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Samuel Pasco



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JEFFERSON COUNTY, FLORIDA, 1827-1910

By Samuel Pasco

Part II.

The Seminole War. - The treaty negotiated with the Florida tribes of Indians at Moultrie Creek, September 18, 1823, provided for their removal to a location on the peninsula designated in the treaty, but by an additional article some of the principal chiefs and their connections were allowed to remain in Middle Florida upon certain bodies of land granted to them for their use and occupation. The main body of the Indians removed to the district assigned to them during the winter of 1824. They had left their old homes and hunting grounds with great reluctance. They were not satisfied with their new location and through their agent, Gad Humphreys, petitioned for an extension of their boundary line further north. Additional issues of provisions were made to them, for their removal had interfered with the cultivation of their crops.

It was not long before there was a renewal of the trouble, and differences soon arose between them and the white settlers which had existed in Middle Florida before and about the time of the exchange of the flags. Complaints were made that the white people encroached upon the Indian borders and that the Indians left their reservations and trespassed upon the whites. Several laws were enacted by the Legislative Council to remedy these evils. But the border troubles between people of different races long inimical to one another, each smarting under the remembrances of former injuries or acts of violence, were too deep-seated to be remedied by legislative acts or legal penalties inflicted

upon individual offenders. Under the conditions which prevailed the two races could not live in peace as near neighbors, and history repeated itself. The inferior race had to yield to the Anglo-Saxon and the Indian finally had to move out of his way. As early as 1825, Acting-Governor George Walton recommended to the Secretary of War their removal from the Territory and this course of action was now determined upon by the authorities in Washington with the full approval of the people of Florida.

It is not my purpose to give a history of the war which followed. I shall confine myself mainly to the part taken by the people of Jefferson County and to the incursions of the enemy within our borders and the attacks of their marauding parties upon the homes and settlements which were defenseless or without adequate protection. The records afford but meagre information upon these subjects. The principal Indian settlements were east of the Suwannee and most of the troops were sent there. All the general engagements occurred in East and South Florida and the commanding officers and military writers have given but little attention to the events which occurred in Middle and West Florida. But the part taken by the early settlers of Jefferson County in its defense and in carrying on the war in other parts of Florida are of great interest to the present generation who are enjoying the fruits of their courage and sufferings and self-denial.

It is a matter of regret that no permanent record of the past was made before the principal actors in the stirring days of the thirties and forties passed away. Fire and decay have destroyed many letters and papers which would have been of great assistance in the investigations I have made and would, no doubt, have aided the memory of the survivors of those days

by enabling them to give exact details of facts which they remember only in a general way. I am greatly indebted to these survivors, and have also gleaned much information from the messages of the governors of the Territory, the proceedings of the Legislative Council, the records of our county, the files of the War Department in Washington, and different works upon Florida, which I have found in the library of the Florida Historical Society at Jacksonville, and in other libraries in other parts of the country.

Before the attack at Fort King and the massacre of Dade and his party, volunteers had been called for and mustered into the service of the United States. Jefferson had furnished her quota of these, and two companies under command of Captain James Scott and Captain William Bailey, were in a force of five hundred men from Middle Florida, under General Richard K. Call, which formed a junction with General Clinch at Fort Drane, ten miles south of Micanopy in Marion County. These troops had been levied for one month only and their time had nearly expired. General Clinch hastened towards the Withlacoochee, where Osceola was in command of a large body of Indians, many of them fresh from their attack upon Major Dade. The hostile forces met on December 31, at a crossing of the river in Sumter County, only three days after Dade's massacre, but General Clinch and his men had heard nothing of the former engagement at the time of this battle. Osceola's force was beyond the river and the ford which they expected to find was impassable, but some of the troops crossed in a canoe, which was found at the bank, seven or eight at a time, some swam the river and some got over on trees which were felled, so that their tops lodged on an island near the further shore, but most of the volunteers were left behind. Two hundred of the regulars

and twenty-eight only of the volunteers reached the south side of the Withlacoochee, where they were soon attacked by a large force of Indians, who raised a yell and opened a galling fire upon them. Osceola was disabled early in the fight, but his men held their ground for more than an hour, when on the third charge, after an inspiring address by General Clinch, they were routed and fled and the battle ended.

