

Page 16 (Book page 139-140) gives a significant amount of detail on **Needham Bass** including his final moments. Lula Bass Overstreet was the granddaughter of **Needham Bass** and daughter of George W. and Susanna Bass.

The text specific to Needham states:

“Her grandfather, **Needham Bass**, was a native of Smithville, Georgia (*note: Needham was actually born in North Carolina but lived in Sumter County, Georgia from about 1836-1850*). We find him in Orlando in the late 1850’s which was probably when he migrated to this section. His children born during his first marriage were: Quinn, Rob, Doc and probably daughter, Elvira. During his marriage to his second wife, Betsy, George, Crawford, Charles, Needham Jr. (Tude), and Sylvania were born. Sylvania married Dr. Billie Smith of Davenport, the only physician for many miles around. Their nieces and nephews call them “Uncle Billy” and “Aunt Silly.”

Needham Bass had a remarkable set of teeth, although they wore down to the gums before his death. Members of the family tell about the wonderful strength eh had in them. They saw him swing his homemade hickory chairs back and forth between his long legs, holding them only by the back with his teeth.

He was very fond of music and was a great “fiddler.” When on his death bed he asked one of the family to give him his fiddle. After playing some of his favorite tunes on his beloved instrument, he lay back on his pillows and passed into the Great Beyond. The fiddle was placed in the casket to rest with him.

When Mrs. Lula Overstreet was eleven or twelve years old, she accompanied her Uncle Jim Bass on his return to Georgia. They got off the train at Smithville, and on their drive to Americus, they visited the grave of her grandfather, **Needham Bass**, who had passed away while visiting relatives. She doesn’t remember having seen him, but she does recall vividly having seen her grandmother sitting just inside the door. She was a very pretty woman although real old at that time. Her sitting there combing her beautiful white hair made a lasting impression on the young girl’s mind.



CHAPTER THIRTY-FIVE

Mrs. Lula Bass Overstreet Kissimmee

We are very glad to include Mrs. Overstreet's information in this manuscript as she is one of the real pioneers of Kissimmee, whose knowledge of the past predates the City of Kissimmee. It is always a pleasure to visit with her congenial and hospitable family in their lovely home on Main Street. This prominent family needs no introduction in this part of the state. The long political career of Mr. J.L. Overstreet as Clerk of the Court of Osceola County for many years and now the career of their son, Murray, as State Attorney, tell the story of their popularity.

When Lula Bass became the bride of John L. Overstreet, it meant the union of two of Central Florida's oldest pioneer families. He was a son of Mr. and Mrs. Malcomb Overstreet and a grandson of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Overstreet, and she was a daughter of Mr. and Mrs. George Bass and a granddaughter of Mr. and Mrs. Needham Bass. Their marriage ceremony was solemnized in the old Methodist Church. Prof. A.A. Simpson and Joe Sears were ushers, Miss Bertie Johnson, now Mrs. George Steffee, was organist, and Janie Bell was flower girl.

Mrs. Overstreet tells about a pretty fall wedding when Miss Mattie Seymour became the bride of W.B. Harris. Goldenrod was used for the decoration.

Her grandfather, Needham Bass, was a native of Smithville, Georgia. We find him in Orlando in the late 1850's, which was probably when he migrated to this section. His children born during his first marriage were: Quinn, Rob, Doc, and probably a daughter, Elvira. During his marriage to his second wife, Betsy, George, Crawford, Charles, Needham Jr. (Tude), and Sylvania were born. Sylvania married Dr. Billie Smith of Davenport, the only physician for many miles around. Their nieces and nephews called them "Uncle Billy" and "Aunt Silly."

Needham Bass had a remarkable set of teeth, although they wore down to the gums before his death. Members of the family tell about the wonderful strength he had in them. They saw him swing his homemade hickory chairs back and forth between his long legs, holding them only by the back with his teeth.

He was very fond of music and was a great "fiddler." When on his deathbed he asked one of the family to give him his fiddle. After playing some of his favorite tunes on his beloved instrument, he lay back on his pillows and passed into the Great Beyond. The fiddle was placed in the casket to rest with him.

When Mrs. Lula Overstreet was eleven or twelve years old, she accompanied her Uncle Jim Bass on his return to Georgia. They got off the train at Smithville, and on their drive to Americus, they visited the grave of her grandfather, Needham Bass, who had passed away while visiting relatives. She doesn't remember having seen him, but she does recall vividly having seen her grandmother sitting just inside the door. She was a very pretty woman although real old at that time. Her sitting there combing her beautiful white hair made a lasting impression on the young girl's mind.

Sam and John Bass married the Powell sisters; Mrs. John Bass, mother of Fred Bass of Orlando, afterward married R.T. Butler, who was well known in Kissimmee during his lifetime.

Needham (Tude) Bass was accidentally injured during a quarrel at Cross Prairie in which he had no part. It caused his death several years later.

Mrs. Overstreet's other grandparents, Uncle John Sanbury and his wife, Nancy, came down from Darlington, South Carolina, in 1867. They brought their daughter, Susanna, down to Cross Prairie to prevent her from getting married, but several months later she eloped with George Bass.

