50 English and 1,000 Creek Indians, invaded the Alachua area and killed the Apalchee and the Creeks; as well destroyed 14 coastal Spanish missions and settlements. The settlements were burned, residents killed, enslaved, exiled, or executed. Those who lived were sold as slaves in Charleston or the West Indies. This led to the Great Slave Trail down the St. Johns and, Kissimmee Rivers to Lake Okeechobee, and the Caloosahatchee where they enslaved the peaceful Calusa. Thousands of Indians were taken into captivity and re-settled in the town they named "Tulwahassee," named for the old town of the former Indian residents.
- 1705: The Yamasee Indians and Lower Creeks raided and destroyed 32 defenseless villages and towns. They captured the native Florida people in the Keys and turned them over to the English to be used as slaves.

- 1738: The British sanctioned the first free African American settlement at Fort Mose, north of St. Augustine. It was used to help Spain fight England. It was a forerunner to the Underground Railroad as a sanctuary for slaves. When the British took over Florida after the French and Indian War, the escaped slaves fled to Cuba with the Spanish or joined other Indian tribes.
- Mid-1700's: A large body of Creek Indians left Georgia to settle at least 6 villages near Gainesville. The remaining Indians became known as the Seminole. They combined the remaining Tekeestas, Mayaims and Calusa.
- 1740: Governor Oglethorpe of Georgia blockaded St. Augustine for a 39-day siege and destroyed Fort Mose. He attacked again in 1742, but was driven away.
- 1742: The Spanish built Ft. Matanzas, south of St. Augustine, guarding the southern approach to St. Augustine, to protect the Matanzas Inlet from British invasion. St. Augustine was the heart of the Spanish coastal defense in Florida.
- 1743: The British attacked the Spanish.
- 1755: A French ship was sunk off of the Indian Keys. The Calusa Indians killed the four hundred sailors who were on board. The Spanish then called Indian Key "Matanzas," meaning slaughter.
- 1763: War broke out between England and Spain. England captured Havana. France traded Florida for Cuba.
- 1763: After the French and Indian War, with the Treaty of Paris, Spain ceded St. Augustine and all of Florida to the British, since Spain had been allied to France. Britain created two colonies – East Florida (capital, St. Augustine) and West Florida (capital, Pensacola). These became England's 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> colonies in America. The British established common law, trial by jury and religious liberty. Landowners introduced large scale plantation farming with slaves to Florida. Spain got Havana and Vera Cruz. England got Canada from France. France transferred ownership of New Orleans and Louisiana to Spain. South Florida tribes escaped to Cuba settling in the hills overlooking Havana.
- 1764: Non-Seminole escaped slavery by going to Cuba with the Spanish.
- During the Revolutionary War, Tory refugees from Savannah, Charleston and other seaboard ports poured into St Augustine.
- 1781: Spain recaptured West Florida, with the seizure of Pensacola.
- 1783: With the Second Treaty of Paris, after losing the Revolutionary War, Britain returned Florida to Spain and exchanged Florida for the Bahamas. West Florida extended from the Panhandle to the Mississippi River. East Florida was from the Apalachicola River to the Atlantic Ocean.
- 1793: The King of Spain offered homestead grants to those who would settle in East Florida.
- 1785: The Treaty of San Lorenzo established the west boundary of the United States as the Mississippi River.
- 1794: Spain and England fought against France.

## **Exploration/Growth in the 1800's**

- The majority of the white settlers in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century were from Northern Ireland, Scotland, Wales, and Northern England where life in Europe was bleak.
- 1801: Jose Gaspar (1756-1821), a Spanish pirate, established a base on Gasparilla Island. It was here he raided, captured, and burned thirty-six ships. Eventually he captured eleven beautiful Mexican girls and gave them to his pirates. This took

- place on Captiva Island where he housed female prisoners for ransom. He also sold stolen goods to Jean La Fitte for American gold.
- 1810: American loyalists fought The Patriot War against Spain. They weren't supported by President Madison because he did not want to invade a territory of Spain who was at peace with the U.S. This began with the occupation of Fernandina on Amelia Island. The Seminole Indians supported the Spanish. The Loyalists lost the short-lived war.
- 1810: Anglo-Americans, thru a bloodless coup de etat capturing Baton Rouge from Spain and established the Republic of West Florida. However, in December of 1810, the United States annexed West Florida.
- 1811: President Madison secretly authorized Congress to negotiate a takeover of Florida to protect the United States from being overrun by other countries.
- 1812: The British built a fort near Apalachicola along the Apalachicola River. After the War of 1812 they abandoned it, turning it over to the Free Blacks, escaped slaves and the Indians. It was named the "Negro Fort."
- 1812: The Seminoles, on their way to St Augustine, were attacked by America militia. The Georgia Governor sent militia to seize North Florida and cede it to the U.S. Government. Volunteer soldiers were promised that they could keep captured slaves and get free land for homesteading.
- 1813: President Madison forcibly annexed the land known as West Florida, from the Mississippi to the current west boundary of Florida.
- 1814-1815: the Seminoles and the Blacks raided the settlements and plantations north of the Florida/Georgia border in retaliation against the slave hunters.
- 1814: Bowlegs was the Chief of the Alachua Seminoles. He and his men joined the British at the Battle of New Orleans against Andrew Jackson.
- 1818: Andrew Jackson attacked St. Marks and took Pensacola.
- 1818: After the War of 1812 when the British left Florida, the east coast was left unprotected. General Gregor McGregor captured Fernandina and took Fort St. Carlos on Amelia Island to establish his own country. The French pirate, Louis Aury bought the fort from him for \$50,000 and set up his own kingdom ruled by pirates and slave smugglers. This lasted only months before the Spanish took Amelia Island.
- 1819: Florida was purchased by the U.S. from Spain. The United States assumed \$5 million in debts.
- 1820: Commodore David Porter of the U.S. Naval Squadron eradicated the pirates from the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean. Between 1815 and 1823 there were 3,000 acts of piracy in the West Indies and along the Florida coast.
- 1821: The United States took possession of Fort Matanzas but never occupied it.
- 1822: Florida became the U.S. Territory of Florida.
- 1822; President Monroe established the West Indies Squadron to rid the Keys of pirates. There were four goals:
1. End piracy
  2. Protect U.S. citizens and commerce.
  3. Suppress slave trade.
  4. Transport gold and silver from Mexico to the U.S.
- 1825: The Navy yard at Pensacola was started to suppress slave trade and piracy.
- 1827: 3 acres of land at St. Augustine was deeded to the United States to construct a lighthouse.
- 1832: Fort Thompson was built on the Caloosahatchee River at Fort Denaud, near LaBelle. In 1865, it was used as a staging area for the Confederate Cattle Calvary.

