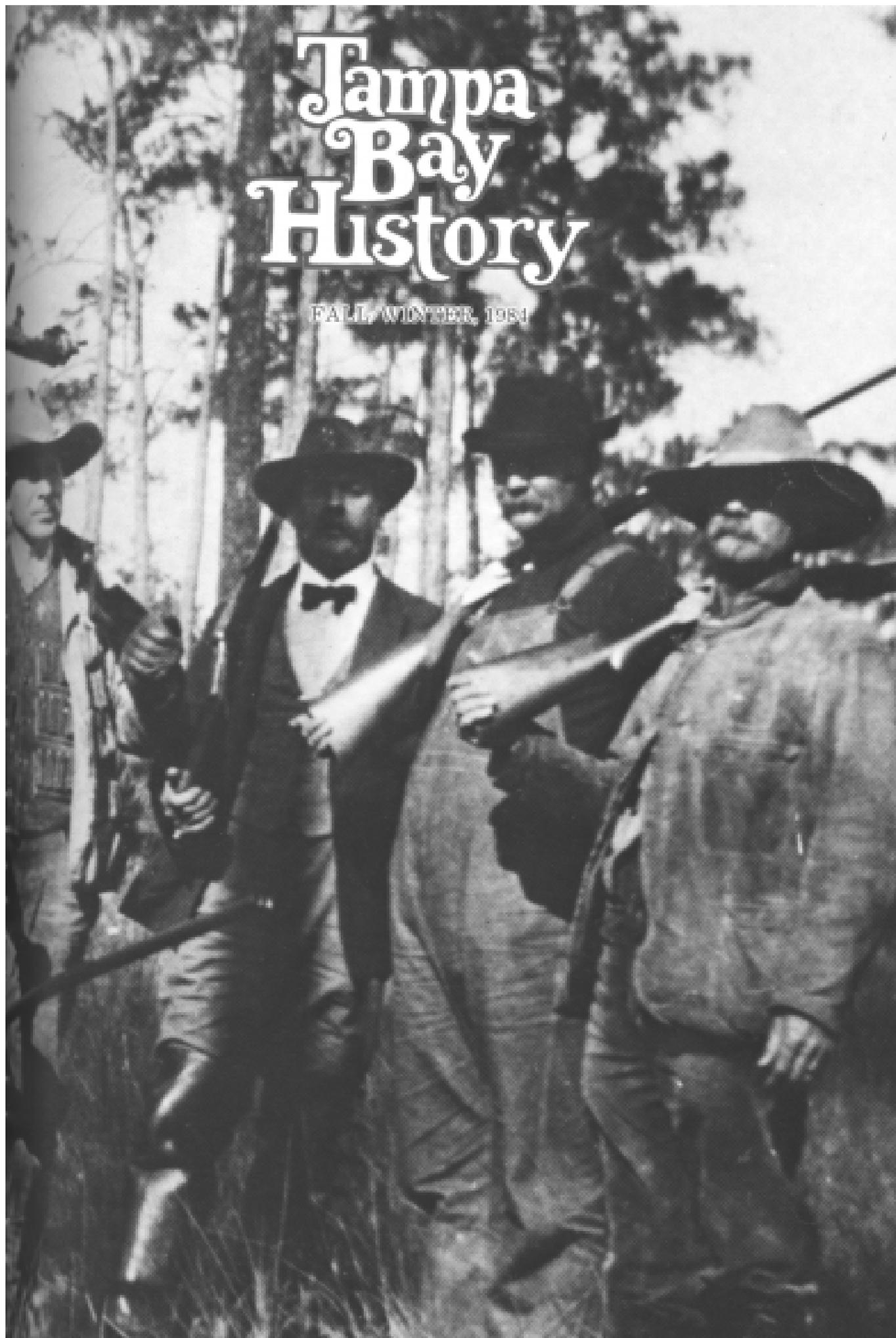


# Tampa Bay History

FALL/WINTER, 1984





**CONTENTS**

From the Editors	3
Communications	4

**ARTICLES**

"A Blot on Tampa's History": The 1934 Lynching of Robert Johnson	<i>By Walter Howard</i>	5
The Peace River: A Forgotten Highway	<i>By Lynn W. Ware</i>	19
Boasters, Boosters and Boom: Popular Images of Florida in the 1920s	<i>By James M. Ricci</i>	31
Pioneer Florida: A Photographic Essay	<i>By Eirlys M. Barker</i>	58

**MEMOIR**

The Reminiscences of an Itinerant Preacher	<i>By Richard McKendree Tydings</i> <i>Introduction by Ruth S. Irvin</i>	75
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**BOOK REVIEWS**

Morris and Warner, eds. <i>The Photographs of Alvan S. Harper, Tallahassee, 1885-1910,</i> By Michael Thomason	84
Zeiss, <i>The Other Side of the River: Historical Cape Coral,</i> By Alberta C. Rawchuck	85
Goldfield, <i>Cotton Fields and Skyscrapers: Southern City and Region, 1607-1980,</i> By Robert P. Ingalls	86
Matthews, <i>Edge of Wilderness: A Settlement History of Manatee and Sarasota Bay,</i> By Richard Matthews	87
Announcements	90

Notes on Contributors ..... 92

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## FROM THE EDITORS

Although not far removed in time, Florida's frontier period is difficult for historians to recreate. Among the obstacles, of course, is the paucity of surviving materials for historians to consult. Using a variety of sources, this issue of *Tampa Bay History* attempts to recapture life and events associated with several frontiers on Florida's west coast.

