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THE EDITOR'S CORNER

In this number we continue the reminiscences of Florida begun in our last issue by the late Jane D. Brush of Michigan, widow of Alanson P. Brush, a pioneer of the automobile industry.

* * * *

TALES OF OLD FLORIDA

by JANE D. BRUSH

CHAPTER II: CAMP ON THE MYAKKA

The next morning Al and I got up early; Mollie gave us our breakfast before the others, and we hurried over to Furman's and Ida's little house at the back of the Helveston place. We found them about ready to start. The two tents had been stowed in the wagon the night before, the bedding carefully wrapped and then packed between the tents for further protection. Ida's big box of camp supplies was ready and waiting; Furman added a few tools, the big jug of drinking water which they always carried, and last a queer looking contrivance which I learned to know well later - a Dutch oven.

As we started on our trip, Flora, Ida's horse, showed her mettle and Furman was busy keeping her in order. A tall, well-built man, Furman looked particularly well on horse-back and the way he managed Flora excited my admiration. Before we reached Sarasota, Flora had settled down and was showing how well-behaved she could be. The Primes were waiting for us and in no time our little cavalcade was out on the open prairie. As we jogged along on the road - you could barely see ahead that it was a road - I found it was a good chance for a little visit with my husband.

"Al," I said, "What is this Myakka you all talk about so much?"

"The answer to that," said Al, "would depend on where you were, and whom you asked." He went on, "If you were down near Charlotte Harbor or Punta Gorda, they would tell you it was a river of considerable size, being tide-water for quite a distance. They would probably add that it drained a large area

of very good grazing land. Then, if you went farther up the river you would come to a good-sized settlement; one of the oldest in this part of Florida. Many of these settlers would live on, or near, two small lakes, Upper and Lower Myakka. These settlers might tell you they live in Myakka, a small town, but we are not going to see any of those places." He went on, "The upper reaches of this river drain a wide region east and south of Sarasota. It is a peculiar bit of country; of plains or prairies dotted by humps of land; land which we in the north might call 'hummocks', but which down here are called 'hammocks'. The main stream of the river winds around these hammocks. During the rainy season the stream is very busy, carrying off the superfluous water, and there are spots where it has hollowed out quite deep holes behind, like a series of ponds. From the banks of some of the hammocks near these holes one can fish, and Furman has been hearing that the fishing is unusually good this year." Just then Furman, who had been riding behind talking to George Prime, came up along side of us.

"Can't we turn off here," asked Ida, "and make a short-cut to Big Hammock?"

"Of course you can," said Furman, "but it will be very rough driving," and he glanced doubtfully at me. Then Al spoke.

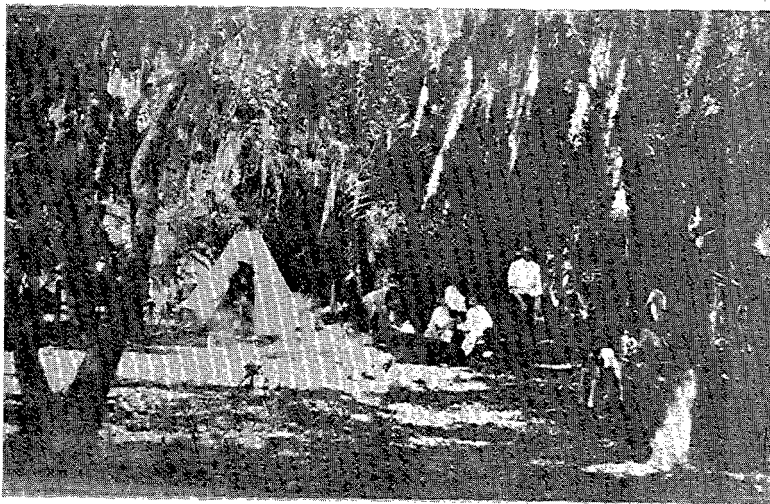
"If your wagon and supplies can stand it, I guess we can. You are no real 'tender-foot,' are you, Janie? Go ahead with your short-cut."

So we drove right out over the plains for some distance. Ahead the ground looked invitingly smooth, but the low spreading leaves of the scrub palmetto were deceptive. Under the inviting smoothness of its leaves, the spreading roots of the plant, writhed like ungainly serpents, sometimes partially underground, sometimes above. It certainly was very rough going, and at times things in the back of the wagon rattled around rather alarmingly, but we were soon back on a road again; at least it was a smooth grassy trail, and we were very near to the hammock. A short climb up a rise of ground and we were on the top of Big Hammock. It was beautiful!