Colonel Samuel Parkhill, Adjutant General, distinguished himself by constant, active service from the beginning to the close of the engagement. Major Gamble, one of General Call's aides and Captains Scott and Bailey, took guns and fought in line with the twenty-eight volunteers, who crossed the river. General Clinch was advised by General Call not to attempt to renew the attack on the next day as the time for the volunteers had expired and the men had determined to return to their homes. Nearly one-fourth of those engaged in this battle under General Clinch were killed or wounded, and the failure to accomplish the purpose of the expedition disturbed the white settlers and increased the confidence of the Indians.

In January, 1836, General Winfield Scott was placed in command of the troops in Florida. He proceeded without delay to the scene of action and prepared his plans for a new campaign. In doing this he arranged for a supply of provisions to be stored on the Withlacoochee, within reach of one of the columns of his army, which was to move southward from Fort Drane.

The Withlacoochee Block-house. - About the middle of March, Major John McLemore was ordered to proceed to the Suwannee to procure corn for this purpose and a company from Jefferson County was ordered to report to him at Oldtown and assist him in collecting and protecting the provisions. This company was raised under the authority of Governor

Richard K. Call, in the lower part of the county and was mustered into the service of the United States at Waukeenah for three weeks, March 3, 1836. The officers were James M. K. Holloman, captain; Joseph McCants, 1st lieutenant ; L. B. Walker, 2nd lieutenant; and Samuel W. Barrington, 3rd lieutenant. I succeeded in obtaining a copy of a muster and payroll of this company in Washington and it contains the names of fifty-five privates, 2 musicians, and a commissary. Many of these names are well known in the neighborhoods of Waukeenah, Lloyd and Wacissa and although the old soldiers who then bore them with honor have all gone to rest on the other side of the river of life, many of their descendants and members of the same families are still living in the county.

Captain Holloman marched with his company along the St. Augustine road to Charles Ferry on the Suwannee and from there to Oldtown. Under the direction of Major McLemore, twelve beeves were driven up, slaughtered and kiln-dried and 600 or 700 bushels of corn were collected. These provisions were loaded on a barge ninety feet long and a flat, with barricades as a protection against the Indians. The detachment proceeded safely to the mouth of the river and coasted along the Gulf coast to the mouth of the Withlacoochee, where they expected to meet General Scott or a courier from him with orders. Volley guns were fired in accordance with a pre-arranged signal but there was no response and they continued on their way up the river in accordance with their orders and repeated the signal at the place where further instructions were looked for, but again there was no response. So they selected a suitable location on the south side of the river about twenty miles from its mouth and commenced to build a block-house for sheltering the provisions and defending themselves against attack.

The walls were raised eight feet high that night before they slept and it was finished in seven days with a covering of pine bark.

Major McLemore and Lieutenant McCants, who had been appointed adjutant of the regiment to which the company belonged, returned in the barge with a few of the men to Oldtown, where the former soon after was taken sick and died. About forty of the company were left at the block-house with Captain Holloman, who expected Major McLemore to return with reinforcements or to be relieved by General Scott. The block-house was completed on the evening of Saturday, April 10th, up to which time no Indians had appeared to molest them. Their first attack was made on Monday about the break of day, when a thousand warriors raised the war whoop and opened a heavy fire, which was continued till about eleven o'clock without effect. The attack was renewed after dark, when they built fires two or three hundred yards from the house in all directions and the war whoop sounded all through the night. The fighting commenced again the next morning and lasted four or five hours.

The beleaguered garrison had but little rest after this day or night. The assaults were continued off and on from day to day with more or less vigor. Sometimes under cover of the darkness the redskins would approach the walls and insult and threaten the inmates, telling them that they could not escape and that they would get them after a while. A fierce onset was made by several hundred warriors on the 15th of April and in the confusion caused by the yells of the savages and the continuous noise of their guns, they got possession of the flat, which they took a short distance down the river and cut in pieces. On the 24th they fired blazing arrows into the roof and set it on fire, while they poured volleys of bullets against the

house. The only water supply of the defenders with which to extinguish the burning roof, was a hole by the side of the block-house and this was available only at high tide. The water was drawn from this hole in a two quart tin bucket tied to a line. The Indians directed their shots against the line and the bucket but the fire was extinguished before it injured the main body of the building.