Lynch law originated on America's eighteenth-century frontier when Colonel Charles Lynch dispensed private justice in western Virginia. Although first employed in sparsely settled areas against horse thieves and common criminals, the practice of lynching persisted into the twentieth century as an illegal means of controlling unpopular minorities such as blacks, immigrants and political radicals. By 1934, Tampa was no longer a frontier, but some citizens still resorted to vigilante methods as demonstrated in Walter Howard's article which won first prize in the 1983 *Tampa Bay History* Essay Contest

The exploration of frontier conditions on Florida's west coast is taken up by other authors in this issue. Lynn W. Ware examines early life along the Peace River. James M. Ricci analyzes one of Florida's last frontiers - the land boom of the 1920s which boosters often represented as a new frontier. The photographic essay by Eirlys M. Barker shows images of pioneer life around the turn of the century. Finally, Ruth S. Irvin presents a document from 1851 that depicts Florida's west coast at a time when a handful of settlers still grappled with the process of carving a life out of the wilderness.

The annual Essay Contest has generated so many worthy entries that we are pleased to announce the fourth annual competition with an entry deadline of September 1, 1985. For more information see the announcement on page 91.

**UPDATE:** The caption for the picture of Tampa's Union Station on page 37 of the last issue should give 1912 as the date of construction.

The Fort Myers railroad depot shown on page 39 of the same issue has been transformed into the home of the Fort Myers Historical Museum. For the museum's current activities, see page 90.

Marian B. Godown of our Board of Advisors points out that the last issue (page 63) incorrectly identified the location of Punta Rassa. The Menge Brothers operated a steamboat line on the Caloosahatchee River in Lee County, where Punta Rassa is (and always has been) located.