- 1838: Fort Pierce was built as an Army post to defend against the Indians.
- 1842: The U.S. opened up the Seminole lands south of Gainesville and north of the Peace River for settlement and occupation. Homesteading the 200,000 acres were cattlemen from Georgia, Alabama, the Carolinas as well as north and west Florida who began driving cattle south. To maintain the cattle and the cane fields, they needed slave labor. This set up Florida's cattle industry. After 1843, slaves were escaping into the Everglades.
- 1845: Florida became the 27<sup>th</sup> U.S. state. It came in as a "slave state" while, at the same time, Iowa came in as a "free state."
- 1847: Fort Clinch was built by the Union troops prior to the Civil War.
- 1849: Major General Twigg laid out a post along the Caloosahatchee River. His daughter was engaged to a young officer named Abraham Myers. He named the new fort "Fort Myers" after Abraham Myers.
- 1850: Congress passed the Swamp Land Act to allow Arkansas and other states to reclaim swampland within their limits. This included the opportunity to develop the Everglades. As a result, Florida let traders, hunters and surveyors invade the "neutral zone" between the American and Seminole land. Progress slowed with the start of the Third Seminole War and the Civil War.
- 1851: Florida created the Internal Improvement Board to manage swamp and overflow lands in the State.
- 1850: Fort Myers was used as a military supply post for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Seminole War. The Union occupied it during the Civil War to disrupt the Confederacy.
- 1852: Stephen Foster wrote "Way down upon the Suwanee River". This became Florida's official song.
- 1855: The Internal Improvement Board gave financial assistance to build railroads and canals, however the 35-year bonds failed due to the onset of the Civil War.
- 1860's: Only 2 arterial roads existed – The Alachua Trail running north and south and the Bellamy Trail running east and west through the Panhandle. 1861: Florida seceded from the Union by the Ordinance of Secession as a slave-holding state and fought with the Confederacy.
- 1861: From November 1861– March 1862 General Rober E. Lee was the Commanding General of the Military Department of Georgia, South Carolina, and Florida. Later in the Civil War, he was in command of the Army of North Virginia.
- 1861: Union troops captured Key West and Ft. Myers. Key West (with Fort Taylor) and the Dry Tortugas (with Fort Jefferson) were under Union control. The freed slaves escaped into the Everglades.
- 1861: President Lincoln had a proclamation on April 19, 1861, for the blockade of seceded states. It was called the Anaconda Plan because it resembled the coils of an anaconda suffocating its prey. It surrounded Virginia, around Florida's Gulf Coast, to Texas, up to Iowa and Arkansas.
- 1861: Stephen Mallory was named as the Secretary of the Confederate Navy. Mallory Square in Key West was named after him.
- 1862: Union ships set up the East Coast Blockade Squadron to keep the Confederacy from bringing in medicine, weapons, and equipment. Proximity to the Bahamas and Cuba, as well as the coves and bays along the Florida coast made blockade running inviting. The squadron destroyed or captured over 280 blockade runners.
- 1864: At the Civil War battle of Olustee, near Lake City. The Union army pushed west from Jacksonville for raw materials and cut off the Confederate supply of beef and pork. The Union army retreated, keeping them from occupying Lake City.
- 1864: Union troops occupied Fort Myers as a base of operations for raids on the interior to disrupt Confederate cattle supplies and be a refuge for escaped slaves.



- 1865: Battle of Natural Bridge - The Union army landed near St. Mark's lighthouse on the Gulf coast, south of Tallahassee to eliminate the area being used by blockade runners but were turned back by the Confederate army.
- 1865: Fort Thompson was used a staging area for the Confederate Cavalry forces, used in the unsuccessful attack of Fort Myers by Captain Hendry. In the 1900's, Fort Thompson became the town of LaBelle.
- Central Florida was critical to the Confederacy because of the food from farms and cattle ranching. Jake Summerlin herded cattle for the Confederacy from Fort Myers to Punta Rassa. After the Civil War, families moved to central Florida to begin orange groves.
- 1868: Summerlin was shipping cattle to Cuba as part of their insurrection.
- 1870's: Tourism began on the paddlewheel steamboat carrying 50,000 passengers per year on the Ocklawaha River, one of America's most scenic rivers.
- 1870: W.T. Collier founded Marco Island.
- 1870: Henry Sanford created the modern orange industry.
- 1879: The legislature said quantities of swamp land should be given to all railroad and canal companies, in addition to purchased rights of way.
- 1879: Henry Plant, from Connecticut, built the Tampa Bay Hotel and the rail line from Tampa to Jacksonville.
- 1880: The Atlantic & Gulf Coast Canal and the Lake Okeechobee Company were formed to drain and improve four million acres of land west of Lake Okeechobee.
- 1881: Thomas Edison built a home in Fort Myers.
- 1881: Captain Peter Nelson homesteaded the land at Alva. His intent was not to make money, just to create a nice place for people to live. People began farming, creating orange groves there.
- 1882: Hamilton Disston bought 6,250 square miles of land between Orlando and Lake Okeechobee from the State of Florida for \$1 million. Disston became one of the largest landowners in the world. The Disston surname came from French noblemen of the D'Isney clan. This translated to Disney. The Disston Study said that the reduction of water was simply a question of sufficient capacity in the canals which may be dug for their relief. The Disston steam dredge dug up four million acres in Central Florida and opened Lake Okeechobee to the Gulf of Mexico. Canals were dug between the Caloosahatchee River and Lake Okeechobee. Starting at Kissimmee, he dredged the Kissimmee River, and then broke through the Caloosahatchee River at Moorehaven. This got ships to Fort Myers. Disston started the Florida sugar industry by forming the Florida Sugar Company in Clewiston where he raised sugar cane on the dried-out land. In St. Cloud, the sugar plantations exhausted the virgin soils then went bankrupt.
- Lieutenant Willoughby made the first attempt at scientific study of the Everglades. He found that its water traveled more than four miles per hour. He didn't think that anyone would attempt to drain it.
- 1882: Henry Flagler, a Standard Oil tycoon, built the Ponce de Leon Hotel in St. Augustine (now Flagler College). He then constructed the Florida East Coast Railway south to Miami, then to Key West. He built luxury hotels along the route for the guests. Flagler chose not to drain his part of the Everglades.
- 1884: The town of Immokalee had set up a sawmill to prepare lumber for an Episcopal mission for the Indians.
- 1891: In Chokolossee, McKinney caught redbirds and fish for the Key West market. He hunted and sold alligator skins at 50 cents for a seven-foot alligator.
- 1894: Flagler surveyed the lower Everglades and Cape Sable.

- 1894: During the Spanish American War, Plant's railroad moved army troops and supplies to Tampa. From there, they sailed on Plant's steamer, Oliviette to Havana.
- 1894-1895: The Great Freeze ruined the orange groves in Orange County and middle Florida.
- 1896: Frank Cushing, as part of the Pepper-Hearst Expedition with the University of Pennsylvania and Smithsonian Institution, made the greatest archeological discovery in the United States at Marco Island.
- 1898: Fort Dade was built due to the threat of the Spanish American War.
- 1899: Phosphate was discovered in the Peace Valley, southwest of Ocala, used in the making of fertilizer. It was made from the bones of prehistoric animals. This was the phosphate capital of the world. A major phosphate producing company in the Sarasota area is Mosaic.