Now, Florida is a land of beauty, most of it associated with water, from its rivers-many of them navigable-and its lakes to the almost infinite variety of its coast line. Its outlying keys give it an infinitude of diversified beauty. But here was something

different; here was stark beauty of line-the sweep up from the surrounding prairie, and the grandeur of towering pines and oaks, softened and made fairy-like by trailing festoons of Spanish moss. All about us, filling in the background, was a great variety of foliage. If I ever saw an ideal camping spot, this was it. There was no end to beautiful places for pitching a tent. Soon each family had chosen a camp-site and the men worked together till the tents were up. With these seasoned campers this didn't take long, and then I got my first lesson on how to make a good camp bed. First came a pile of pine branches. These were laid with care so that they formed a springy foundation which would keep our bed off the ground, but it was evened and smoothed by a layer of flat palmetto leaves. To this we added armfuls of a soft dry grass which we brought up from the surrounding prairie. This might seem to be enough, and indeed it often was, but this night, because it was there in such abundance, we added a layer of Spanish moss soft as a hair mattress. A felt blanket over all gave us a comfortable couch if we wanted to rest during the day, and it was ready to receive our soft cotton blankets and our pillows for the night. Anyone who wants a better bed than this should not go camping!

As soon as our beds were ready, we gave our attention to collecting fuel for our campfire. The location of the fire had been chosen before the tents were put up. They were so spaced that all three tents would be within the circle of its radiance. Not being near any water, we had to be sure there was a pile of fresh dirt available to bank a fire or smother it, as the case might be. Now to provide a big pile of fuel for our evening campfire! "Look for pine," they said. I had thought I knew all about pine, for it had been our common fuel in my childhood in northern Michigan, but this southern pine was quite a revelation to me. A piece of heart pine was not only inflammable - it was almost solid pitch! A splinter of it could be lighted and carried like a torch. They called it "light-wood" down here; sometimes they talked of "fat pine," a very descriptive term. I learned something about looking for it in an isolated region like this. Find a place where a tree has been struck by lightning, or blown over by some gale or hurricane. The bark and outer layers of wood will sooner or later disappear, but if you explore the crumbling debris, you will find pieces of heart pine which will still burn like a



Getting dinner on Big Hammock, out on the Myakka.



Alzarti House on Sarasota Bay.

torch and add gloriously to your evening fire. While the women folk were looking for fat pine Furman and Al were scouring the woodland around us for a different kind of wood; something that would bum slowly and hold that fire a long time. In particular they looked for a wood called "button wood." This, they told us, would be almost as good as charcoal for our camp cooking. There was a great diversity of foliage on this hammock, and they soon found what they wanted.

Is it simply because this was my first camping experience in Florida, or was it really the most beautiful spot I ever saw? How can I tell? I have however, several photographs taken that first afternoon, which would go far to justify my thought. The composite picture in my mind, however, is much more complete and vivid than the one I am able to show. I can see three tents and the big campfire with its rude seats. I see Mable, gathering her handfuls of moss. I see George Prime tending the early morning fire, his bird-dog, Sport, beside him. Oh yes! I can see it all! Can you?

We did not use the Dutch oven that night. There had been no time for hunting or fishing. Instead, Ida got out a long-handled frying pan and we had generous amounts of bacon and eggs with toasted cheese and assorted sweets, according to individual tastes. Always for Furman it would be Florida cane syrup; always for Al it would be Ida's guava jelly. As for me, I liked both; perhaps I took both! We did not linger long that night around the fire. We had worked hard and were tired; besides, the next day would be full, for we planned to go to the deep holes on the Myakka River, and fish for big-mouthed black bass.

The next morning we didn't waste much time. After a somewhat hasty breakfast, we tidied up our tents, fastened them shut as well as we could, banked our camp-fire, and taking a picnic lunch we started for our fishing in the Myakka River-in the deep holes Al had told me of. It was quite a little drive from where we were. When we got there I was interested; it was a curious looking place. Queer - to think that in the wet season these "holes," which looked like a series of detached ponds, would be connected by a flow of water which would ultimately empty into Charlotte Harbor and so into the Gulf of Mexico.