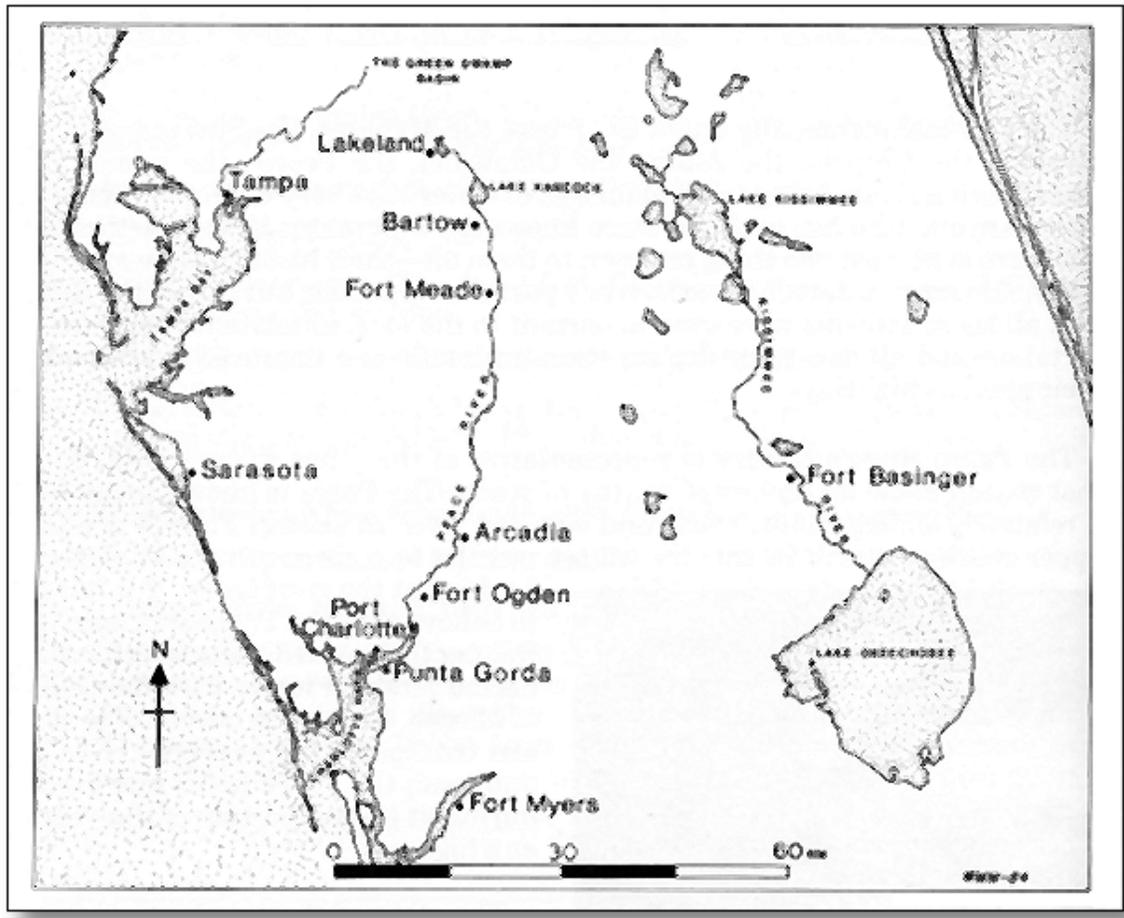


**The Peace River near its northern source,  
from *Peace River Pioneers* by Louise Frisbie.**

## **THE PEACE RIVER: A FORGOTTEN HIGHWAY**

by Lynn W. Ware

The Caloosahatchee, the upper St. Johns, the Manatee, the Suwannee, the Myakka, the Chipola, the Alafia, the Oklawaha, the Peace—the names of these Florida rivers bring to mind images of waterways very different in character. Anyone who has explored them knows the differences in their settings, but there is at least one thing common to them all—their history. More specifically, it is not the details of each river's past that are alike, but rather the fact that all these streams were once important to the local inhabitants for transportation and all saw their decline when railroads and improved roads took their place as highways.



Map by William M. Murray.

The Peace River's history is representative of the other rivers' pasts. For that reason alone its history is worthy of study. The Peace is known today as a relatively unimportant, small and winding river in central Florida whose upper reaches shrink in the dry winter months to a mere stream of water. Looking at the river today, it is hard to believe that the Peace was once a frequently traveled route which connected central Florida with the Gulf of Mexico. Before the advent of modern transportation networks of rail and road, the Peace River was used during at least a portion of the year as a highway.

The story of the river's usage begins at least three thousand years ago when natives used the Peace River system up into the Green Swamp north of present-day Lakeland as a highway for their dugout canoes. There is evidence that the Seminoles also used the river as a form of transportation. Because of the Indians' reliance on the river as a means of travel it follows that when the soldiers of the Third Seminole War moved into the area, they too would use the river in order to find the elusive Seminoles. Later as the threat of Indian attack subsided, settlers began moving into the area which ironically lead to the disuse of the Peace River. As the population grew, the building of roads and railroads brought a more reliable and direct means of traveling

and made river transportation of lesser importance. Like most other Florida rivers the Peace River was eventually forgotten as a transportation route. Today only those who enjoy fishing and canoeing have ever seen this beautiful stream except when crossing its bridges in their cars.

As early as 1000 B.C. natives used the Peace River to travel between the Green Swamp and the Gulf of Mexico. Their shallow draught dugouts would have had no difficulty in traversing the river even during the lowest stages of water. The oldest canoe in the western hemisphere was uncovered on the northern shore of Lake Parker, northeast of Lakeland. By radiocarbon analysis this canoe recorded a reading of 3040 B.P.  $\pm$  115 years, indicating that it was used about 1090 B.C. Two other canoes were found—but not analyzed for age—near this lake that once was a link in the chain of lakes and streams extending from the Green Swamp to the Peace River.<sup>1</sup> The continued use of this waterway may be inferred from the discovery of other dugouts near Lake Hancock. One of these craft dates from 1520 to 1620 A.D.<sup>2</sup>

By the mid-eighteenth century Creek Indians and runaway slaves from Georgia and Alabama had moved into central Florida. Collectively known as the Seminole Indians, they too used their canoes to travel along the Peace River.

Park DeVane, a long-time student of the Seminoles, has an interesting theory concerning the Seminoles' use of Florida rivers. According to DeVane, it was once possible by using the Green Swamp in the fashion of a railroad roundhouse to travel from one part of Florida to another via the Peace, Kissimmee, Alafia, Hillsborough, Withlacoochee, Oklawaha, St. Johns and Econlockhatchee Rivers. All of these rivers had their headwaters in the Green Swamp or connected to another river that did, so it was possible to travel through the swamp to get from one river to the next. By this means the Indians could have traveled by water continuously from the Gulf of Mexico to the Atlantic.<sup>3</sup>

DeVane bases this theory on the scores of years he has spent in learning Florida history first-hand from those elder Seminoles yet surviving. He has learned that the Indians once traveled practically anywhere in Florida in their canoes. Using linking lakes, creeks, rivers and inundated swamps, it was possible to travel long distances. DeVane published an account by Billy Bowlegs, III, of a canoe trip from Fort Basinger on the Kissimmee River, through Lake Okeechobee, up Fisheating Creek to Rainey Slough and Gannett Slough, then into Myrtle Creek, Shell Creek and up the Peace River to Fort Ogden where he traded and then made the return trip.<sup>4</sup> The two-hundred-and-sixty-mile roundtrip does not seem possible now that the smaller bodies of water are dried up, but this was once common practice. DeVane has pictures of canoe wharfs built by the Seminoles in the Everglades. It is an odd sight to see the wharf remnants in the midst of dry land.<sup>5</sup>

