

Pioneers Of Wiregrass Georgia Volume Viii

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The New South Comes to Wiregrass Georgia, 1860-1910
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Finding List
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Pioneers of Wiregrass Georgia ; Vol. 5
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Pioneers of Wiregrass Georgia
Pioneers of Wiregrass, Georgia
Pioneers of Wiregrass, Georgia, by Folks Huxford
Pioneers of Wiregrass Georgia
The Blanton's of "Wiregrass" Georgia
Additions and Corrections to Pioneers of Wiregrass, Georgia
Pioneers of Wiregrass Georgia
Cracker Times and Pioneer Lives
Pioneers of Wiregrass Georgia ; Vol. 1
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this first book length examination of the georgia pine belt challenges the conventional view of this area as an unchanging economic backwater by examining its postbellum evolution from an independent agricultural economy to one entirely dependent upon a single unstable crop cotton before the civil war the georgia piney woods region easily supported a population of mostly self sufficient yeomen and livestock herders after the war

a variety of external forces invaded the region propelling the economy through three stages of social political and economic change that permanently altered the landscape spearheaded by new south boosters like henry grady these invasions were intended to create a south with a diversified economic future bright with industry and self sufficient agriculture the first stage did see economic advancement in the form of transportation routes including railroads that opened up the pine belt s forests to the second stage of change industrialized sawmilling and turpentineing this second stage created new jobs but failed to bring in other industries leaving the area dependent upon an industry that destroyed the antebellum open range herding system and brought deforestation within a generation the lumber industry s demise led to the final stage of change which saw new south boosters in an attempt to curtail the economic malaise promoting the deforested lands to a wave of newcomers immigrant cotton farmers from the upcountry hungry for new lands with no other industries to compete with them cotton farmers came to dominate the area s economic life even more than before the civil war by 1910 few georgia pinelanders doubted that a new south had arrived but it was not the diversified landscape that henry grady and others had originally envisioned it was instead a land of cotton much like the one that had come to dominate life across the rest of the pine belt from virginia to east texas mark v wetherington s in depth study of this region sheds new light on its socioeconomic history and encourages a closer examination of the often ignored histories of other areas

wild and wooly recollections from the florida frontier cracker times and pioneer lives brings together the reminiscences of two pioneers who came of age in antebellum florida s columbia county and the nearby suwannee river valley though they held markedly different positions in society they shared the adventure thrill hardship and tragedy that characterized florida s pioneer era with sensitivity poignancy and humor george gillett keen and sarah pamela williams record anecdotes and memories that touch upon important themes of frontier life and reveal the remarkable diversity of florida s settlers keen s story typifies that of many cracker families born in georgia he moved with his parents to the florida territory in 1830 in search of a better life he grew up in a dangerous yet exciting setting and as an old man at the turn of the twentieth century recorded his colorful memories with a verve and vernacular reminiscent of the georgia humorist augustus baldwin longstreet keen writes about subsistence farming cattle grazing the seminole wars marriage customs medical practices politics the abundance of wildlife and the paucity of educational opportunities admittedly not a cracker sarah pamela williams was the daughter of a nationally recognized man of letters in 1847 she moved to columbia county s seat of alligator lake city and later married into one of northeast florida s prominent planter

families she recorder her recollections of a life brightened by social functions travel and cultural endeavors offering a rare glimpse into florida s civil war homefront williams tells of making clothes of homespun tithing crops to the confederacy fearing hostilities just thirteen miles from her home and surviving as a widow in the lean postwar era cracker times and pioneer lives features biographical sketches of more than 280 persons mentioned by keen and williams in their writings many of whom subsequently pioneered settlement in the florida peninsula

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