Captain Holloman saw the necessity of protecting the water supply, so on the 3rd of May, he arranged to have a few posts set up in the edge of the river in a ditch, which had already been dug. Irving Granger, Story, and Jernigan were detailed as guards to stand at designated points and protect the men who were bringing up and planting the posts under the supervision of the captain. While he was thus engaged, Captain Holloman was shot in the back of the neck and instantly killed. The work was abandoned, and at night the body was taken into the block house, sewed up in some tent cloth with rocks to sink it and put in the river. It was not safe to attempt any other mode of burial.

The bullets of the Indians was not the only danger that menaced the lives of these brave men. Hunger was gnawing at their vitals and starvation was approaching. The meat they had taken with them from Oldtown had spoiled and the corn was rotting from exposure to the rain after the burning of their roof. A few sacks were protected by great care and they cracked the grains on an old steel mill and boiled the coarse hominy with pieces of a pork barrel to make it palatable. For forty days they subsisted on corn and brackish water from the river-side.

All hope of relief from the officers under whose orders they were serving had departed and Lieutenant Walker, who took command of the company after the

death of Captain Holloman, determined to attempt to open communication with the outside world. Sergeant John M. Leek, John Rogers, and John Riley, who were accustomed to the water, volunteered to risk their lives for their comrades in an effort to accomplish this. They accordingly patched up a leaky canoe and on a dark night started down the river for Oldtown, taking with them a letter from Lieutenant Walker to Major McLemore. They reached the mouth of the Suwannee safely but the Indians saw them, raised the war whoop and opened fire upon them ; so they changed their course, ran westward along the Gulf coast till they reached St. Marks and then went on to Tallahassee and reported to General Leigh Read.

A company of eighty men was immediately raised. Read took command and they embarked on the steam-boat *Minerva*, May 22. The next day they reached the mouth of the Withlacoochee and at night ran the boat up the river to the block-house. The boat made so much noise as it went up the river, getting up into the timber on the banks, the men sawing the logs and cutting down the limbs and branches, which obstructed the passage, that the Indians supposed large reinforcements were on the way ; so they made no attack upon the block-house or the rescuing party. By morning the boat was out of the river with Lieutenant Walker and his men safe on board. Then the Indians built big fires along the coast and danced the war dance with yells of defiance and shouts of victory.

Notwithstanding their close confinement, their loss of rest, their short rations and their hardships and sufferings, there were no deaths from disease during the siege and only one man was killed besides the captain; this was Eli Sealey, who was shot on the 13th of April. A few others were wounded, but none seriously.

The boat returned to St. Marks; and soon after their return Lieutenant Walker and his company were mustered out of service, their time having expired. The courage, fortitude and endurance of this splendid body of citizen soldiers, summoned hastily from the ordinary business of their lives, aroused general admiration. Governor Call in reporting the matter to the War Department sent Lieutenant Walker's letter, a copy of which I have in my possession, to Secretary Cass, but no immediate action was taken by the State or United States authorities to commend or reward their action. But in February, 1840, a resolution was introduced into the House of Representatives of the Legislative Council by Walker Anderson, of Pensacola, declaring that their services "should be commemorated and live in the hearts of this nation and a grateful posterity." It was further resolved that the Governor be requested to prepare a medal and present the same to the officers and men who defended the block-house, with the thanks of the people of Florida and the assurance of the grateful appreciation in which they would be ever held. This resolution was adopted by both houses of the Council and approved by the Governor, but the medals were never presented.

When the discharged soldiers got back to Jefferson County they found the whole country in a state of alarm and confusion. An attack had been made upon Judge Thomas Randall's plantation and some of his servants had been carried off. Other outrages had been committed and many families had taken refuge in Monticello. But the excitement subsided, people returned to their homes and put them in a state of defence and scouting parties were organized to watch the movements of the enemy and to unite for mutual defence and protection, in case of an attack.

