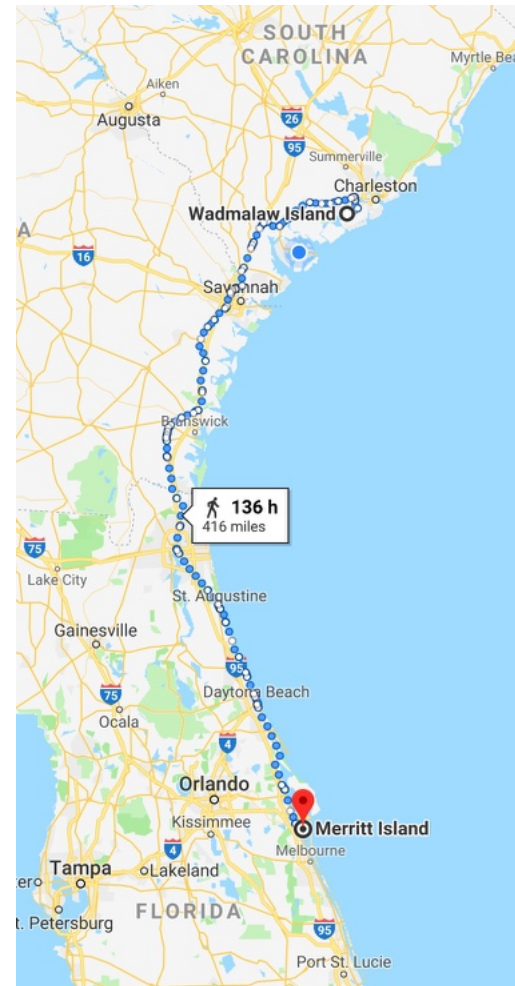
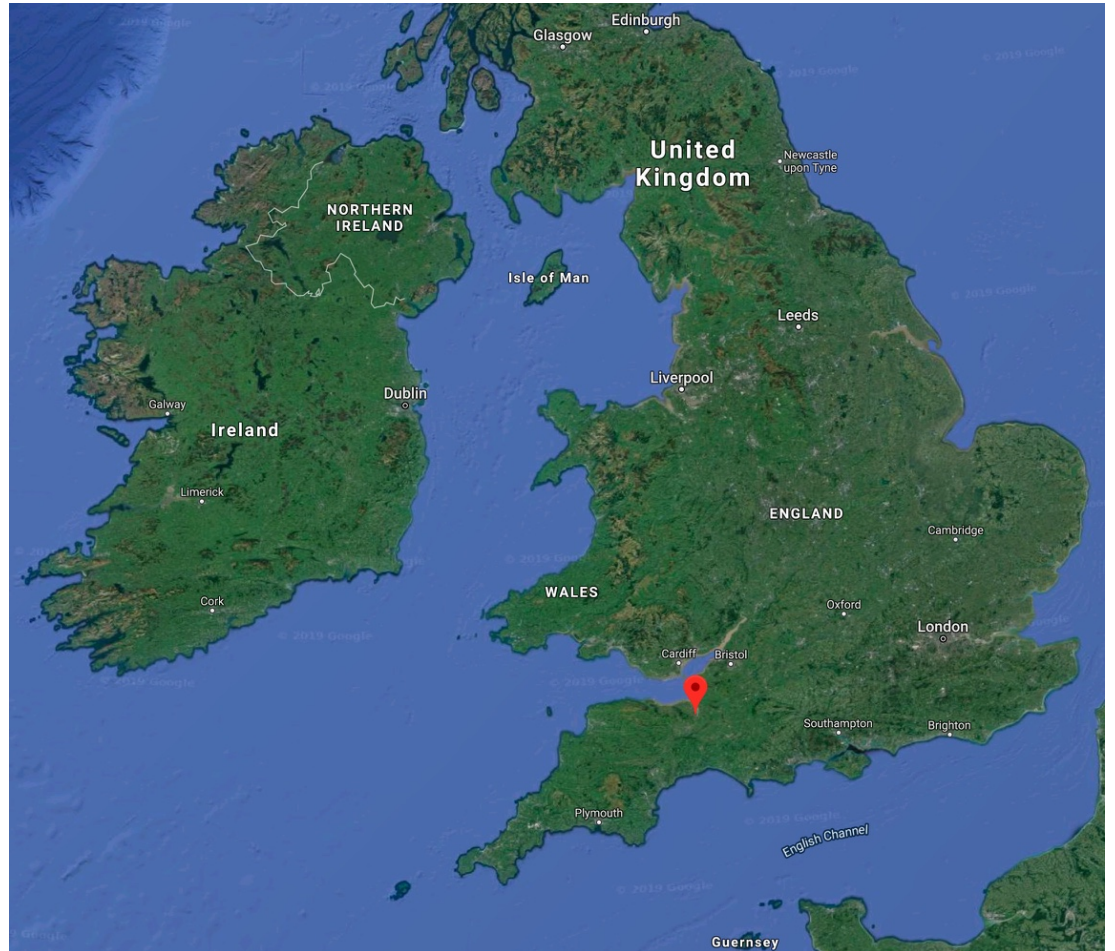