### **Growth in the 1900's**

- 1901: The Audubon Model Law made it illegal to plume hunt in Florida.
- 1905: The Audubon Society hired a game warden, Guy Bradley, to guard against people killing birds for plumage in the Everglades. He was eventually killed by a plume hunter. Bradley's father was a land developer and had great expectations. He thought that Flagler's railroad would begin in Flamingo. Instead, it started in Homestead.
- 1905: McKinney started his own store and the Post Office. Indians came in their long canoes and stayed for days at the trading post.
- 1905: Napoleon Bonaparte Broward became Governor of Florida. He authorized maps showing how canals should run, and how they would serve the drainage and transportation.
- 1906: Ted Smallwood established a trading post with the local Indians in Chockoloksee.
- 1910: Bertha Honroe Palmer, the widow of Potter Palmer of Chicago, moved her winter home to Sarasota. She became the main driving force in the cattle industry and farming in Florida.
- 1911: Baron Gift Collier began buying one million acres of land, which eventually led to the separation of Lee County to form Collier County. He became the largest landowner in Florida.
- 1912: Flagler's first train went from Jacksonville to Key West. The project cost an estimated \$50 million. It was called the 8<sup>th</sup> Wonder of the World.
- 1915: 2 dredges began working by the New River, with four more dredges being started. Things did not work. The Everglades muck was flowing into the mouth of the river staining the bay bottom, creeping out to sea, and silting up the shallows in dry times. Salt tides were working their way upriver. The first growth was amazing. Vines covered houses, cane sprang up high, cabbages and tomatoes were huge, melons ripened overnight. After the initial growth, though, plants and fruits wilted and died. Crops were lost in a week. The soil had the minerals taken out of it.
- 1920: Phillip Phillips moved to Orlando to build the citrus empire.
- 1925: With the land boom, 2.5 million people came to Florida looking for homesteads. Subsequent to this, the land boom went bust. Early tourists were called "Tin Can Tourists."
- 1926 & 1928: Hurricanes devastated the region.

- At Belle Grade, the State of Florida built an experimental station to study the muck. They discovered that when the early crops died, the soil lacked copper, manganese, zinc, and other trace elements. Cane would grow all year around when the chemicals were replaced. This was tested at Moorehaven and Clewiston.
- 1928: The Tamiami Trail cost \$6 million. It was supported by Baron Gift Collier. Walking dredges cut through the mangrove swamps to create Tamiami Trail. There is a walking dredge on display at the Collier Seminole State Park, off of Rt. 41. After World War I, the Monroe County portion of the Tamiami Trail extended straight into Carnestown, where Collier's Road went down to the town of Everglades. Both ends met in 1928. Collier established six patrol stations along the Tamiami Trail, every ten miles, to help motorists. The Monroe Station was listed on the National Register of Historic Places but later destroyed by fire.
- 1929: The U.S. Sugar Corporation established a pioneer processing plant near Clewiston. The U.S. Sugar development cut off the natural drainage from Lake Okeechobee to the Everglades, necessitating the construction of canals.
- 1942 to 1945: There was a population boom. 2.1 million servicemen and women trained in Florida. Many stayed after the war.
- 1942: Florida's sea lanes were infested by German U-boats. There were twenty-four ships sunk. In addition, 4 German saboteurs came ashore, who were later caught and executed.
- 1947: President Harry Truman dedicated the Everglades National Park, amounting to over 500,000 acres.
- 1949: The village of Caxambas on Marco Island was moved to Goodland to develop Caxambas. The move included the homes of twenty-six families, post office, and general store.
- 1949: A law was passed preventing cattle from free ranging, which had been done for generations.
- 1939-1950: Buildings of Florida Southern College in Lakeland were designed by Frank Lloyd Wright.
- 1957: The Seminole Tribe of Florida sought tribal recognition from the United States, which was granted in 1957. The Everglades Miccosukee Council also presented a constitution to get title to the land and get tribal recognition, but it was rejected by the government. The Miccosukee were going to place a lien on the land for payment. They also were seeking recognition from other countries including France, Spain, and England as an attempt to join the United Nations.
- 1959: Miccosukee tribal leaders went to Cuba, where they were formally recognized as an independent nation by Fidel Castro.
- 1959: With Castro coming to power in Cuba, the United States cut off imports of sugar cane from Cuba. This led to the significant increase in domestic sugar production in Florida.
- 1959: A missile tracking station was built on Marco Island to track missiles launched from Eglin Air Force Base in Pensacola Cape Canaveral as well as keep an eye on Soviet activity in Cuba. It was an important part of the MISTRAM Radar Defense System.
- 1960's-1980's:  
Smugglers in southwest Florida brought in tons of marijuana wrapped in bales called "Square Groupers." The points of entry were the sparsely populated areas of Collier County in the 10,000 Islands. The drugs were loaded into small boats offshore piloted by local fishermen and crabbers. They were known as the "Saltwater Cowboys." On most nights, between 15-50 tons were off loaded on Chokoloksee Island and the Everglades. By the mid-1980's Operation

- Everglades seized several dozen boats and vehicles, recovering \$252 million in marijuana, and sentencing of local smugglers. After this, cocaine became the most smuggled drug. The smugglers were known as “Cocaine Cowboys.”
- 1962: The United States gave the Miccosukee tribal recognition with the caveat they would not have contact with Cuba. They were given 143,000 acres of land.
- 1968: The Dade County Port Authority planned, and began, a jetport in the Big Cypress National Preserve. It was to be the world’s largest airport, five times larger than JFK Airport in New York City. Friends of the Everglades, comprised of conservationists, hunters, private landowners, as well as the Seminole and Miccosukee Tribes, stopped the construction due to the potential damage to drainage and impact on the Everglades. It was stopped in 1970, after one runway was completed. It is now the Dade County Transient Training Airport.
- 1971: Governor Askew convened a conference on Florida’s water crisis stating that unless the region could replace its relationship with nature, it would become the world’s first and only desert that gets 60 inches of annual rainfall.
- 1971: The Walt Disney World Resort opened in Orlando. Tourism has become a major financial resource for Florida with Disneyworld the theme parks, as well as great weather, fishing, golfing, etc.
- 1982: The Conch Republic was” born” in Key West. It was in the residents’ reaction to government roadblocks. On April 23<sup>rd</sup>, on Mallory Square the flag of the Conch Republic was raised, establishing a new republic. The Conch Republic immediately surrendered and requested foreign aid from the United States.
- 2016: Marked the beginning of the Babcock Ranch new town. Located east of Ft. Myers, it is the first solar powered town in the United States, featuring 340,000 solar panels.

## Miscellaneous Exploration and Development

Spanish ships would enter the Caribbean between Dominica, Martinique, and St. Lucia, following the equatorial current and the prevailing winds straight across from the Azores. They returned past the Keys, Cuba and the Bahamas following the Gulfstream.