I have already given an account of the destruction

of the home of Rev. Tilman D. Purifoy and the sad fate of his family and servants. There were many other cases of murder and pillage and incendiarism in our county, but none were more horrible than this. I wish I could give a full history of those, but it is not possible, for time soon effaces the recollections of the past, when Mother Earth has hidden the victims of cruelty in her bosom. In the cases I shall attempt to describe, I can give but little more than an outline of the facts. I have not been able to ascertain even the years when the outrages occurred.

Captain James Scott was living near Lloyd when the war opened and was then in the service of the State, as I have shown in an earlier part of this address. One afternoon, at a later date, he rode from his home in company with a neighbor, Captain William Bailey, better known to us by his later title of General. The marauding Indians saw them and supposed he was going to spend the night with General Bailey and that they could safely attack his place. Some of them were heard to say "only squaws at home." But Captain Scott returned before it was quite dark and was sitting with his family in their living room after supper, when a group of Indians appeared at the back door and without warning fired into the room. Scott and his overseer, who was in the house, instantly seized their guns, which in those days were always ready for immediate use, and returned the fire and with good effect, as the condition of the house afterwards proved. The attacking party fled upon meeting with this unexpected resistance, taking with them, as was their custom, those who had been disabled or killed. Captain Scott followed them to the door and challenged them to return, but they had had fighting enough. In the attack, Mrs. Perrine, who was visiting the Scott family at the time, was killed and William

J. Bailey, son of General Wm. Bailey, was wounded. Mrs. Perrine was showing the children, who were gathered around her, an illustrated volume, which had been recently received and it was preserved for many years in the family, marked and stained with her blood.

At another time the house of Mr. Slaughter, father of Harris, near Turkey Scratch, on the road to Natural Bridge, was robbed and burned. Mr. Slaughter had gone to Monticello to attend court; early in the evening his wife and children heard the Indians approaching and fled from the house in an opposite direction and concealed themselves in the woods, where they were not discovered. After setting the house on fire, the Indians hastened away and Mrs. Slaughter went cautiously towards the town with her children, until she met her husband. No trace was found of the band of robbers and incendiaries.

A similar attack was made upon the house of John Gray in the neighborhood of Elizabeth Church, but with more disastrous results. The attacking party added murder to their other crimes and all of the inmates of the house were killed.

The last marauding party of the War in Jefferson County committed some outrages on or near the Aucilla River. Colonel William J. Bailey raised a company of twenty men and went in pursuit of them. One of them was captured in Madison County and hanged. The pursuit continued to the Suwannee and was not abandoned until all the gang were killed or dispersed.

The War Department has record of some of our Jefferson County officers as follows :-

One James Scott served as captain of a company of volunteers under the command of Colonel R. C. Parish, Florida War. His name appears on a muster roll of the company covering the period from December 9, 1835, to January 7, 1836. No further record of him has been found.

One William J. Bailey served as captain of a company of Florida Mounted Volunteers in the Florida War. He was enrolled May 20, 1839, at Magnolia, Florida, to serve four months, and was mustered out of service with the company, as captain, September 29, 1839, at Camp Pleasant.

One William J. Bailey served in Bailey's Battalion of Florida Mounted Militia (1839-1840), Florida War. He was mustered into service as major October 9, 1839, to serve four months; was promoted to be lieutenant-colonel March 3, 1840, and was mustered out of service as lieutenant-colonel, May 19, 1840, at Camp Pleasant, Florida. He was mustered into service to date May 20, 1840, as colonel, 1st Regiment Florida Mounted Militia, Florida War, to serve three months, and was mustered out of service with the regiment, as colonel, November 23, 1840. He was again mustered into service November 23, 1840, as colonel 1st Florida Mounted Militia, Florida War, to serve three months, and was mustered out of service with the regiment, as colonel, April 17, 1841.

One William Bailey (name also borne as William J. Bailey) served as major in Bailey's Battalion, Florida Mounted Militia, Florida War. He was mustered into service August 24, 1839, and was mustered out of service October 8, 1839.

