

About 1850 James Alderman decided to take his family to the frontier area of south Florida, and settle in Hillsborough County, along the Alafia River. Deed records of Hillsborough County show that on Jan. 16, 1851 he paid John Parker \$200 for 160 acres of land located as follows: the SE $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 14, Township 30S, Range 21E. Also recorded is a Letter of Patent from Millard Fillmore, President of the U. S. to James Alderman for 40 acres located as follows: the NW $\frac{1}{4}$ of the NW $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 13, Township 30S, Range 21E, dated May 18, 1852. During the 1850's and the 1860's James Alderman was engaged in the cattle business. Hillsborough County tax rolls show that in 1853 he owned 500 head and by 1855 he owned 900 head of cattle. On July 19, 1851 he registered the 4 brand and on July 12, 1853 he registered 22, according to Hillsborough County's oldest Marks & Brands Book. On March 16, 1863 James registered the 4 brand in Manatee County.

During one of the Seminole Indian uprisings, James and his family were forced up north of the river at Alafia for protection. James decided to move to the south side of the river, although many of the people in the fort did not think it safe because of reports of Indians being nearby. Nevertheless, he went across the river and settled. One night, the horses, who were extremely sensitive to Indian sounds, began to stampede. The next morning the Aldermans returned to Fort Alafia. When the hostilities ended, James Alderman returned to his home and is generally recognized to be the first person to settle in the area south of the

Alafia River. Alderman's Ford, located near his homestead, is the spot where James first crossed the river. During the Third Seminole War, in 1856, James Alderman served in the volunteer militia

James Alderman

company of Capt. Leroy G. Lesley. On July 9, 1855, James applied for bounty land based upon service in Capt. Newman's company during the Seminole War in 1836 in Thomas County, Ga. The claim was rejected for lack of proof. (Above signature from 1855 application).

On November 24, 1860, the people of Hillsborough County met at Alafia and recommended that the State of Florida secede from the Union. James Alderman was among the citizens who signed the petition urging secession. The 1860 census shows James Alderman and family residing in Hillsborough County with James having real estate valued at \$1500 and personal property worth \$10,100. Nearby neighbors included sons Matthew, Mitchell, Timothy and Michael Alderman and sons-in-law, M. P. Lyons and William B. Moody.

According to her tombstone in Pelot's Cemetery, Hillsborough County, Roxie Ann (Annie) Alderman died March 6, 1868. Another source gives her death date as March 5, 1882. At any rate, James Alderman appears on the 1870 census for Hillsborough County in the Hurrah Community.

The following item appeared in the Tampa Sunland Tribune, dated Feb. 19, 1880:

Died on the 3rd instant, at the residence of Mr. Josh Riggs in Manatee County, Mr. James Alderman, aged 79 years. Mr. Alderman was one of the oldest settlers in this county and was an upright and honest man.

James Alderman's body was interred at Pelot's Cemetery near the Alafia River.

References: Census: 1830-40 Thomas Co., Ga., 1860-70 Hills. Co., Fl.; Aldermans in America by W. A. Parker; Pioneers of Wiregrass Georgia, by Folks Huxford, Vol. III; Hills. Co. deed, tax, marriage & marks and brands records; Pioneer Fla page, Tampa Tribune, Feb. 10, 1952; Sunland Tribune, Tampa, Fl., Feb. 19, 1880; Bounty Land Application of James Alderman, 1855.