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## Florida in 1845

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## FLORIDA IN 1845

### STATISTICS - ECONOMIC LIFE - SOCIAL LIFE

by DOROTHY DODD

When the government of the State of Florida was organized in June 1845, the state contained a population of some 66,500.<sup>1</sup> Although Florida has a total area of 58,560 square miles,<sup>2</sup> 47 percent of the population was concentrated in the 7,333 square miles (only 12.5 percent of the state total) lying between the Apalachicola and Suwannee rivers, then known as Middle Florida. The remaining 53 percent was distributed fairly evenly between West and East Florida, 25 percent being in the former and 28 percent in the latter. But since West Florida -between the Perdido and Apalachicola rivers- has an area of only 8,171 square miles, while there are 43,056 square miles in East Florida - *i.e.*, all that part of the peninsula lying south and east of the Suwannee river-there was a great difference in density of population.

According to Turner's criterion that territory with less than 6 inhabitants to the square mile was part of the frontier, Florida was indeed a frontier

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*Note* - Here are a great number of little-known and unknown facts of Florida in 1845 condensed into a few pages, from which can be got a good idea of the economic life and some picture of the social life of our pioneers on their entrance into the Union. This article is one result of long research by the author into various sources, but largely in the manuscript and other historical material in the Florida State Library. - *Ed.*

1. A census of Florida's population in 1845 by counties and broken into whites, slaves and free Negroes, follows this article. It has been compiled by Dr. Dodd from several sources most of which are in manuscript in the Florida State Library, such as Comptroller's Record of Claims and the tax rolls for 1845, with other figures from the Florida Senate Journal 1845.
2. Areas are taken from U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940. Areas of the United States, 1940* (Washington, Govt. Print. Off., 1942). Although the Georgia-Florida boundary was not fixed in 1845, the present figures are approximately correct, as the line was finally adjusted substantially in accord with Florida's claims.

state in 1845. The state as a whole had only 1.12 inhabitants per square mile. Even when taken by sections, this test of the frontier held true, Middle Florida having 4 persons per square mile, West Florida 2, and East Florida .44. Only Leon county seems to have passed the frontier stage, with a population density of 13.8. Men predominated in the white population, 54 percent of the adult whites in the 17 counties for which we have data being males. And in sparsely settled counties, such as Marion, Benton, Orange, and Hillsborough, men outnumbered women two to one. Only in St. Johns county was there an excess of females over males.<sup>3</sup> About 53 percent of the total population was white, but there was a blackbelt consisting of Jackson county, with 52.9 percent slaves; Gadsden, with 53 percent; Leon, with 68.9 percent; and Jefferson, with 64.3 percent. Nassau county, in the extreme northeastern corner of the state, also had a slave population of slightly more than .50 percent of the total.

The foregoing figures reflect both the nature of the land and the history of the territory during the 24 years between the change of flags and statehood. In 1821, the white population of Florida was concentrated in the western and eastern extremes. Of an estimated total of 4,500, about 800 were in Pensacola and its environs and 3,700 in East Florida from the vicinity of St. Augustine to the St. Marys river. Middle Florida and the peninsula west of the St. Johns were occupied by an estimated 5,000 Indians.<sup>4</sup> During the first two decades, immigrants were attracted largely to Middle Florida for several reasons. The best planting lands of the territory,

3. See Florida Senate, *Journal*, 1845, Adj. Sess., App., p. 2.

4. Jedidiah Morse, *Report . . . on Indian Affairs* (New Haven, 1822). pp. 308-310.

namely those suited to the cultivation of cotton, were supposed to be in that section; the surveys of public lands were begun there; and the central part of the peninsula, from about the present location of Ocala south to the Caloosahatchee river, had been set aside as an Indian reserve. Furthermore, the seven-year war that broke out over the removal of the Indians in 1835 and lasted until 1842 made a battleground of the entire peninsula and effectively stemmed the flow of immigration into East Florida.

The outbreak of the Indian war also halted the surveys of public lands, which by 1836 had been virtually completed to the second basis parallel between Townships 14 and 15, South, just north of Ocala.<sup>5</sup> Hostilities ceased in August 1842 however, when the Indians remaining in Florida were temporarily assigned the lands between Charlotte Harbor and Peace creek on the west and the Kissimmee river and Lake Okechobee on the east, Lake Istokpoga being the northern, and Shark river the southern, limit.<sup>6</sup> In the same month Congress passed the Armed Occupation Act, offering homesteads to actual settlers in that part of Florida lying south of the line between Townships 9 and 10, South, which runs about three miles north of Palatka. Resumption of the public surveys was ordered to accommodate settlers under this act, plans being made for the survey of "about a million acres of land, in detached parcels, at various eligible points."<sup>7</sup> By 1845, 1,048 permits, covering 167,680 acres, had been sanctioned under the act.<sup>8</sup> The largest settlements were around Ft. King (now Ocala) and near Ft. Cross on the upper reaches of

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5. H. Doc. 6, 24th Cong., 2d sess. [301], p. 4 ; H. Doc. 24, 27th Cong., 2d sess. [401], plat.

6. *National Intelligencer*, Aug. 25, 1842.

