

Chronology for Gulf Coast Maroon History

for

*Tragedy and Survival:
Bicentennial of the Southward Movement of Black Seminoles on Florida's Gulf Coast*

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First Spanish Period 1513-1763

1513 Spain claimed La Florida

1565 Don Pedro Menendez de Aviles established San Agustín, or “St. Augustine”

Gracia Real de Santa Teresa de Mosé (Fort Mosé)

1693 King Charles II Proclamation granted liberty to slaves seeking refuge in Florida

1733 Royal edict reiterated freedom for English slaves seeking refuge in Florida

1738-1740 Fort Mosé I is destroyed by James Oglethorpe’s attack

1752-1763 Fort Mosé II residents left as Britain gained control of Florida

British Florida 1763-1783

- The British used the Apalachicola River to divide Florida into two colonies (East and West); East Florida developed a plantation economy, with a considerable importation of enslaved Africans
- Both Floridas remained loyal to Great Britain during the American War of Independence
- Ahaya (Mikasuki), also known as Cowkeeper, met the new British governor, Patrick Tonyn

1770s Cuban fishermen began setting up ranchos on Florida Gulf Coast

1775 Bernard Romans published *A Concise Natural History of East and West Florida*

1783 William Panton, Thomas Forbes, and John Leslie created a trading company: Panton, Leslie and Company

Second Spanish Period 1783-1821

Prospect Bluff

1814 On May 10th, British Captain Hugh Pigot anchored the HMS Orpheus near the mouth of the Apalachicola River; leaving supplies and the Royal Marines under the leadership of Captain George Woodbine. These troops were to begin the military drilling of the Indians and runaway slaves on the Apalachicola as part of larger British strategy focused on taking New Orleans.

1814 On May 25, Woodbine oversaw construction at a site that would become a fortification: Prospect Bluff

1814 In August, Nicolls arrived on the Apalachicola with the HMS Hermes under Captain Percy and the HMS Caron under Captain Spencer

- 1814** On September 15, British Colonel Nicolls, Royal Marines and newly recruited locals failed to win their attack on Fort Bowyer at Mobile Point
- 1814** November 7–9, Andrew Jackson captured Pensacola
- 1814** In November, Edward Nicolls organizes a fort on a large mound at Chattahoochee Landing. Described as a square or rectangular earthwork fort, with a breastwork about four feet high, a stockade or picket work, and two pieces of artillery, a howitzer and a coehorn mortar. Evidence for this outpost is not clear in the archival record.
- 1815** In January, Colonel Benjamin Hawkins led a large force of allied Creek warriors to scout Nicolls' Outpost; he saw 180 white and black British troops and around 500 Red Stick and Seminole; Peter McQueen and the Prophet Francis were reported in British uniforms. But the War of 1812 ended and Hawkins withdrew. Nicolls and the majority of his British, Black, and Native American forces are still at Prospect Bluffs
- 1815** On March 19, Admiral Cochrane orders Edward Nicolls to leave Florida; leaves in summer 1815, abandoning Nicholls' Outpost and taking Francis and others to London
- 1815** On April 22, Corps of Colonial Marines at Prospect Bluff were disbanded and the greater part of the Royal Marine garrison at Apalachicola embarked aboard HMS Cydnus.
- 1815** In Spring, people of African heritage, having absorbed Nicolls' anti-slavery rhetoric, regarded themselves as British subjects. They staffed the fort at Prospect Bluff – as a maroon community that extended up and down the Apalachicola River
- 1816** On July 10, provisions from New Orleans for Camp Crawford reached the mouth of the Apalachicola River on the schooners *Semilante* and *General Pike* and gunboats No. 149 and 154 commanded by Sailing Master Jarius Loomis
- 1816** On July 23, Creek soldiers, under William McIntosh, entered the fort to demand its surrender; Garcon refuses.
- 1816** On July 27, sailing Master Jarius Loomis reached Prospect Bluff at 5 am and saw the red or bloody flag as well as the Union Jack; after several shots, the first “hot” one entered the fort's powder magazine; the ensuing explosion was massive, destroying the Negro Fort. Hundreds were killed; Garcon and the Choctaw chief (unidentified in the records) were executed (in revenge for captured US soldier had been killed). Some survivors were brought to Fort Scott in August 1816; others fled to the Suwannee River.

