

Johnson, Peter A.

Johnson - Mr. Peter Angus Johnson, after a lingering illness, despite the close attention of faithful physicians, friends and loved ones, passed peacefully away last Monday morning, Dec. 8, at 1 o'clock.

Deceased was the youngest son of John McDougal Johnson and Margaret Johnson, whose maiden name was Margaret Giles, daughter of Roderick D. Giles. His father was a son of Nancy McDougal and Daniel Johnson, born of Scots ancestry, both grandparents coming from Scotland and settling in Cumberland and Robinson counties in North Carolina, somewhere near one hundred and fifty years ago.

With his parents and older brother he came to Florida, landing at Morrison's Mill, March 2, 1854, making the journey in wagons and carriages drawn by horses. Morrison's Mill is east of Hawthorne, which was then the post office. Hawthorne then was an unbroken forest. The mill was owned by his father's sister, Sarah Johnson Morrison and husband Daniel Morrison. Thus the family settled in this locality with kith and kin. There were no railroads, post offices far and few, Gainesville lay as wild woods.

Mail was carried from river routes overland in the old-fashioned saddlebags on horse-back.

Primitive days indeed were there. The few natives found here went about in ox-carts. Woods teemed with game, wild deer in droves and flocks of wild turkeys. The wily turkeys often donating to themselves the backyard fences for the night. Rivers and lakes swarming with fish. The game in plenty induced the settlers to choose this favored spot and there cast their lot.

Prior to the Civil War these settlers came. This family was here but scarce two years when on April 18th, 1856, the father was shot and killed by some lawless character, a short distance from where the village of Johnson now stands, leaving the mother a widow with five small children: Daniel Webster, William Frederick, Peter Angus, deceased, Mary Patterson, who became Mrs. J. D. Vause, then a baby.

Destitute, in civilization, the mother, with the help of the slaves owned by them, managed to rear the five children. As time passed by a public travel road for horses and carriages was opened, connecting Gainesville and Palatka. The commencement of orange growing in West Florida was brought by some travelers in their stops on their journeys east and west. The traveler would perhaps drop some seeds or give the children some oranges. First one settler and then another would get a tree started to bearing, and so on until large groves were planted.

The departed when a young man, seeing the bright future for the orange industry, built up a home about three miles south, planting large orange and tangerine groves. With long hours and hard labor he succeeded. Before the big freeze, his grove was pointed out as one of the most beautiful, so rich and green, laden with its golden fruit, grown without a pound of commercial fertilizer.

Choosing for his life's companion Miss Amanda Morrison from Georgia, who also dates her

relationship to this pioneer settler, Daniel Morrison. To this union came four: Mrs. Mamie Matchett, Grace J., Ida J., and Florence May Livingston.

This faithful wife, who shared both shade and sunshine, has kept sacred the vow, "Till death do part," proving herself a most loving mother, keeping a vigilant watch over the nest of her young, and has seen them all grown into beautiful womanhood.

The farm home now stands as first settled years ago, they never migrating. The deceased was born Feb. 10, 1852.

The funeral was held Tuesday morning at the home, by Rev. A. P. Johntry, and the remains were interred in the Johnson Presbyterian Cemetery.

Times-Herald Obituary Friday, Dec 19 1919.