7. H. Doc. 18, 27th Cong., 3d sess. [419], p. 4.

8. S. Doc. 16, 29th Cong., 1st sess. [472], p. 4.

the Withlacoochee river. Smaller settlements were made south of Ft. Fanning on the Suwannee river, on Hillsborough bay between the Hillsborough and Alafia rivers, and south of the Manatee river. There were also scattered settlements near the coast from Palatka to Miami river and Bay Biscayne.<sup>9</sup> The sale of lands in 1845 reflected the new trend toward East Florida, for of a total of 20,053 acres taken up by private entry, 12,123 acres were in East Florida as compared with 7,930 acres in Middle and West Florida.<sup>10</sup>

As a result of this immigration, four new counties were established in East Florida between 1842 and 1845, as contrasted with one each in West and Middle Florida. Consequently, of the 26 counties in existence in 1845, exactly half were in East Florida. The counties, by sections, and their county seats, were :

West Florida - Escambia, Pensacola ; Santa Rosa, Milton ; Walton, Eucheeanna ; Jackson, Marianna ; Washington, Roach's Bluff ; Calhoun, Iola ; Franklin, Apalachicola.

Middle Florida - Gadsden, Quincy ; Leon, Tallahassee ; Wakulla, New Port ; Jefferson, Monticello ; Madison, Madison Court House ; Hamilton, Jasper.

East Florida - Columbia, Alligator (now Lake City) ; Nassau, Nassau Court House ; Duval, Jacksonville ; St. Johns, St. Augustine ; Orange, Enterprise ; St. Lucie (now Brevard), St. Lucie ; Dade, Miami ; Monroe, Key West ; Hillsborough, Tampa Bay ; Benton (now Hernando), Annuttaliga ; Marion, Camp King (now Ocala) ; Alachua, Newnansville ; Levy, Wacasassa.<sup>11</sup>

9. Dorothy Dodd. "Letters from East Florida," *Florida Historical Quarterly*, XV (July, 1936), p. 53.

10. H. Doc. 9, 29th Cong., 2d sess. [498], p. 14.

11. This list is taken from a letter of Governor W. D. Moseley, July 3, 1845, in MS. letterbook in the Florida State Library. Strangely, Governor Moseley omitted Dade and Monroe counties, which have been added by the writer.

*Economic Life*

Florida had an agricultural economy based on staple crops suited to the plantation system. This system was well established, however, only in the blackbelt counties of Jackson, Gadsden, Leon, and Jefferson. It undoubtedly reached its highest development in Florida in Leon county, yet in 1845 roughly 20 percent of the persons engaged in agriculture in the county operated holdings of 40 to 320 acres without owning slaves, while only 10 percent were large planters holding 50 or more slaves. Farmers owning from 1 to 10 slaves accounted for 40 percent of the agriculturists. The remaining 30 percent, owning from 11 to 49 slaves, may be classified as middle class planters.<sup>12</sup> Only seven planters owned more than 100 slaves. The largest planting interest in the county was the estate of Benjamin Chaires, owner of 181 slaves and 7,940 acres. The two next largest slaveholders were Robert W. Williams, with 176 slaves and 2,832 acres, and Bryan Croom, with 133 slaves and 2,484 acres.

The largest slaveowner in Gadsden county, Oscar Filyaw, held 83 slaves and 560 acres.<sup>13</sup> He was one of 12 large planters constituting about 5 percent of the agriculturists in the county. Middle class planters, owning 11 to 49 slaves, were present in the same proportion as in Leon county, being 30 percent of the total, while farmers with 1 to 10 slaves made up 40 percent, and non-slaveowning farmers accounted for the remaining 25 percent. Hamilton county, outside of the blackbelt but one

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12. Data relative to slave ownership in Leon and other counties are taken from the 1845 tax rolls in the Florida State Library. The figures are only approximate, as occupations are not given. Landowners holding 40 to 320 acres, when the returns were not made by an agent or trustee and when no slave ownership was indicated; are classed as non-slaveowning farmers. All owners of slaves who held 40 acres or more of land are counted.

13. Other large planters had a far greater acreage.

of the older counties, had only one large planter, Francis J. Ross, who owned 52 slaves and 1,720 acres. He and 11 middle class planters constituted some 17 percent of the county's agriculturists, while the remaining 83 percent was evenly divided between non-slaveowners and farmers holding from 1 to 10 slaves. Marion county, established in 1844 in territory opened to settlement under the Armed Occupation Act, likewise had only one large planter, John H. Madison, with 51 slaves and 770 acres. Of 247 white males over 21 years of age, <sup>14</sup> 70 percent owned no slaves. Most of the 79 persons who did hold slaves had not secured title to their land and paid no land tax. Of these, 47 owned 1 to 5 slaves, and only 10 persons could be called middle class planters by virtue of owning 11 or more slaves.

Cotton was the great cash staple of the state, but more than 80 percent of the crop was raised in the four blackbelt counties. The concentration of wealth in that relatively small area is indicated by the contemporary statement that nearly four-fifths of the state's capital was devoted to "the production of cotton for export, and corn for home consumption." <sup>15</sup> Although Florida planters endeavored to raise breadstuffs and meats for their slaves, they never succeeded in doing so in sufficient quantity. Consequently, western corn and bacon were imported from New Orleans, and hogs were driven in on foot from Tennessee and North Georgia. It was necessary, also, to import horses and mules from North Carolina, Tennessee, Kentucky, and Ohio. <sup>16</sup>

Since, as a Tallahasseean stated, "Cotton is the ruling guide with us to good or bad times," <sup>17</sup> times

14. Florida Senate, *Journal*, 1845, Adj. Sess., App., p. 2.

15. S. Doc. 2, 29th Cong., 1st Sess. [471], p. 665.

16. *Ibid.*, pp. 666, 670.