Early white explorers left accounts of Indians living at the river's edge. One of these was by Horatio S. Dexter, who in 1823 sent to Florida's territorial governor a detailed account of central Florida terrain. Dexter left the Tampa Bay area for the interior during the rainy season. The land became flooded, and he had difficulty making his way by horse. He met an Indian who told him of a village where he could get a boat to take him down the Peace River to Charlotte Harbor. Finally, he reached Oponey's settlement in Lake Hancock, but unfortunately for Dexter there was no boat. His communication with the Seminole was so poor that he could not tell if the boat

had been sunk or if someone had taken it, but there is no question that the Indians used the river for transportation.<sup>6</sup>

The Treaty of Moultrie Creek in that same year set aside an Indian reservation in the heart of the peninsula which included the northernmost reaches of Peace River. James Gadsden was appointed to head the operation of surveying the Indian lands. In addition to Oponey's settlement, two other villages were noted by him in 1824 on the upper reaches of Talakchopko, or Peace, River.<sup>7</sup> Another 1824 map shows villages near Fort Meade and further south on Bowlegs Creek, a tributary of the Peace River that joins the river two miles south of Fort Meade.<sup>8</sup>

Another account of Indians in the area was left by a slave of an army officer who was captured by the Indians. Sometime between 1835 and 1837 he stole a canoe from his captors and escaped. He traveled the entire length of the Peace River before being recaptured by the Indians.<sup>9</sup>

In 1839 Alexander Macomb, commanding general of the U.S. Army, concluded a treaty with two of the Seminole chiefs left in Florida. He moved the Indian reservation south and east so that the Peace River from its mouth north to Big Creek (Charlie Apopka Creek today) became the western boundary.<sup>10</sup>

By the 1850s a few white settlers had built homes along the Peace River and its tributaries. On the heels of the settlers the army moved in with a string of forts to flush out those Indians remaining. Peas Creek, as it was then known, now became important to the U.S. Army. The army built Fort Fraser near Lake Hancock in November, 1837. It was located a couple of miles north of present-day Bartow. The "fort" was actually a supply depot for the interior and east coast forts.<sup>11</sup>

In 1841 the army built Fort Ogden. The main purpose of this post was to supply the military with cypress canoes for the fighting in the Everglades. Soldiers built fifty-five of the craft here and transported them down the Peace River to the Gulf and up the Caloosahatchee.<sup>12</sup> At about the same time the army expanded its surveillance of the area by building Fort Winder. It was located south of Fort Ogden on the west side of Lettuce Lake.<sup>13</sup>

In 1849 U.S. forces established two additional forts to the north. In October they laid out Fort Chokkonikla near the site of a former Indian trading post at the confluence of the Peace River with what became known as Payne Creek. The store had been burned by Indians earlier that year. Near where a wharf once had stood on the west bank of the river, soldiers ferried a bridge into place to allow access to the opposite side of the river.<sup>14</sup> In December they constructed Fort Meade. Named after second Lieutenant George Gordon Meade, this fort served longer than all the other military establishments on the river.<sup>15</sup>

Additional installations followed during the 1850s. Two miles southwest of the present location of Wauchula, soldiers built Fort Hartsuff in August, 1851. After abandoning the post, they brought it back into service in April, 1856.<sup>16</sup> The military set up its last installation near the mouth of the river in 1857. They used Camp Whipple as a site for mounted forces on reconnaissance and a depot for supplies that came by steamboat from Fort Myers on the Caloosahatchee and Fort Brooke at Tampa Bay.<sup>17</sup>



**Peace River bridge at Bartow.**

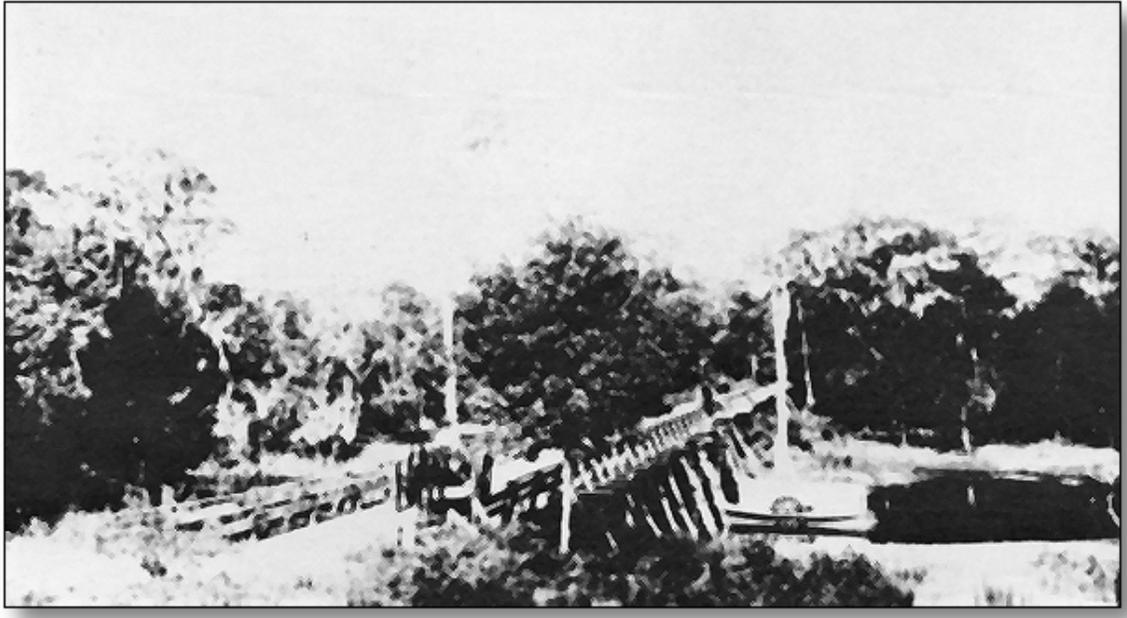
Photograph courtesy of Polk County Historical Library.