Plume trade became important as a result of the Victorian Era. Egrets, Ibis, etc. were being sold as far north as New York. In 4 years, Lake Okeechobee’s rookeries were destroyed.

Before the Everglades were drained by canals, fresh and salt water were in balance. After 1942, salt water worked its way inland at rate of 235 feet per year, increasing to eight hundred feet per year in 1944. When a canal was cut through the Caloosahatchee, the cattlemen saw this as good thing; but the Lake level dropped five feet, drying up the orange groves – changing the surrounding fields to powder. Salt water from the Gulf pushed up the canal with every high tide. Wells near the river turned to salt. Cypress trees began to die. Black muck, with its old cover removed, gave up heat more quickly when the sun went down. Quick, biting frost hurt the crops.

The climate and soil divide Florida into four regions: 1. The Southern Region grows winter vegetables and sugar cane, 2. The Central Region grows citrus, 3. The Western region, including the Panhandle, grows corn and 4. The Northern Region does general farming.

The land was dry enough for beans, peppers, eggplant and celery. However, the experiment station proved that:

Elements needed by the soil had to be replaced each year.

Irrigation had to keep the porous muck from drying out and blowing away. Dusting had to be done to protect against insects. From the late 1800's to the early 1900's there was the "tarpon craze", which supported tourism.

## **Piracy**

In 78 BC, Julius Caesar was captured by pirates for ransom. The ransom was paid and he eventually killed the pirates.

In the 1600's a fleet of ships from Spain would come into the Caribbean in three groups:

Group 1: Terra Firma – They sailed to Porto Bella in Panama to offload goods and pick up silver, then on to Cartagena to pick up gold, then on to Columbia and Venezuela for pearls.

Group 2: The New Spain Fleet sailed to Vera Cruz where it loaded gold and silver from Mexico, as well as silks, porcelain, and spices from China.

Group 3: The Honduras Fleet took indigo dye from Trujillo.

All three fleets then met in Havana to sail together along the Florida coast for protection from the pirates. Together, they were known as the Plate Fleet when they sailed back to Spain.

Fifty percent of the Caribbean pirates were Black, during the Golden Age of Piracy.

The Golden Age of Piracy extended from 1650-1730. After this, the Age of Privateers extended from 1775-1821.

With the acquisition of Florida in 1819, the United States wanted to suppress piracy.

In 1821, the true war on pirates began, when three American ships were captured, and the crews were tortured. President Monroe authorized the United States Navy to set up an anti-pirate squadron to rid the Caribbean of piracy.

In 1822, the West Indies Squadron battled pirates around Florida. The war lasted until 1825, ending the Golden Age of Piracy.

Pirates are sometimes known as "buccaneers." The term "buccaneer" referred to a cooking device used by the Hispaniola French used to smoke meat.

## **Miscellaneous Cities and Places**

**Babcock Ranch:** The first solar powered town in the United States, featuring 340,000 solar panels. It was named after Edward Vose Babcock, a lumber baron, and Mayor of Pittsburgh from 1918-1922. He purchased 91,000 acres of land in 1914. It was originally used primarily for logging and agriculture. The cedar trees cut were shipped to South Africa and used in the diamond mines. In 2016, the 17,000-acre town began being developed, with 74,000 acres being purchased by the State of Florida for preservation. It was the largest conservation land acquisition in Florida history, establishing a corridor from Lake Okeechobee to the Charlotte Harbor estuary. When completed, Babcock Ranch will have 50,000 residents in 8,000 homes, creating 20,000 jobs, having five million square feet of

light industry, retail, commercial, office and civic space. There will also be eight magnet schools.

**Belle Glade:** In 1921, a community south of Lake Okeechobee was called Hillsborough Canal Settlement. When tourists returned there from a trip to the Everglades, they felt that the town was the Belle of the Everglades – hence renaming it “**Belle Glade.**”

**Big Cypress Preserve** - lumber companies cut the tallest of the ancient trees. Route 29 became a logging road.

**Boca Grande,** at the mouth of Gasparilla Island in Spanish means “Big Mouth – the entrance to the Gulf.

**Caloosahatchee River** was named after the Calusa tribe in southwest Florida. “Hatchee” is a Muscogee word meaning river.

**Cape Canaveral** became the launching site for military and civilian rockets as part of the space program. In Jules Verne’s book, From the Earth to the Moon published in 1865, he predicted that this location would be the latitude in Florida for the launching site of humanity’s first voyage to the moon. It happened as predicted on July 16, 1969.

**Captiva:** Spanish word was “Cautiva” which means female slave or captive. La Isla de los Cautivos was the Island of the Captives where women were held for ransom by Jose Gaspar, the pirate.

**Cedar Key** was a strategic port for blockade runners of cotton and lumber supply during the Civil War.

**Dry Tortugas** (7 small islands):

Fort Jefferson was begun in 1846.

After the Civil War, it received four conspirators of the Lincoln assassination. This is where Dr. Samuel Mudd was imprisoned. He set the broken leg of John Wilkes Booth, who had assassinated President Lincoln.

The fort was abandoned in 1874 after a hurricane and a yellow fever outbreak.

In the early 1900’s the U.S. Navy used it as a wireless station.

In World War 1 it was a seaplane base.

**Horr’s Island** adjacent to Marco Island is the oldest known permanently occupied coastal village in the Southeastern United States – between 5,000-4,400 BP. Captain Horr was a Union Army veteran from 1889-1893 a customs collector, Director of the Key West National Bank, and in 1898, was a U.S. Marshal at Key West. He built a vacation home on the 134-acre island from a U.S. land grant, which he lived in from 1877-1920. In the 1890’s he had a 50-acre pineapple plantation, citrus grove, packing plant and a cannery. It supplied the Horr’s Wholesale Grocery in Key West. The remaining structure is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

**Immokalee** was Miccosukee Seminole for “his home.”

**Islamorada** – in Spanish, means the Purple Isle.

It is comprised of Lower Matecumbe Key, Plantation Key, Upper Matecumbe Key and Windley Key.

**Jacksonville** was named after Andrew Jackson when he was Governor of Florida.

**Key Largo:** The Spanish called it “Cayo Longo.”

**Key West** was called “Cayo Hueso,” or the “Island of Bones,” by the Spanish as a result of hundreds of dead Indians buried there. After 1569, the Indians were ravaged by white man’s diseases including yellow fever, smallpox, and measles. Bones were heaped in mass burials. Key West’s mid-19<sup>th</sup> century prosperity was due to

the salvage business. Fort Zachary Taylor on Key West was an important supply base and refueling depot for the Union.

**LaBelle**, the county seat of Hendry County, was the center of the cattle boom. After the Civil War, Colonel Hendry started the town of LaBelle, naming it after his daughters Laura and Belle.

**Lake City** was originally called "Alligator" honoring the Seminole chief.

#### **Marco Island – 12 Square Mile Barrier Island**

December 1895 – May 1896 Discovery of Calusa artifacts

Franklin Hamilton Cushing led the Pepper Hearst Expedition on Marco Island, which was a joint venture between the University of Pennsylvania and the Smithsonian Institution.

