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**Holland Pond.**

Photograph courtesy of the Daniels family.



**Margaret Lee on left and Mary E. Daniels on right.**

Photograph courtesy of the Daniels family.

## **MARGARET ELIZABETH DANIEL LEE: PINELLAS PIONEER**

by Judith Masce Wade

The communities of Palm Harbor, (known as Sutherland until 1925), Ozona, (which was also known as Yellow Bluff until 1890), and Curlew, were the residences of the family of Margaret Daniel Lee. Situated on the west coast of Florida, twenty-five miles from Tampa, they were part of the 1870 census of Hillsborough County (with Pinellas included) which recorded that Susan Sutton Daniel lived there with her children Amanda, Mary Catherine, Margaret, Rufus, and Shelmon Lafayette (who was the father of Margaret Lee). Curlew was named after the pink Curlew bird which used to inhabit the area.

Susan's brother, John A. Sutton, and her sisters Emily and Mary A. had previously settled in the Curlew area. Although the exact date is not known, it is thought to be around 1850. Their mother, Susannah Whitehurst Sutton, was recorded as living with Susan Daniel at that time. All of these children of Mrs. Sutton were born in Hamilton County, Florida. Mrs. Sutton herself was born in North Carolina. In 1869, John A. Sutton donated the land for the Curlew Methodist Church, where a log cabin church was built. Susan Daniel's husband, Joseph Daniel, had previously died in Pensacola, Escambia County, Florida. Joseph Daniel is thought to have come from Edisto, South Carolina which is near Charleston. Little is known about his parents James Madison Daniel and Huldie McCollum.

Margaret Lee's mother, Mary Elizabeth Holland was the daughter of George Washington Holland and Sereny Ellen Brownlow. It is known that the two brothers, George W. and Billy Holland, came to this area prior to 1855. It is not known how long the Brownlows resided there. Both the Hollands and Brownlows lived on Curlew Road, settling on farms next to two ponds that were later known as the Holland Pond and the Brownlow Pond.

Mary Elizabeth Holland Daniel recalled her life in Pinellas County on her eighty-second birthday in an interview for the *St. Petersburg Times*. On January 26, 1947, the newspaper reported: "She was the second oldest daughter of George and Sereny Holland. Her birthplace was the old Nigel Farm on what was known then as Palm Harbor Drive which is now County Road 1 in Dunedin, Florida. When she was about eight years of age, the family moved to a farm on Curlew Creek Road by a lake known as Holland Pond where she lived until her marriage to Shelmon Daniel on January 27, 1884. Mrs. Daniel well remembers when there were no roads except wagon roads through the woods, and Tarpon Springs had only one house."

Margaret Lee, known as "Aunt Maggie" to everyone in the surrounding community of Ozona, lived to be ninety-three years old. In 1963, at the age of seventy-six, she wrote her own personal journal, an excerpt from which follows:

I, Margaret Elizabeth Daniel was born 17 March 1887 in a little cottage in an orange grove on the Tampa Road (SR 584, Hillsborough Avenue) on the border of a lake called Lake Daniel, later known as the Fechtig Lake and now called Lake St. George. My father homesteaded the land and lived there until he was married to my mother Mary Elizabeth Holland on 27 January 1884. My father built the cottage of lumber he rived out of pine trees, and later he built a larger house of sawed lumber.

They had five children born to them at this place. My sister and brothers were:

Mamie Josephine Daniel born 20 December 1884. Myself: Margaret Elizabeth Daniel born 17 March 1887. David Shelmon Daniel born 19 April 1889 died: 26 May 1889. Fredrick Merrick Daniel born 23 May 1890. Elmer Lafayette Daniel born 29 November 1892.



**Birthplace of Mary E. Daniels near Holland Pond.**

Photograph courtesy of the Daniels family.



**Tree lined street in Ozona.**

Photograph courtesy of the Daniels family.

When I was very young, I went in the woods with my father and carried the lantern at night for him to get wood for the fireplace. My mother, my sister and myself would fish at the lake and catch nice fish.

My father traded places with his brother Rufus Daniel, and we moved near the Fechtig Place about a mile away and had a larger orange grove and house. The big freeze came in the winter of 1894, and it killed some of the large trees. My father made a big pit in the ground and banked lots of the oranges. We lived here several years, then traded places again. I always worked along with my mother. I learned to cook and wash dishes early and made my first dress when I was twelve years old. We also worked in the field some and helped with the cows. We raised our vegetables, sweet and Irish potatoes, and sugar cane from which we made syrup and brown sugar. Each family would take turns grinding cane, and all of the children would too. What a good time we had riding the horse around the mill, drinking juice, and eating candy around the boiler. It took weeks for everyone to finish, as there were only two or three mills in the county. We had our hogs for meat.