In addition to the military's posts, settlers constructed fortifications. The Blount family built a stockade for their own protection near what is now the corner of Main Street and Floral Avenue in Bartow.<sup>18</sup> James Green made a fort of his homestead near Payne Creek, west of present-day Fort Green Springs, between the years 1854 and 1856.<sup>19</sup>

The Peace River figured prominently in fighting between Indians and soldiers. In June, 1856, Indians attacked the Willoughby Tillis family near Fort Meade. Volunteer forces set out to avenge the raid. Twice they contacted the Seminoles. The last skirmish occurred on the banks of the Peace River. Finally, after losing a total of five men with others wounded, the soldiers temporarily retreated, enabling the Indians to flee.<sup>20</sup> Jesse Carter, Florida's special agent on Indian affairs, told Governor Broome he believed the Indians had escaped "down-river . . . in boats or rafts."<sup>21</sup> Later Carter reported finding a canoe that he thought might have been "used by the party attacking Tillis."<sup>22</sup>

Because the Indians were slipping away from the troops through the swamps and down the waterways, the soldiers employed the same means of transportation in order to find them. Skiffs and scows were kept at Forts Meade and Chokkonikla for this and other purposes.<sup>23</sup>

Two reports filed in 1857 described reconnaissances made by boat. On February 5, 1857, Captain John A. Whitall left Camp Whipple with nine boats. He ascended the river



**Peace River bridge at Fort Meade, showing paddlewheel boat to the right of the bridge.**

Photograph courtesy of Polk County Historical Library.

approximately twenty-eight miles, landing often to burn the country. He slowly continued an additional seven or eight miles before having to turn back because of low water.<sup>24</sup> According to a November, 1857, report, Captain L. G. Lesley took seventeen men in four boats down the Peace River on another reconnaissance mission. He traveled from Fort Meade south to five miles below Fort Winder where he was forced to turn back. The high southerly winds made the water too rough for his small boats.<sup>25</sup>

Besides using the Peace River in looking for hostiles, the army sometimes utilized the waterway to transport supplies and troops. The steamboat *Texas Ranger* brought in supplies to Camp Whipple from Fort Myers.<sup>26</sup> In 1851 Captain W. H. Winder reported to the adjutant general that twenty-three men had embarked the previous day from Fort Myers on one transport to relieve Company E, 9th Artillery, at Fort Meade. Eighteen additional troops were to follow southerly winds made the water too rough for his small boats.<sup>27</sup>

After the Tillis skirmish the threat of Indian attack on the Peace River valley residents subsided. There was no further conflict between the Indians and the army or individual settlers in this area. Gradually the country began filling up with pioneers eager to begin a new enterprise in a country possessing both cheap, fertile land and a warm climate.



**Phosphate dredge boat.**

Photograph courtesy of author.

Early entrepreneurs took advantage of the Peace River's current in transporting logs from the river swamp to sawmills located downstream on the banks of the river. The first man to open a mill on the Peace was Louis Lanier who built a greatly needed facility near Fort Meade in 1860. Prior to that time lumber for the area had to be transported overland from Tampa.<sup>28</sup> Later other mills were established in Bartow, Fort Ogden, Arcadia and near the mouth of the river.<sup>29</sup>

The logging method used along the Peace River was typical of cypress lumbering procedures found in other parts of the country. First the trees were "girdled" to drain them of their sap, making them light enough to float. Months later the trees were cut down where they floated in place in the stagnant water of the swamp. When enough were felled, loggers pushed them out into the river either rafted together or floating singly. The river carried them downstream to the mill, where workers fished the logs out with a winch and cut them into boards.<sup>30</sup>

The new inhabitants of the Peace River valley also used the river in transporting goods. Oranges, sweet potatoes, furs, hogs and chickens were moved from one location to another along the river.<sup>31</sup> The early traders sometimes found it hard going north of Arcadia. Fallen trees, sunken logs from the logging operations and shoals often made passage difficult. The new inhabitants of the Peace River valley begged the Congress for improvement of the river. In March, 1879, Congress responded by authorizing the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to examine

