

Certainly these Indians  
need a firearm - Their  
hunting grounds are fast going  
Also all other American States  
need a great quantity of  
firearms for all time our  
Pacific borderland -

Yours E. L. C.

Opening Page

I have been requested to write something from my knowledge of the Seminole Indians.

For nearly forty years I have been more or less brought into contact with the Seminole ~~Indians~~. As a boy I knew Jack <sup>Buster</sup> ~~Bouler~~ and some of the Jumper family of the section around Orlando and Kissinmi where I then lived. Thirty years ago I knew Robert Osceola and his family at Fort Lauderdale. For over twenty years I have known Jack Tigertail and his brother Charlie Tigertail. Have visited the store on the west boundary of the Everglades which was run by the latter. The sign over the door read: "Mr. Charlie Tigertail's Store General Merchandise." Charlie Tigertail kept a very complete stock, getting his supplies from Miami via Indian canoe. When the water was low he transported some of his goods from Fort Myers, Everglades and Chockoloskee by ox wagon part of the way and by canoe to his store. He had a jail with iron bars, and if an Indian or a trader became unruly he was locked up in the jail and the word "Jail" was printed over the door so that no one could mistake the fact that it was a jail. This store was patronized by both Seminoles and by white traders of the Everglades.

Fifteen years ago I crossed the Everglades with Grover Doctor and Frank Cypress and during the latter period of time I have known such Indians as Conopachee, Josie Billie, the Cypress family, Tommie Osceola, Billie Fuel, Jimmie Tommie, Teethpull Tiger, Jack Jumper, Doctor Tiger, Abraham Lincoln, Boy Jim, Brown Tiger, Tony Willie, Willie Willie and many other Seminole Indians.

The last of the Seminoles, - the brave, honest tribe of North American Indians. The Seminoles are really made up from many North American tribes. Descendants of noble red men who refused to accept the edict of Government and *be deported* to Oklahoma <sup>or</sup> other National Indian Reservations, but who chose to trek, for trek is the right word, to Florida, and maintain their primitive mode of *of* life rather than be dictated to by Government or Government agents.

Say what you may they are the original Americans whom Columbus, Cortez, Plymouth Rock Colony, Sir Walter Raleigh, John Smith of Pocahontus fame, who brought the *some of the* Puritans of New England *and* the Cavaliers of Virginia, the Carolines, and Florida pioneers when America was first settled.

They, the North American Indians, really *owned* America by reason of first settlement and occupation.

*The English* Roger Williams in Rhode Island, <sup>and</sup> the Puritans ~~in~~ New England settlers of Virginia, the Dutch in New York, Sir Walter Raleigh and Sir John Smith in Virginia and the Carolinas, and *R. Oglethorpe* of Georgia, Ponce de Leon of Florida and the West Indies; the French in Louisiana, Cortez in Mexico and South America, and so on down the line, - had to replace these primitive Indians with European settlers and inhabitants.

There is no use for me to tell you how the Dutch bought Manhattan Island for a keg of rum and twenty-four trinkets nor the *story that* history of New York City which embraces Manhattan Island, has ever since been trying to "trade back," but Indian wars after Indian wars was the portion of these new settlers from Europe. It is unnecessary for me to attempt to give to Americans even an outline of our early settlement for you no doubt desire *more* specific statements of the Seminoles, -- Well, its not been so long ago, *that they* and not us ~~we~~ owned all of Florida -- in peace,



----and I mean peace --- Three specific treaties were made <sup>with</sup> by the government by forefathers of these <sup>primitive</sup> prehistoric and native people, each treaty pushing them further south to Florida.

Treaty <sup>broken</sup> begun by our government, then the Seminole Indian War of 1841 and the Peace River Treaty which in substance said: "To Peace River and no further", would the United States settle -- so there sprang up the <sup>Big</sup> Cypress tribe and the "Cow Creek" tribe of Seminoles. Many times have I stood under the "Peace Oak" just east of Fort Meade in Polk County -- have tried to buy it to preserve it for all time to come and to erect there a lasting monument to these primitive owners of America, but it is now owned by a large phosphate Company and they won't sell. Please, Floridians, buy this Oak-- place there a marker and memorial for these original Americans, Don't let me or any other American writer tell the story or write the history, but go to the archives of the United States,-- get the original history from the reports of that wonderful American Andrew Jackson,-- place under this Oak the just and fair history of these Indians.

Since the peace treaties we have had the war between the States, the Spanish-American War, the World War, but ever has the habitation of the Seminole Indians of Florida been growing smaller until now they do not own a single acre of land in Florida. True, there is a few---and I mean a few---acres "reserved" for them in Broward County and some land in Hendry and Monroe "reserved" for them. They cannot and will not occupy it. Why? You ask--- the answer is they don't know and can't know in the face of broken treaties which have gone before just what to depend on.

With all ~~this~~ the foregoing I have been and will continue to be a party to taking from them the last remaining cane, corn and pumpkin fields. For the opening of the Tamiami Trail will soon see the last of the Seminoles, because

they will not occupy Government "reservations". They do not know and will never know what "title" to land means.

The white man contaminates them with "Wyonie"<sup>W</sup> (Whisky). They are but children---True they are wards of Government, but unwilling wards,- very suspicious of taking the least thing from the Government for fear they will be deported to our Western Indian Reservations.

\$20,000.00 a year is the appropriation made by the Government for the five or six hundred Seminoles, most of it which is absorbed by "red tape", the balance put to the disposition of Dean Lucian A Spencer (a most honest and fearless Indian Commissioner for Florida), but he cannot get a dime nor a dollar until the government goes through the usual routine of "red tape" of government requisition - O. K. after O. K. and the final official O. K..

When I look back twenty years ago and think of the hundreds and hundreds of Seminole Indians who died with an epidemic of measles. No hope for them. And in 1918 the great number who died with influenzie. Only such men as Capt. Geo. W. Storter and family at Everglades, Sam Thompson and wife and Stanley Henson at Fort Myers, to aid them,- and they were aided as far as the government authority extended by the distant <sup>deputy</sup> Indian Commissioner, for even Indian Commissioner Lucian A. Spencer was present only by proxy for he was made a Chaplin of the 124th Infantry of Florida, and was at Argonne Forest and the Fields of Flanders in France fighting the battle for these Seminole Indians and for us all.

I have stood by many Seminole Indian graves on what was then Lee County Now Collier County, who were victims of influenzie, for many died with it, and the thought that just a little first aid---just one single physician and there would have been many more Seminoles today.

In 1921-1922 when I was associated with the Collier interests and was at Everglades, through Indian Commissioner Spencer, I requisitioned or applied for