

# TRACKS OF TIME

Monthly Publication from the Zephyrhills Historical Association

Volume 23 – Number 3

March 2021

## There will be NO scheduled meeting in April.

### Future Meetings

I'm not at all sure when we can anticipate meeting together. I know that we are planning to meet in person for our April Library Board meeting, but that is late in the month. I think it might be possible to meet in May or June, but that remains to be seen.

I've had some correspondence from the Scholarship Committee. It appears that they will extend the deadline for applications to June 1 to allow college students to send complete transcripts. They will announce the results in July and send out the checks in August.

If you have not already sent in your dues for the year, please do so. I'm going to leave Andy's address below just in case.

Patty Thompson's fundraiser was a moderate success, bringing in \$280 for the scholarship fund. Patty contributed the most, followed by Andy Nagy, Clereen Brunty, Anne Mester, Anna Boone, and George Boone. Thanks everyone!

Please note that I have made no changes to page two of the newsletter, so if you made a contribution to Boardwalk or Scholarship and do not see your name, I apologize. Clereen and I will catch it all up in time.

### Treasurer Address

Please mail your checks payable to ZHA to:  
**Andrew Nagy,**  
**5548 23<sup>rd</sup> Street,**  
**Zephyrhills, FL 33542**

## There will be NO fundraisers for the time being.



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**Jeff Miller**

**Pasco County Historian**

For a walk down memory lane visit

[www.fivay.org](http://www.fivay.org)

Please consider contributing old photos for the website.

My email address is on the opening page

### ZHA Mission Statement

The mission of the Zephyrhills Historical Association is to research, gather, and share local historical information with all generations, through our literature, programs, and scholarships, and to volunteer assistance to the Zephyrhills Depot Museum and WWII Barracks Museum.

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 <p><b>Clereen Morrill Brunty</b>                  ZHS Alumni Contact</p> <p>clereen@gmail.com</p> <p><b>813-782-8763</b></p>	 <p><b>chalet flowers</b></p> <p>Kim   Tim   Maryann Sanders                  owners</p> <p>Ph: 813-788-2874                  chaletflowersfl.com</p> <p>5002 7th Street                  Zephyrhills, FL 33542</p>
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**SAMUEL PASCO AND FRANCIS DADE: A SHORT HISTORY**

*by Andy Warrener*

*This article appeared in The Zephyrhills News on January 7, 2021.*

We use their names all the time. Yet, precious few can relate just who the men behind the names actually were. The truth is not stranger than fiction but certainly gives fiction a run for its money. Let’s take a quick peek into the lives of the men that are an ubiquitous and ever-present influence in the county’s and the state’s history. It’s Dec. 28, 1835, and Major Francis Dade is leading a column of just over 100 soldiers and scouts north, along the Fort King Trail from Fort Brooke in Tampa. Their destination is Fort King near present-day Ocala. A band of Seminole warriors led by Chiefs Alligator and Jumper tracks their progress through the swamps and pine hammocks. Meanwhile a small party of warriors, under Osceola, wait in ambush outside of Fort King for Indian Agent Wiley Thompson. Alligator and Jumper are awaiting Osceola’s return but the column of soldiers gets too close to the safety of Fort King.

Roughly 40 miles from their destination, just outside of present-day Bushnell, the Seminoles spring their trap. Major Dade is shot off his horse during the opening volley and a significant portion of the remaining force is also killed or wounded. The soldiers scramble to fell trees and build some kind of cover for themselves as Seminole warriors pour hot lead from concealed positions into the survivors.



The survivors put up a valiant stand, letting rip on their field artillery piece but they are eventually reduced to nothing. Only two soldiers escape the ambush, one dies later from his wounds and the other, Ransom Clark goes on to write a book about the experience. The ambush is a rallying cry and Dade is viewed as a martyr by many as the incident sparks the Second Seminole War (1835-1842), the longest and costliest Indian war the United States ever engages in.

Francis Langhorne Dade was born in Virginia in 1793 and joined the 12th Infantry regiment in March of 1813. By 1815, he had been transferred to the 4th US Infantry and began a military career in Florida. He led two military expeditions in Florida in 1825 and again in 1826, both of which traversed the dangerous path from Fort Brooke in Tampa to Fort King in present-day Ocala.