Sams of Florida

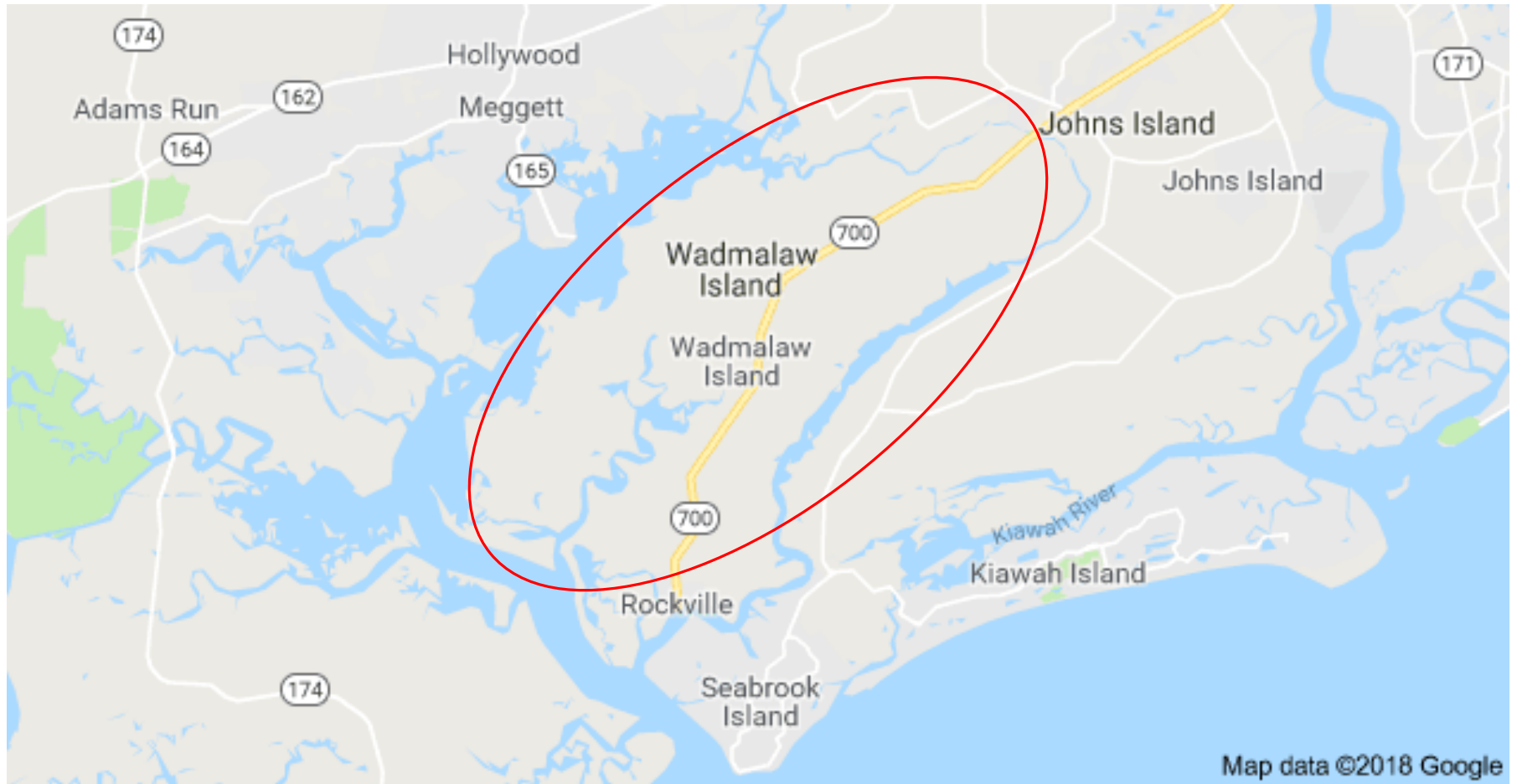
June 2019

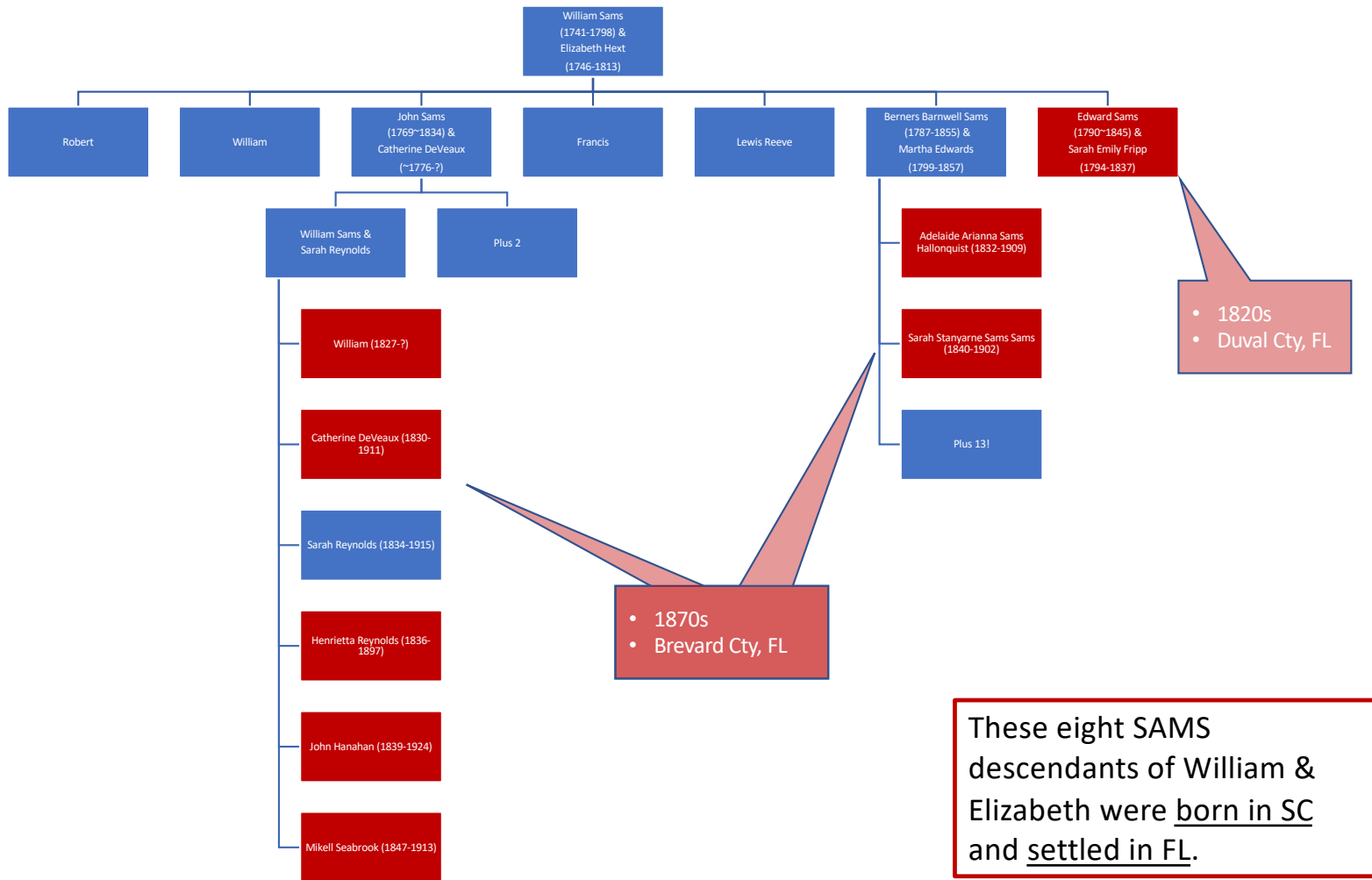


Church of St Mary,
North Petherton
Parish, County of
Somerset, England



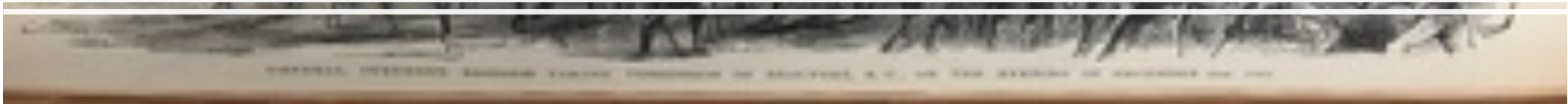
- 
-
- BONHAM/BONUM SAMS, II
 - Born 1663 Somerset, England
 - 1681 married Enstis Blake, Niece of Captain Benjamin Blake
 - Moved to Charles Towne, SC
 - Died after 1716 in USA