17. "C. H. B." in *Florida Sentinel*, Mar. 19, 1844.

were far from good in 1845. The price of cotton, which had remained above 10 cents during the decade of the 'thirties, and in the best years had been as high as 15 and 16 cents, began to decline in 1840.<sup>18</sup> At the height of the season in 1845, cotton was bringing at Apalachicola, the principal cotton market of the state, from 3 1/2 to 6 1/2 cents a pound.<sup>19</sup> Where a planter during the 'thirties had received from 10 to 15 percent return on his investment in lands and slaves, in 1845 he averaged 5 or 6 percent.<sup>20</sup> This might not have been so bad had the planters really owned their lands and slaves. Many in the blackbelt, however, were heavily mortgaged to the Union Bank, which was trying to liquidate its assets, and it had been only by the grace of stay laws that some had not been sold out by the marshal.

These conditions caused planters to seek other staple crops to supplement, if not to supplant, cotton. Sugar was looked to as an alternative, especially in East Florida. A fair crop was harvested in that section in 1845,<sup>21</sup> but the sugar plantations along the St. Johns river had not recovered from the devastations of the Indian War. Planters in Jackson county and Middle Florida hopefully turned to it, year after year, sometimes producing as much as 200,000 pounds in a season, but its cultivation as an export staple was never firmly established there.

A more promising substitute seemed to be Cuban tobacco. It had been cultivated in East Florida since 1822<sup>22</sup> and in Gadsden county since 1828, but

18. S. Doc. 2, 29th Cong., 1st sess. [471], p. 669.

19. See *Commercial Advertiser*, Mar. 15 and 22, 1845.

20. S. Doc. 2, 29th Cong., 1st sess. [471], pp. 666, 669, 670.

21. *Pensacola Gazette*, Dec. 13, 1845, quoting *News* (Jacksonville), Nov. 21, 1845.

22. Charles Vignoles, *Observations on the Floridas* (New York, p. 100.



without much success because the Florida product lacked flavor. A chance shipment of the silky, broad, spotted Florida leaf to Bremen in 1842 found favor in the German market as cigar wrappers, and tobacco acreage was expanded until the bumper crop of 1,200,000 pounds in 1845 glutted the market.<sup>23</sup> The best tobacco land was in Gadsden and Leon counties, but even the small farmers of Walton and Washington cultivated the leaf,<sup>24</sup> and an East Florida correspondent of the *Charleston Courier* reported, "Every body here is going into the tobacco culture, which . . . requires no machinery and the poorest can engage in it."<sup>25</sup>

The preeminence of agriculture was recognized in the contemporary remark that the population of Florida might be divided into three classes, "planter, overseer, and cracker or stocktender."<sup>26</sup> This was an overstatement, though men in the planter class engaged in the practice of law and medicine, manufacturing, banking, and even inn-keeping. Commission merchants, or factors, especially in Apalachicola and Key West, and retail merchants, in all towns, constituted an important economic group, while the mechanics, or artisans, were a self-conscious class with which newspaper editors and overseers identified themselves. This group consisted of printers, carpenters, masons, tailors, boot and shoe makers, cabinet makers who would act as undertaker on occasion, and metalsmiths. Most of the towns supported two or three taverns, there were numerous bars and restaurants in Tallahassee and Apalachicola, and practically every county was served by at least one retailer of spirituous liquors.

23. "Florida and Spanish Tobacco," *DeBow's Review*, XVIII (Jan., 1855), pp. 38, 39.

24. *Pensacola Gazette*, July 5, 1845.

25. Quoted in *Niles' Register*, LXIX (Sept. 13, 1845), p. 24.

26. *Florida Sentinel*, Mar. 19, 1844.

The two recognized professions were law and medicine, with dentistry accorded a quasi-professional status. Dr. S. C. McIntyre, a Tallahassee dentist, for instance, was also a daguerreotype artist.<sup>27</sup>

Law was the more lucrative profession, the top income from its practice being some \$4,000 a year, while the best medical practice brought in hardly half that amount. At least seven counties had no physician, and many lacked lawyers. Since it was the custom for lawyers to ride circuit, the latter deficiency was supplied from the towns in which the legal profession was concentrated.<sup>28</sup>

Commerce and trade centered, of course, in the towns. The principal commercial town of the state was Apalachicola, which owed its preeminence to its river connection with the cotton-raising sections of Alabama and Georgia on the Chattahoochee and Flint rivers. Far below Apalachicola in importance as a cotton-shipping port, but the export point for much of Middle Florida and some of south Georgia, was the new town of Newport on the St. Marks river. Other seaport towns were Pensacola, whose chief export was lumber; Key West, with its unique wrecking business; St. Augustine, which drowsed along with a few tourists and invalids and little substantial trade; and Jacksonville, the advantage of whose site near the mouth of the St. Johns was largely nullified by the undeveloped state of the back country. Cedar Keys and Tampa were just beginning to develop from military posts into towns. The interior towns, such as Marianna, Quincy, Monticello, Madison, and Newnansville, were local trading centers and county seats. Tallahassee was raised from this category by being the capital of the

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27. *Ibid.*, Jan. 28, 1845.

28. Much of the data for this paragraph is taken from the *Florida Sentinel*, Dec. 9, 1845, and from 1845 tax rolls.

state and the business center of the planting counties of Middle Florida.

