

Page 6 (Book page 46-47)

These pages detail Needham's Ferry Boat operation. It notes that there is not a record of when it was first operated but does state that it was operating during the Civil War.

The text reads:

Cross Prairie

Originally, Tohopekaliga and East Tohopekaliga Lakes were one large body of water, the two lakes being joined by a wide stream of water which was from four to ten feet deep, in the bottom of which were several feet of muck. It was impossible for any one to cross except in boats so the Indians found this an ideal retreat as they could climb to their lookout in the tall oak trees on the edge of the marsh and very easily discern the approach of an enemy.

The earliest record I have been able to obtain comes from Mr. Summerlin. He says his father was a scout, and that in 1855 the Indians were crossing here in canoes. It was nearly a mile from shore to shore.

Mr. Needham Bass built the ferryboat, but I haven't been able to find the date of his first operations, because that was in the long ago. There is no state or county record of it, but it was in operation during the Civil War.

Uncle Steve Roberts crossed here with his father, Albert G. Roberts, who was doing some surveying in 1867.

It seems that many of Orlando's first settlers moved down the different trails about the beginning of the Civil War. It was probably at that time that Needham Bass moved down the General Harney Trail to Cross Prairie near East Tohopekaliga Lake. Thinking perhaps it might prove a profitable investment, he built and operated a ferryboat there.

They say that this ferryboat was a very crude affair. It was about fifteen feet wide and thirty feet long with walls built to keep the teams from running off into the water. At first there was no approach, and the horses had to be ridden some distance out into the water so that persons could board the boat. At that time, the ladies rode on side-saddles, and when Mr. and Mrs. George Bass, parents of Mrs. J.L. Overstreet, crossed on their wedding day, the bride became so excited and instead of getting into the saddle when she was being assisted to mount, she in some way, got overbalanced and landed on the opposite side right into the mud.

Later it was somewhat improved, for when my parents crossed there on their wedding day, June 19, 1883, there was an approach, and the horse and buggy were driven onto the ferryboat, making it much more convenient for both traveler and operator.

One landing for the ferryboat and another for the rowboat were made on each side of the stream. Fire signals were used. A high fire was a signal for the ferryboat, and a low fire was a call for the rowboat for pedestrians. Sometimes guns were fired as signals. The boats were kept on the south side in the 1880's where a few families lived and John Padgett operated a store. Persons from the northern shore desiring to make the crossing had to give the signal. If the ferryboat was on the opposite

side of the stream and there was more than one load to be moved, it sometimes took a day as it had to be poled across. It was probably kept on the north side when the Basses operated it as Needham Bass lived on what is called the McManus Place, now owned by Lionel Bell. It was operated by Needham Bass and at different times by his two sons, Quinn and Rob, John Padgett and perhaps others. Prices for crossing were: Pedestrians, 25c; Horseback, 75c, Small Team, \$1; Large Team \$2. The Indians also used this ferryboat for moving their hogs and other belongings. They had fields for growing pumpkins, corn, cane, etc. on the banks of the Kissimmee River and some of the lakes and came up into the woods of this section to get the wild bee honey. They traded at the small stores at Boggy Creek Ford, Shingle Creek, Peg Horn, Cross Prairie and Kissimmee. They also peddled their hides, beads and other items among the early settlers.

When Hamilton Disston drained this section of the state, the ferryboat was no longer needed, and the convenience of being able to drive the teams on dry land must have been greatly appreciated by the early settlers.

Now, instead of a lake, there is a prairie. Some time while driving over the Old Highway to St. Cloud and coming back the New Melbourne Highway, note the large stretches of lowland and try to draw a mental picture of the way it must have looked before the drainage. The high land was very fertile, and the sub-irrigation caused a luxurious growth of food for the stock.

When you reach Melbourne Highway, turn to the left and drive back towards Kissimmee. Now you are on Cross Prairie. Stop your car for a few moments. Looking to the south-westward to the left about one-quarter of a mile away, you can see the tall oaks where the ferryboat landed during the wet seasons, and in front of them, lower down, is a bunch of oaks where it landed in the dry season. At this place there used to be some very tall oaks, and it was in the oaks that the Indians had their lookout. The landing was farther way from the Highway at the taller trees.

and the hotel was named Detroit. Legionnaire J. Mott Williams has the coin in his possession.

Umatilla

William A. Whitcomb lived in Cartersville, Georgia. He had been very much interested in a government report and description of the valley of Umatilla, Oregon with its fertile soil and large trees and the government offer of six hundred and forty acres of land to those who would settle there. But that was a long way from home so he decided to try the milder climate of Florida.

After traveling around for a few years, he took up a homestead on a nameless lake. His neighbor there was Nathan J. Trowell, who grew oranges, corn, and cotton and operated a small store. As it was inconvenient not to have any name by which they could tell people where they lived, Mr. Whitcomb suggested the name of Umatilla. Mr. Trowell agreed and rode on horseback to Gainesville where the name was recorded in the United States Land Office located there, and his little store became the post office of Umatilla.

Mascotte

Mascotte means luck, and it was indeed a lucky day that brought the Orange Belt Railway into the town. Now there was a post office, and no longer need the mail be carried to Leesburg by pony express. The self-supporting citizens now had the opportunity of seeing the outside world more often. The town was named after the S.S. Mascotte by J.W. Payne.