Then my father and his brother traded places again, and we moved to old Tampa Bay near what is now Oldsmar. There we went swimming, fishing, and got oysters, clams and scallops. We penned wild cattle, and my brothers would catch and hold them while I did the milking until the cows got gentle. We had plenty of milk, cream and butter and plenty of company. Our cousins would come and spend weeks with us just to be at the bay. We would go into the woods to pick huckleberries. My sister Mamie married Angelo Nick Masce on June 22, 1901, and lived on the same property in another house.

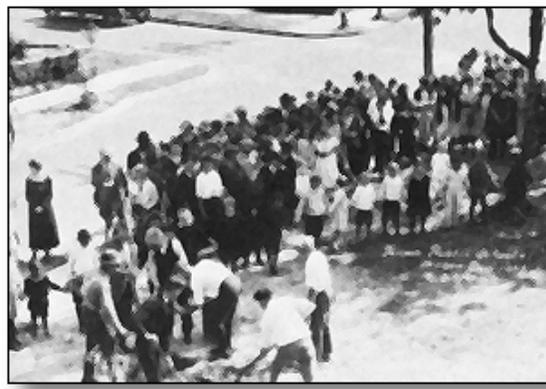
When I was about six years old, I saw the first railroad being put through Ozona. It was a narrow gauge road, and had a funny little train which burned wood in the engine.

Our first transportation was oxen and a cart with a cover. We would go to the bay and camp at night, and my father would catch mullet and we would salt them in a barrel. My grandfather,



**“Blue Sink,” a sink-hole near Sutherland.**

Photograph courtesy of the Daniels family.



**Tarpon Springs School celebrates Arbor Day in 1923.**

Photograph courtesy of the Daniels family.

George Holland, had a big cream colored mare which he drove to a funny little vehicle with two wheels, called a “Jump Funny,” and jump funny it was. The seat sat out over the axle, far out on springs. It was fun to ride in. Of course in later years everyone had horses, wagons and buggies.

When I was fourteen, I was taken ill. My father was not well at the time so my mother would do some practical nursing. My father died at this place on September 22, 1902, and is buried in Curlew Cemetery. There was not much money to be made and times were often hard but we always had food and sold our oranges. It was the same with everyone else.

After my father died we had to move to Sutherland, now Palm Harbor, where we could get work. We did home laundry for the students at Southern College. The college burned in 1921, and the following year it moved to Lakeland.

My mother bought a lot, had a two story house built, and we kept boarders. My brothers were young but they worked at a sawmill nearby. My health grew worse, and I was sent to Jacksonville to St. Lukes Hospital for an operation. My mother went with me, got room and board near the hospital, and came to see me everyday. How beautiful she looked when she came in. I was there three months, came home, and was taken very ill again. There was a family of Mormons living on our place at the bay. Some of their Elders came to visit them. My Uncle Rufus and a Mr. Fleming came and brought the Elders to administer to me. I started to improve slowly. My Uncle Rufus and his family were baptized. A few days later my mother, my sister, my brothers, and I were all baptized in Lake Butler (now Lake Tarpon). We were persecuted by the members of the Methodist Church. Mobs would gather and threaten the missionaries. I kept improving slowly.

When I was young I went to school from our home on Lake Fechtig. We went to Curlew to school in a one room building with all grades. Our first teacher was a man, Mr. Marion Casey who taught two terms. Then came Miss Alice Land who taught one term. Next to arrive was



**Packing House in Ozona.**

Photograph courtesy of the Daniels family.



**Margaret Lee's Home.**

Photograph courtesy of the Daniels family.

Miss Lizzie Lenfestey, who was the daughter of the Mr. Lenfestey who owned the Lenfestey Broom factory in Tampa. Miss Lenfestey taught two terms. Last we had Miss Mary Wilkerson who taught one term. We then moved to the place on old Tampa Bay, and didn't go back to school.

Finally my mother, my brothers, and I moved to Ozona so that we could work in the Citrus Fruit Packing House. I met a young man from North Carolina, and we were happily married. We built our home in Ozona. After fourteen years, we were divorced.

My mother lost her health after the death of my sister Mamie, and came to live with me. I was glad to have her; she was so good and agreeable, and we were very happy. In the meantime, I met a man from Washington D.C. We were married, and I visited with his children who were wonderful to me. After two years, my husband went back to visit his children, and he died there. My mother was very ill at the time. She lived with me eighteen years and passed away on April 7, 1951.

I have a little garden, some fruit trees, and flowers. My health is very good. I go to church and Sunday school. The first Mormon Church service was held in my home in Ozona. My niece's husband was the first bishop. I am very contented. I go fishing and oystering when I can. My family are all near me, and I have many friends. I enjoy my life.