Cushing sailed to Marco on the Silver Spray Schooner, which was a sponging boat he borrowed from Joseph Disston.

The excavation was 8,100 square feet on the property of W.D. Collier (Captain Bill).

This has been recognized as one of the most spectacular assemblages of artifacts in the history of North American archaeology.

The artifacts were preserved because they were buried in anaerobic (oxygen free) mud.

The Key Marco Cat is one of the most famous Pre-Columbian Native American artifacts ever discovered in Florida. It was carved by either the Muspa or Calusa between 500-1500 BP.

The 2014 Trip Advisor listed Marco Island as the Number 1 Island the United States, and Number 4 in the world.

**Micanopy**: The city of Micanopy is the former site of a Timucan village. It is **Florida's oldest inland town**, not on a waterway. Micanope was the chief of the Seminole Indians at the beginning of the Seminole War of 1835.

**Sanibel** was named by the pirate, Jose Gaspar (Gasparilla), who named it after Santa Isabella, the Spanish queen. This was the home of the pirate Black Caesar. It was here that Gasparilla brought his stolen goods for Black Caesar to trade with Jean Lafitte' for American gold. It was said that Black Caesar's gold was buried on Sanibel.

**St. Augustine**, established in 1565, is **the oldest permanently occupied city in America**. It had the first church, hospital, school, court of law market and first city plan.

**Tallahassee** became the site of the Florida capital in 1823. It was selected because it was half-way between Pensacola and Tallahassee.

**Tamiami Trail**, the road between **Tampa** and **Miami**, was named by William Hill, a reporter on the Miami Herald. Adjacent to it was the longest dike in the world, next to the Netherlands.

**Useppa Island** was named after Josefa Inez de Mayorga, the daughter of a former Viceroy of Mexico. She rejected the attention of the pirate, Gasparilla, who eventually killed her. Gasparilla was said to have hidden treasure on Useppa Island. The island was eventually purchased by Barron Collier, who built a resort and a golf course. While raking out a sand trap on the second hole, the greens keeper found gold coins dated 1761.

## **People**

**Black Caesar**: There were 2 African pirates named Black Caesar. Both sailed in the Florida Keys and the Atlantic. They each spent time in Sanibel and Captiva. The

first Black Caesar established a pirate community on Elliott Key and joined forces with Blackbeard. The second Black Caesar was born in Hispaniola (1767-1818). As he became more successful, he moved his harem to Sanibel and Captiva, away from his pirates. Gasparilla had him set up his camp on Sanibel near the mouth of the San Carlos Pass to protect against unwanted access of enemy ships from Pine Island Sound toward Gasparilla's camp. It was at Captiva that he built a village of where he traded with the Calusa. After the War of 1812, he set up camps in Marco Island, Black Island Sanibel, Captiva, and Pine Island.

**Ben Baker:** He was a "wrecker" who gave up piracy to become a pineapple farmer on Key Largo and Plantation Key. There was a fascination with pineapples since Christopher Columbus was welcomed by the Carib Indians who offered him pineapple slices as a sign of friendship and hospitality. The pineapple was known as a symbol of "welcome." A pineapple was placed at the front door to let everyone know that the sailors had returned from their sea voyages and their homes were open to visitors.

**Brewster Baker:** Born in England around 1758, he was a member of Gasparilla's gang (The Captains of the Brotherhood of the Seas) until around 1820, sailing in the Gulf of Mexico. He eventually moved his ships away from Gasparilla at Boca Grande and ended up at Bojelia (Bokelia) at the head of Pine Island. Around 1819 he heard that the United States was going to buy Florida from the Spanish. He didn't want to fight with the U.S. Navy, so he split his spoils with Gasparilla and sailed toward Columbia to start a new and better life as a retired gentleman or join the army of Simon Bolivar to help free the continent from Spanish rule. He was killed by natives at the Gulf of Darien in the Gulf of Mexico.

**Anne Bonny, Jack Rackam (Captain Jack) and Mary Read** were 18<sup>th</sup> century pirates. They spent time on Estero Island and Lover's Key. They were said to have buried more than \$3 million in the Ten Thousand Islands.

**Colonel Hendry** was a dispatcher during the Second Seminole War. During the Civil War, he was the Captain of the Cattle Calvary, protecting the cattle in Central Florida from the Union troops. After the War, he shipped cattle from LaBelle to Punta Rassa then to Cuba. He was known as the Cattle King of South Florida.

**"Conchs"** were Bahamians that salvaged the remains shipwrecks in the Upper Keys in the late 1700's.

**Jose Gaspar** (1756-1821) was born in 1756 in Seville, Spain. Initially, he was an Admiral in the Navy of King Charles III of Spain. Maria Louisa, the Sicilian wife of the Crown Prince, had a crush on him, but he loved another. So, she, along with the Prime Minister, plotted against him saying that he had stolen some of the crown jewels. He escaped capture and became a pirate, preying on Spanish ships and towns. By 1795, he looted and burned 36 Spanish vessels, then continued for another 20 years. As a pirate, he built a stronghold on Gasparilla Island in Charlotte Harbor. He lived in a luxury home near Boca Grande, while his crew lived on Cayo Pelau. Gasparilla Island is where he kept his female captives for ransom. At one point he captured a beautiful Spanish princess who he fell in love with. She didn't share the love, so he cut off her head, threw it in the Gulf of Mexico and buried her body on Useppa Island. He was said to have buried \$2 million worth of gold and silver on Gasparilla Island.

**Juan Gomez** (1776-1900) was a pirate who lived to be 118 years old. He lived on a key, where he started a goat ranch. However, the panthers ate his goats. The Key became known as Panther Key. Gomez was a part of Jose Gaspar's crew. He was on a ship that was captured by Gaspar in 1801. All of the crew were killed, but he was spared.



- 1805: He was a sentry and a member of the Spanish Dragoons when he met Napoleon (who said that he would make a fine soldier). He later sailed to Charleston where he was a member of a slave ship between Africa and the West Indies.
- 1818: His ship fell into the hands of one of Gaspar's captains. His life was spared and was taken back to Boca Grande and Gasparilla.
- 1821: When Gaspar's ship was ambushed by a U.S. ship, Gomez got into a yawl and escaped to Pine Island Sound with other pirates. He then hid out at Panther Key.
- 1825-1830: Worked on a slave ship.
- 1831: Gomez was involved with a revolt against the Spanish in Cuba. He escaped capture and was picked up by a ship and taken to St. Augustine. At 57, during the Second Seminole War, he fought at the Battle of Okeechobee as a scout with Zachery Taylor.
- 1841: Herded cattle in the vicinity of Cedar Key on the Gulf Coast.
- 1855: Returned to Panther Key.
- 1900: Died at 122 years old when he fell overboard after getting tangled in a fishing net while fishing for mullet.

