

REFERENCES FOR ALBRITTON SKETCH: Bounty Land Application of T. H. Albritton, 1851 & 1856; Pension application of T. H. Albritton, 1892; Widow's pension application of Syndrilla Albritton, 1907; Thomas H. Albritton family Bible; Joshua Creek, Crewsville, Lily, Fort Ogden & Coker family cemeteries; Manatee Co. & Monroe Co. marriages; 1850 Columbia, 1860, 1870, 1880 & 1885 Manatee Census; Manatee County deed books; Manatee County Mark & Brands; Confederate military service records; Union military service records; James A. Albritton pension application for Union service; Interview with Mrs. Dora McLenon Johnston, granddaughter of Thomas H. Albritton who provided many stories about him and also contributed the photograph of him; Thanks to Mrs. Frances K. Hendry who assisted in locating & providing material from her mother, Mrs. Johnston; The Tampa Tribune, July 26, 1959, "Fearless Pioneer Waded Into Palmetto & Killed Panther With His Fists"; Albritton Family File, Polk County Historical Library, Bartow, Fla.; Article from Punta Gorda Herald, dated 1906, "A Polk County Patriarch"; "Albritton Family Settled in Manatee in the 1850's", The Tampa Tribune, July 12, 1959; Pioneers of Wiregrass Georgia, by Judge Folks Huxford, Vol II, page 20, 281; Vol. IV, page 354; Vol. V, page 4-5.



DE SOTO COUNTY: HISTORY OF FORT WINDER

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Fort Winder is a small settlement in southwestern De Soto County, Florida, on State Road S-761. It was first settled around 1865 and was a station for cattle drives that were being driven down King's Highway to Charlotte Harbor to be loaded aboard ships called "lighters" and shipped to Cuba. The men who owned the cattle were paid in Spanish gold coins.

Fort Winder got its name when a group of soldiers led by a Capt. Winder, came south looking for stray bands of Indians. They made a camp near where Peace River Heights is today. They camped there several days building a circular dirt embankment for protection from possible attacks from the Indians. The camp was called "Fort Winder" and it is still called that today.

The early settlers had to travel by ox cart to Fort Ogden and Pine Level to get their supplies they did not raise on their farms. To get to Fort Ogden, they had to cross Peace River on a ferry as there was no bridge back then. Later, near the river, there was a general store, owned by a Mr. Gill. William Platt had a turpentine still near the railroad after it was built.

The settlers first went to the camp meetings at Pine Level for Church services. Then around 1875, the first school was built. It was also used on Sunday for Church services when a circuit riding preacher came thru. The first building burned about 1906 and was replaced with a new one the same year. Several years later the school was discontinued and the pupils were transferred to the Fort Ogden school.

The Fort Winder Methodist Church was organized in 1880. After a number of years, the membership transferred to the Methodist Church in Fort Ogden. The old building was wrecked and only the old bell remains today.

Some early settlers of Fort Winder were Mr. Albritton, David Mizell from Pine Level, William Barnwell from Alabama, Shubal Barnwell, William Platt, Ben Blackburn from north Fla., Mose Whidden, Isam Martin, William Jernigan from N.C., J. F. Beasley, Will Waterson, John Easters & others.