At that time the ferryboat had no approaches, and a horse had to be ridden a short distance to the ferryboat on each side of the stream. The bride was shy and attempted to mount the sidesaddle on the horse without aid. Being somewhat excited, she went right on over the horse into the mud. They went to Dick Bass's house, where she washed and ironed her clothes, and they were married there.

These newlyweds settled on the General Harney Trail, about two miles northwest of Hilliard's Island. Some of the men who passed the house on the trail were pretty tough fellows.

Book page 140 shows 2 photographs of George Bass (Son of Needham Bass and brother of Crawford Bass). His daughter is in the top photograph, front row, second from the left.



The Overstreet family pictured on the porch of the Overstreet home in Shingle Creek. On the top row, Eleazer, Ruth, William, Sarah, and Henry; middle row, Rebecca holding Onie Austin, Malcolm holding Murray, Mary

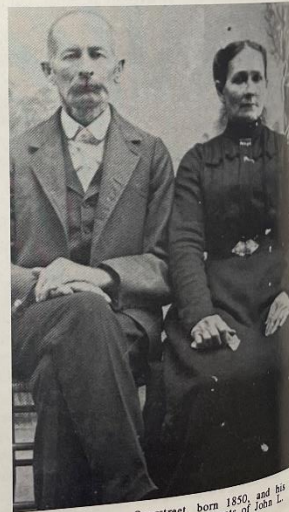
Cowart Overstreet, born 1826, and George; bottom row, John, Lela Vermelle Bass Overstreet, Rev. Austin and his wife, Mary Aquil (Courtesy: Mrs. Lois Overstreet Summers)



Ellanore Overstreet, grandfather George Bass and Laleah Overstreet. Ellanore and Laleah are grandchildren. (Courtesy: Lois Overstreet Summers)



George W. Bass, father of Mrs. J.L. Overstreet, with Masonic regalia. (Courtesy: Mrs. Lois Overstreet Summers)



Malcomb Nicholson Overstreet, born 1850, and his wife Rebecca Bronson. They were the parents of John L. Overstreet. (Courtesy: Mrs. Lois Summers)

Book page 141 finishes this chapter of the book. (Note, *George W. Bass (Son of Needham, brother of Crawford and uncle of William Robert Bass)* was a house builder by the later 1800s. This is very likely what led *William Robert Bass* into that business as a home carpenter vice the cattle business so many of his family remained in.)

Lula's mother Susanna became so frightened that she returned to South Carolina for three years. After she came back, Mrs. Lula Overstreet was born there at the home on the General Harney Trail.

Mrs. Bass and a schoolteacher, Miss Mamie Dasher, once made a trip to Mellonville (Sanford). They were driving an ox hitched to a two-wheeled cart behind the other teams driven by the men. All at once a skunk tried to cross the road in front of the ox. The ox ran toward the skunk, hooking it with his horns. The ox finally broke loose from the cart, which tipped backward, breaking a large number of eggs, which showered all over Miss Dasher.

When Mrs. Overstreet was four years of age, her parents sold the place to Mr. and Mrs. Hawes. It is now owned by their son-in-law and daughter, Mr. and Mrs. Ky Myers.

Mr. and Mrs. Bass moved to the location of Kissimmee. The community was growing, and there was no hotel to accommodate the newcomers so they, having built a story-and-a-half house for their home, used the upper story for sleeping quarters, placing many beds in the available space, leaving only a place to walk between.

Mr. Bass was a carpenter, and he and his workman built practically all the first houses. When the Tropical Hotel was burned down, he built the Graystone Hotel.

Mrs. Overstreet well remembers a certain day when some of

the Indians dined in her home. She became terribly frightened because she thought she was going to be scalped.

Mrs. Overstreet's uncle, Mr. Tom Bass, had a store in Kissimmee. He was a great friend of the Indians, and they traded with him. One day Old Tom Tiger was in his store. Mr. Bass told him to select his entire outfit of clothes, and he would make him a present of them. Tom Tiger did so, putting them on at once. He was the first one of the Seminoles to wear civilian clothes.

The first Methodist preachers coming to Kissimmee were circuit riders, John and Ed Ley. They rode ponies on their rounds and tied their shoes over their shoulders so they wouldn't get wet while the ponies were swimming the streams.

The first services were held once a month in a blacksmith shop between Lake and Bass Streets. Sunday School was organized here. Later a church was built on the southeast corner of the block now occupied by the Emma Yowell School on Church Street. That school now rings the bell once used by the old Methodist Church. Mr. J.L. Overstreet has been Sunday school superintendent for thirty years.

Over twenty years ago when Mrs. George Bass was making her home with her daughter, Mrs. J.L. Overstreet, I visited her a number of times, and she told me about life on the General Harney Trail. She and her relatives used that trail in the 1860's.



John Lewis Overstreet and his beloved wife, Lula V. Bass Overstreet.
(Courtesy: Osceola County Historical Society)