

John Vinzant, Jr. Files

3rd Sergeant Company A 1st Florida Cavalry Regiment

PROLOGUE

John Vinzant, Jr. (1840-1907) of Columbia County, Florida and Martha Alice Futch (1850-1926) corresponded over the years 1870 to 1874.

Mattie met John in the fall of 1869 when she traveled with her parents to buy staples from a store in Providence, Bradford County (now Union County) where John worked as a clerk. John and Mattie chatted briefly as Mattie sat in a wagon outside the store. Later he passed her this note written on a scrap of paper:

“I hope you will not think me bold or impertinent, but as our acquaintance is short, may I have the pleasure of visiting you for the purpose of extending our acquaintance.”

Shortly after John and Mattie met she and her family moved to Sumter County. It was at this time, 1870, they began their correspondence. He was 30 years old and she was 20.

[Image: John Vinzant, Jr. and Martha Alice (Futch) Vinzant, with their three girls May, Mattie, and Birdie. (c. 1887)]

[Image: John Vinzant, Jr. Clerk of the Court, Columbia County (c. 1887)]

[Image: Birdie, Mattie & May Vinzant with a friend (c. 1900)]

[Image: Vinzant home with beginning of vine started by Martha (Futch) Vinzant. The vine eventually covered the entire front of the west side, on the right. (c. 1900)]

[Image: John and Martha Vinzant at Lake City Home (c. 1898)]

EPILOGUE

John's "fondest hopes and happiest thoughts" were finally realized. On January 29, 1874 he and Mattie were married at Sumterville, Florida. They returned to Lake City to live in the two-room house John had obtained for them. A few years later they had a Victorian-style house constructed in the same location and it was there they raised their three girls, May, Mattie and Birdie.

In 1877 John received a Commission as Clerk of the Circuit Court for Columbia County, but continued to teach part-time in the local schools and served on the Board of Trustees of the Lake City Institute.

Practical and capable Mattie sewed to perfection and made all her girls' clothes. She also served as nurse for her family (16 siblings) and John's (8 siblings), either in her own home or traveling to wherever there was sickness. Their nieces and nephews living on out-lying farms often boarded with the family while attending school in Lake City and at one time they hosted tourists "from up North."

The house, two blocks from the County Courthouse where John worked, was purchased and restored by the Columbia County Historical Museum, Inc., and is open to the public.

John and Mattie are both buried in Phillippi Church Cemetery near Mikesville, Florida.

John Vinzant Biographical Information

JOHN VINZANT, JR.

3rd Sgt. Company A
1st Florida Cavalry Regiment
CSA

John Vinzant, Jr., was born in Tatnell County, Georgia, on the 29th of March 1840. He was the son of John Vinzant, Sr. and Nancy Youmans. In 1847 he moved with his family, including uncles, aunts, and cousins, to the settlement of Mikesville, Florida, in South Columbia County. He grew up on his father's farm of 160 acres on a bluff above Buzzard's Roost Prairie on the Santa Fe River. The Vinzants were non-slave owning, self-sufficient farmers of the Baptist faith. Immediately upon arriving in Florida they established a church and a school for the education of their children. John Vinzant, Jr., was 21 years old when he joined Company A of the 1st Florida Cavalry Regiment as a private on October 12, 1861 at Lake City, Florida. He furnished his own horse and equipment valued at \$170. The first six months of his enlistment he was paid \$10 a month for the use of his horse, and the second six months the rate dropped to \$8 a month. He fought in the battle of Richmond, Kentucky August 30, 1862, and served as a scout until he joined the dismounted troops of the 1st Florida Cavalry on February 14, 1863. He was a foot soldier from that time until his capture on January 4, 1865. As a dismounted cavalryman he would have fought at Chicamauga [sic] and in all battles under General Johnston in the spring and summer of 1864 as the Confederates attempted to save Atlanta. He was with General Hood in the Confederate Army's final foray into Tennessee in the fall and winter of 1864.

On the 4th of December of 1864 John Vinzant was with Bate's division when they attacked a Union blockhouse on Overall's Creek near Murfreesboro. He was wounded through both thighs by a minnie [sic] ball and three days later his right leg was amputated above the knee. He was captured on January 4, 1865 and remained as a prisoner in Union hospitals until his discharge on July 15, 1865.

John Vinzant returned to his home on crutches in the late summer of 1865, clerked in a store in Ellisville, Columbia County, taught school for a while, and in January of 1877 he was appointed clerk of the circuit court in Columbia County. From 1886 to 1888 he served as county tax collector. On January 29, 1874 he married Martha Alice Futch of Sumter County, daughter of Florida Pioneers [see footnote below] David Jackson Futch and Eliza Jane Brown Futch. John and Martha Alice had three daughters. Their descendents [sic] number 7 grandchildren, 9 great grandchildren, 19 great-great grandchildren, 19 great-great-great grandchildren and 3 great, great, great, great grandchildren. John Vinzant died on the 29th of April 1907, and is buried with his wife in the Philippi Church Cemetery near Mikesville.

John and Martha Vinzant's home in Lake City was restored by the Columbia County Historical Society and serves as a house museum and the headquarters of the Battle of Olustee re-enactment organization.

In 1902, Birdie Marie Vinzant, daughter of John and Martha Vinzant, married A. Livingston, Jr., son of Confederate Veteran A. Livingston, Sr. and his wife, Frances Webb Livingston, and a grandson of Columbia County Pioneer John Francis Webb and Caroline Livingston Webb. Caroline Webb was the daughter of Jefferson County Pioneer William Livingston. [see footnote below]

[footnote: Florida pioneers are certified by the Florida Genealogical Society, and must have lived in the Territory of Florida before statehood in 1845.]

Sources

- 1) Census records, Florida Archives
- 2) Confederate Civil War Records, Florida Archives
- 3) Philippi Church Cemetery, Mikesville, Florida
- 4) Family Records, Dot Jean Jones