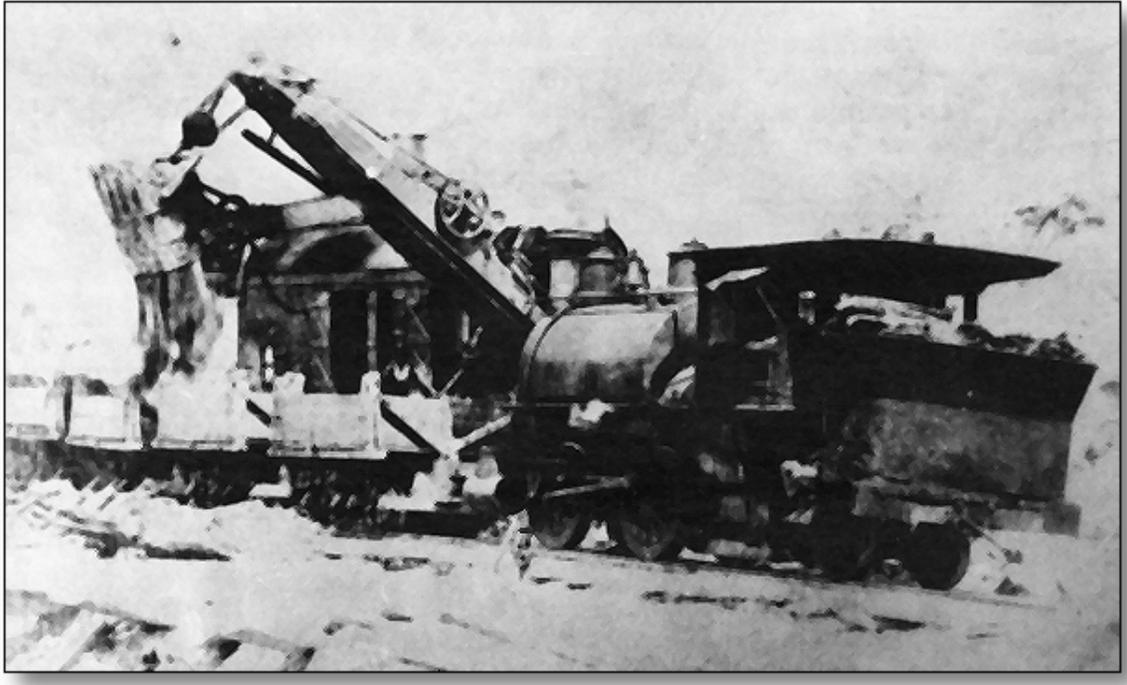


**Bone VaHey Phosphate Works on the Peace River, circa 1900, from *Peace River Pioneers* by Louise Frisbie.**

the river. The report by J.L. Meigs was favorable, and sixty-four miles of the river were cleared before the money ran out in 1884.<sup>32</sup>

As the task of clearing the river was getting underway another Corps of Engineers project included the Peace River. In 1880 Congress passed an ambitious act calling for a cross-Florida steamboat canal. The waterway was to connect the St. Johns River to the Peace River by way of the Topokalija Lake without the use of locks.<sup>33</sup> J. Francis LeBaron surveyed the Peace River from Fort Meade to its mouth as a part of the Corps' examination of the canal route.<sup>34</sup> As a result of the surveys conducted, the Corps of Engineers concluded that a steamboat canal along this route could not be built without the use of locks, the cost of which far outweighed the benefits to a sparse Florida population.<sup>35</sup>

Although it did not produce a canal, the survey reported the presence of phosphate in the river, and businessmen soon organized phosphate hunts. Usually working in secret so as not to drive land prices up, these men and their scientists floated down the river taking random samples of the riverbed.<sup>36</sup> When they were satisfied that huge amounts of phosphate could be recovered from the river, they quickly set to work. By 1891 the fledgling phosphate industry had bought up acreage on both sides of the river and had begun mining the river bottom. Dredge barges, resembling large rafts with room aboard for a steam engine and a centrifugal pump, could be



**Steam shovel loading phosphate on railway cars, circa 1905.**

Photograph courtesy of Polk County Historical Commission.

seen as far north as Bartow. Accompanying the large barges were smaller “lighters” which conveyed ore to drying houses on the river bank. Once the phosphate was dried, the lighters hauled it downriver to Punta Gorda where ocean-going steamships carried it to domestic and foreign ports.<sup>37</sup>

Within a short time mining was so intensive that the phosphate industry had practically taken over the river.<sup>38</sup> Use of the river by anyone else would have been difficult at this time because of the number of boats working the river.

The miners eventually learned that dealing with the extremes in water level was a part of the job. They became exasperated with using the river for transporting their vessels when during the dry months low stages of water were sometimes too low for floating their laden boats and high water in the wet season occasionally flooded their works.<sup>39</sup> The miners welcomed the coming of the railroad which promised a more reliable means of getting the phosphate to Punta Gorda. As the companies began abandoning river mining altogether for the more profitable land mining, there was even more reason to rely on the railroad for transportation of the phosphate to Punta Gorda. The Peace River was soon abandoned in a worse condition than it was in before the mining began. The river was now cluttered with sunken barges, fallen trees and new shoals made by the dredging operations.<sup>40</sup>

