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***Florida's Peace River Frontier* by Canter Brown, Jr.**

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the Messiah. He did not sign *Cristum ferens* or Christ-bearer. (West and Kling missed the subtleties of Latin declension; their translation is wrong on page 2.)

The few errors in the book are trivial and seem to be a result of poor proofreading: *dal* instead of *del* in Toscanelli's name (page 13); *Gasper* instead of *Gaspar* (pages 8 and 271); and *Milina* instead of *Milani* (page 76). *Santo Porto* (page 12) should read *Porto Santo*. It is this reviewer's opinion that Columbus was never in Ireland (page 12) and that no such person as "Canon Martins" ever existed (page 14), but these are only opinions.

This version of the *Libro* is a very unusual book, co-authored by two men, Delno C. West and August Kling, who never met. West began his research in 1984 and did not learn of Kling's work on the translation until after the latter's death in 1986. Dr. Kling's widow, Marjory, facilitated an arrangement that allowed West to complete the project, using Kling's translation and notes.

The *Libro de las profecias* is an important book, long overdue in an English language edition. Moreover, in addition to the English translation, this edition contains a printed transcription of the handwritten Latin and Spanish of the original on the facing pages. And, to add icing to the cake, this second volume in the University of Florida's Quincentenary Series is a beautiful publication.

Robert H. Fuson

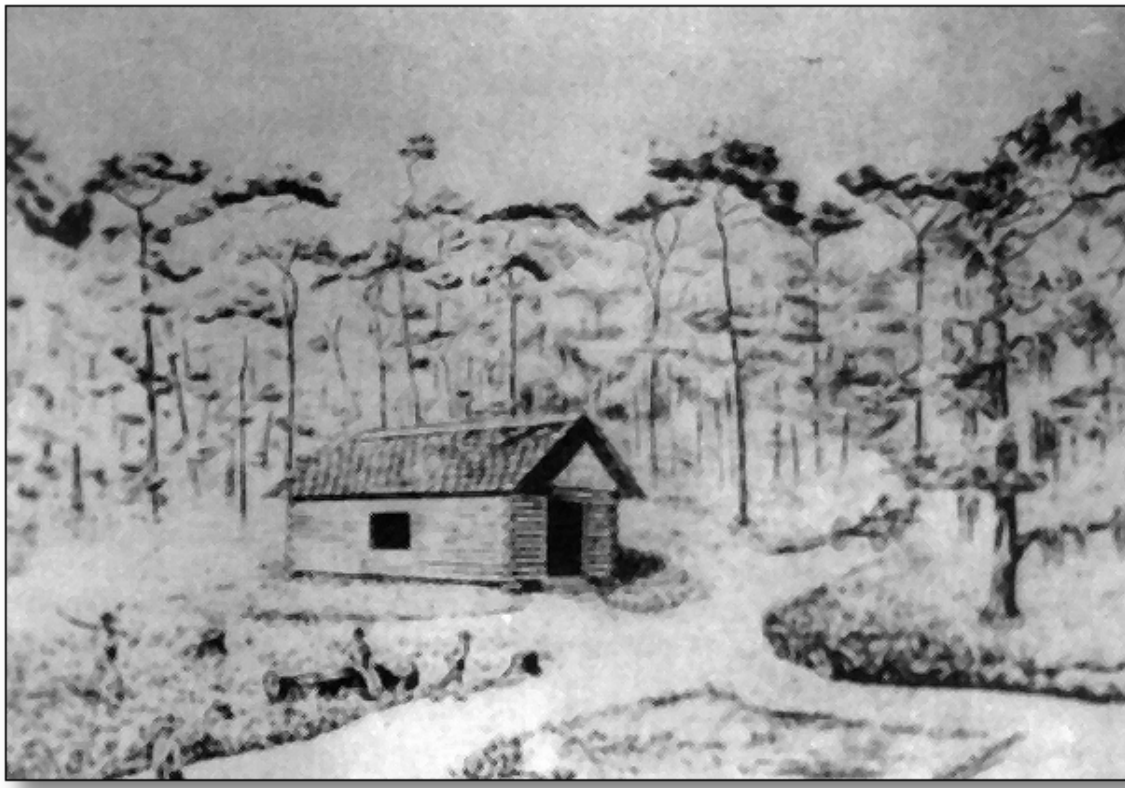
Florida's Peace River Frontier. By Canter Brown, Jr. Orlando, Florida. 1991. University Press of Central Florida. Pp. ix, 483, Illustrations. Maps. Appendices. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Cloth. \$34.95.

Canter Brown, Jr., has written a thoroughly researched narrative of the history of Florida's Peace River area during the nineteenth century. A major objective of the writer was to recreate the happenings of nineteenth-century South Florida described within scholarly conventions and also in such a fashion to reach non-academics who are interested in local history.

Appropriately, the narrative begins in the prologue with a geographical explanation of Florida's Peace River and its valley. The publisher could have enhanced the maps, photographs, and graphics, producing better quality and making them more readable. Still, the geography of the region is concise, leaving the reader with an eagerness to know more about the area.

The focus of this work is on the people of the Peace River valley. The mixture of races and nationalities encompassed Indian tribal groups, black slaves, runaway slaves, free blacks, and white southerners. Whites played various roles, including frontiersmen and planters, cattlemen and cowboys, farmers and phosphate miners, craftsmen and merchants, militia and professional soldiers, and Unionists and Confederates. The book portrays their impact on the Peace River valley in successive wars and periods of peace, punctuated with recurring frontier violence.

Woven into the narrative is the development of churches, schools, postal offices, and the arts. Brown also addresses the impact of commercial development on the economy of the Peace River valley, which featured land speculation, agriculture, phosphate open-pit mining, railroads, and



Bartow's first schoolhouse as it appeared in 1858.

Photograph from *Florida's Peace River Frontier* by Canter Brown, Jr.

the establishment of a tourist industry. Brown's description of the Peace River valley is not written in the style of statistical cliometrics. Rather, it explores the societal forces that exacted their toll on the region as well as those that benefitted the local economy. Periods of poverty, bankruptcy and boom times are clearly sorted out for the reader, illuminating the material conditions of nineteenth-century Peace River valley inhabitants.

The greatest value of this work is its deliberate and thoroughly researched correction of mistaken notions and stereotypes, which have been accepted over the years as historically accurate accounts of circumstances and conditions. Brown has reinterpreted conditions in Florida before, during, and after the Civil War. He has convincingly replaced the traditional viewpoint of a united Florida effort for the Confederacy with a more balanced view of the opposition to the Confederate war effort. The rapid political redemption of the Peace River region from the victorious radical Republicans is examined, along with the effects of the regulators upon free blacks. Through his extensive use of public and private sources, Brown has made a significant contribution to the local history of Florida's Peace River region.

Frank L. Snyder