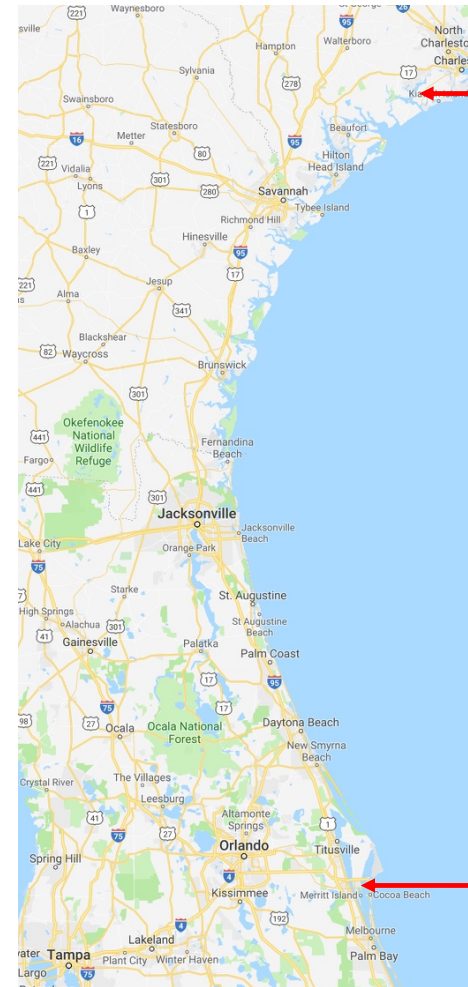




General Stephen's Brigade
Beaufort, SC
Evening of Dec 5, 1861



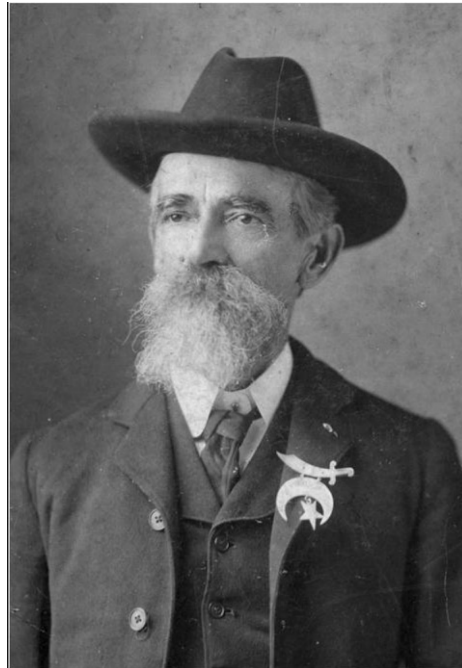
South Carolina to Florida



Wadmalaw
Island, SC

Merritt
Island, FL

Mikell Seabrook Sams 1847 – 1913