Before the Corps of Engineers again studied the feasibility of improving the river, times had changed. The railroads that had crept through the Florida peninsula during several decades finally choked off Florida's reliance on river transportation. In 1886 the Florida Southern Railroad, which generally followed the course of the Peace River, was completed to Punta Gorda.<sup>41</sup> It was impossible for river transportation to compete with railroad service. Both agriculture and industry preferred to rely on the railroad for moving their products. In those days before refrigeration, farmers needed a more direct and, therefore, quicker means of getting their products to northern markets than the now-antiquated method of ferrying them downriver to Charlotte Harbor, to be loaded onto an ocean-going steamer that slowly plied to New Orleans or New York for final distribution. The railroad and phosphate industry doomed the river as a means of transportation.<sup>42</sup>

Although residents complained about railway freight rates, they could not convince the Corps of Engineers to improve the entire river again. The Corps could not justify the expense of clearing the river so that its navigation could be used by the citizens solely as a club to hold over the head of the railroad owners. A 1918 report concluded: "It is not believed that any improvement of the river will bring back the commerce that has left to seek other outlets according to natural trade laws, and owing to the good service given by the railroad it is not believed that the improvement of the river would open up any new territory."<sup>43</sup>

With alternative means of transportation afforded by the railroad system and an improved road network, most of Florida's rivers were soon forgotten as transportation arteries. The Peace River was one of these rivers whose usefulness fell into obscurity.

Today following the river by canoe from Bartow, one encounters few other boaters but many reminders of past activity. Just north of Fort Meade there is a broad place in the river where once the Seminoles dammed the water to make a fish weir. One can still see the evidence of a long-ago cypress logging industry in the upper river. Near Bartow is a sunken phosphate dredging barge whose outline can be discerned at low water. The remnants of wharves built by the earliest phosphate companies are still standing near Arcadia. These physical evidences remind one that this river was not always as quiet as it is today. The Peace River, once a frequently traveled route, is now a forgotten highway.

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<sup>1</sup> Ripley P. Bullen and Harold K. Brooks, "Two Ancient Florida Dugout Canoes," *Quarterly Journal of the Florida Academy of Sciences*, 30 (June 1967): 97-107; "Four Rivers Basin, Florida," House Executive Document No. 585, 87th Cong., 2d. sess. (Washington, 1962), 21.

<sup>2</sup> Interview with Joe Lamed, March 31, 1981, Bone Valley Phosphate Museum, Bradley, Florida; Murray Tamers to author, September 23, 1981, transmitting report of carbon dating analysis.

<sup>3</sup> Interviews with Park DeVane, May 7, 1980-March 29, 1982, Sebring and Tallahassee.

<sup>4</sup> Park DeVane, "Billy Bowlegs III Describes a Canoe Trip," *DeVane's Early Florida History*, 2 (Sebring, Fla.: Sebring Historical Society, 1979), n.p.

<sup>5</sup> A copy of one of these photos is in the possession of the author.

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<sup>6</sup> William P. DuVal to John C. Calhoun, August 26, 1823, transmitting report of Horatio S. Dexter. "Records of the Secretary of War Relating to Indian Affairs-Letters Received," Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Record Group 75, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

<sup>7</sup> James Gadsden to the Secretary of War, June 15, 1824, in Clarence E. Carter, ed., *The Territorial Papers of the United States: Territory of Florida*, 22 (Washington, 1956), 968-69 (hereinafter cited as *Territorial Papers*).

<sup>8</sup> "Survey of Indian Boundary in Florida, with sketch of the country embraced within," Map. No. 757, Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. These settlements were noted on surveyors' maps as late as 1855. See, John Wescott, "Township Plat of original U.S. Government survey of Township 29 South, Range 24 East" (1850); W.G. Moseley and John Jackson, "Township Plat of original U.S. Government survey of Township 31 South, Range 25 East" (1855), Department of Natural Resources, Bureau of State Lands, Tallahassee.

<sup>9</sup> D.B. McKay, *Pioneer Florida*, 2 (Tampa: Southern Publishing Co., 1959),481.

<sup>10</sup> Secretary of War to Zachary Taylor, June 4, 1839, *Territorial Papers*, XXIV, 614-15.

<sup>11</sup> *Lakeland Ledger*, February 5, 1961.

<sup>12</sup> John T. Sprague, *The Florida War* (New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1847), 303.

<sup>13</sup> John A. Whitall, "Sketch of a Reconnaissance made upon Peas Creek, Florida," in "Memoir of Reconnaissances, with Maps during the Florida Campaign," Records of the U.S. Army Continental Commands, 1821-1920, Record Group 393, National Archives Microfilm Publication No. M1090 (hereinafter cited as "Memoirs of Reconnaissances").

<sup>14</sup> Michael G. Schene, "Not A Shot Fired: Fort Chokkonikla and the 'Indian War' of 1849-1850," *Tequesta*, 37 (1977), 21-26.

<sup>15</sup> Ft. Meade was in operation from 1849 through 1854 and reopened in 1857. See "Post Returns from Ft. Meade, Florida, Dec., 1849-Aug., 1857, National Archives Microfilm Publication No. 617, Roll 763 (microfilm located at Florida State Library, Tallahassee).

<sup>16</sup> Jean Plowden, *History of Hardee County* (Wauchula, Fla.: Florida Advocate, 1929), 53.

