

In 1870 when the daughter Matella Alma was born, the family was living west of New Smyrna in Turnbull Hammock.

In 1871 the Bell family arrived at Fort Pierce, in Brevard County. They first located near the old fort where Alexander operated a store with one Frank Smith. He later bought out Smith and ran the store until the debts on the books exceeded the stock, then closed it out. During the period that Bell operated the store he had a schooner which carried hides and green turtles to Jacksonville or Savannah and brought back supplies. On one occasion the Bells captured a manatee and sold it to P. T. Barnum. By 1878 the store was no longer in operation.

By the year 1878 the Bells had a homestead located south of Taylor Creek, just north of Fort Pierce. They also had about 160 acres of land in the Ten Mile Creek section southwest of Fort Pierce.

On May 23, 1879, Alexander Bell was commissioned County Commissioner for Brevard County for a term of two years.

In the 1880 Brevard census Alexander is listed as a farmer, living with his wife and four daughters. Next door are the two married sons, James S. & John Franklin Bell.

The following deeds recorded in Brevard County involve Alexander Bell:

1. State of Florida to Alexander Bell, Feb. 9, 1878; 42 acres in Section 3, T35S, R40E, tax deed; Taylor Creek area.
2. United States to Alexander Bell, Aug. 13, 1883; Homestead Certificate 2953; 118.10 acres: Lots 2 and 3, Section 3, T35S, R40E; Taylor Creek area.
3. Internal Improvement Fund of Fla. to Alexander Bell, Apr. 4, 1887; 160 acres:  $E\frac{1}{2}$  of NE  $\frac{1}{4}$ , NE  $\frac{1}{4}$  of SE  $\frac{1}{4}$ , and SW  $\frac{1}{4}$  of NE  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 27, T35S, R39E; Ten Mile Creek area.

In 1885 Alexander Bell represented Brevard County in the Constitutional Convention in Tallahassee which drew up a new State Constitution. He was also one of the signers of the document.

The 1885 Brevard Census shows Alexander Bell engaged as a "fruit-grower". In 1886 the Government opened a House of Refuge at Indian River Inlet on the Atlantic Ocean. The eldest son, James S. Bell, was first keeper. The Bells were always friends to the Indians and treated them with fairness. While James Bell was keeping the House of Refuge a number of settlers came over the river in great excitement. Somebody had been killing the Indians' hogs and stealing their cattle and they were threatening to go on the warpath and kill all the whites unless they were paid for their loss. The people wanted Alexander, James and Frank Bell to meet with the Indians and try to make peace. They did get the Indians to hold their tempers but the Indians demanded \$200, a large payment for that day and in that isolated locality, and they also set a time limit for its payment. But it was raised from various settlers along the river and peace was maintained. The Indians trusted Alexander Bell. Once a visiting photographer wanted to take a picture of a number of the braves but they were leery of that black box and the cloth under which the photographer hid his head and wouldn't pose until Mr. Bell stood up in the group with them. That was the only known photograph made of Alexander Bell---and he and his family did not get a copy.

On September 18, 1898 at his home on Taylor Creek, Alexander Bell died. He was buried in the Fort Pierce Cemetery. Incidentally, Mr. Bell had earlier donated the cemetery land to the community. A tomb-