Apalachicola was a sleepy community of only several hundred persons in the summer, but it came to life in the fall when the new cotton crop started coming in. Then the streets filled with people, steamboats came "booming down the river with their tall chimneys peeping over the bales of cotton" with which they were laden, the ringing of the auction bell and the cries of the auctioneer were heard, and lighters plied busily between tall ships in the bay and wharves covered with cotton.<sup>29</sup> During the year ending August 31, 1845, Apalachicola shipped 153,388 of the total of 188,893 bales of cotton exported from Florida ports.<sup>30</sup> Since the port of St. Marks ( *i.e.*, Newport and St. Marks) shipped 30,000 bales during the same period,<sup>31</sup> all other Florida ports exported only about 5,000 bales. Nearly two-thirds of the state total was shipped coastwise; the other third was exported directly to Great Britain, France, and other European countries. Apalachicola and Newport also exported most of the state's tobacco crop, and the former shipped considerable sawed lumber, though not so much as Pensacola. Exports of lesser importance were staves, cedar logs, hides (of both cattle and deer), furs, and beeswax.

Communication was by water, when possible. Steamboats had regularly plied the Apalachicola river and its tributaries since 1827,<sup>32</sup> and possibly earlier. The first steamboat appeared on the St. Johns in 1831, when the *George Washington* made the run from Savannah to Jacksonville by the inside

29. *Commercial Advertiser*, Sept. 30, 1844.

30. *Ibid.*, Sept. 23, Oct. 7, 1845.

31. The exact amount was 30,232 bales for the year ending October 1. *Florida Sentinel*, Nov. 25, 1845.

32. The *Steubenville*, Captain Vincent, was taken from Mobile to the Apalachicola in the spring of 1827. *Pensacola Gazette*, July 6, 1827.

passage,<sup>33</sup> and by 1845 there was a regular packet line between Savannah and Palatka<sup>34</sup> which connected with the weekly run of the *Sarah Spalding* from the latter place to Enterprise, 125 miles up the river.<sup>35</sup> The first steamboat to make a regular run on the Suwannee was the *Orpheus*, which appeared on that river in October, 1845, to carry the weekly mail from Cedar Keys to Columbus.<sup>36</sup>

Since these rivers afforded no east and west communication, intercourse between the sections was either by sea, which in the case of communication between East Florida and the Middle or West involved the lengthy and dangerous trip around the peninsula, or by overland routes. The project of improving transportation by the construction of a canal or railroad across the peninsula, so often agitated during the territorial period, was still no more than a topic for discussion, and of the four short railroads built in the 'thirties, only the line from Tallahassee to St. Marks was still in operation.

The main overland route started at Whitesville, or Garey's Ferry, at the forks of Black creek in the present Clay county, which was a junction point for Jacksonville and St. Augustine. Running south through Newnansville, in Alachua county, it then swung north to Alligator (Lake City). From Alligator a traveler could take a southern or northern route to Tallahassee. The former, which appears to have been the main one, ran through Columbus and Madison Court House; the latter through Jasper and Monticello. From Tallahassee there was the choice of railroad transportation to St. Marks, where a ship could be taken to Apalachicola or Pensacola ; coach service, through Quincy, to Chatta-

33. *Niles' Register*, XL (June 18, 1831), p. 234.

34. *Florida Journal*, Dec. 3, 1842.

35. *News*, Nov. 8, 1845.

36. *Ibid.*, Oct. 25, 1845.

hoochee and thence by steamboat to Apalachicola; or an all-coach route through Bainbridge, Georgia, Chattahoochee, Marianna, Campbellton, Almirante (in the northern part of the present Okaloosa County), and Milton to Pensacola.<sup>37</sup>

Accommodations for travelers were afforded by the two-horse stage coaches that carried the mails. Jesse Carter, proprietor of the Central Line, operating between Garey's Ferry and Tallahassee, advertised that he ran "two splendid four seat Troy built Coaches."<sup>38</sup> The fare for the six-day trip was \$18.00, with half-price tickets for children under 12. Passengers, of course, paid for their own meals and over-night accommodations. Baggage was limited to 40 pounds, an extra charge being made for any in excess of that amount. This was a weekly service, but the coach line from Tallahassee to Pensacola, by way of Bainbridge and Marianna, ran three times a week.

On the lesser routes, mail service was by horse. The total annual transportation of the mails in Florida for the year ending June 30, 1845, was 335,947 miles, of which 96,680 miles was carried on horseback, 163,894 miles in coaches, and 75,400 miles by steamboat. The last figure included a weekly run between Palatka and Savannah.<sup>39</sup> Among the 66 post offices served were six opened since January 1, 1845, in the new counties of Benton and Marion.<sup>40</sup> The volume of business of these offices ranged from net proceeds of \$2,852.39 at Apalachicola, whose

37. These routes are worked out from the 1843 advertisement for postal contracts (*Florida Herald*, Apr. 10, 1843) which were still operative in 1845 (see *Register . . . of the United States*, 1845, App., pp. 504, 505.)

38. *News*, Dec. 12, 1845.

39. S. Doc. 1, 29th Cong., 1st sess. [470], pp. 862, 863, 871.

40. *Register . . . of the United States*, 1845, App., pp. 260-263. Although 67 post offices are listed as being in operation in Florida on June 30, 1845, "Sugar Valley" in "Murray" county obviously was not in the state.

postmaster received a compensation of \$1,002.37, to 2 cents at Camp Izard, in Marion county, where the postmaster received 1 cent for his services.

