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***The Billy Bowlegs War, 1855-58: The Final Stand of the Seminoles
Against the Whites* by James W. Covington**

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that the Brighton Reservation and the beginnings of a tribal cattle industry were established. He did not, however, agree with the notion of self-determination, nor with programs designed to preserve traditional culture. It is not clear whether his objections to these aspects of the program reflected an assimilationist philosophy or a belief that Seminole self-government was simply impractical given their objective conditions. He expresses a genuine appreciation for their traditional beliefs and values, but a loathing for the tourist camps which he felt exploited the more exotic aspects of their culture.

Glenn apparently was perceived as a maverick by the Indian Service personnel and, as a hold-over from the Hoover administration, was vulnerable to partisan opposition. At any rate, caught between an uncooperative bureaucracy and relentless pressure from local political and economic forces, he was impeded and eventually stalled in his efforts to lead the Seminoles out of the wilderness. Although there is no indication of it here, it may also have been that the Seminoles were unwilling to be led in the direction that he wanted them to go.

This is a very valuable document from several standpoints. It provides an unusually candid and well-written analysis of a critical transition period in the organization of the Seminole tribe of Florida, and it supplies important background information for anyone wishing to understand the controversy over their current economic development activities in Hollywood and Tampa. The work has been very ably edited by Harry A. Kersey, Jr., whose introduction and extensive footnotes provide much-needed clarification of some of the vagaries in the text.

My major criticisms concern the quality of photo reproductions and the odd-sized sideways design of the book. Glenn included 60 photographs in his original letter, and each is the subject of a specific reference in the text. Although these are quite interesting, even aesthetic, the print quality is terrible. Given their unique role in the book, they deserved more creative darkroom attention than they evidently received. Similarly, more thought should have been given to selecting the shape of the book, because this only fits on a shelf when the spine is tilted upward. These are perhaps trivial objections, and certainly should not deter anyone from reading or buying the book. But, these features seem to reflect an unresolved ambivalence about whether this should be a scholarly book or a coffee table item. It far more suitably belongs in the former category.

Susan Greenbaum

The Billy Bowlegs War, 1855-58: The Final Stand of the Seminoles Against the Whites. By James W. Covington. Chuluota, Florida. 1982. The Mickler House Publishers. Photographs. Pp. 82. Index. Cloth. \$9.95.

Billy Bowlegs made a surprise attack upon First Lieutenant George L. Hartsuff's detachment at five a.m., December 20, 1855. This was the official opening of the Third Seminole War, or the Billy Bowlegs War. Yet Professor Covington believes that the third war was only a continuation of the Second Seminole War fought two decades earlier; that Colonel William J. Worth's General Order, issued on August 14, 1842, signified only the temporary termination of military action against the Seminoles of Florida; and that during the period between Worth's order and

Billy Bowleg's attack there had been no diminution in the desire or the plans of white Floridians to drive the red Floridians from the peninsula.

Of the three Seminole wars in Florida, the best known is the second and the least known is the third. There have been a smattering of newspaper accounts and historical articles in local publications about the third war, but all of these treated only a specific segment of the whole. Until recently no one had produced a study of the Third Seminole War in its entirety. Then a few years ago Virginia B. Peter's *The Florida Wars* included the third. Now Professor Covington provides an in depth study of this little known Indian-white conflict.

Covington's thesis, expressed in his subtitle: *The Final Stand of the Seminoles Against the Whites*, is presented through an uncomplicated narrative. He describes the desire of Floridians to rid the peninsula of Indians, the efforts of various Indian agents to bribe, cajole, and threaten the remaining Seminoles, and the State and Federal governments' harassment by survey and military reconnaissance into the heartland of the Seminole reserve in the Everglades. Finally, he focuses on the war itself, with its countless scouting expeditions and infrequent skirmishes. It would be so easy for a historian to become bogged down relating one minor event after another for no other purpose than to inform the reader on every bit of research performed by the author. Covington avoids this pitfall and keeps his narrative moving.

The author discusses three phases of the Billy Bowlegs War. First the Indians were actively raiding well beyond their assigned reserve, while the whites were disorganized and defensive. Then two regular officers, General William S. Harney and Colonel Gustavus Loomis, reorganized the military structure. Harney initiated the use of boats, and Loomis increased the militia participation. In the final days of the conflict, the militia brought the war to the Seminoles in the Everglades and the Big Cypress Swamp. The third war's ending seems a *déjà vu* of the earlier war.

Professor Covington focuses so intently upon local history that he overlooks the significance of these Florida events upon national developments, especially American military history. While he believes that this war was a continuation of the Second Seminole War, he does not devote any analysis to the army's strategy during the earlier conflict. Therefore, his discussion of military stratagems during Billy Bowlegs War is developed in a vacuum.



Billy Bowlegs

A map of Florida appears on the front and back covers. Geographic and political details are provided only for south Florida, and even here the information is inadequate. Of the thirty-seven forts listed in the text only eight appear on the maps. Two of the seventeen rivers are identified. The Seminole reserve, set aside in 1842 for the Florida Indians, is not delineated, a crucial omission. Only the more informed reader could follow this narrative without outside geographic aid.

Despite these limitations, Covington's book fills a void in Florida history. Not only will those interested in Florida history want to become acquainted with it, but also those devoted to American military history, for this study adds its might to the national military development.

George E. Buker

Sun, Sand and Water: A History of the Jacksonville District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. By George E. Buker. Jacksonville. n.d. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Jacksonville District. Illustrations. Bibliography. Index. Pp. 288. Cloth. \$10.00.

Not only has George Buker masterfully captured the color, scope, and evolution of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers from 1821 to 1975, but also has provided the historical and geographical framework so necessary for a study of this kind. The book, well-organized into fifteen chapters, reflects thoughtful research, articulate expression, and attractive graphics. An excellent bibliography, appropriate index and footnotes, as well as two appendices more than compensate for the few misspellings in this interestingly presented work.

The early history of the Corps is inextricable with that of Florida, linking numerous personalities, both familiar and obscure. James Gadsden, more noted for his Mexican activities and famed Gadsden Purchase, is recognized as a significant contributor to early Florida history and Corps development. On occasion, the author infuses such realism into his characterizations that the reader senses a loss when the figure fades from the Corps story. An excellent example is the analysis of Dr. Abel Baldwin's lengthy, aggressive, but futile, struggle to gain acceptance for his plan to enhance the port status of Jacksonville by solving the problem of shifting stream channels at the mouth of the St. Johns River.

The theme of change and expanding responsibility for the Corps is ever present. Seldom deviating from his primary objective, the author successfully traces two centuries of growth from the first official designation of an engineer in 1775 to the 1975 status of the Jacksonville District of the Corps. Early emphasis on mapping and surveying yielded to concern for coastal fortifications in the mid-nineteenth century. Fort Jefferson in the Dry Tortugas, today a remote national park, serves as a reminder of the scope, frustration, and failure of that period. Later private developers helped stimulate Corps activity in regard to harbor and community development. The twentieth century was a boom period, as Corps activities affected the lives of almost all Floridians. Navigational projects such as the Intracoastal Waterways, the incomplete and controversial Cross-Florida Barge Canal, the Okeechobee Waterway and the beltline canal vied for funds and approval along with projects concerning flood control, drainage, beach erosion, water management, wetland conservation, and a host of related environmental problems.