**Jean La Fitte:** Besides assisting the United States during the War of 1812, La Fitte was a pirate that employed thousands of sailors, raiding commercial vessels throughout the Caribbean. He set up ports in Tampa and Charlotte Harbor. In 1807 he set up a commune at Grand Terre Island at the entrance to the Mississippi Delta to control import traffic on the lower Mississippi. He was thought to have buried millions of dollars in San Carlos Bay and along the Peace River in Charlotte Harbor.

**Sir John Hawkins** was known as the pioneer of British slave trade. Between 1563-1579. He created "Triangular Trade."

First Leg: Ships from England were loaded with cargo to trade for slaves on the west African coast.

Second Leg: This was called the Middle Passage, where African ports also loaded the ships with slaves to export to America.

Third Leg – African slaves were sold in America. The ships were then loaded with sugar, cotton, tobacco, and rum in America to sail back to England.

He was a privateer to Queen Elizabeth, and was highly regarded by the French because he saved Frenchmen at Fort Caroline from the Spanish.

**Andrew Jackson:** Was the 7<sup>th</sup> President of the United States. In 1817, when Florida was a territory of Spain, Jackson led an illegal invasion over the border into Florida which led to the First Seminole War. In 1828, while running for President, he promised cleansing Florida of several Indian tribes. His opponents referred to him as a "Jackass," but he liked the name, so he used the donkey as a symbol. After that, it was popularized when the jackass became the symbol of the new Democratic Party. In 1830, he signed the Indian Removal Act, sending them to the "west".

**James Monroe:** The 5<sup>th</sup> President of the United States was one of America's "Founding fathers." During the American Revolution, he manned the boat with George Washington that crossed the Delaware River to capture Trenton from the British. It was there he took a bullet in the shoulder while attacking a British artillery battery. He was credited with penning the Monroe Doctrine, which prohibited European countries from further colonization in the Western Hemisphere.

**Captain Henry Morgan** was a successful pirate who also fought against the Spanish between 1663-1670. He was later knighted in 1674 and became the Governor of Jamaica.

**Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida:** The origin of the Miccosukee is that they were one of the tribes of the Creek Confederacy of Georgia. Two thousand Red Sticks joined them after their defeat in the Creek War of 1813-1814. In the early part of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century the Miccosukee became a part of the developing Seminole Nation. A famous leader was Sam Jones, a leader during the Second Seminole War. After the Seminole Wars, most of the Miccosukee were displaced to land west of the Mississippi, to the Indian Territory. Others fled into the Everglades, with descendants along the Tamiami Trail. There were about 6,000 Miccosukee in the early 19<sup>th</sup> Century. Now there are approximately four hundred members. They were a part of the Seminole Nation until 1962 when they became federally recognized. The Miccosukee Indian reservation is comprised of 333 acres north border of the Everglades, and they control 200,000 acres of wetlands.

## **Big Cypress National Preserve**

In an effort to save thousands of acres of wilderness, the Big Cypress National Preserve was to be a part of the Everglades National Park. However, it faced the Great Depression, followed by WWII. There were ½ million acres in the original acquisition plan.

By 1968, before it became a preserve, four hundred million board feet of pine and 360 million board feet of bald cypress (some trees older than the Magna Carta) were being logged, as well as the development of 42,000 acres of orange groves.

1973: The Big Cypress Conservation Act passed by the Florida legislature authorized \$40 million in bonds to purchase the Big Cypress land.

1974: The Big Cypress National Preserve was passed by Congress. Comprised of 729,000 acres, it became the nation's first national preserve. Within the Preserve, there are five main habitats:

1. Hardwood hammocks
2. Pinelands
3. Prairies
4. Cypress swamps
5. Estuaries

## **Picayune Strand State Forest**

In the 1940's virgin cypress forest logging began as a wartime measure, but continued into the 1950's.

In the 1960's, after developing Cape Coral, the Gulf American Land Corporation purchased more than 57,000 acres to create the largest subdivision in the United States, calling it Golden Gate Estates. They went on to develop Port of the Islands, south of Everglades City.

A massive system of canals and roads were cut into the forest, leaving the land parched and lifeless, except during the rainy season when it flooded.

This became the "Swampland in Florida Scam" where potential buyers were flown over the land in the dry season, then purchased their property. Most of the land was

never developed, due to flooding from the summer rains. The company went bankrupt.

1985: Florida purchased the Golden Gate Estates Property using Conservation and Recreation Land funds, under the Save Our Everglades program.

1998: The federal government gave \$25 million to Florida to complete the land acquisition.

Today roads, dikes and canals are being undone to return the sheet flow of the Big Cypress Swamp, bringing fresh water into the marine estuaries of the Ten Thousand Islands and the Rookery Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve.

### **Fakahatchee Strand Preserve State Park**

The Fakahatchee Strand Swamp is the largest strand swamp in the world. It is nineteen miles long, 3-5 miles wide and 3'-4' deep.

1913: The land was purchased by the Lee Tidewater Cypress Company, who intended to log the "old growth" cypress trees.

1944: They were logging 1 million board feet of cypress trees per week.

1966: The Gulf American Land Corporation bought the land to market as a part of the Golden Gate Estates. This was, along with a land purchase in the Picayune Strand, became the infamous "buy some swampland in Florida." It didn't develop, and the land was traded to pay for damages done in Cape Coral from drainage and fill violations. This resulted in the acquisition of 9,523 acres of land.

1974: The Fakahatchee Strand Preserve State Park was created.

### **Corkscrew Regional Ecosystem and Water Trust**

This public/private trust was intended to acquire and manage the Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary water levels.

This became a mitigation bank where funds from another project could be used to purchase additional land to protect another area of environmental sensitivity.

### **1954 Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary**

Plans were begun in 1912, based upon a report from the National Audubon Society to protect significant wood stork colony nesting in the Corkscrew Swamp.

In the 1950's, the wetlands were purchased from the Lee Tidewater Cypress Center Company and Collier Enterprises. It was 11,000 acres.

### **1989 Florida Panther National Wildlife Preserve**

In the late 1800's, panthers had much of their range and habitat destroyed by human expansion and development.

The Collier family used the land for private hunting and cattle grazing.

The Fish and Wildlife Service purchased 24,300 acres from the Collier family under the Endangered Species Act, to protect the panther and its habitat.

1996: Additional land was acquired from the Collier family through the Arizona-Florida Land Exchange of 1988.

The preserve is 26,400 acres.

## **Okaloacoochee Slough State Forest**

In the early 1900's it was heavily logged to serve the growing network of railroads.

2000: The land was purchased by Florida under the Conservation and Recreation Lands Program, using Preservation 2000 and Save Our Rivers funds. Comprised of 32,039 acres, this became a state park in 2000.