In February 1828, he was brevetted a major after serving 10 years as a captain. He was the man for the job in 1835 as tensions between US outposts and Seminoles in north-central Florida were mounting. The Indian Removal Act of 1830 shattered all of the hard-fought negotiations between the United States and the Indians of Florida. The only recourse for many, was war. Dade’s command, while being virtually annihilated, was a rallying point for the U.S. Army and drew soldiers and appropriations from Washington DC and militiamen from Georgia and Alabama to enact revenge.

A Florida state park, the Dade Battlefield Park in present day Bushnell is a living testament to Major Dade and his command. The park contains memorial markers where many of the soldiers fell and conducts an annual reenactment of the massacre in January.

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Fast forward a few decades and Samuel Pasco becomes a part of Florida history. Pasco was actually born in London, England on June 28, 1834, a year-and-a-half before the Dade Massacre. His family emigrated to the United States in 1844 and settled in Charlestown, Mass. After high school, Pasco received his Bachelors of Arts from Harvard University in 1858. In January of 1859, he accepted a commission as principal and primary educator at Waukeenah Boy’s Academy in Jefferson County, Fla.

The rumble of secession was already in the air and just two years into his tenure at Waukeenah, Pasco’s newly-adopted state seceded from the United States. Without any family south of the Mason-Dixon Line, Pasco and some of his senior students enlisted in the 3rd Florida Infantry, Company H in July of 1861. Pasco worked his way through the ranks and deployment with the Army of Mississippi, later the Army of Tennessee. He became the company clerk and eventually a sergeant in Company H. In July of 1863, during the Battle of Jackson, Mississippi, Pasco is credited with braving enemy fire to retrieve a wounded student, Private Thomas Pettus from the field. In November of 1863, during the Union breakout from Chattanooga and action on Missionary Ridge, Pasco was wounded and captured. He would spend the rest of the war imprisoned at Camp Morton in Indiana.



Paroled at the end of the war, Pasco returned to Florida and resumed his position at Waukeenah Academy. While serving as Jefferson County’s Clerk of the Court, Pasco studied law and by 1868, was admitted to the Florida Bar. He would join with the former Colonel of the 3rd Florida, Colonel D.S. Dilworth in forming the Monticello-based Dilworth-Pasco Law Firm.


In 1869, Pasco would be elected to the Monticello town council, launching his political career. Pasco would go on to attain his Master of Arts degree from Harvard and gain the high-profile post of a seat on the Florida Democratic Executive Committee. He would serve as chairman from 1876 to 1886. In 1887, Pasco would be elected by the Florida State Legislature to serve as U.S. Senator, where he would serve until 1899.

It would be the year of 1887 when Pasco’s name would be forever attached to state history. In 1887, Hernando County was growing by leaps and bounds. Residents, particularly those in the southern and western reaches of the county lamented bad roads and the difficulty getting to the county seat of Brooksville. They wanted to form their own county.

A delegation travelled to Tallahassee during the end of the 1887 legislative session, with the intention of naming the newly minted county, “Banner County.” In the late 19th Century, “banner,” meant “preeminent” or “the best.”

The moniker did not sit well with state legislators from different counties. As the session was closing, the petitioners called an audible. They felt as though “Banner” was not going to fly and scrambled for a new name. Pasco’s name just got a glowing review from the legislature and thus the delegation petitioned to name the new county “Pasco County.”

The petition was approved and as they say, “the rest is history.” Pasco’s later life saw him become a member of the Isthmian Canal Commission, which would eventually decide that the canal connecting the Atlantic and Pacific oceans would be built through Panama. He remained on the commission until 1905 when work on the canal began. He would later author a book entitled, *Jefferson County Florida, 1827-1910* and remain active in the Freemasons before retiring from public life. On March 13, 1917, Pasco died at the age of 83 at the home of his daughter J.C. Tims in Tampa. His remains were returned to his adopted town of Monticello and interred in the town’s cemetery.

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