



On April 15, 1861 Willoughby Whidden registered his mark & brand with the Manatee County Clerk. On this same day, James and Maxwell Whidden also registered their marks and brands. James Whidden: Crop & half crop in one ear, crop in the other; brand . Maxwell Whidden: Swallowfork in one ear, crop in the other; brand .

Willoughby Whidden died at his home on May 27, 1861 and was buried in the Wauchula Cemetery. His tombstone shows his death year as 1862. But on Oct. 3, 1881, James D. Green, Henry Langford and Eliza Whidden appeared before the Manatee County Clerk to testify that Willoughby had died on May 27, 1861 and that on May 10, 1861 while of sound mind and discretion, he did make his last will and testament in the presence of Maxwell Whidden, Henry Langford, John W. Whidden, James Whidden and J. O. Neal Smith, a Justice of the Peace who wrote the will for Willoughby. A copy of the will was presented:

State of Florida Manatee County	To all whom it may concern. Know all men by these present that I Willoughby Whidden of the State and County aforesaid, for and in consideration of the affection that I have for my beloved wife, Eliza Whidden, do bequeath and give all of the property that I am now possessed of together with the increase interest and consisting of cattle, hogs, horses, money, notes, household furniture and farming utensils to have and to hold the said described property during her natural life for her support and maintenance and to use and dispose of, buy or sell, in short to make all her own contracts. As I have given to those of my children who are of age other portions of property it is my wish that at the death of said Eliza Whidden that the children of mine and the said Eliza Whidden who are not of age to draw an equal portion with those who have already drawn. Then the surplus if any other, then to be equally divided between them all. This is my last will and testament signed in the presence of Almighty God and those witnesses whose names are hereunto affixed. I being at the time of signing and sealing of this instrument of writing in full possession of all my faculties.
------------------------------------	--

Maxwell Whidden Henry Langford John W. Whidden Maxfield Whidden James Whidden	his Willoughby X Whidden mark
---	-------------------------------------

Eliza's father, Jesse Pennington, died in 1863, aged 86 years and her daughter, Lavina Williams died in 1863. Both were buried in the Wauchula Cemetery near Willoughby Whidden.

On October 5, 1863, Eliza Whidden sold to James E. Whidden 600 head of cattle marked crop & underbit in one ear, swallowfork in the other and branded with a heart. On March 14, 1864, he sold the 600 head of cattle back to her.

During the Civil War, John Wesley Whidden was a First Lieutenant and later Captain of Company "E", "South Florida Bulldogs", 7th Fla. Infantry of Confederate Army. E. W. Thompson was a private in this company. James D. Green, Maxwell Whidden, James E. Whidden, William Whidden and Jesse Whidden were members of the 2nd Florida Cavalry of the U. S. Army.

In 1870, Eliza Whidden was living in Township 34 in the Fort Hartsuff area along with James & Eliza Green, John W. Whidden, Charles & Sophia Hendry, Jesse Whidden and others of the family. In the early 1870's she moved into the Joshua Creek area along with some of her children. They were members of Mt. Moriah Baptist Church and J. W. Whidden was a delegate from the Church to the 1875 South Florida