There was little manufacturing in 1845, but what there was falls into two classes, manufactures for export, which were in reality extractive industries, and manufactures for home consumption. A salt manufactory, established in Key West in 1834, was turning out 30,000 bushels a year by solar evaporation. The product, said to be superior in quality to imported salt, was sold at New Orleans and other Gulf ports for 23 cents a bushel. Settlers on the lower East Coast manufactured and shipped from Key West to northern markets some 20,000 pounds of "coontee," or arrowroot, each year, for which they received 5 cents a pound.<sup>41</sup> The only important manufacturing industry, however, was the lumber business, centered in Santa Rosa county in West Florida and in Nassau and Duval counties in East Florida, although there were several saw mills in Middle Florida. Both steam and water mills were in use. In Santa Rosa county, \$150,000 was invested in 20 saw mills, which employed 200 men.<sup>42</sup> An estimated 4,000,000 feet of lumber and 300,000 shingles were exported from Pensacola during the year ending June 1, 1845, while about 2,000,000 feet of lumber was shipped from Apalachicola. Much of the latter, however, undoubtedly was manufactured in Georgia and Alabama.<sup>43</sup> Unfortunately, no figures are available for East Florida.

Other manufacturing establishments were natural subsidiaries of an agricultural society. Grist mills were to be found in most of the counties of West and Middle Florida, though there were few

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41. S. Doc. 2, 29th Cong., 1st sess. [471], pp. 660, 664.

42. *Ibid.*, p. 489.

43. *Ibid.*, p. 493.

in East Florida.<sup>44</sup> Bricks and lime were made in Escambia and Leon counties. Jefferson had a tannery that employed six men and a carriage and wagon factory employing 25 men to produce products of an annual value of \$12,000. A smaller wagon factory was operated in Madison county and, presumably, similar establishments reported in Gadsden and Leon counties in 1840<sup>45</sup> were still in operation in 1845. A tobacco manufactory in Pensacola employed three men, probably in "twisting segars," while at Arcadia, near Milton in Santa Rosa county, juniper pails of a superior quality were made. At Arcadia, also, was under construction in 1845 the first of three cotton manufacturing mills to be erected in Florida before the Civil War, although it did not begin production until April, 1846.<sup>46</sup> Prior to this, only the coarsest cottons and linsey-woolsey were spun and woven by hand.<sup>47</sup>

### *Social Life*

The settlers who followed the American flag into Florida brought with them the cultural institutions of the Anglo-American communities from which they came. Where these institutions depended upon organization for expression, they naturally flourished best in the towns and in the more prosperous planting communities of Middle and West Florida. This was true of churches, schools, newspapers, and fraternal organizations.

Although the Catholic Church was the only organized religious body in Florida when the United

44. *Ibid.*, p. 489; U. S. Department of State, *Compendium of the . . . Returns of the Sixth Census . . .* (Washington, 1841), p. 344.

45. See *Ibid.*

46. See Dorothy Dodd, "The Manufacture of Cotton in Florida Before and During the Civil War," *Florida Historical Quarterly*, XIII (July, 1934), pp. 3-15.

47. S. Doc. 2, 29th Cong., 1st sess. [471], p. 667.

States took over, it made practically no gains during the territorial period. By 1822, Baptists, Episcopalians, Presbyterians, and Methodists had all found footholds in the territory.<sup>48</sup> Baptist churches in Middle Florida affiliated with the Ochlockonee Association, organized in 1825, while those in East Florida helped to organize the Suwannee River Association in 1835. In 1843 the Baptist churches split over the question of missions and drew apart into the sects now known as Missionary and Primitive. As a result of this schism, the Florida Association was formed by the missionary group, the two older associations adhering to the anti-missionary doctrine.<sup>49</sup> The Diocese of Florida of the Protestant Episcopal Church was organized by seven parishes at a convention held in Tallahassee, January 17, 1838, and the Presbytery of Florida, erected by the Synod of South Carolina and Georgia in 1840, held its first meeting in Tallahassee, January 28, 1841.<sup>50</sup> The General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1844 established the Florida Conference, which convened for the first time in

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48. For the Episcopalians, see Edgar Legare Pennington, "The Protestant Episcopal Church in Florida, 1763-1892," *Historical Magazine of the Protestant Episcopal Church*, VII (Mar., 1938), pp. 3-77; for the Methodists, see Charles Tinsley Thrift, Jr., *The Trail of the Florida Circuit Rider* (Lakeland, Fla., Florida Southern College Press, 1944). I do not know of any comprehensive account of the Baptist and Presbyterian churches in Florida. There was a Baptist church constituted at Pigeon Creek, Nassau county, January 7, 1821 (Pigeon Creek Church Record, microfilm in the Florida State Library), and Presbyterians had settled in Walton and Gadsden counties by 1822 (see William E. McIlwain, *The Early Planting of Presbyterianism in West Florida* [Pensacola, Fla., 1926]).

49. "Delegates from the Baptist Churches, favorable to the Benevolent Institutions for the spread of the Gospel," were invited to meet at Indian Springs Church in Leon County on March 2, 1843 (*Florida Sentinel*, March 17, 1843), and it was doubtless as a result of this meeting that the Florida Association was formed.

50. *Floridian*, Dec. 12, 1840, Feb. 20, 1841.



Tallahassee on February 6, 1845. The Protestant Methodist Church also had a circuit in Middle Florida by 1845, and there was a Congregational Society at Apalachicola.<sup>51</sup>

Best adapted to a frontier life were the Methodists and Baptists, the former because of their itinerant system, the latter because their simple associational form of organization and dependence upon a volunteer ministry did not presuppose much financial support. These denominations were therefore dominant in the rural areas, while the Episcopalians, Presbyterians, and Catholics found or retained footholds mainly in the towns, and there sometimes with difficulty.