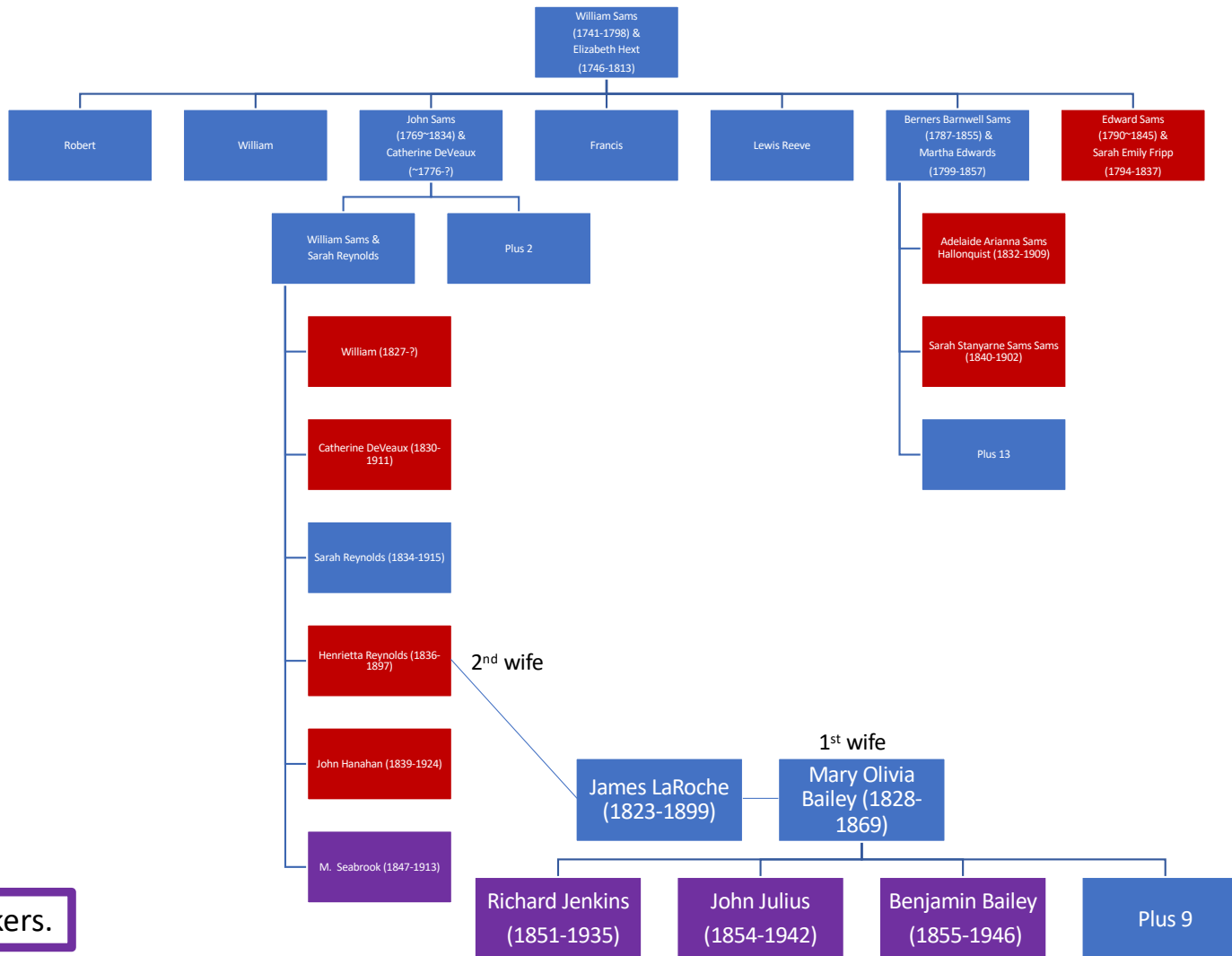
Sarah-Jane-
Bembry-Sams
1860-1897

Three LaRoche brothers walk from South Carolina to Florida with M. Seabrook Sams

Richard Jenkins
LaRoche
(1851-1935)

John Julius
LaRoche
(1854-1942)

Benjamin Bailey
LaRoche
(1855-1946)



The four hikers.



