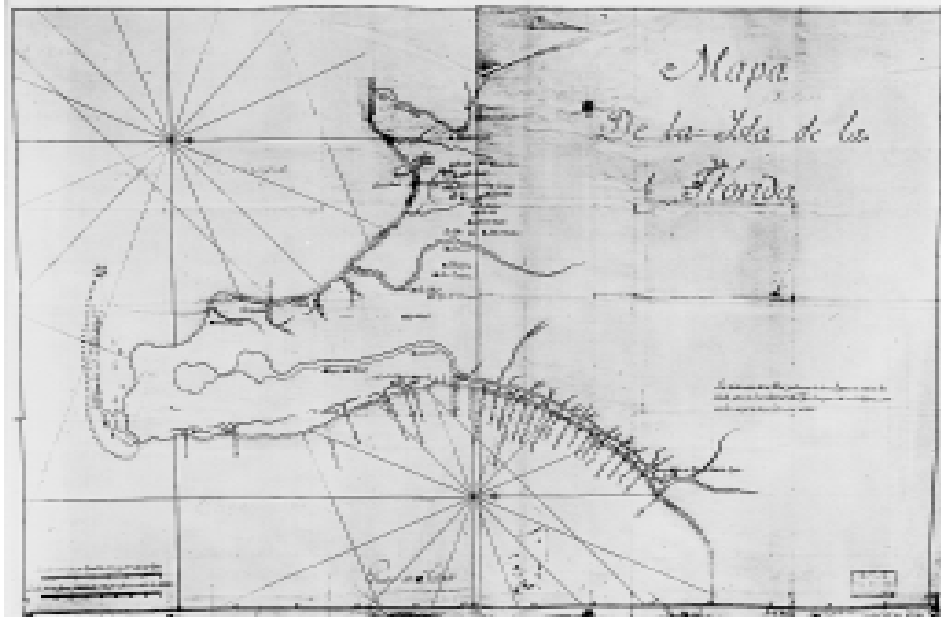


An Environmental History of Northeast Florida

The Ripley P. Bullen Series
Florida Museum of Natural History



An Environmental History of Northeast Florida

James J. Miller

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For Cindy and Joey

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Foreword

Stand by the railing of Jacksonville Landing on the St. Johns River, close your eyes, and try to envision what the landscape around you looked like 100 years ago. Now try 500. How about 15,000?

Difficult at best, isn't it? If you took a canoe and paddled up a quiet, isolated stream flowing into the St. Johns River in a less-developed locale you might enjoy more success, but even then you would be hindered by the present appearance of the land. In most areas in northeast Florida, what we see today—the trees, shrubs, and animals—is a far cry from what was there even 150 years ago.

In this skillfully researched and well-illustrated volume James J. Miller describes the changing landscape of northeast Florida over the past 18,000 years. He documents the reasons for the transformation that took place and the interaction between the succession of human cultures and the dynamic environments in which they lived.

Can visualizing and understanding the past help us today and in the future? As Miller points out, it can indeed. Knowledge about the changes that occurred in the past, their causes, and their effects on human populations is a powerful tool, one that can help us plan for future use of the environment and our place in it.

I take great delight in the publication of this volume by the Florida Museum of Natural History and the University Press of Florida. Not only are books on archaeology and natural history near and dear to my heart, but in addition Jim Miller is someone I admire and for whom I have great professional and personal respect.

For 15 years as chief of the Bureau of Archaeological Research, an office of the Florida Division of Historical Resources, Jim has guided the informed management of the state's archaeological resources. He has worked tirelessly and successfully to investigate and preserve sites, provide aid in the passage of appropriate regulations and legislation, and promote archaeology. As a result the state of Florida has one of the most successful and effective state archaeological offices in the nation; the informed management of Florida's archaeological resources is a reality.

Jim Miller can envision the past; more important, he has used that vision to chart the future of archaeology. In *An Environmental History of Northeast Florida*, the past, present, and future come together, providing a unique view of Florida.

Jerald T. Milanich,
series editor

Preface

This work is, in part, an attempt to reconcile the past and the future, to examine whether an understanding of what happened to people and environments in history can be of value in making decisions about people and environments in the future. Dissatisfied with the limited relevance of archaeology for finding solutions to modern problems, I have tried to understand the content and the practice of two very different professions: archaeology and regional planning. This look into the past and the future could not have occurred without the understanding and assistance of people in both fields, as well as the help of many others along the way. I sincerely hope that they will have found worthwhile the investment of their time and effort in what must have sometimes seemed an odd combination of specialties.

My interest in planning and the recognition of its power to influence the future of people and land I owe to John Ormsbee Simonds and Jack Scholl of the Environmental Planning and Design Partnership of Pittsburgh. The opportunity they and the ITT Community Development Corporation provided to develop many of the data and ideas in this work was instrumental in my later decision to study planning. Ian McHarg, then chairman of the Department of Landscape Architecture and Regional Planning, University of Pennsylvania, graciously encouraged my application for doctoral study in a field for which I had little preparation, and arranged financial and other support that made my residence in Philadelphia possible. Dan Rose, of the same department, introduced me to the application of anthropology to planning and served as a trusted adviser in matters academic and otherwise. Dan's friendship is exceeded only by his patience, and I am grateful

for both. Seymour Mandelbaum of the Department of City and Regional Planning has been a steady supporter, providing solid advice, especially in times of doubt. The present work is based on a dissertation guided by that committee.

In the field of archaeology I am indebted to many colleagues and friends. For the past 15 years I have been employed in the Florida Division of Historical Resources as State Archaeologist. My supervisors and staff have been not only understanding in accommodating my outside obligations over the years, but many have also been valuable and enjoyable sources of intellectual stimulation over the years. I would particularly mention L. Ross Morrell, Randall Kelley, George Percy, John Girvin, Mable Revell, Henry Baker, the late Calvin Jones, James Dunbar, and Drs. John Hann, Gary Shapiro, Bonnie McEwan, Roger Smith, Brent Weisman, Marion Smith, and David Dickle.

Finally, many archaeologists and historians in Florida and elsewhere have influenced my thinking in a variety of ways over the years, particularly Drs. Jerald Milanich, Kathleen Deagan, Bennie Keel, Eugene Lyon, Patricia Griffin and Michael Gannon. My greatest debt, which I am most pleased to acknowledge, is to the late Dr. John W. Griffin, whose archaeological and historical knowledge of northeast Florida was unmatched. John was a colleague, partner, adviser, and friend for 15 years. Not enough scholars are also gentlemen; in both accomplishments John set a high standard.

I thank Charles Poe for inking and lettering the maps. Dr. Jerome Stern kindly reviewed an unfinished draft and offered encouragement as well as advice on style. Many others have been helpful along the way; I apologize for omitting acknowledgement and offer my sincere thanks.