The only functioning Catholic churches in 1845 were at St. Augustine and Pensacola. Mission stations, subsidiary to the former, were maintained at Jacksonville and on Amelia Island, and services were occasionally held at Apalachicola, Tallahassee, and Key West. The Protestant Episcopal Diocese of Florida had nine parishes - at Pensacola, Apalachicola, Marianna, Quincy, Tallahassee, Monticello, Jacksonville, St. Augustine, and Key West - many of which leaned heavily for financial aid upon the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of the Church. Churches within the Presbytery of Florida included Marianna, Quincy, Tallahassee, Monticello, and Madison, while outside the geographical limits of the Presbytery were such churches as the old Euchee Valley Church in Walton county and those at Jacksonville, Mandarin, and St. Augustine, which were attached to the Presbytery of Georgia.

The Florida Baptist Association in 1845 consisted of thirty-one churches, three of which were in Jackson county, four in Columbia, one in Duval, and three in Georgia, the other nineteen being in

51. *Commercial Advertiser*, Nov. 8, 1845.

Middle Florida.<sup>52</sup> The new Association had entered enthusiastically into home mission work and in 1844-5 engaged two missionaries, one of whom traveled 2,789 miles and preached 189 sermons in West Florida, while the other traveled 4,079 miles and preached 170 sermons in East Florida.<sup>53</sup> In 1845-6, the Association sent out five missionaries, one in the West and two in each the Middle and East.<sup>54</sup>

Equally energetic were the Methodists, who by 1844 had followed the flow of immigrants into East Florida and established missions at Camp King (Ocala), Chuckachattie (near Brooksville), Indian River, and Hillsborough Bay.<sup>55</sup> The Florida Conference at its first session set up four districts-Quincy and Tallahassee, covering Middle Florida and adjacent Georgia territory; St. Marys, embracing the coastal region of northeast Florida and southeast Georgia; and Newnansville, covering the remainder of East Florida.<sup>56</sup> The Hillsborough and Indian River missions were dropped in 1845, but the following year the former was renewed and a mission was designated for Orange County.<sup>57</sup> West Florida, which was then, as now, under the jurisdiction of the Alabama Conference, was served by at least two missions - Escambia and Holmes Valley,<sup>58</sup> and there was a church at Apalachicola.<sup>59</sup>

The missionary fervor of the Baptists and

52. Unfortunately, statistics for the Ochlockonee and Suwannee River Associations are not available. The latter had seven Florida churches reporting in 1848. Suwannee River Baptist Association, *Minutes*, 1848, p. 8.

53. Florida Baptist Association, *Minutes*, 1845, pp. 7-8.

54. *Ibid.*, 1846, p. 4.

55. *Florida Sentinel*, Feb. 6, 1844.

56. Thrift, *op. cit.*, pp. 74-76.

57. *Commercial Advertiser*, Mar. 7, 1846.

58. F. W. Hoskins, *The History of Methodism in Pensacola, Florida*. . . . (Nashville, 1928), p. 60.

59. *Commercial Advertiser*, Apr. 19, 1845.

Methodists was probably due, in part, to a religious awakening that began to sweep Middle Florida as early as 1842.<sup>60</sup> The section seems to have been dotted with camp grounds and the papers frequently carried notices of an "old fashioned Methodist Camp-Meeting" or "a general protracted meeting," with "cloth tents, every family to provide their own meat and bread," or promising "ample provision for those who may come from a distance."<sup>61</sup> Negroes, as well as whites, participated in these meetings. Indeed, all denominations ministered to the Negroes and there is good reason to believe that in many churches, especially in rural communities, Negro membership far exceeded white.

#### *The Temperance Movement*

Closely allied with the religious revival was the temperance movement. Liquor was plentiful and cheap. Wholesale prices ranged from 35 cents a gallon for the best plain whiskey, through 40 cents for New England rum and 80 cents for old rye, to \$3.50 for imported cognac brandy.<sup>62</sup> And there were plenty of retailers to purvey it - 8 in Tallahassee and 14 in Apalachicola, for instance, though neither town had as much as 2,500 population. There was at least some truth in the statement concerning Tallahassee "that more than one-half the young men, who locate here, die drunkards . . . They spend their evenings at the billiard saloons or gambling houses, because they have no father's house; *drink* because it is *fashionable*, and the grog seller winds up their assets for administration."<sup>63</sup> Temperance Societies were formed to combat this very real social evil and in 1845 there were active organizations in

60. See *Florida Sentinel* and *Star of Florida* for May and June, 1842.

61. *Florida Sentinel*, May 27, Oct. 7, 1845.

62. *Southern Journal*, Jan. 13, 1846.

63. "C. H. B." in *Florida Sentinel*, Mar. 19, 1844.

Tallahassee, Apalachicola, St. Augustine, and perhaps other towns. The Society in Apalachicola increased in less than a year from 12 to 158 members.<sup>64</sup> Its activities were sufficiently successful to attract the following notice from the proprietor of the Sans Souci bar and restaurant: "Choice WINES and LIQUORS will always be served out to those who are so unfortunate as yet to be without the pale of the 'Tetotal Abstinence Society'."<sup>65</sup>

### *Education*

There were few, if any, public schools, in the modern sense of the word. The nearest thing, perhaps, were the log-cabin schools maintained by the Scotch Presbyterian settlers of the Euchee Valley, in Walton county, though many of these "were parochial schools, organized and controlled by the session" of the Euchee Valley Church.<sup>66</sup> The instruction afforded by these schools was probably no more than "the rudiments of an English Education" offered by the day schools that were not uncommon in the towns. Such a school in Apalachicola offered, for a five-months session, reading, writing, and arithmetic at a fee of \$9.00, and English grammar and geography at \$10.00.<sup>67</sup>

The customary educational institution was the academy, which was found from St. Augustine and Jacksonville to Pensacola and was especially prevalent in Middle Florida. Some academies were semi-public in that they were governed by boards of trustees often consisting of the most prominent men in the community, while others were purely private ventures. The school year generally consisted of two five-months sessions, climaxed by public ex-

64. *Commercial Advertiser*, June 24, 1845.

