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Fred N. Varn



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FRED N. VARN'S ACCOUNT BOOK, 1869-1875

During the period following the Civil War, Florida slowly regained her economic balance, and a few industries began to prosper in a moderate sort of way. The interior part of the lower peninsula was hampered by a shortage of currency, and many persons resorted to a barter system. The records kept by Fred N. Varn, who operated a store and tannery on his farm situated two miles from Fort Meade, illustrate this type of barter.

Many of the pioneers of Hillsborough and Polk Counties were customers of Mr. Varn. A partial list of the names includes John Collier, J. B. Crum, Warren Carlton, William Durrance, Eli English, Francis A. Hendry, William Hayman, Albert Lanier, William Varn, E. B. Sparkman, William Ralerson and Willoughby Tillis.

Fred Varn's grandchildren recall his stories concerning the tannery and the store. Many Seminoles, led by Chipco, living on the shores of Lake Pierce, came to the store and traded skins for manufactured articles. One Indian woman even wanted to trade her brown-skinned baby for a blue-eyed, blonde, white-skinned child, but the storekeeper could not oblige her.

Mr. Varn was born in Lake City, August 30, 1847, and came to Polk County with his parents in 1852. He served in the Confederate Army and purchased a farm near Fort Meade in 1868. He died in 1929. His son, D. H. Varn of Fort Meade, allowed the use of the account book for the *Quarterly*. It must be noted that only parts of the accounts are used; consequently no reader should conjecture that his grandfather owed money to Mr. Varn which could not be collected.

W. WILLINGHAM

DR.		CR.	
1870		1870	
July	1-Leather \$ 3.75	June	27-hides \$ 2.00
Aug. 15	Deer skin 1.75	Aug. 27	-
	26-repair saddle 9.00		-3 bu potatoes 1.50
Sep.	1-2 pr. shoes 7.50		30-3 ¹ / ₂ bu potatoes 1.75
	3-repair saddle 10.00	Sep.	1-hides80
	30-leather 3.00		30-hides 2.05
	- repair saddle 10.00	Oct.	4-beef 10.00
Oct.	4-repair boots 2.00		- hides 2.00
	-----	Nov.	6-hides 1.60
	\$47.00		-----
			\$44.20

W. R. HOLLINGSWORTH

DR.		CR.	
1870		1870	
May	2—Amt. forwarded...\$ 3.00	May	2—amount forwarded 6.75
June	3—2 pr. shoes 6.00		—cash 5.50
	—(unreadable) 1.60		—beef 11.00
July	4—1 pr. shoes 3.00		—skins30
	20—1 pr. shoes 3.00		— "75
Aug.	4—repair saddle 16.00		— " 1.80
	—skin 5.50	Dec.	31—hides 5.04
	15—(unreadable)50	1871	
	30—1 pr. shoes 3.00	Jan.	30—fish 1.00
Nov.	18—2 pr. shoes 5.00		—bacon 11.25
1871		Feb.	18—beef 2.00
Jan.	30—repair shoes50		—hides 2.85
	— " 1.25		—dry beef 2.20
Feb.	18—4 carving knives 1.00		—bacon 6.50
	—1 pr saddle bags 7.00		—skins 1.20
	—1 side leather 4.25		—lard 5.00
	—1 pr shoes 2.50		—corn 12.00
	—1 pr shoes 2.50		—skin 1.00
June	6—4 box lye 1.00	Aug.	7—hides 2.40
	—½ skin65		11— " 2.05
	—1 pr shoes 2.50	Sep.	22— " 1.90
Aug.	12—2 pr shoes 4.75		—skins70
	—1 pr shoes 2.25		
	—leather 3.50		
			\$83.20
	\$81.25		

G. W. HENDRY

DR.			
1870			
May	2—amt. forwarded...\$ 5.00		—lead25
	21—1 pair fine shoes... 3.50	Nov.	18—½ deer skin75
	—1 side leather 5.50		—nails 8.50
June	2—1 pr shoes 2.00		—pr pants 1.50
July	23—1 lb tobacco 1.00	1871	
Aug.	5—1 dr. beef 5.00	June	10—1 deer skin 1.50
	—sundries 1.95		— " 1.75
	—1 pr shoes 3.00		
	—cash 2.10		CR.
		May	2—amt. forwarded... 10.93
	27.05	21—beef and hide 10.62	
Aug.	15—coffee 1.00	July	2—skins60
	—10 lbs tallow 1.00	18— "60	
	—repair saddle50	Aug.	3— "60
	—1 lb tobacco 1.00		—potatoes 3.75
	—leather 3.00		
	—1 sack oats 4.75		27.10
	—bal due on place... 8.50		—bag skins 2.34
	—nails70		—cash 4.75
	—rep shoes..... .50		—ox 15.00
	— "75		—cash 4.50
	—chisel 1.25		—quarter beef 2.00
	—nails80		—hide 1.98
Nov.	3— 1 pr boots	April	15—beef 11.00
Nov.	11—repair shoes60	1871	—calf skin 1.25
	—plug tobacco40		—(unreadable) 5.00
			—cow 10.00

BRIEF ARTICLES

73

HENRY SEWARD

1870				
July	26	—amt forwarded	16.30	DR.
"		—Cash	.40	—tub
28		—3 yards osnaburg	.81	—½ bu meal
"		—3 bu potatoes	2.25	—1 qr beef
Aug.	3	—1 qr beef	3.00	—order (unreadable)
"		—bucket	.40	—1 pr slippers
	6	—washboard	.50	—2 lbs tallow
	9	—pr shoes	3.00	—coffee
11		—5 bu potatoes	3.75	—bedstead
15		—coffee	3.00	—12 lbs leather
20		—2 bu potash	.80	—order
"		—cash	1.00	—½ bu meal
"		—spoons	.50	—tub
25		—plates	.75	—1 pr shoes
"		—salt and beef	6.75	—tobacco
"		—1 pr brogans	3.00	—½ bu meal
"		—ink	.10	—mdse
		—2 bu potatoes	1.00	—coffee
		—matches	.10	
		—L & R's account	30.93	414.03
		—3½ bu potatoes	1.75	CR.
				Amt. forwarded
				236.58