Paisley

Paisley was known as Lightwood when it was settled in 1860. Fifteen years later a post office was established in a two-story log house, and the name was changed to Acron. A general store was built in 1886, and the name was again changed to Paisley after the town of Paisley, Scotland.

Ybor City

When we go rushing along the highways in our modern cars and pass through Ybor City down Seventh Avenue, little thought is given to the man that founded that prosperous community and to the old ox teams that once moved slowly down the old trail to Bartow and points to the eastward in the almost forgotten days. There are still some persons who remember those old days and perhaps long for their return.

When the insurrection broke out in Cuba in 1868, a man lived there by the name of Ybor. The volunteers mobbed him because he was doing business with the United States. He established a place of business in Key West in order that he might avail himself of the difference of duty provided by our tariff. Again he was mobbed so he moved to Key West. He made a trip to Tampa, and it is evident that he was pleased with the prospect because he built a cigar factory and purchased one hundred and sixty acres of land from William B. Henderson. He built houses for his employees, and the foundation was laid for the great industrial Ybor City which continues to grow after the story of his coming has faded into the past.

Cross Prairie

Originally, Tohopekaliga and East Tohopekaliga Lakes were one large body of water, the two lakes being joined by a wide

stream of water which was from four to ten feet deep, in the bottom of which were several feet of muck. It was impossible for any one to cross here except in boats so the Indians found this an ideal retreat as they could climb to their lookout in the tall oak trees on the edge of the marsh and very easily discern the approach of an enemy.

The earliest record I have been able to obtain comes from Mr. Summerlin. He says his father was a scout, and that in 1853 the Indians were crossing here in canoes. It was nearly a mile from shore to shore.

Mr. Needham Bass built the ferryboat, but I haven't been able to find the date of his first operations, because that was in the long ago. There is no state or county record of it, but it was in operation during the Civil War.

Uncle Steve Roberts crossed here with his father, Albert G. Roberts, who was doing some surveying in 1867.

It seems that many of Orlando's first settlers moved down the different trails about the beginning of the Civil War. It was probably at that time that Needham Bass moved down the General Harney Trail to Cross Prairie, near East Tohopekaliga Lake. Thinking perhaps it might prove a profitable investment, he built and operated a ferryboat there.

They say that this ferryboat was a very crude affair. It was about fifteen feet wide and thirty feet long with walls built to keep the teams from running off into the water. At first there was no approach, and the horses had to be ridden some distance out into the water so that persons could board the boat. At that time, the ladies rode on side-saddles, and when Mr. and Mrs. George Bass, parents of Mrs. J.L. Overstreet, crossed on their wedding day, the bride became excited and instead of getting into the saddle when she was being assisted to mount, she in some way, got overbalanced and landed on the opposite side right into the mud.

Later it was somewhat improved, for when my parents crossed there on their wedding day, June 19, 1883, there was an approach, and the horse and buggy were driven onto the ferryboat, making it much more convenient for both traveler and operator.

One landing for the ferryboat and another for the rowboat were made on each side of the stream. Fire signals were used. A high fire was the signal for the ferryboat, and a low fire was a call for the rowboat for pedestrians. Sometimes guns were fired as signals. The boats were kept on the south side in the 1880's where a few families lived and John Padgett operated a store. Persons from the northern shore desiring to make the crossing had to give the signal. If the ferryboat was on the opposite side of the stream and there was more than one load to be moved, it sometimes took a day as it had to be poled across. It probably was kept on the north side when the Basses operated it as Needham Bass lived on what is called the McManus Place, now owned by Lionel Bell. It was operated by Needham Bass and at different times by his two sons, Quinn and Rob, John Padgett, and perhaps others. Prices for crossing were: Pedestrians, 25¢; Horseback, 75¢; Small Team, \$1; Large Team, \$2. The Indians also used this ferryboat for moving their hogs and other belongings. They had fields for growing pumpkins, corn, cane, etc. on the banks of the Kissimmee River and some of the lakes and came up into the woods of this section to get the wild bee honey. They traded at the small stores at Boggy Creek Ford.

Shingle Cr
also peddle
settlers.
When H
ferryboat
able to dr
appreciate
Now, in
driving on
the New I
land and
looked be

Shingle Creek, Peg Horn, Cross Prairie, and Kissimmee. They also peddled their hides, beads, and other items among the early settlers.

When Hamilton Disston drained this section of the state, the ferryboat was no longer needed, and the convenience of being able to drive the teams on dry land must have been greatly appreciated by the early settlers.

Now, instead of a lake, there is a prairie. Some time while driving over the Old Highway to St. Cloud and coming back the New Melbourne Highway, note the large stretches of lowland and try to draw a mental picture of the way it must have looked before the drainage. The high land was very fertile, and

the sub-irrigation caused a luxurious growth of food for the stock.

When you reach the Melbourne Highway, turn to the left and drive back towards Kissimmee. Now you are on Cross Prairie. Stop your car a few moments. Looking to the south-westward to the left about one-quarter of a mile away, you can see the tall oaks where the ferryboat landed during the wet seasons, and in front of them, lower down, is a bunch of oaks where it landed in dry seasons. At this place there used to stand some very tall oaks, and it was in these oaks that the Indians had their lookout. The landing to the right was farther away from the Highway at other taller trees.

