

10. William Oscar Skipper, born Nov. 10, 1873; died Jan. 10, 1954; married 1st, Bertha Pearl Hart, Jan. 20, 1895; married 2nd, Bertha Herzog Saunders, July 3, 1919.

John L. Skipper was a cattleman and farmer in Hillsborough County. On May 29, 1850 he registered the JL brand for use on his cattle, the mark being "Poplar leaf in one ear, undersquare in the other". John and Elizabeth Jane Skipper are shown twice on the 1850 census for Hillsborough County, once as family 88, again as family 111. At that time they were living in the Ichepucksassa-Simmons Hammock area.

By 1856 John L. Skipper and his family had moved to the Peas Creek area, settling on the east side of the stream, near the present site of Homeland. Their homestead appears on Ives' 1856 military map of Florida, being shown on the east side of the trail that led from Fort Carroll south to Fort Meade.

When the Third Seminole War broke out, John Levi Skipper enlisted in Capt. William B. Hooker's Independent Company of Florida Mounted Volunteers at Fort Meade Jan. 3, 1856. They were mustered into Federal service on Feb. 21, 1856 and served until Aug. 20, 1856. After Seminoles attacked the home of Willoughby Tillis, June 14, 1856, they retreated south to Peas Creek swamp. Lt. Streaty Parker led a detachment of men to pursue the Indians and among his number was John L. Skipper. During the battle which followed on June 16, 1856, John Levi was wounded. A colorful account of this incident appears in J. O. Parrish's Battling the Seminoles:

Uncle John Skipper, who had walked a short distance along the bank, was fired upon by a lone Indian. The shot took effect in the muscle of his right arm but did not break the bone. Looking to where the shot had come from, Skipper saw the old Chief standing between him and the river, holding his smoking gun but making no attempt to reload it. Seeing there was no escape the old Chief called out, "Me see John. Me no let other Indian shoot John. Me no let other Indian shoot John. Me friend."

Mr. Skipper called to the men, "Boys, I am shot. Bring me another gun quick or the cuss will get away."

One of the men ran to him with a loaded gun and raised it to shoot the old Indian, who stood in plain view and in easy range, but Skipper's blood was up and he tried to take the gun from the man, in spite of his wounded arm, insisted on doing the shooting.

At first the Indian thought that Uncle John was trying to keep the man from shooting him and a grin overspread his features as he thought this ruse had worked, but when he realized the true situation he dashed off at high speed for the near by river. As the Indian disappeared thru the dense willows growing on the high bank, and dived into the water, Mr. Skipper had got the gun and as the Indian, who had swum under the water until his breath gave out, bobbed up, Skipper fired tearing a huge hole thru the top of the Indian's head.

"There, damn you," said Uncle John. "I'll drag your carcass out of there mighty soon." Later, in spite of his wounded arm, he dived into the river and dragged the body to shore, where he proceeded to cut the head off.

During the Civil War, John L. Skipper "was opposed to secession and voted against secession and did not voluntarily aid, abet or engage in the rebellion", according to an affidavit made by William Raulerson in 1888