The men got the rods ready and we all went to work. Leaving the horses and the wagons in the shady spot which had been

chosen for our picnic lunch, we took our positions at the different holes to find out where the best fishing was. There was quite a little rivalry; each one wanted to show up with the biggest string of fish. The stories that had been told about this place had not been exaggerated; we caught so many fish that when we got hungry at noon-time and met at our picnic spot, our combined string of fish was so long that everyone agreed that to go on fishing would be foolish. Mr. and Mrs. Prime said that two would be enough for them; Ida said one would do for her family. That would leave a big string - ten or more fish - to show the folks at Alzarti House that this had been no wild goose chase. The suggestion that one should be cleaned and fried for our luncheon was turned down. "I will take one of the biggest," said Ida, "and stuff it and bake it in the Dutch oven for our dinner; you don't want fish twice today." We all agreed, so we boiled our coffee and sat down to our picnic luncheon of crackers and cheese, bread and butter with a great variety of sweets. Our picnic spot was close to one of the pools so our long string of fish was left in the water till we were ready to start back to camp. We wanted them to be fresh when we reached home. Our Southern friends were jubilant over these fresh water fish and even I, who very much preferred Spanish mackerel, had to admit that these big plump, greenish-brown fellows were fine looking fish.

We were so anxious to get these fish home while they were nice and fresh, that it was decided that we would spend just one more night in camp, and then drive home the next day. So after luncheon things were packed to go back to Big Hammock. In our wagon were the fishing poles, Furman's tools and Ida's box of picnic lunch. Ida was in her seat and I was waiting for Al to come and help me up when Mabel begged for a little ride on her mother's horse. After putting Mabel on Flora, Furman took the long string of fish just out of the water, and put them in the back of the wagon. "Don't put those wet things in here," said Ida, "they will make our crackers and everything else smell of fish."

"All right," said Furman, "I'll carry them back of me on Flora," and he tied the rope with the fish to the back of Flora's saddle. Was it the strange damp weight that Flora objected to, or did she smell the fish? Who can say? But there was no question as to how she felt. "This is an insult," she seemed to say, "and I'll not stand it!" Not in a hurried way, but slowly, very de-

liberately, she dropped her head toward the ground and just as slowly her hind quarters began to rise in the air. "I'll get rid of that thing," she seemed to say. Mabel did not scream, but she clutched wildly at the saddle. Then things happened fast. Al sprang to Flora's head while Furman snatched Mabel off her back and then began untying the string of fish. All this movement had not soothed Flora. She now seemed thoroughly frightened and tried to bolt. She was very hard to hold as she pranced around. But Ida was now out of the wagon; she knew her horse.

"Here," she said, "Let me get on her. *I'll take that out of her!*" Obediently, Furman held his hand, and in a jiffy, Ida was on Flora's back and had turned her head out toward the open prairie. Flora was ready to run and Ida, instead of checking her in any way, urged her on, giving her sharp little slaps with the reins. Never had I at that time - nor have I since - seen such riding. Ida kept her precarious side seat on a man's saddle, sitting erect with no apparent effort. The tumultuous start had jarred her hair-pins out and her long dark hair streamed after her. I was thrilled! Oh, what a Brunhilde! I would never hear that opera again without thinking of Ida and her wild ride across the Florida prairie. I picked up a few hairpins which had fallen almost at my feet as she wheeled Flora out toward the open plain, then I got in with Al while Furman took Mabel beside him and we started out over the faint trail which wound over the prairie and around some smaller hammocks to Big Hammock. We caught up with Ida finally. She was sitting quietly in a shady spot, braiding her long hair so that a few pins would hold it up. Flora was perfectly meek and gentle; she had lost all desire to run. Ida and Furman changed places and we were soon back in camp, the fish dangling from the back of the wagon.

We didn't have long to rest after we got back to Big Hammock for it was nearly time to prepare our dinner - and we wanted it to be a good one. The Primes had left the picnic spot ahead of us, and they had the camp fire blazing. Ida selected the fish she wanted for our dinner and while Furman got it ready for her to cook, Al and George Prime took the rest of the fish. Choosing a shady spot, they strung them up between two saplings.

I have been present at more pretentious banquets, but never, I am sure, at one where the food tasted better than at this dinner at Big Hammock. The big fresh water bass stuffed as only Ida

could do it, and baked in the Dutch oven, was our main dish, but besides that there were some other things not often found on a camping-trip menu. Hot baking-powder biscuits, and hearts of palm served with Hollandaise sauce, are not common on such occasions.