One James M. K. Holloman was captain of a company of Jefferson County, Middle Florida, Drafted Militia, Florida War. His name appears on an undated muster roll of the company, stationed at Monticello, covering the period from March 3 to June 3, 1836, with entries showing that he was enrolled March 3, 1836, at Monticello, by the Governor and that he was killed at block house on the Withlacoochee May 3, 1836.

One L. B. Walker served as a second lieutenant in Captain Holloman's company of Jefferson County, Florida, Drafted Militia, Florida War. He was enrolled March 3, 1836 at Monticello by the Governor. No further record of him has been found, nor has anything been found of record to show when or for what period Captain Holloman's company was mustered into service.

It is evident that the names of William Bailey and William J. Bailey have been confused in the record.

By the early part of 1842, most of the Indians had surrendered or been captured and had been removed to their new homes in the West. In August, General Worth issued a general order, announcing that hostili-

ties had ceased. Gradually the apprehensions of the people subsided, a feeling of security followed the disturbed conditions which had existed, the people resumed their farming operations and soon the population of Jefferson was largely increased by the incoming of many settlers, mainly from other Southern States. For the next twenty years there was a period of peace and prosperity. The census returns show an increase in the population from 5,713 in 1840 to 9,786 in 1860, more than 72 per cent.

Transportation.- It was in the latter part of this period in January, 1859, that I came to the county upon the invitation of the trustees of Waukeenah Academy, who had elected me as principal of that institution. There was then no railway communication with the outside world, but the Pensacola and Georgia Railroad was being constructed and trains were running between Tallahassee and a temporary station, called Number Three or Walker's, about half a mile west of the Pinhook or Monticello and Waukeenah road. This, in connection with the railway from Tallahassee to St. Marks, afforded an outlet to the port through which the cotton and other products of Leon and Jefferson and lower Georgia were shipped and where merchandise and supplies were received from New York and New Orleans for the planters and merchants in this section. The former transportation route to the coast from Monticello to Newport had been by the Pinhook road and the merchants and planters of southern Georgia used this road after reaching Monticello. This wagon route had not been entirely abandoned in 1859 and trains of them often passed through Waukeenah in the winter months loaded with cotton, and on the return trip with cases, barrels, and casks of merchandise.

The railroad facilities in Georgia extended south

to Albany and mails and passengers from further north were carried by a stage line through Thomasville and Monticello to the terminus of the Pensacola and Georgia Railroad at Walker's and thence by rail to Tallahassee. There was also a stage line through this section from Jacksonville. Two years later the different companies had laid their tracks eastward and there was continuous railway communication from Tallahassee to Jacksonville and Fernandina ; and early in 1862 the line westward was extended to Midway in Gadsden County. The northern communication by stage through Thomasville to Albany was continued and the construction of the South Western road from Savannah, just before the war, opened a new outlet in that direction by a stage line from Monticello to Dixie, Georgia.

I travelled from Savannah by the Central R. R. to Macon, thence by the South Western to Albany, where I took the stage. The dinner house was at Youngs ; early in the evening a stop was made in Thomasville and on the following morning we reached Monticello. There I stopped for a few hours and the stage went to the railroad terminus at old station Number Three, or Walker's.

Monticello. - There were two hotels at Monticello, the Blackburn House, formerly the Banner House, on the corner of the court house square and Jefferson Street southeast of the court house, and the Bless House on Washington Street, where the Mays warehouse now stands. Both of the main hotel buildings were of brick and both were in later years destroyed by fire.

The churches were all situated where they now are, except the Episcopal. This was a wooden structure on the right-hand corner of Washington Street and the Waukeenah road. This also, was destroyed by

fire after the War. The present brick academy, then one of the finest buildings in the State, had been completed. The lodge rooms of the Masons and Odd Fellows were in the upper story. The post office was in a wooden building on the corner of the court house square and Washington Street and south of the latter. Charles A. Bradley was postmaster.

