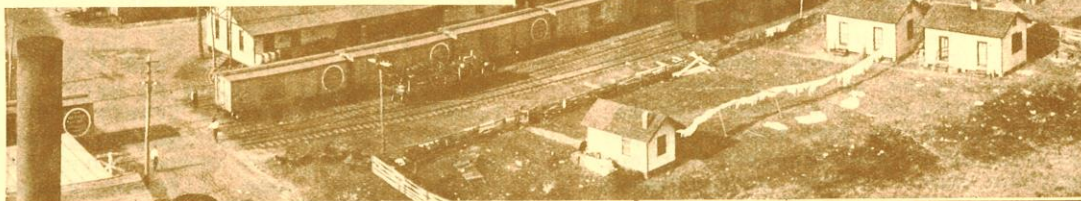


# THE OSCEOLA JOURNAL

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The following story is courtesy of one of our members, Mrs. Charlotte K. Quina, and it is taken from the Americus Press [Sumter County] Georgia, January 21, 1903:

Among the early settlers in the year 1836 were the Basses, Lanes, Griffins, and many others, which I shall take up later. There were four brothers--Quincy, Amos, Needham and John Bass--all of whom came from North Carolina and settled in different parts of the county. Quincy settled three miles north of the town, on the place now known as the Webster Bagley place. He was at that time looked upon as one of the best farmers in the county, and also one of the most substantial men, liberal and kind and a conscientious Christian.

He raised five sons--Zack, Patrick, Alleck, James and Charley--all of whom are dead, except Charley, who is now living at Sumner, Worth County.

All were good and substantial citizens of the county in their day, and from whom have sprung large families.

Amos, also, was a good and reliable man, but, unfortunately,

was killed by Henry Welary for resisting arrest on a warrant. He also raised a large family. All are now dead.

John also had a large family, who are all dead.

Needham, the one that I shall devote more time to than the rest, had a large family of boys brought up here, but afterwards moved to Florida.

Needham was somewhat different from the rest, as he was a great hunter in those days. Game was plentiful--deer, turkeys, etc., and almost daily he would bring to town venison hams and wild turkeys to sell. He was a great shot with a rifle, which he always carried with him. And, in addition to his hunting, he was a good fiddler, and would have frolics. We called them afterwards balls, and now they are germans. Two or three times a week there would be a frolic, either at his house or some of the neighbors' houses. Needham was always sure to be there with his fiddle. He took great delight in the dances because of the pay and fun there was in them. About every hour they would pass the hat around for collection, and the dance

generally would last all night, so that they could go home in the morning. The girls and boys would have a good time of it dancing the old, old favorite and much beloved Virginia reel--most always in the yard--as the houses were too small to dance in. They would clean off the yards, which were large. Then, if the moon was not shining, they would have large lightwood fires at several places around so as to give good lights, and have benches made for the girls to sit on to rest. When they danced out a reel they got ready for the next. Needham was always the central figure at all places, and would not only play the fiddle, but would call for them and pat his foot. His favorite piece would be called "Needham's Favorite", which would run thus:

"Up in the loft and down the cellar, Needham Bass is a hell of a fellow."

And thus the dancing would go on till Betsy would announce supper, which was always prepared for the occasion, and very soon the table would be filled with at least as many as could get around it. When they got through eating they would give away and another crowd fill the table. Thus they did till all had enough.

On one of those occasions while Betsy was making a chicken pie she accidentally dropped her pipe into it. She never discovered it and all went merrily on till supper was announced. When all had partaken of the pie, and about the time the last table was getting through, Frank Turpin got the pipe in his plate and thought that he had struck something hard which he could not masticate very easily. On a closer examination he found it to be Betsy's pipe. About that time those of the first table began to get sick, then the others, until all commenced vomiting. All that had partaken of it were sick, and soon the whole house and yard was filled with chicken pie; the dogs and cats got hold of some of it, making them sick.

Needham had three dogs, Ringtail, Rock and Jowler, who were about to die. He sent for Aunt Polly Peterson, who soon administered sweet milk and some tea made from herbs taken from the garden, and they soon began to get better, except Grif Gatewood, Jim Baily and Frank Turpin, who seemed to be worse off than the balance. Frank had a private bottle of peach and honey, which they began to sample, and soon they began to get better, but it broke up the frolic for the night. Needham said that outside of his two Betsies, his wife, gun and fiddle, that there was nothing on earth he loved better than his trusty dogs. I will state that Major Speer wrote about the pipe in the chicken pie some fifteen years ago. He said that it was in Tallow Town that it happened. Pat Brady answered his letter from Henry county, Alabama, and disputed it by saying that the event took place over in Goose Neck, four miles west of Americus, in Holly Settlement. But as I happen to be one that had gnawed some of them chicken bones, it made very serious impression on my mind, and I know what I am talking about.

Poor Old Needham got into a little scrape by cutting Jack Anthon's throat and had to run away to Florida, which broke up the fun in that settlement. When he was a friend to you, he was a friend indeed, and would give up everything he had except his two Betsies and his three dogs, Ringtail, Rock and Jowler.

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#### OLDTIMER'S DAY - A HAPPY DAY

The third Oldtimer's Day was as successful as the first two. People who had not seen one another for years met with old friends and acquaintances and their pleasure and enjoyment were deeply gratifying to the members of the Historical Society who hosted the occasion at the Historical Museum.