The use of the Dutch oven was new to me and I watched the process eagerly. As soon as the fire was at the right stage, the heavy iron skillet, on its sturdy three legs, was pushed down in the hot ashes, with live coals banked all around it. Then coals were shoveled into the concave top of the cover till it could hold no more. This would soon produce an oven hot enough to bake anything. When it was ready, a green sapling with a pronged end was slipped under the half ring which made a handle for the cover. Now the cover was lifted just enough to slip Ida's pan of biscuit in. It would take these about fifteen minutes to bake. Then the cover was lifted again - carefully and briefly - and the deliciously stuffed fish took the place of the biscuit. Ida quickly wrapped her biscuit in the heavy bread-cloth which was a part of her camp equipment. Those biscuit would still be hot when we were ready to eat. I speak from years of experience with Ida and her hot bread-cloth. Al and Furman insisted that we had at hand a fine vegetable to add to our dinner. They cut down a palmetto plant, peeled its terminal bud out from its protecting sheath, boiled it in salted water and were about to serve it with melted butter, when Al had a thought. "My dear," he said, "make us some Hollandaise sauce, like they serve in hotels with artichokes; it would be good with these palm hearts."

"I know it would be good," I said, "but I never made any - I don't know how."

"Don't you know what to put in it?" asked Al.

"Why yes - in a way," I said, "but it's tricky to make, and I would need a double boiler and an egg-beater."

"Well," said my resourceful husband, "You have a skillet, a saucepan and a fork. Go ahead - try it."

"All right," I said, "Bring me the butter jar, two eggs, some salt and a lemon; but don't blame me if you can't eat it." I don't know what magic of good luck was with me that day - I know it wasn't skill - but the truth is, I never afterward, in my own kitchen and with every convenience, made better Hollandaise sauce than that which was concocted out on the Myakka. As for

palm hearts, we came to know them in the north - where they "grew in cans" - but though they sold at luxury prices, they could not compete with these we got for nothing out in the wilds of our "Old Florida."

It did not take long after dinner to dispose of our work. The paper napkins we used scrubbed each plate and utensil so clean that a very little water completed the job. All the refuse was piled on the fire and reduced to ashes. We had no use for people who left a disorderly camp. We sat around for awhile, talking over the events of the day. The men had found a log which they placed near the fire; with a blanket for a cover it made a good seat for anyone who wanted such a luxury. These talks around a camp-fire are very pleasant, but they were not prolonged too late on this occasion for it had been a long day in the open air and we were somewhat tired. There was a faint fragrance of pine boughs all around us and our camp beds seemed inviting, so we went to bed fairly early and were soon in a dreamless sleep - at least I speak for myself. Sometime in the night, I was awakened by a violent barking. That would be George Prime's bird-dog. "I wonder what's troubling Sport," said Al sleepily. We did not have to wonder long. There was no mistaking those grunts and squeals. Pigs - razor-backs! Many herds of them ran wild over these plains, but they did not often invade the thick growth on the hammocks. What could have drawn them? Suddenly a voice rang out - it was Ida's - "*They are eating our fish!*" That cry brought everyone out in a hurry in a great diversity of night apparel, Furman had hastily pulled on a pair of trousers, but his nightshirt stuck out in the back. Al appeared shamelessly in his "undies" - he had neglected to pack his night-shirt.

This band of "razor-backs" - there were at least a dozen of them - were not easily driven off. As soon as one was driven away from the string of fish, another would take its place; but at last the men with sticks and stones, aided by Sport, had the whole pack started down the slope toward the open prairie. Then Furman stepped into his tent and came out with his shot-gun, loaded with bird-shot. "Just to make sure they don't come back," said Furman as he peppered them with little lead pellets. The sting of the shot brought a burst of shrill squeals, and the slow moving herd broke into a run. When they slowed down Furman

fired again, which brought a new burst of squeals and more running. For some time Furman kept this up and I finally fell asleep with the memory of those receding squeals in my mind.

The pigs did not come back. In the morning we examined the damage. It was not very great; a few fish were missing but the ends of the rope on which they had been strung were tied so high that only a few could be reached by the marauders. We still had a fine string of fish to take home, and what a good story to account for its not being much larger!

Perhaps it is natural that the return from a trip like this should be less exciting than the one going out. To most of our party camping trips were so frequent as to seem commonplace; even to Al, it was a renewal of a pleasure he had once enjoyed and had missed, but to me it was a new and thrilling experience - an adventure! Had I never camped out before? To be sure I had but not in this way. A few years before, I had been invited to spend a couple of weeks camping in northern Michigan. We had several tents erected over board floors; we slept on folding cots and used folding chairs around a folding dining-table. We were on the outskirts of a thriving resort town on the shore of one of our Great Lakes. A walk of ten or fifteen minutes took us into town where we ordered supplies which were brought to our tent by a delivery boy. Down here it was different. Nowhere on our ten or twelve mile drive had we seen a house. What was equally strange to me - there were no fences! Nothing, I think, so impressed me with the primitiveness of this country, as the sweeping lines of its plains, with never a fence!