LaRoche Brothers & Hikers



Mikell Seabrook Sams
1847-1913

John Hanahan Sams 1839-1924



Sarah Stanyarne Sams Sams 1840-1902



"Federal Hospital No. 10, for colored Union troops"

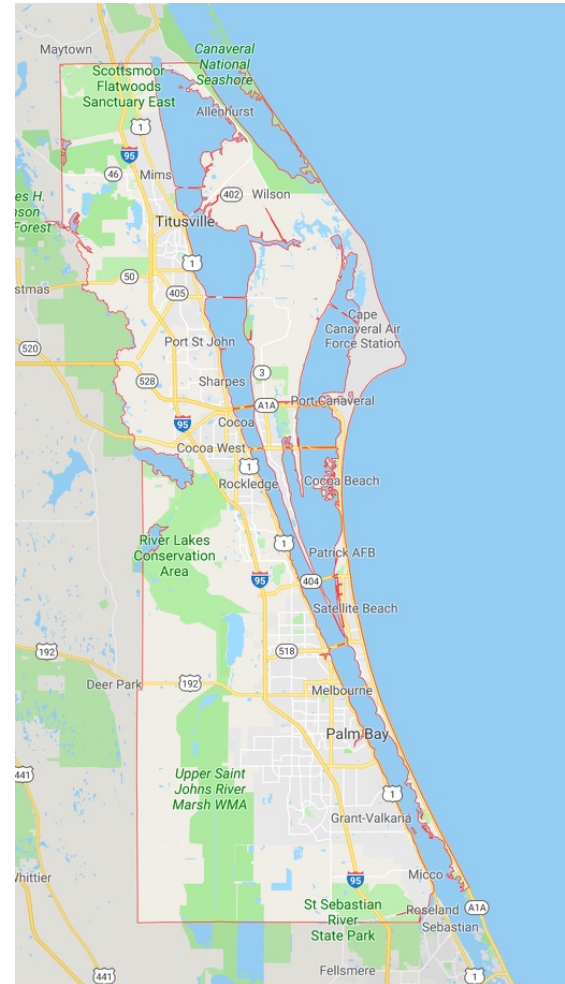
Sarah Sams,

daughter of B.B. Sams, lived here until Union troops commandeered her home for a hospital during the Civil War.

American abolitionist **Harriet Tubman** served as a nurse in this federal hospital, formerly the home of slave owner B.B. Sams. Tubman established the underground railroad, rescuing scores of slaves with her personal sacrifices.

Tracy Knauss

Brevard County, FL



Annual Pioneer Day

St. Luke's Episcopal Church and the Pine Island Preservation Society,
in partnership with Brevard County's Environmentally Endangered Lands Program,
proudly present the

8th Annual Pioneer Day

Saturday, February 9th, 2019 • 10 am - 4 pm

St. Luke's Episcopal Church

Sams House/Pine Island Conservation Area



www.mlpioneerday.com • FB: Merritt Island Pioneer Day

St. Luke's Events

5555 N. Tropical Trail, Merritt Island • (321) 452-5260

Guided Cemetery Tours:

10:15 am An Archaeologist's Perspective with *Molly Thomas*
11:30 am Founding Families
2:30 pm Through The Ages

Cemetery Stroll: Meet historic figures found in this early Merritt Island Cemetery 12:30 pm—2:00 pm

Featured Presentations:

11:00 am St. Luke's Chapel: A Gem of Carpenter Gothic Architecture (*in the 1888 Chapel*)
2:00 pm Rebuilt and Remade: Florida Citrus in the Early 20th Century (*in the Church*)

Know Your Treasures:

Bring an item or a picture and have an expert explain your treasure at 10:00 am - 2:00 pm

Pioneer Music in the Chapel at Noon • Homemade Soups \$5

Sams House/Pine Island Events

6195 N. Tropical Trail, Merritt Island • (321) 449-4720

Florida Living History Demonstrations • Guided Trail Hikes

Live music: *Celery City String Band, Chris Kahl, Pine Trio & Boylston Fish*

Exhibitors: History, Nature, Wildlife, Anthropology, & Archaeology

Crafts Fair & Farmer's Market • Children's Games & Crafts

1888 Sams House Tours • Pioneer "Parade" at 11 am • Food Trucks

FREE Admission • \$1 Suggested Donation for Parking

FREE Shuttle Service Between Venues







Tommy Lee Sams 1883-1960
and Amanda Clarity Sams



Fanny Sams Bell
1890-1920



Sams Historic Homestead

323 Pioneer Road
Merritt Island, Florida 32953
1-321-452-7668

January 10, 2003

Director
Division of Historical Resources
Bureau of Historic Preservation
Grants and Education Section
500 South Bronough St
Tallahassee, FL
32399-0250