<sup>17</sup> John A. Whitall, "Sketch of Reconnaissance made upon Peas Creek, Florida"; Winfield S. Hancock to Francis N. Page, January 22, 1857, in "Letters Received by Headquarters, Dept. of Florida," Records of the U.S. Army Continental Commands, Record Group 393, National Archives Microfilm Publication No. M1084 (hereinafter cited as "Letters Received - D.O.F.").

<sup>18</sup> *The Polk County Democrat*, Progress Edition, July 1, 1976.

<sup>19</sup> Plowden, *Hardee County*, 7.

<sup>20</sup> James W. Covington, *The Billy Bowlegs War* (Chuluota, Fla.: Mickler House Publishers, 1982),49-52.

<sup>21</sup> Carter to James C. Broome, June 24, 1856, *Florida Assembly Journal*, Appendix VII (1856),126-27.

<sup>22</sup> Carter to Broome, November 11, 1856, *Florida Assembly Journal*, Appendix: Correspondence Relating to Indian Affairs, 134-35.

<sup>23</sup> "Consolidated Morning Report of a Battalion of U.S. Troops stationed at Fort Meade Florida," November 15, 1850, "Fort Meade - Letters Received," Records of the U.S. Army Continental Commands; D.W. Howard to G.O. Lyaе, July 12,1850, "Letters Received - D.O.F."

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- <sup>24</sup> F.N. Page, Summary of Capt. Whitall's Report to Headquarters, "Memoirs of Reconnaissance."
- <sup>25</sup> L. G. Lesly to Francis N. Page, November 25, 1857, "Letters Received – D. O. F."
- <sup>26</sup> Winfield S. Hancock to Francis N. Page, January 22, 1857, *ibid.*
- <sup>27</sup> W.H. Winder to R. Jones, September 26, 1851, "Adjutant General's Office – Letters Received," Records of the Adjutant General's Office, Record Group 94, National Archives Microfilm Publication No. M. 567.
- <sup>28</sup> *The Florida Peninsular*, February 4, 1860.
- <sup>29</sup> *The Bartow Informant*, April 14, May 26, 1883; *Bartow Advance Courier*, January 18, 1888; J.F. Bartholf and F.C.M. Boggess, *South Florida, The Italy of America* (Jacksonville: Mead Brothers, 1881), 13; *Polk County News*, February 6, 1891; L. French Townshend, *Wild Life in Florida with a Visit to Cuba* (London: Hurst and Blackett, 1875), 126.
- <sup>30</sup> *Fort Meade Leader*, April 9, 1964; Deposition of G.W. Williams, taken January 4, 1894, in Transcript of Record, *State of Florida vs. The Charlotte Harbor Phosphate Company*, U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit, 260, Federal Archives and Records Center, Fort Worth, Texas. Phillip Ware, a geologist who has spent many hours in the Peace River swamp, has recovered several "deadheads" which are logs that were sawed on both ends by the lumbermen but which sank before they reached the mill. One of these deadheads still had attached to it a "dog" or metal clip used in tying several logs together into a raft.
- <sup>31</sup> *Bartow Informant*, December 23, 1882; *Tampa Tribune*, August 16, 1959; *The Arcadian*, January 7, 1943.
- <sup>32</sup> "Examination of Charlotte Harbor and Peas Creek, Florida," Senate Executive Document No. 128, 46th Cong., 2d sess. (Washington, 1880), 1-8; "Report of the Secretary of War," House Executive Document No. 1, Pt. 2, 49th Cong., 1st sess. (Washington, 1885), 1268-69.
- <sup>33</sup> "Steamboat Communication in Florida," Senate Executive Document No. 189, 47th Cong., 1st sess. (Washington, 1882), 1-23.
- <sup>34</sup> It was during this survey that LeBaron discovered phosphate in the Peace River. Although LeBaron tried to exploit the vast resources of the now-famous Bone Valley Phosphate District, he was unable to find sponsors for the venture and never profited financially. His original report may be found in Records of the Office of the Chief of Engineers, Record Group 77, Federal Records Center, East Point, Georgia.
- <sup>35</sup> "Steamboat Communication in Florida," 17.
- <sup>36</sup> M.F. Hetherington, *History of Polk County, Florida* (St. Augustine: Record Company, 1928), 178-79; *Polk County News*, February 20, 1891.
- <sup>37</sup> Francis Wyatt, *The Phosphates of America* (New York: Scientific Publishing Co., 1894), 77; Louise Frisbie, *Peace River Pioneers* (Miami: E.A. Seemann Publishing Co., 1974), 111.
- <sup>38</sup> W.W. Finerin, to the District Engineer, January 4, 1918, transmitting report on the preliminary examination of Peace River, Florida, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers District Office, Jacksonville, Florida.
- <sup>39</sup> *Polk County News*, June 12, 1891.
- <sup>40</sup> Finerin to the District Engineer, 2.
- <sup>41</sup> Vernon E. Peebles, "Charlotte Harbor Division of the Florida Southern Railroad," *Florida Historical Quarterly*, 58 (January 1980): 296.

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<sup>42</sup> Finerin to the District Engineer, 5.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., 6.