

ALEXANDER BELL 1827-1898

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Alexander Bell, a son of Daniel and Mary (Cone) Bell, was born in Hamilton County, Florida, June 2, 1827. Daniel Bell settled in what is now Hamilton County about 1825 and his son Alexander is generally considered the first white child born there. Alexander's mother died when he was young and his father subsequently married Evalina Brickell.

Alexander grew up in well-to-do circumstances and "read law", but never became a lawyer. On August 8, 1849, he enrolled at Alligator (now Lake City) as a private in the militia company commanded by Capt. Joseph J. Knight. He was discharged from service on Oct. 27, 1849.

On August 17, 1853, in Hamilton County, Alexander Bell was married to Susan Amanda Stewart, daughter of Israel M. and Antionette Stewart. Susan was born in Florida on Sept. 18, 1834. Alexander and Susan Amanda (Stewart) Bell had the following children:

1. James Stewart Bell, born Aug. 25, 1854; died March 23, 1917; married Emily Lagow, July 25, 1879.
2. John Franklin Bell, born Sept. 9, 1856; died April 2, 1921; married Eloise Hendry, June 16, 1878.
3. Daniel Bell, born c1859; died young.
4. Annie Ella Bell, born July 19, 1861; died Dec. 18, 1929; married 1st, Timothy Gage, Feb. 2, 1887; married 2nd, Frank Black.
5. Alice Evelyn Bell, born Aug. 11, 1866; died Jan. 22, 1940; married Wallace T. Harbin, June 24, 1895.
6. Matella Alma Bell, born July 26, 1870; died Apr. 22, 1939; married John Bibb Meriwether.
7. Lillian Bell, born Aug. 8, 1873; died Sept. 28, 1955; married 1st, Jeter Lane, Mar. 23, 1896; married 2nd, Robert Gorman, Apr. 8, 1907.

(Family sources indicate that there were two other children: a son named Montgomery who died at age four and an unnamed infant son who died at four months. The son, Daniel, listed above may actually have been one of these two sons.)

During the Third Seminole War, Alexander Bell commanded Company No. 3 Infantry, Special Battalion Florida Volunteers, commanded by Col. M. Whit Smith. The company served from June 24th to Sept. 30th, 1856.

From the years 1859 until 1864 Alexander Bell was Sheriff of Hamilton County.

Alexander did not believe in slavery and opposed the Civil War. The Bells and Stewarts served in the Confederate army but Alexander could not bring himself to do so. He stayed at Cedar Key, on the west coast, during part of the war and while there contacted yellow fever and was the only survivor in a ward of twelve men.

Needless to say, following the war Alexander Bell was not popular among his kinsmen or the citizenry of Hamilton County because of the stand he had taken during the War. About 1867 Alexander and his family left north Florida and began their long journey which would eventually take them to the southern part of Brevard County on the east coast.