

This section details Ackias Bass, grandson of **Needham Bass** and son of Needham (Tude) Bass.



CHAPTER NINETEEN

Mr. Ackias Bass St. Cloud

We found Mr. Ackias Bass at his home about ten miles southeast of St. Cloud. He is one of Florida's Native Sons and has served many years as County Commissioner of Osceola County.

Mr. Bass is a son of Mr. and Mrs. Needham (Tude) Bass and first saw daylight during a three-day storm in 1879 at the Flat Ford Canoe Creek Place. He says that the storms were not so severe back then as the ones of recent years.

Flat Ford was between Alligator and Buck Lakes, and unlike most of the surrounding marshes, it had a white sand bottom, and the water was perfectly clear. This was a wonderful place for "striking" fish. The men waded in this ford at night, carrying a fat pine torch and a hand saw or framing square. The light attracted the fish, and when they came to the top, the men struck them, killing them almost instantly.

When Mr. Bass was large enough to stride a horse, his family lived at the old Bunk Tyson place at Shake Rag.

Mr. John Bass owned a saloon in Kissimmee. Mr. Redding Parker who lived beyond Canoe Creek, owed him four or five hundred dollars and agreed to pay the bill in cattle so this boy went with his father after them.

Canoe Creek was a terrible looking place to him. The crossing here was made with a very large rowboat. They found it on the opposite side of the creek so his father swam over after it. At this crossing the wagons and persons crossed on the boat, and the horses, oxen, and herds of cattle swam across.

Mr. Aaron Bass, his cousin, had his own idea about how to make this crossing. He pushed his wagon out into the creek until the rowboat beneath picked it up and floated it; then placing his ox at the front and taking hold of his tail, he said, "Gee up, Nig, gee up." In this way he crossed the creek in

grand style and didn't have to use the pole.

Mr. Ackias Bass also tells us about himself and his brother El riding horseback to Kissimmee to see the first train enter this village. That was a great day, and a big barbecue was enjoyed by the people of the surrounding country.

That day Mr. Tom Johnson said to Ackias's father, "Tude, are these your boys?" He told them that they were, and Mr. Johnson gave each of them a silver dollar, thereby winning their love for all time. In later years they had the opportunity of giving him some money when he needed it.

Messrs. Bob Donegan, Jeff Barber, and John Tyson hauled supplies from Waters and Carson Grocery Company in Kissimmee to Fort Bassenger with ox teams.

Mr. Bass tells us that long before that period, there were two routes for the persons living to the south. One route was from Fort Bassenger, traveling east of Lake East Tohopekaliga on the high land to Lake Jessup. This route was used by the large ox teams, which had several yoke of oxen and were heavily loaded. The shorter route across Cross Prairie ferry was used by the smaller teams. He says that this ferryboat was about fifteen feet wide and thirty feet long.

We saw Mr. Bass in Kissimmee one day, and although he was busy contacting the voters in regard to his election as County Commissioner, he spent some time looking over the manuscript and maps. He very graciously gave us the route east of East Tohopekaliga Lake. It leaves the Fort Mellon — Fort Brooke Trail several miles north of Maitland, running east of Maitland, Orlando, Fort Gatlin, Lake Hart, East Tohopekaliga Lake and follows the high pine timber land to Whittier, where it joins the shorter route from Fort Gatlin to Fort Bassenger.



Ackias Bass. (Courtesy: Elvin Thomas)

Ackias Bass, County Commissioner. (Courtesy: Osceola County Historical Society)



Mr. and Mrs. Ackias Bass and their children in 1906. In the buggy are Pearl Bass (front seat, left), Otis Lee Bass (in back), Mrs. Lily Day (school teacher) and Tobe Bass. Standing on the porch are Mrs. Dell (a neighbor),

Mrs. Ackias Bass and Alzine McCleard (a friend). (Courtesy: Mrs. William Crum)