Dear Sir or Ms.,

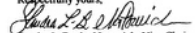
I have been advised about the possibility of restoring the Sams Homestead at Courteney on North Merritt Island, Florida. This is one of the oldest surviving homes of the earliest settlers on North Merritt Island and is over 100 years old. The fact that this humble wooden building still stands is a testament to the native materials from which it was built but beyond that it represents the hardiness and determination of the Sams family, who built it. A Sams relative has lived in it continuously until recent years when it became part of an Environmentally Endangered Lands tract.

Part of the building was originally built and used in Eau Gallie in the late 1800's and then barged up the river to its present location because lumber was still very difficult to mill and a good house was not to be wasted. The LaRoche families and Sams families, who were related, were not able to grow what they had hoped to on John's Island at Vero Beach and decided to resettle on Merritt's Island. Eventually they built the first sawmill on that part of the island and milled Merritt Island Mahogany (native pine) for themselves and others. The home had additions as was needed and was "modernized" several times but it is my hope as well as that of my other LaRoche-Sams family members, that the home be restored to its original state as nearly as historically possible. It is important to note that this home was the site of the first gatherings of congregants for the future St. Luke's Episcopal Church and the home of the first Superintendent of Brevard County schools.

The North Island has become well populated now and more accessible than ever which would be a plus if the building could be used as a history center that would educate visitors on the importance of this little known era and area. Because this site is so close to the Kennedy Space Center, which is already a visitor destination, it would be wonderful to provide access to this property so that the public may see a homestead that is still "Old Florida". I'm sure they would find the contrast amazing, given today's technological advances.

When you consider that these early families began the agriculture that still survives today, Indian River Citrus, that they built the first and only Episcopal Church, now a historic landmark at Courteney, started a post office, blasted pine stumps out of the ground so that they could farm and grow citrus and formed a community in the wilderness that is still vibrant today, all with the most rudimentary of conveyances, tools and only boats to get to the mainland and back, you will understand why we feel it imperative that this symbol of survival be restored and used as an example of responsible historic preservation.

As chairman of the Brevard Heritage Council, Inc. a countywide organization that supports historic preservation and education, I urge you to support this project so that another historically significant property in Brevard and on Merritt Island, is not lost as others have been. This is not just a family concern, but also a community concern.

Respectfully yours,

Sandra LaRoche Natowich, Vice Chairman
Merritt Island Redevelopment Agency



Brevard's Oldest Home

Built by John H. Sams in 1875, this is believed to be the oldest standing home in Brevard County. Originally built in Eau Gallie, the house was taken apart, floated up the Indian River Lagoon, and reassembled on this site in 1878. In 1880, ten family members (4 adults and 6 children) lived in this 600 square foot cabin!

The cabin has been restored as one room, but was originally divided into three spaces. It was also used as a school and for church services prior to the construction of the area's first schoolhouse in 1883 and St. Luke's Church in 1889.



John Sams and his granddaughter Celestina on the cabin steps in 1910



Many served in the
Civil War





Historic Home



John Sams' brother, daughter, and granddaughter, 1910

John H. Sams built this 1888 home in the classic Florida vernacular style to accommodate his growing family. He had a wife and 8 children, some of whom were grown and living on their own at the time this house was built. His older brother and sister also lived with the family.

At 1,260 square feet, the home features two large rooms downstairs, a family room, and an office. The upstairs holds three bedrooms and a bathroom. A separate kitchen was located behind the cabin.

Prior to the 1930s, there was no indoor plumbing and an outhouse was located nearby. Part of the house was enclosed in the 1950s to create a separate bathroom (now a separate bedroom) and bathroom (now a separate bedroom). Descendants of the



With 'cousin' Joe

DADE COUNTY HISTORIC FOUNDATION





St. Luke's Episcopal Church on
Merritt Island, FL

Photo by Ben Prepelka





Frank Sams &
Zelia Sheldon
Sams