As we jogged along toward home I thought again of those fish. "Al," I said, "I always thought that black bass were a northern fish, but they called these bass. I'm sure the smallest one we have is larger than any I ever saw up North."

"I don't know much about it," said my husband. "When I lived down here, I spent most of my time on salt water, but I have heard fishermen say that the biggest large-mouthed black bass in the world were found in Florida's fresh water lakes."

We were making a leisurely return trip across the Florida plains and as always the nearer we came to Alzarti House the more our late experiences became background and we were looking forward to new adventures. One thing puzzled me, and I finally said, "It is hard for me to understand why our Southern

friends value fresh water fish so highly when so many kinds of salt water fish are easily available."

"It is just human nature," said Al. "Circumstances do not often let them get a big catch of fresh water fish. To them big-mouthed bass is as rare as mackerel and blue fish are to you." As we reached the Helveston home Al helped me down and as he did so remarked laughingly, "Well, here we are, my dear, and I think I can promise you that the next time you go fishing, it will be for salt water fish."

(Continued in the next issue)

Mr. Ralph E. Wager, of Panama City, sends us the following account of legend, lore, and history concerning early Wewahitchka.

* * * *

AN INDIAN STOCKADE AND FORT IN NORTHWEST FLORIDA

by RALPH E. WAGER

IN THE EARLY 1830's there came to the area of Wewahitchka, Florida, several members of a Richards family whose ancestors had left France, landed in North Carolina and from there had migrated to Alabama. With their families they found their way to the wilderness of forest along the Chipola River wherein they made their clearings and built their log houses. Their route was possibly along the Euchee and Holmes valleys to Marianna, and then along the river. Whatever their route, they came into a land abounding in fish and game, with good soil and pleasing climate.

One of the four men, Jim Richards, constructed his house on a slight rise of ground within the bounds of what is now Wewahitchka. His family of wife and five children doubtless enjoyed their new home. Leaving one day on a hunting trip, the father returned to find his house in ashes, and his wife and three children massacred. The other two children hid in a nearby swamp, now known as Hunter's Head. Both were found the following day, the girl after a long search. The name of the lad was Jehu; that of the girl is not known. The Indians, perpetrators of the

tragedy, left without knowing of the children's escape. The children were between the ages of seven and twelve years. The Indians may have been Seminoles or a wandering band of Creeks.

Mr. Joe Hunter, who was born in Wewahitchka in 1883 and died there in 1961, related that his father, a superintendent of two of the large orange groves along the Chipola, bought the lot on which the tragedy occurred and on it built his home, now long since disappeared. But the naked lot remains. Both father and son were familiar with the legends of the community.

The story is that Mr. Richards, so enraged over the loss of his home and family, vowed vengeance on all Indians. It is related that he did kill some of them, and that his friends had forcefully to restrain him when an Indian came into sight. Though it has no historic confirmation, Mr. Hunter thought that there was a place on the Chipola called Bloody Bluff so named because of the encounter there between Mr. Richards and two Indians whom he killed.

The boy's name, Jehu, is perpetuated as the name of a cemetery, near Wewahitchka, land also in that of a landing on the Dead Lakes. It is also of interest to point out that the site of the cemetery was the place where were kept the horses of a contingent of Union soldiers during the Civil War. A crude fort was erected nearby. These Union men were sent to protect the approaches to the river, and also to deter traffic on it. It is thought that on returning to their northern homes, these soldiers made known to their friends the plentiful game, fertile soil, and pleasant climate experienced during their sojourn. The result was a marked migration of people from the North attracted by the rapidly growing orange industry in the 1870's and 1880's which attained remarkable proportions until the "big freeze" of 1895 destroyed the trees. Old residents of the area say that the trees reached great size and bore abundantly. The fruit was shipped by large boats to Columbus, Georgia, and other points for distribution, moving up the Chipola to the cut-off and thence into the Apalachicola River. The modern cemetery is an interesting landmark. The name Jehu reminds one of the tragedy of the massacre. Five miles from the site of the massacre, in the direction of the old town of St. Joseph, other members of the family made their homes - Jehu, Stephen, and John, who was a Methodist preacher.