Suwannee

- 1817** Robert Arbuthnot opened a store on Ocklockoney Bay; later another one on the Wakulla River at the site of the old Panton, Leslie store.
- 1817** June, Josiah Francis/Hillis Hadjo returned to Florida and called for a gathering of Native Americans at Tallahassee
- 1817** November 21 and 23, Fowltown in Southwest Georgia was attacked
- 1818** March, Andrew Jackson ordered the construction of what became Fort Gadsden, over the ruins of the Negro Fort

- 1818** March 31, Tallahassee Talofa was found abandoned and burned by Jackson's forces.
- 1818** April 1, the Battle of Micosukee involves villages on the west coast of Lake Micosukee; Jackson's forces move south and take Fort Marks/San Marcos de Apalache
- 1818** April 12, the US army attacked a Red Stick village on the Econfina River
- 1818** April 18, Battle of Suwannee: maroons held off US army, allowing time to escape further south, then the abandoned houses are destroyed. The survivors of the battle expanded the size of maroon community on the Manatee River; Angola grew in importance as a refuge
- 1818** April 29, the Arbuthnot and Ambrister Incident occurs: Andrew Jackson judged and condemned Robert Ambrister to death by firing squad and Robert Arbuthnot by hanging
- 1818** May 24, Jackson marched on Pensacola and captured the Spanish Fort
- 1819** From 1819 to 1821 negotiations for what becomes the Adams-Onís Treaty, also known as the Transcontinental Treaty, the Florida Purchase Treaty, or the Florida Treaty
- 1821** March 10, U.S. President James Monroe appointed General Andrew Jackson Commissioner of the United States to take possession of Florida and gave him the full powers of governor. Jackson resigned on December 31, 1821
- 1821** July 17, Spain transferred Florida to the United States

American Period 1821-present

Angola on the Manatee River

- 1821** In Late April, "...some men of influence and fortune, residing somewhere in the western country, thought of making a speculation in order to obtain Slaves for a trifle. For this purpose, they hired Charles Miller, William Weatherford, Adam, alias Allamonchee, all half breed Indians, and Daniel Perimaus a mulatto, and under these chief [sic], were engaged about two hundred Cowetas Indians". One of their targets was Angola, having perhaps seven hundred maroons, on the Manatee River and lands to the west of Sarasota Bay (citation: Canter Brown, Jr. 1990)
- 1821** By June, "The expedition took place, under the chief command of Charles Miller. They arrived at Sazazota, surprised and captured about 300 of them, plundered their plantations, set on fire all their houses, and then proceeding southerly captured several others; and on the 17th day of June, arrived at the Spanish Ranches, in Pointerrass Key, in Carlos Bay, where not finding as many Negroes as they expected, they plundered the Spanish fishermen of more than 2000 dollars worth of property, besides committing the greatest excess; with their plunder and prisoners, they returned to the place appointed for the deposit of both" (citation: Canter Brown, Jr. 1990)
- 1821** July through October, refugees from Angola fled Florida via Cape Florida for the Bahamas
- 1822** April 17, William Pope Duval became the first territorial governor
- 1823** September, the Treaty of Moultrie Creek established a reservation in central Florida, with no access to the coasts except for Neamathla sustaining villages on the Apalachicola River.
- 1825** Lighthouse built at Cape Florida, damaged by a hurricane in 1835, attacked by Seminoles on July 23, 1836, reconstructed in 1846

- 1828** The land claims by Joaquin Caldez and Jose Maria Caldez, each for 640 acres by Angola on the Oyster River, were rejected
- 1832** William Bunce, William R. Hackley, and Col. George W. Murray describe Negro Point, where the Braden River meets the Oyster River. John Lee Williams called the remains of the maroon community the “Old Spanish Fields” on his map of Florida
- 1835** From 1835 to 1842, the Second Seminole War raged across Florida
- 1837** John Lee Williams published *The Territory of Florida, or Sketches of the Topography, Civil and Natural History of the Country, the Climate, and the Indian Tribes from the First Discovery to the Present Time, with a map, views, & c*
- 1841** Miguel Gerrero, Manuel Olivella and Phillipi Bermudez brought Josiah Gates and Miles Price to a spring marked by a lone pine, a mile to the south were the former maroon fields; with surveyor Samuel Reid, a group settled by the Manatee Mineral Spring in January 1842 to create the Village of Manatee
- 1845** Florida became a state of the United States of America
- 1858** Joshua Reed Giddings published *The Exiles of Florida: or the Crimes committed by our Government against the Maroons, who fled from South Carolina and other Slave States, seeking Protection under Spanish Laws*