Waukeelah. - At Waukeelah I made my home at the hotel kept by William T. Carpenter. The people of that community were mostly from North and South Carolina and had long maintained a school of high character there. Some of my predecessors were college graduates, well known as successful educators. Among these were Louis I. Fleming and Mr. L'Engle, who were afterwards lawyers of great reputation in Jacksonville, and William O. Girardeau who was then principal of the Jefferson Academy in Monticello. A new academy building had been completed a few years before with a Masonic lodge room in the upper story. The house was a plain wooden structure and is still standing, but it has recently been enlarged. I was kindly received by the patrons of the school and by the people I associated with and with whom I was brought in contact; my work in the Academy was appreciated and before many months had passed I felt that I could adopt Florida as my permanent home.

Secession.-Notwithstanding the angry debates in Congress upon the differences between the North and the South and the unfriendly spirit in which these differences were discussed by the press in both sections, there were no forebodings of the storm of war which was soon to break upon the land. The country was prosperous, the people were engaged in their usual pursuits and enjoyments and it seemed to be taken for granted that there would be peaceful solution of the differences which existed in the country. But the next

year as the presidential election drew near the skies' grew darker; the John Brown raid, the division of the Democratic party into two opposing factions, one supporting Breckinridge for the presidency, the other Douglas, and the probable success of the Republican candidate disturbed the tranquillity which had prevailed. The people became impressed with the belief that the election of the Republican candidates would result in an attempt on the part of the general government to interfere with the rights and institutions of the states and the property of the people of the South, and a withdrawal from the Union was advocated as the best remedy for these evils. When the success of the Republican party was announced the feeling in favor of secession grew stronger. The Legislature took steps to call a state convention to take action upon the question, and a large majority of the people of Jefferson County advocated it and elected four delegates who were known to be in favor of the movement. These were J. Patton Anderson, William S. Dilworth, Thompson B. Lamar and Thomas M. Palmer. The convention met in Tallahassee on the 3rd day of January, 1861, and on the 10th the Ordinance of Secession. was adopted.

The War for Southern Independence. - It was not generally believed that this action would result in war. An editorial in the *New York Tribune* used this language, "Let the wayward sisters depart in peace"; and this was thought would be the policy of the new administration. Nevertheless, the Legislature took early action for reorganizing the military forces of the State and it was not long before volunteer companies were being formed for defensive purposes in case of invasion. Among the first of these companies in Jefferson was a cavalry company in Waukeenah, commanded by Captain William S. Murphy; and an

infantry company in Monticello called the Jefferson Rifles, commanded by Captain William O. Girardeau.

In March, 1361, the Governor called for a regiment of infantry to serve at Pensacola and a company was at once raised at Monticello to form a part of this regiment; it was mustered into the Confederate service on the 5th of April. It was the first company to leave the county and its officers were as follows ; captain, J. Patton Anderson, who afterwards was elected colonel of the regiment, and before the war closed reached the rank of major general ; first lieutenant, Thompson B. Lamar, who succeeded Anderson as captain and was afterwards lieutenant-colonel and colonel of the Fifth Florida Regiment, and also served on the staff of General Joseph E. Johnson and was killed in action near Petersburg in 1864; second lieutenant, William Capers Bird, who afterwards was captain of Company C, when the regiment was reorganized and who was severely wounded at Shiloh. Richard Turnbull and William Scott also served as lieutenants in this company, and the latter afterwards became adjutant of the Fifth Florida Regiment.

Six other companies were raised in Jefferson County during the War, five infantry and one cavalry. I give a list of these here with the names of those who served with the rank of captain.

The Jefferson Beauregards, Company E, 3rd Florida, captains, Daniel B. Bird and Hamilton K. Walker, former killed at Perryville, Ky.; the Jefferson Rifles, Co. H, 3rd Florida, captains, William O. Girardeau and Matthew H. Strain ; Co. A, 5th Florida, captains, William J. Bailey and William K. Partridge ; Co. G, 5th Florida, captains, William J. Bailey and George D. Raysor, the former was wounded at Gettysburg and died in prison ; Co. K, 10th Florida, captains, Pickens B. Bird and Marion J. Clark, the former served first

as lieutenant in Co. E, 3rd Florida and was promoted from captain in Co. K, 10th Florida to major of 9th Florida, he was mortally wounded at Cold Harbor, June 3, 1864, and died two days later; Co. F, 1st Florida Reserves, captain, Wiley A. Barwick, this company did not leave the State but was engaged in the battle of Natural Bridge ; the Magnolia Dragoons, Co. A, 15th Confederate Cavalry, captains, Robert H. Partridge (promoted major), and John Ulmer.