65. *Ibid.*, Nov. 8, 1845.

66. McIlwain. *op. cit.* p. 18.

67. *Commercial Advertiser*, Nov. 22, 1845.

aminations. Both boarding and day students were taken, and a successful academy might enroll some 80 or 90 pupils. The academies usually offered instruction to both male and female pupils, though in separate departments. St. Augustine, however, had a seminary for young ladies<sup>68</sup> and, in the fall of 1845, N. M. Hentz, "late professor of Modern Languages in the University of North Carolina, assisted by his wife, C. Lee Hentz," the authoress, opened a similar school in Pensacola.<sup>69</sup> Although Dr. Hentz probably possessed a better formal education than other Florida teachers of the period, it was not uncommon for Florida schools to be conducted by college graduates. C. W. Downing and A. C. Gillette, who ran the St. Augustine Academy, were educated at the University of Virginia and Yale, respectively,<sup>70</sup> and James H. Horner, a graduate of the University of North Carolina, taught "a select classical school" in Jackson county under the patronage of Dr. Samuel C. Bellamy.<sup>71</sup>

The most extensive curriculum was offered by the West Florida Collegiate Institute, of Pensacola, whose courses ranged "from the first rudiments of learning to the studies of the Freshman year in college."<sup>72</sup> This institute had the distinction of publishing in 1845 the first catalog issued by a Florida educational institution.<sup>73</sup> The Quincy Male and Female Academy may perhaps be taken as typical of the better class academy. In addition to the common branches, it offered its students "the highest branches of an English Education, embracing Natural and Moral Philosophy, Rhetoric, Botany, Chemistry, Geology, Mineralogy, Book-keeping,

68. *News*, Sept. 6, 1845.

69. *Pensacola Gazette*, Sept. 3, 1845.

70. *News*, Aug. 23, 1845.

71. *Florida Sentinel*, Nov. 18, 1845.

72. *Pensacola Gazette*, Sept. 13, 1845.

73. Diocese of Florida, *Journal of the Proceedings*, 1846, p. 16.

&c., &c.," as well as "the Languages, embracing Latin, Greek and French, together with the higher branches of Mathematics, including Algebra, Geometry, Mensuration, Surveying, &c., &c." Although in establishing the institution the trustees had "looked with deep and anxious solicitude to the eradication of a too popular error in female education, viz: the neglect of the more *solid* and *fundamental* branches," yet females who desired it could obtain instruction in music, drawing, and painting, and "Ornamental Needle-work, embracing Worsted Embroidery, &c., &c." Expenses for board and tuition ranged from \$116 to \$140 a year.<sup>74</sup>

#### *Newspapers*

There were 10 newspapers in Florida in 1845, 3 of which were in Tallahassee, 2 in St. Augustine, and 1 each in Pensacola, Apalachicola, Newport, Jacksonville, and Key West. Their combined circulation probably did not reach 4,000 copies.<sup>75</sup> All were four-page weeklies. About half of their space was devoted to advertisements, which usually filled all of the back page and parts of the first and third pages. Reading matter consisted of short articles picked up from contemporary periodicals, national and foreign news several weeks old, and brief local notices and editorial comment. Only when a political campaign was in progress was there much space devoted to Florida affairs.

Booksellers offered a variety of works for amusement and edification. G. Burt & Co., of St. Augustine, in addition to annuals and school books, advertised a stock of 1,200 volumes of history, novels, and travels.<sup>76</sup> School books in use included Webster's spelling books, Greenleaf's *Grammar*,

74. *Florida Sentinel*, Mar. 10, 1846.

75. James Owen Knauss, *Territorial Florida Journalism* (DeLand, Fla., Florida State Historical Society, 1927). pp. 42, 84.

76. *News*, Aug. 30, 1845.

Murray's *Grammar*, Mair's *Syntax*, and arithmetic, chemistry, Latin, Greek, and French textbooks. *Intellectual Philosophy* and *Moral Philosophy*, by Abercrombie, and *Natural Philosophy*, by Comstock or Coffin, were available, as were Watt's and Methodist hymnbooks, the *United States Speaker*, and Harper's Family Library.<sup>77</sup> The novel reader could obtain, often in cheap paper-backed reprints, works of Balzac, Dumas, G. P. R. James, Dickens, Madame D'Arblay, Frederika Bremer, and other favorites. Such light reading was available in Florida only a month or so after publication.<sup>78</sup>

Most of the organized social activities were for men. Freemasonry had been introduced into the territory as early as 1821 and had become well established in the planting districts of Middle and West Florida by 1830, when the Grand Lodge of Florida was organized. When a special communication of the Grand Lodge was convened at Tallahassee, June 23, 1845, to participate in the ceremonies incident to the organization of the government of the State of Florida, there were seven working lodges, as follows: Jackson No. 1, at Tallahassee; Washington No. 2, at Quincy; Harmony No. 3, at Marianna; Franklin No. 6, at Apalachicola; Madison No. 11, at Madison; St. John's No. 12, at St. Augustine; and Dade No. 14, at Key West.<sup>79</sup> By 1845, there were also two lodges of the International

77. Advertisement of Smith & Catlin in *Pensacola Gazette*, Feb. 1, 1845.

78. B. S. Hawley advertised in the *Commercial Advertiser*, of March 22, 1845, the receipt of *The Maid of Honor, or The Massacre of St. Bartholomew*, from the French of Madame deBour, and *The Regent's Daughter*, from the French of Alexander Dumas, in the same month their publication was noted in the book section of *Hunt's Merchants' Magazine*. XII (Mar., 1845), p. 304.