It is stated in an old letter, that "it was not safe for a white

man to go unprotected." It seems then, that a body of Indians were remaining in the area. Mr. Hunter's belief was that the massacre, together with the constant menace, led the few families to group themselves in building a stockade and fort for protection. This they did, so that at night refuge might be taken in it, and it seems also that one house was built within the stockade. Fierce dogs were set loose in the stockade at night to warn of intruders, and also to seek outside for Indian approach. The site of the stockade and fort is well known, and still is referred to as the Fort Place. The plot of ground at the time consisted of about seven acres of fertile soil, later cultivated over a period of many years.

The stockade, formed by vertically placed puncheons, enclosed an area of over an acre and a half. The fort, of typical blockhouse construction, was sixteen by thirty-two feet, of two stories. The second floor extended out over the first a few feet. Heavy hewn logs, ten inches square, were pegged together by oak pins. On one side of the second floor was an opening through which a ladder might be lowered and raised. Port-holes were built into the walls of both stories, admitting light, and serving for the use of firearms. A stick-and-mud chimney was centrally placed with an opening on each side of the bottom part supplying heat and a means of cooking in each of the two rooms. A heavy gate opened into the stockade, and an equally heavy door opened into the fort.

Twenty miles away lay St. Joseph with hundreds of inhabitants. The venturesome construction of a railroad from the Bay to Depot Creek was completed in September of 1836. In 1839, a branch of this railroad to Iola was completed, and the stockade and fort lay between this railroad and a bayou and creek extending about a mile and a half from the Chipola River close to the site. The railroad was somewhat over a quarter of a mile distant.¹

It seems certain that construction of the stockade and fort was completed before the railroad. Mr. Hunter was of the opinion that the massacre, which by tradition took place in 1833, was

1. Editor's Note: A definitive treatment of the railroad from St. Joseph to the Apalachicola River is found in Robert R. Hurst, Jr., "Mapping Old St. Joseph, Its Railroads, and Environs," *Florida Historical Quarterly*, XXXIX (April, 1961), 354-365.

the immediate cause of the united effort to guard against further atrocities at the hands of Indians. It is reasonable to think that the railroad came by after the completion of the stockade. There is no record of Indian interference in the construction of the railroad, but depredations took place for many years in places not far distant. One member of the Constitutional Convention of 1838-39 in St. Joseph was compelled to leave to guard his property from Indian depredations. How long the few people of the community used the stockade and fort is not known. The failure of the railroad, about 1841, left the area again isolated in its wilderness. The Chipola River, not far away, made travel by water possible, but many years elapsed before the forests were even partly cleared away and farms opened. Even as late in time as the early part of the present century it was possible for one to blaze out a section of forest and say, "This is mine." Squatters were everywhere, for the lands had not been surveyed until about 1850, after which time titles could be gotten. The Richards people were pioneers, dependent only on their own ingenuity, living in a wilderness of forest and stream.

One of the family, John Richards, the Methodist minister, gave to Wewahitchka its present name. In an Indian language it means "two-eyes," referring to the two lakes lying within its boundaries. It had had other names, such as "Double Ponds," and "Spectacles."

The construction of the stockade and fort has been described by Mr. Hunter, who as a child played in the fort, then occupied by his uncle. Mr. Edwin Banks, still living, saw the place in 1905, and again in 1910. He recalls that the building was not then occupied. The stockade had long since fallen. He was impressed by the heavy construction of the building. He recalls walking along the old railroad right of way which still had many of the ties in place.

It seems that soon after the turn of the century, the "fort" was deserted and the upper story fell into decay. Mr. W. C. Whaley repaired the building in 1918. The port-holes were cemented up, and shuttered windows cut in the walls. He lived for a short time in the house, repaired by a new roof and floor. Mr. W. B. Smith occupied the place for some years, a marriage of his daughter taking place in it in 1923. By 1930 the house, unused for a few years, became an easy source of timber for neighbors

and nothing now remains, the lumber having been carried away to be put to other uses.

The clearing on which the stockade and fort were located, is still clear of forest growth. For some years it was cultivated as a garden. Access to the spot is not difficult although the road leading to it is narrowed by growth on either side.

Soon after the Civil War, the tract of land containing the site of the fort, was bought by Mr. S. S. Alderman, an extensive operator of orange groves, some of which grew close to the site of the fort. People still recall the enormous trees and the heavy crops of fruit they bore. The "big freeze" of 1895 destroyed the trees and the extensive groves were not renewed. The property then came to a Mr. Daffin, who married the daughter of its former owner. Mr. T. Spencer, an engineer on the river boats, bought the property. He died in 1917, leaving it to his daughter who now holds title to it.