Besides these eight full companies, a number of our young men enlisted in R. H. Gamble's and C. E. Dyke's light artillery companies, in D. W. Gwynn's cavalry company and in the Howell Guards, Co. M, 2nd Florida, under captains George W. Parkhill and Richard C. Parkhill.

Jefferson County sent out more soldiers in these companies than she had voters and most of those who remained at home were organized for home defence, whenever they were needed. When General Newton landed on the coast expecting to penetrate into the interior, take possession of Tallahassee and overrun Middle Florida, the alarm went out to every plantation and home in Jefferson and the older men and boys who were at home hastened to join the small military force that was guarding the country about St. Marks and assisted in impeding the march of the invaders. And when the two armies met at Natural Bridge on our county line and Newton was defeated and driven back to his ships, full share of the honor of the splendid victory which was there achieved belonged to the sons of Jefferson.

The 1st, 3rd, and 4th of these regiments served in the army of Tennessee ; the 2nd, 5th, 9th and 10th, in the Army of Northern Virginia; the 15th Confederate Cavalry in West Florida and Alabama ; and many of the companies in the regiments mentioned served in

different parts of Florida before leaving the State, so our Jefferson County soldiers, besides defending our own State against hostile incursions, fought in all the great battles of the War east of the Mississippi under Lee, the two Johnsons, Bragg, and Beauregard. They made up a part of that splendid line which for four years held back a vastly superior force with unlimited resources until death, disease, and other casualties of war had so thinned and weakened the line that it could no longer be kept intact.

Reconstruction. - The end came, the star of the Confederacy set in clouds and disappointment, but the soldier had done his best and he accepted the result manfully. He returned to his home and went to work to build up his broken plans of life and resume the duties of citizenship, though under conditions which at times were more trying in many respects than those he had encountered in his military life.

Under President Johnson's proclamations, granting amnesty to those who had maintained the cause of the Confederacy (excepting certain specified classes) and authorizing the holding of a convention under military supervision for the reestablishment of the state government and the restoration of the political relations of the state with the general government, the people of Florida elected delegates to represent the different counties, and on the 25th of October, 1865, the convention assembled at Tallahassee to revise or amend the state constitution, so as to comply with the terms required by the chief executive in Washington, and adapt the fundamental law to the new social conditions of the people. Jefferson County was represented by William Capers Bird, William B. Cooper, and Asa May. The convention completed its work in a way that was satisfactory to the President, a general election was held November 29, 1865, and as soon

as the result was officially declared, the new state and county officers were inducted into their offices. The new General Assembly convened December 18, 1865, two U. S. senators were elected and such legislation was enacted as was deemed necessary to bring the laws into harmony with the new constitution.

It was believed that the Union was restored. The planters made contracts with their employees and renters and entered upon the new year in a hopeful spirit. The most prolific source of trouble was the Freedman's Bureau, organized under the law of Congress for the protection of the newly emancipated negroes. Its officers were authorized to supervise the contracts of servants and laborers of the African race and to take cognizance of cases in which the freedmen felt that they had grievances. These officers had the right to call upon the military authorities to execute their order and detachments of troops, many of them belonging to negro regiments, were stationed at different points to support the authority of the Bureau.

Many of those who were entrusted with power to exercise functions which belonged to the state courts had filled inferior positions in the army or in some other government service. They had come to Florida full of prejudice or ill will against our people; they were without legal training and their action was often arbitrary and oppressive and injurious to the interest of all classes. But it was endured with much patience in the hope that the rights and privileges of the people would soon be fully restored and that the general government would cease to interfere with the administration of the affairs of the State and the execution of its laws. This hope was not realized for many years. Conditions grew worse. Men of extreme views controlled the action of Congress. The power of the President to reestablish and reorganize the states

which had formed the Southern Confederacy was denied and the state governments formed under his plan of reconstruction were overthrown. The South was divided into military districts under the authority of generals of the army whose powers were almost absolute. While some of the local officers were retained, others were removed and their successors appointed by the general commanding at his pleasure.