79. *Proceedings at Seventy-fifth Anniversary of the Organization of the Grand Lodge of Florida F. & A. M. at Jacksonville, January 18, 1905, with Address of Hon. Samuel Pasco, Past Grand Master*, p. 25.

Order of Odd Fellows in Jacksonville-Florida Lodge No. 1 and Kennedy Lodge No. 2.<sup>80</sup> Fire companies, crack militia companies, and debating societies also offered social diversions to the younger men, while public dinners and barbecues attracted males of all ages. Women's activities outside the home, on the other hand, were restricted to an occasional church supper or bazaar or an infrequent ball, when the "Spanish dance, the Waltz, and the Cotillion" would keep "the merry company on their feet till daylight."<sup>81</sup>

### *Dress*

The ladies who attended such affairs wore gowns whose long, full skirts, held out by stiffly starched underskirts, gave the impression of very small waists. Deep berthas fell over closely-fitting bodices cut high in the neck. Lace caps trimmed with flowers and ribbons, and perhaps lace mittens or gloves, completed the costumes. The gentlemen were apt to be resplendent in tight pantaloons and dress coats cut to display fancy vests of figured satin, silk, or velvet. Workaday clothes were of much the same styles. Women's dresses were long-sleeved and high-necked, worn with bonnets on the street and usually with caps in the house. Materials varied with the season, such fabrics as mouslin de laine, cashmere, and alpaca being popular in winter but giving place to organdy, muslin, and balzarine in summer. Men marked the change of seasons by replacing their woolen frock coats with more comfortable garments of plaid gingham or linen.

Until the economic distress of the early 'forties, all who could afford to do so were accustomed to spend the summer months at Northern watering places for the sake of health. When times grew

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80. *News*, Feb. 13, 1846.

81. *Ibid.*, Feb. 27, 1846.



hard, summer resorts were found nearer home. Lake Bradford and Bel Air, a few miles from Tallahassee "in the midst of the pine woods, and in a sandy and barren soil," were thought "to be free from the effects of malaria, which a more fertile soil generates."<sup>82</sup> Tallahasseeans also used St. James Island as a summering place, while Hickory Hill was "a place of Summer Retreat in Washington county."<sup>83</sup> White Sulphur Springs, in Hamilton county, and the Suwannee, or Lower Mineral Springs, in Columbia county, sought to offer the attractions of regular spas. The waters of the former were advertised "to possess excellent medicinal qualities," and its bath house was equipped "with force pumps, and tubs for shower baths, either cold or warm."<sup>84</sup> The proprietor of the latter promised the "very best fare that can be obtained in this section of the country," and that "beds will be properly attended to and kept clean and airy."<sup>85</sup> Residents of St. Augustine and Pensacola took advantage of their location to indulge in sea bathing during the warmer months. The St. Augustine salt water bathing house, open every day from sunrise until 10 P. M., was reserved on Tuesdays and Thursdays "exclusively for the use of the Ladies,"<sup>86</sup> while in Pensacola there were "Bathing Houses in the Bay for the use of Ladies, near to which" were "other Bathing Houses for the use of Gentlemen."<sup>87</sup>

Citizens of Tallahassee, Quincy, and Apalachicola enjoyed an intellectual and artistic treat in the winter of 1845, when Mr. Richards, of Georgia, gave a series of eight subscription lectures in each of

82. Diocese of Florida, *Journal of the Proceedings*, 1845, p. 7.

83. *Florida Sentinel*, Nov. 8, 1845.

84. *Star of Florida*, June 27, 1845.

85. *Florida Sentinel*, June 10, 1845.

86. *News*, June 14, 1845.

87. *Pensacola Gazette*, Feb. 1, 1845.

those towns. Lectures on The Atmosphere and The Moon and Her Phenomena were elucidated "by a series of splendid Moving Dioramas, and other Beautiful transparencies, Exhibited on a scale of unusual magnitude and brilliancy, by means of a Grand Oxy-Hydrogen Magic Lantern." Such subjects as Electricity and Galvanism and Steam and the Steam Engine were "illustrated fully and brilliantly" by "a working steam engine," a large electric magnet, and other apparatus. Each performance concluded with landscape views of "The Falls of Niagara, Westminster Abbey, St. Peter's at Rome," etc., topped off "with several exquisite designs representing life," including "The Blooming Carnation," "The Fiery Skeleton," and "The Beautiful Maiden."<sup>88</sup> On a less elevated plane was the performance of Wyman, the ventriloquist and magician, who appeared in Tallahassee with an "automaton speaking figure" that was "nightly received with screams of laughter."<sup>89</sup> Apalachicola also enjoyed in April its customary visit from a theatrical company.<sup>90</sup>

These entertainments certainly were restricted to persons in towns having the price of admission. Indeed, much of what has been written here is applicable only to town life. Unfortunately, available material affords little data on the average Floridian of 1845.

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88. *Florida Sentinel*, Jan. 28, Feb. 25, 1845; *Commercial Advertiser*, Mar. 22, 1845.

89. *Florida Sentinel*, Mar. 4, 1845.

90. *Commercial Advertiser*, Apr. 12 and 19, 1844.