

received a stock of cattle and pasture rights on Chloroform Branch at Kissimmee Island, where he resided for about 10 years. Kissimmee Island was a large range located in the Kissimmee River Valley.

Tax statements for Polk County, dated 1862, show that William H. Willingham owned 1550 head of cattle. During the late 1860's William gave his land at Kissimmee Island to his son, William W. "Bill" Willingham, and moved to Fort Meade, where he homesteaded land on the east side of Peace River. The legal description of his 160 acres is the E $\frac{1}{2}$  of the NE $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 35; and the N $\frac{1}{2}$  of the NW $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 36, Township 31 South, Range 25 East. Polk County land records show deeds to William H. Willingham from Francis A. Hendry, dated Nov. 3, 1869 for another plot of land; also a deed from the Internal Improvement Fund of Florida to Willingham, dated Nov. 3, 1876.

On the Willingham homestead, William constructed a handsome two-story house. A hand-pegged structure, painted white, it had gingerbread printing on the broad veranda. In the front room was a fireplace, built of limestone blocks William had cut from the banks of Peace River. During the 1880's William owned large orange groves and operated a ferry across the river at Fort Meade.



SIGNATURE OF W. H. WILLINGHAM, 1851

When William H. Willingham was an old man he fell off a wagon and broke his leg. His health gradually declined and he died Feb. 2, 1886 at Fort Meade. Pleasant Grove Cemetery, located near the homestead, was

the place of burial. William died intestate and Sheriff R. T. Kilpatrick served as Administrator ex officio of the estate.

After William's death, Annie (Hilliard) Willingham continued to live at Fort Meade and received \$8 a month pension for William's service in the Indian wars. While staying at the home of her daughter, Ellen (Willingham) Parker, in Bassinger, she died April 24, 1901, and was buried in the Bassinger Cemetery.

Children of William Henry & Annie (Hilliard) Willingham:

1. Isabelle Willingham, born 1840; died March 1902; married 1st, Jacob Driggers who died in 1864; married 2nd, William McClelland, on July 10, 1866.
2. William W. "Bill" Willingham, born June 25, 1842; died June 6, 1910; married Ann E. Starling, July 25, 1866; divorced Nov. 16, 1893.
3. Serena Willingham, born April 14, 1844; died July 12, 1926; married James Thomas Hancock, May 6, 1858.
4. Matilda Willingham, born Feb. 8, 1846; died Dec. 10, 1935; married 1st, Manuel Montes de Oca, Jan. 12, 1867; married 2nd, William Henry McLaughlin (McGlochlin), Dec. 6, 1878; married 3rd, John Smith; married, 4th, Thomas J. Waters.
5. Penelope Willingham, born 1849; died young.
6. Ellen Willingham, born May 14, 1851; died March 8, 1933; married Readding Blount Parker, Aug. 6, 1868.
7. Mary Ann Willingham, born June 3, 1855; died Sept. 3, 1924; married Thomas B. Hilliard, Oct. 15, 1873.