A new convention was ordered ; many of the prominent and influential citizens of the State were disfranchised ; the ballot was given to the recently enfranchised freedmen; men who had followed the army into the State for gain and graft organized the negroes into secret leagues in the black belt and by their votes were elected to represent counties where they were strangers and had no property but their personal baggage, which they carried in their carpet bags. A constitution was framed by a convention made up largely of such delegates as these and ignorant negroes ; the few old citizens of the State who were chosen from the white counties were powerless. Power was given to the Governor to appoint county officers all over the State, so that even in the counties where the white people were in the majority, the local offices were filled by these new political elements or by some of the few representatives of the old citizenship, who were in political sympathy with the chief executive.

Jefferson, like many of her sister counties, had a bitter experience in those days. Property was unsafe, crime went unpunished, wastefulness and extravagance prevailed in the administration of the public business and taxation became burdensome. A full account of this period of our history ought to be made a matter of permanent record for the information of those who have come upon the stage of action since those days, as well as those who come after us.

In 1876 there was a change for the better. George F. Drew was elected governor and under the power of appointment in the constitution which then existed, he filled our county offices with our home people who were in harmony with the spirit of reform and good government which his administration represented. But here these people were in the minority, and the business interests and intelligence of the county continued to be unrepresented in the councils of the State until 1885. A state convention was then held to frame a new constitution to take the place of the one adopted in 1868, during the period of the second reconstruction. In the election of delegates to this convention, the white people of Jefferson realized the importance of having their interest protected in the organization and determined, if possible, to defeat the five colored men who had been nominated by the opposition and to elect five of their own number. In this they succeeded ; these representatives had an influential voice in shaping the new constitution. and one of them was honored by being chosen president of the convention.

During the four years of war a large proportion of the planters and business men were in the military service, the usual crops of cotton were not made, the merchants had sold their goods for Confederate money, many of them were indebted to Northern houses for their latest purchases in 1860. The planters needed horses, mules, farming utensils, and supplies to plant and cultivate their crops ; and when the soldiers returned to their homes in the summer of 1865 after the surrender at Appomattox, the future looked dark and gloomy. Many found themselves reduced from affluence to poverty, but they bore their privations patiently and adapted their new mode of living to their changed conditions, hoping that the future would bring a return of prosperity ; but, as I have already

shown, the reconstruction period brought no relief. The census returns and tax-books show that property values steadily decreased and taxes increased every year. In fact, there was no sale for lands and the valuations fixed by the assessors were merely nominal.

The New Era. - But there has been a steady improvement within the last twenty years. The resources and productions of our section have attracted a good class of settlers from other states and men of capital and enterprise and industry have established their homes among us. They have assisted in the development of new industries and our labor has been turned into new channels. The pine forests have yielded turpentine and lumber to add to our wealth. Nurseries have been established and seed and shrubs and trees have been shipped to all parts of the country. The pear trees yield reliable crops, which have brought good prices and our former staples of corn and cotton have largely increased in value.

Some years ago a few of our industrious housewives planted some pecans in their gardens and front yards. These trees in course of time produced abundant crops which brought generous prices. The result was a new industry of which Jefferson County has become the centre. The demand for young trees has become so great, that our nurserymen cannot supply them and some of the old plantations in the country are being divided into small farms and planted in young trees. The pecan has been taken under the protection of the National Nut Growers Association and this association has recently held its 9th annual convention in our new court house, being the first great organization that we have had the honor and pleasure of entertaining here.

A fine grade of leaf tobacco has been raised in the

county and this also promises to be a very profitable industry.

The development of these industries and the proof that so many valuable productions can be raised in our soil, have caused a great demand for our lands and many sales have recently been made at good prices, so that the old expression of being land-poor has become obsolete in Jefferson.

This brief history demonstrates that those who lived here before us did their work well, and with the limited means at their command accomplished great results in the development of the material resources of this community and the establishment of the educational, moral, and religious institutions upon which our Christian civilization is founded. We have inherited the results of their labors and the duty and responsibility of carrying them forward rests upon us and we must discharge these duties and meet these responsibilities industriously, faithfully, and conscientiously.