Wewahitchka, the site of the massacre, for many years was a scattered community, dependent on its production of Tupelo honey, and the trees of its extensive forests. Logs were transported to the Chipola, rafted, and then floated to Apalachicola's mills. It is now a pleasant town, the county seat of Gulf County with modern homes, churches, and schools. The old railroad right of way, for many years traveled by cart and automobile, is hard-surfaced, making for easy travel to neighboring towns.

The tradition of the massacre, and the building of the fort, still lingers in the minds of the older people. The fort place is quite unknown to the younger generation, nor are they familiar with its history.

An effort to find the burial places of the older Richards people has been unsuccessful. There is a tradition that years ago a burial place existed not far from the Jehu cemetery but no trace of it remains.

It is the opinion of the writer that the site of the stockade and fort should be memorialized by the Board of Parks and Historical Memorials. It was one of the few structures of its kind in northwest Florida. It testifies to the hardihood of the first white men who came into a land little frequented hitherto save by the Indians.

* * * *

Mr. Leon O. Prior, a graduate student at the University of

Miami, has sent us the following account of Florida's participation in the building of the Washington Monument.

FLORIDA AND THE WASHINGTON MONUMENT

by LEON O. PRIOR

In 1833, the Washington National Monument Society was organized by influential citizens of Washington, D. C., to build a monument to the memory of George Washington. Construction funds were to be raised by public subscription.¹ Before admission to statehood, and in 1838, Florida assisted in the fund raising.² Later, Florida representatives participated in the cornerstone ceremony on July 4, 1848, and the final dedication on February 21, 1885.³

One of the earliest national civic activities of the Florida citizens was the collection of funds from the public for the construction of the monument. The statement of receipts of the Washington Monument Society for 1838 shows receipt of two hundred twenty-seven dollars from the people of Florida.⁴ School children, as well as private citizens, took part in raising funds for this purpose.⁵

The laying of the cornerstone was planned for July 4, 1848. Prior to this date, the National Monument Society invited each state to have representatives attend the ceremony in Washington, D. C. The invitation requested the delegation to bring a banner inscribed with the great seal of their state. They were also requested to bring some other article to be deposited in the monument. This article was to have a suitable inscription thereon, to perpetuate to posterity, some knowledge of the state's use and origin.⁶

1. United States, Department of the Interior, *Washington Monument* (Washington, 1958), I.

2. *Senate Document* No. 224, 57th Congress. *History of the Washington National Monument and Washington National Monument Society*. Compiled by Frederick L. Harvey, Sec. of the Washington National Monument Society (Washington, 1902), 30.

3. Letter by Cornelius W. Heine, Chief, Division of Public Use and Interpretation, National Park Service, dated June 9, 1961, to the writer.

4. *Senate Document* No. 224.

5. Letter by Cornelius W. Heine, cited above.

6. *Senate Document* No. 224, p. 151.

The spokesman for the Florida delegation at the cornerstone ceremony was a Mr. Gregory Yale, who presented the Florida banner to the Society on July 6, 1848.⁷ The banner was accepted in behalf of the managers of the Society by a Mr. Fendall, who gave the Florida delegates a piece of the cornerstone.⁸ Also deposited in the recess in the cornerstone were copies of various newspapers from all the states. The newspaper from Florida deposited therein was a copy of the *Quincy Times*.⁹ This was a weekly paper published during 1847-1848. Issues of this publication for the period May 13-20, 1848, are available in the Library of Congress.¹⁰ The public library and the historical society at Quincy have no information concerning this newspaper.¹¹

Upon returning to Florida, the state delegation to the cornerstone ceremony advised Governor William D. Mosely of the receipt of the piece of cornerstone. This was encased in a box of live oak, formerly a part of the United States frigate *Constitution* and was turned over to the Governor on December 4, 1848.¹²

In 1849, the Board of Managers of the National Monument Society extended an invitation to each of the States of the Union, to furnish a block of marble, or other stone, the production of its soil, for insertion in the monument.¹³ Governor Thomas Brown accepted this invitation on behalf of the State of Florida, and in a letter dated April 16, 1850, advised Elisha Whittlesey, General Agent of the Society, that he had shipped a block of stone. The stone was to have inscribed on it the following:

Florida Sees in His Counsels Safety-In His Life an Example
-In His Memory a Perpetual Bond of Union.¹⁴

On November 25, 1850, Governor Brown reported to the Florida Legislature that he had shipped to the National Monu-

7. *Ibid.*, p. 155.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 157.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 157.