## **Development of the Railroad**

- 1853: The Florida legislature authorized David Levy Yulee to build the first railroad. He was known as the Father of the Florida Railroads.
- 1860: The Florida Atlantic and Gulf Railroad, from Jacksonville to Lake City and beyond, was a supply line for Confederate troops.
- 1860-1865: The Union blockaded Confederate ports, so supplies were sent by railroad until Vicksburg fell to the Union troops.
- 1861: David Yulee ran the Florida Railroad, from Fernandina to Cedar Key.
- 1881: Peter Demens, a Captain in the Russian imperial Guard, escaped Russia when the Czar was assassinated and came to Florida. He bought the railroad and named it the Orange Belt Railroad. Its terminus was St. Petersburg, which was named after his town in Russia.
- Henry Plant bought the Orange Belt Railroad. The railroad's name changed to the Savannah, Florida, and Western Railway, connecting Savannah, Georgia to the Gulf Coast cities of St. Petersburg, Tampa, and Charlotte Harbor. He extended the pier approximately 3,000 feet into Tampa Bay. This allowed ships to load and unload from the trains.
- 1888: Flagler opened the Ponce de Leon Hotel in St. Augustine, and bought the Augustine and Halifax Railroad, which became the Florida East Coast Railroad. Cities along the railroad grew as the railroad expanded southward. After the Spanish-American War and the subsequent quarantine, land was being bought up along the East Coast. The railroad created the towns of Ft. Lauderdale, Lantana, Lake Worth, Boynton Beach, Del Rey, Boca Raton, Deerfield, Pompano, Hallandale, Onus, Dania, and Homestead.
- 1891: Henry Plant built the Tampa Hotel, with the design inspired by Peter Demens.
- 1895: Flagler's railroad reached Miami.
- 1912: The Florida East Coast Railway founded by Flagler connected Jacksonville to Key West.
- 1927: The Atlantic Coast Railroad extended to Marco Island across a railroad trestle to support the Doxsee and Burnham Clam Factories, as well as Ludlow's pineapple plantation.
- 1947: The Atlantic Coast railroad was discontinued.

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This is only a partial bibliography. The remainder of the resources were from the Marco Island Library, on the Florida History bookshelf. Due to the fact that the library is closed due to the COVID pandemic, I don't have access to the names of the remaining books. Once the pandemic has cleared, there are other books available for research.

## **Trip to Northeast Florida for Covid Vaccinations**

January 29, 2021

The following is historical information learned about the area in conjunction with our weekend trip to St. Johns and Palm Beach Gardens for our Covid vaccinations:

### **Amelia Island**

Since the time of Christopher Columbus, the Spanish marauded Mexico, Central America, South America, and Florida, stealing gold, silver and turning Native American Indians into slaves. On their trips back to Spain, the treasure ships passed through the Sir Francis Drake channel past Tortola, Galleon's Passage north of Trinidad, or into the Caribbean between Dominica, Martinique, and St Lucia.

1562: the French Commander, Jean Ribault, landed near the mouth of the St John's River. He left behind a small garrison at the Charles Fort near Port Royal Sound in South Carolina, and then sailed back to France. La Caroline, near the mouth of the St. John's River was France's first attempt at a permanent settlement. It began as a commercial venture, but with the French persecution of the Protestants (Huguenots), it also became a colony of refuge. It was a perfect base for attacking plundering of the Spanish treasure ships, sharing in the riches which they amassed. The French sailed between Hispaniola, Cuba, and La Caroline,

1564: Rene de Goulaine returned with two hundred soldiers, women, children, and artisans to set up a permanent settlement on land claimed by Spain. The Timucan Indians helped build the village and Fort Caroline. The area was named La Caroline (land of Charles) after King Charles IX. When relations with the Native Americans soured, the colonists faced starvation, with many mutiny parties leaving to seek their fortune elsewhere. When some were captured by the Spanish, the Spanish became aware of the French presence in Florida.

1564: When Phillip II of Spain found out that Ribault had returned to Florida, he sent Admiral Pedro Menendez to get rid of the French. Menendez set up a base in St. Augustin, south of Fort Caroline. Named for King Charles IX, it became the heart of the Spanish coastal defenses in Florida.

1565: The remaining colonists were set to return to France, but Ribault returned to the mouth of the St. John's River instead with a relief expedition of supplies and six hundred soldiers, settlers, women, and children.

Ribault sent a party down to attack the Spanish at St. Augustine, but a hurricane scattered his ships and left them shipwrecked between Daytona Beach and Cape Canaveral.

When Menendez found out that the Fence had left Fort Caroline unprotected, he sent an army of five hundred soldiers to attack. He massacred the remaining French soldiers and settlers, sparing only sixty women and children.

The French leader, Laudunniere, escaped with 40-50 citizens and sailed back to France.

Menendez then went back to the south and attacked the shipwrecked French soldiers, along with Ribault. He massacred about 350 of them and beheaded Ribault. The only ones saved were those that were Catholics or musicians. The place became known as Matanzas (Spanish for slaughter).

1568: The French returned under Dominique de Gourgues, attacking, and burning Fort Caroline, killing the Spanish that did not escape. Those who escaped sailed back to Spain. France never again challenged Spanish claims in North America.

1569: Spain rebuilt Fort Caroline but then abandoned it.

### **Fort Matanzas**

1565: The first Spanish outpost was constructed.

1586: Francis Drake raided St. Augustin.

1695: The Castillo de San Marcos was completed but was exposed to attacks from the south through the Matanzas River.

1740: Governor James Oglethorpe of Georgia blockaded and attacked St. Augustine in a 39-day siege but failed.

1740-1742: Fort Matanzas was constructed by the Spanish to ward off the British invasions of St. Augustin.

1742: Governor Oglethorpe tried a second time to attack but failed.

1763: With the Treaty of Paris, Florida was turned over to the British.

1784: After the Revolutionary War, the Second Treaty of Paris, Fort Matanzas was returned to Spain. Spain, then, let it deteriorate.

1819: Spain transferred Florida to the United States.

1821: The United States took possession of Fort Matanzas, but it was so deteriorated it could not be used.

### **Fernandina and Amelia Island**

1492: Fernandina was named by Christopher Columbus as a tribute to King Ferdinand of Spain.

1562: Amelia Island was founded on May 3 by Frenchman, Jean Ribault. He named the island Isle de Mai.

1567: Fernandina was settled, making it the second oldest city in the United States.

1565-1763: The Spanish controlled the island with the founding of St. Augustin by

Menendez. The island was named Santa Maria, derived from the Spanish mission.

1702: The British, under Governor Oglethorpe destroyed the mission, and renamed it Amelia after the daughter of King George III.

1763-1783: The island was known as Egmont, from the Earl of Egmont's indigo plantation.

1777-1778: American revolutionary forces invaded Amelia Island.

1783-1821: Britain ceded Amelia Island back to Spain.

1794-1795: The French illegally occupied the island.

1807: President Jefferson's Embargo Act closed U.S. ports to foreign shipping. With that, Amelia Island became a hotbed for smuggling.

1812: During the War of 1812, American patriots overthrew the Spanish.

1816: Spain demanded that Amelia Island be returned. Spain then completed construction of Fort San Carlos to protect Fernandina.

