

FLORIDA V. F. BAKER COUNTY

Blockhouse Still Sound

MACCLENNY — Deep in the heart of the backwoods here in Baker County stands truly a historical gem. It's the last relic of its kind in Florida, a blockhouse built during the Second Seminole War to protect white residents from attacks by the Indians.

An authority on the structure is a native of Baker County, Edwin J. Fraser, former state senator and former secretary of the state senate. He says the main body of this house was built by Jim Burnsed in the year 1837. Burnsed sold this place about 1866 to Hugh Brown. Carl Brown, a son of Hugh Brown and a distant relative of Fraser, raised his family there and the place is now known as the "ole Carl Brown place."

The original structure is still basically good and sound. The people of Macclenny are hopeful some group will act to preserve this historical landmark, which they say reveals "so much of our rich history." It has been suggested that the blockhouse be moved and reconstructed in Macclenny, which sits on U.

S. 90 west of Jacksonville, or at the Civil War battleground site at Olustee, so it could be viewed more easily by the curious public.

It is built of hewn, rich pine logs dovetailed at the corners and put together by wooden pegs, and with loop holes cut between the logs to aim rifles through.

One pointed post still standing indicates that originally the blockhouse was in a compound with many pointed posts, higher than a man's head surrounding it. When the Indians were on the rampage, the whites would gather here and stay until things settled down.

The Seminoles were too shrewd to attack blockhouses. They waited for the whites to leave these compounds, and then jumped them from ambush.

Many years ago there were numerous blockhouses such as this one in Baker County. But it is suspected this is the only one remaining not only in Florida, but possibly the entire southeast.



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