10. Winfred Gregory (ed.), *American Newspapers 1821-1936* (New York, 1937), 98.

11. Letter by Alice Sanford, Librarian, Quincy Library, dated Feb. 8, 1961, to the writer.

12. Fla. *House Journal*, 1848, p. 40.

13. Gov. Thomas Brown's Message to Legislature of Florida, Nov. 25, 1850, *House Journal*, 1850, p. 16.

14. Gov. Thomas Brown's Letterbook, State of Florida, 163.

ment Society, a block of limestone which had been quarried near St. Marks.¹⁵

The Florida State Memorial stone was placed in the interior of the shaft, on the sixty foot level, during the 1850's. As early as 1900, the surface of this Florida limestone had powdered, making the inscription thereon completely illegible. Many of the older stones have deteriorated in this manner, but the National Park Service hopes that a restoration program can be undertaken in the near future.¹⁶

Work on the construction of the monument progressed favorably until 1854, when the building of the monument became involved in a political quarrel. The collection of funds lagged.¹⁷ On March 15, 1859, at the Masonic National Convention in Chicago, the wives and daughters of Masons in attendance organized a Ladies' National Monument Association to aid in the completion of the monument. One of the Vice-Presidents in charge of Florida activity was a Mrs. Margaret C. Brown. The Ladies' Association was not successful, and collapsed in about two years.¹⁸

With the outbreak of the Civil War in 1861, construction halted. The monument stood incomplete at the height of about 153 feet for twenty-five years. Finally, on August 2, 1876, President Grant approved an act which provided that the Federal Government should complete the monument.¹⁹ Just prior to the action of President Grant, and in the period 1874 to 1876, there was an unsuccessful public campaign for funds to complete the monument. Among the contributions made during this campaign, there is one of \$82.00 from the Free and Accepted Masons, Grand Lodge of Florida.²⁰

The National Park Service of the United States Department of the Interior advises that it is impossible at the present time to determine how much money was raised in any of the states for the erection of the monument. Many of the records were lost during the period 1854 to 1858, when the "Know-Nothing" party had control of the building of this memorial. It is known, how-

15. Gov. Thomas Brown's Message, *loc. cit.*

16. Letter by Cornelius W. Heine, cited above.

17. *Washington Monument*.

18. *Senate Document* No. 224, p. 69.

19. *Washington Monument*.

20. *Senate Document* No. 224, p. 71.

ever, that both the Odd Fellows and the Masonic Orders of Florida contributed generously for the construction.²¹

After the construction of the monument was resumed in 1880, under the supervision of the Engineer Corps of the War Department, memorial stones continued to be presented by individuals, societies, cities, states, and foreign nations for insertion in the walls.²² At the 230 foot level on the interior east side of the twenty-first stair landing, there is one memorial block bearing the inscription "Presented by the Grand Lodge of the State of Florida," otherwise not identified.²³

The memorial reached the height of 500 feet on August 9, 1884. The capstone was set in place on December 6, 1884, marking the completion of the work.²⁴ Official dedication took place on February 21, 1885. The Florida representative at this ceremony, riding in the dedication procession as an honorary member of General Philip Sheridan's staff, was Colonel Wallace S. Jones.²⁵

Colonel Wallace S. Jones was the owner of El Destino and Chemonie Plantations, both of which were located near Tallahassee, Florida. He served as United States Consul at Messina in 1885, and Consul General at Rome in 1895. His great grandfather, Noble Jones, was a volunteer colonist who had crossed the Atlantic to Georgia with General James E. Oglethorpe in 1733.²⁶

Although dedicated in 1885, the monument was not opened to the public until October 9, 1888. It is five hundred fifty-five feet, five and one-eighth inches high, and cost \$1,187,710.31,²⁷ a part of which was contributed by Floridians of the past.

21. Letter by Cornelius W. Heine, cited above.

22. *Washington Monument*.

23. *Senate Document* No. 224, p. 334.

24. *Washington Monument*.

25. *New York Times*, Feb. 22, 1885.

26. Ulrich Bonnell Phillips and James David Glunt, *Florida Plantation Records from the Papers of George Noble Jones* (St. Louis, Missouri, 1927), 23.

27. *Washington Monument*, 5.