1817: Sir Gregor McGregor seized control of Fort San Carlos to liberate northeastern Florida from Spanish rule. McGregor could not maintain control of the island and ran out of money. He then sold Amelia Island to the French Pirate, Luis Aury, who used it as a home base for piracy.

1821: Spain ceded Florida back to the United States, who regained control of Amelia Island.

1875-1900: These were the Golden Years of Fernandina. It prospered from tourism with steamships coming from New York, the shipping of lumber and phosphates, as well as its use for naval storage.

During the Spanish American War, gun running from Fernandina was common, until the United States stopped it.

In the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, the shrimping, oyster, and crab industry prospered, until the Depression.

## **Fort Clinch**

1847: The United States began to build Fort Clinch on Amelia Island at the mouth of the St. John's River. It was named after General Duncan Lamont Clinch, a prominent figure during the Second Seminole War. It was built to protect the deep-water port of Fernandina.

1861-1862: During the Civil War, Confederate troops took over Fort Clinch; but Federal troops regained it in 1862. They occupied it for the remainder of the Civil War.



## **David Levy Yulee**

David Levy Yulee's father, Moses, was born in a Moroccan harem. Moses was the son of Rachel Levy, who was the daughter of a Jewish physician living in England and Jacob Ben Youli, the Grand Vizier to the Sultan of Morocco.

Rachel was on board an English ship bound for the West Indies when it was captured by Barbary pirates. She was a young virgin and a prize for the slave market in Fez. She was then bought for the Grand Vizier.

During a revolution, Rachel and her son Moses escaped to Gibraltar. Eventually, Moses took his mother and sister to St. Thomas in the Virgin Islands.

Moses married Hannah Abendanona. They had a son, David, in 1815.

When he was 9 years old, David was sent to school in Virginia. His parents moved to Florida, near Micanopy.

1839: David became a member of Florida's first Constitutional Congress.

1841: He was elected as a Territorial Delegate to the U.S. Congress.

1845: Florida became a state, and Yulee became Florida's first U.S. Senator. He changed his name from David Levy to David Levy Yulee in honor of Jacob Youli and the harem where his father was born.

He married the daughter of Governor Charles Wickliffe of Kentucky, while developing a 5,000-acre plantation, which he named Margarita (Spanish for pearl). The plantation was burned by the Union troops during the Civil War.

1853: David Levy Yulee built the Florida Atlantic and Gulf Railroad. He was known as the Father of Florida Railroads. It connected Cedar Key on the Gulf Coast to Fernandina, providing a transfer point to ship goods (in particular, wood) through to the Atlantic Ocean and points north. It was the first trans-peninsular railroad in Florida.

1860: The railroad was a supply line for Confederate troops.

Yulee was imprisoned at Fort Pulaski during the Civil War, accused of aiding in the escape of Jefferson Davis. He was later released by Ulysses S. Grant.

### **Additional Information from Hidden History of Florida James Clark**

1528: Navarez landed near Tampa. The crew were all killed except Juan Ortiz. He was to be burned alive, but was saved by the chief's daughter. John Smith, one of the early Pilgrims at Jamestown, was likely to have retold the story in 1608, citing himself being saved by Pocahontas instead.

1529: The first Thanksgiving was actually in Tampa, before Plymouth Rock in 1623.

1559: The second Thanksgiving was in Pensacola.

- 1565: The third Thanksgiving was in St. Augustine, which was shared with the Timucua Indians.
- 1565: After Menendez landed at St. Augustine, 40 miles south of Ft. Caroline (which was built by the French), he attacked Ft. Caroline and killed the French. He left the Spanish soldiers there to defend it.
- 1569: The French returned and killed the Spanish soldiers. Menendez then came back and killed the French in an area known as "Matanzas" which means "place of slaughter."
- 1606: The first African American born in North America was in St. Augustine.
- 1619: The American slave trade began when Africans were taken to Jamestown. Florida was a problem for the British. Spanish slavery was more lenient. Slaves from the British colonies escaped to Florida. The Spanish would pay the British owners for use of their slaves, who would then work to pay off their debt in the construction of a fort.
- 1669: The Spanish stopped paying the owners, and said that the slaves would be protected. Escaped slaves built a settlement outside of St. Augustine, calling it Ft. Mose. The Spanish also lured slaves to come to Florida if they would convert to Catholicism. Some slaves intermarried with the Indians. Illegal slaves were smuggled from Cuba.
- 1719: The French captured Pensacola from the Spanish.
- 1810: Residents of West Florida staged a revolution, proclaiming it the Free and Independent State of West Florida and capturing the unmanned Spanish fort in Baton Rouge. Their flag was blue with one white star, calling it "Bonnie Blue".
- 1818: Andrew Jackson, with 2,800 soldiers and 1,400 Creek Indians, raided Florida, burning the Indian town of Tallahassee, and burned the Spanish fort at St. Marks.
- The Spanish were losing control of Florida. They didn't have the military strength to fight the United States, as well as facing a revolution in Latin America. They were also drained by the Peninsular War in Europe.
- General Gregor MacGregor had visions of taking over Florida. He had fought with Simon Bolivar in the liberation of Venezuela. With an army of 150 soldiers, he took over the fort on Amelia Island and called it a republic. However, he ran out of money and his men deserted. He then sold Amelia Island to the pirate, Louis Aury for \$50,000, who then turned it into a haven for pirates, slave smugglers and other criminals. The U.S. Navy then came and shut it down.
- 1822: Florida became a territory, having 2 counties – Escambia in West Florida (capital, Pensacola) and St. John's in East Florida (capital, St. Augustine). Eventually, they switched to one capital, Tallahassee, which was halfway between the two.

### **Cedar Key – "The Pencil Capital of the Nation"**

- 1840: Cedar Key became a tourist resort with excellent fishing. Later, commercial fishing began. Its main attraction was cedar trees which were used to make pencils. Two of the biggest pencil makers were Eberhard Faber and Eagle Pencil. They cut down the trees, set up mills, but didn't re-forest.
- 1862: During the Civil War, ships carrying cotton and portions of the railroad were destroyed by Union forces. Cedar Key was also important for making salt. The Union soldiers destroyed the salt-making plant.
- 1864: Union troops occupied Cedar Key. After the War, Eberhard Faber and Eagle Pencil returned to Cedar Key.
- 1886: Railroad service opened to Tampa, reducing the importance of Cedar Key.
- 1896: A hurricane basically destroyed the town, including the mills and the trees. Oyster beds had basically kept the town going, but they became overharvested.

1925: There was a publicity stunt in Key Largo in order to develop the key and attract buyers. The developers claimed that Spanish treasure was found. Ben Hecht, an accountant from Indiana, along with the President of the Key Largo Land Company, paid a beachcomber \$100 to plant Spanish vases and coins they bought from the President of Cuba. They then advertised across the U.S. and people lined up to buy lots. Hecht knew that the land deal would go bust so he got out. Hecht went on to write the classic movie 'The Front Page,' helped write Gone with the Wind, and won the first Academy Award for a Screenplay with "The Underworld" in 1927.