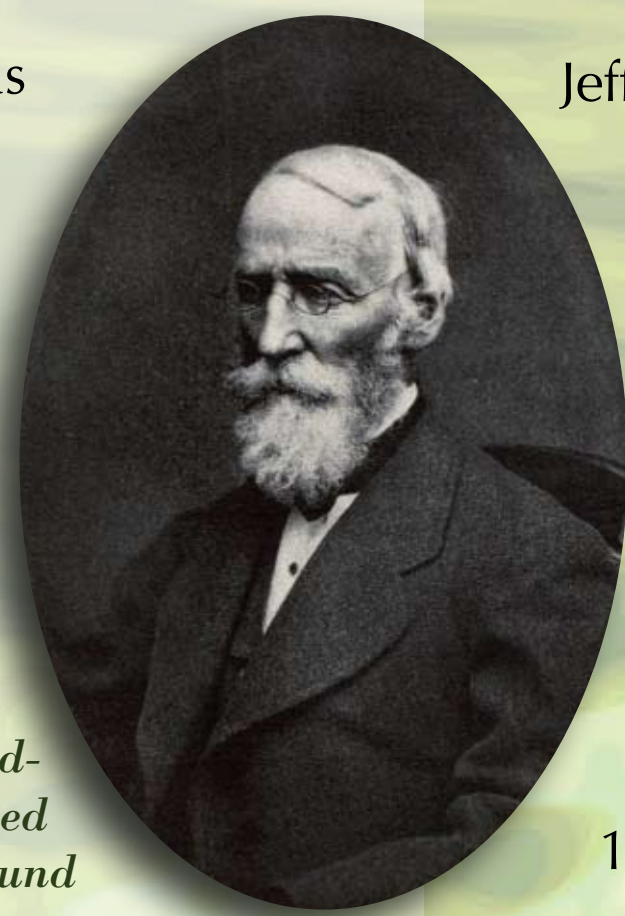


GREEN SPRINGS PARK

The Enterprise Midden

Though it no longer exists for visitors to see, a prominent landmark once stood on the lakeshore southeast of here. The Enterprise midden was a refuse heap for people occupying these spring lands thousands of years ago. Its mass of freshwater shells offered a focal point for inhabitants—certainly as a kitchen dump, and possibly as a lookout, a ceremonial site, or other uses.

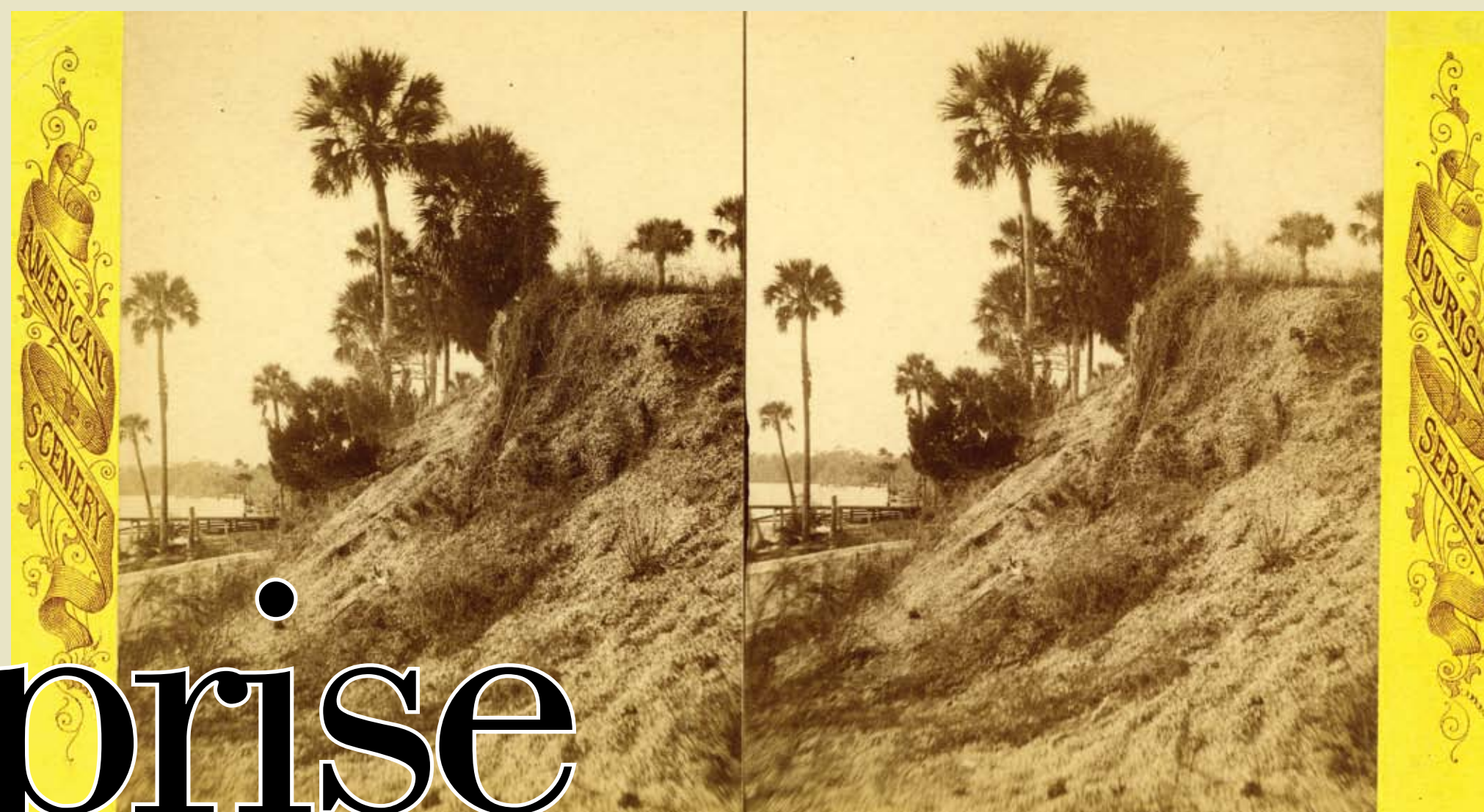


Jeffries Wyman—a Harvard-based scientist who excavated the Old Enterprise shell mound starting in 1860.

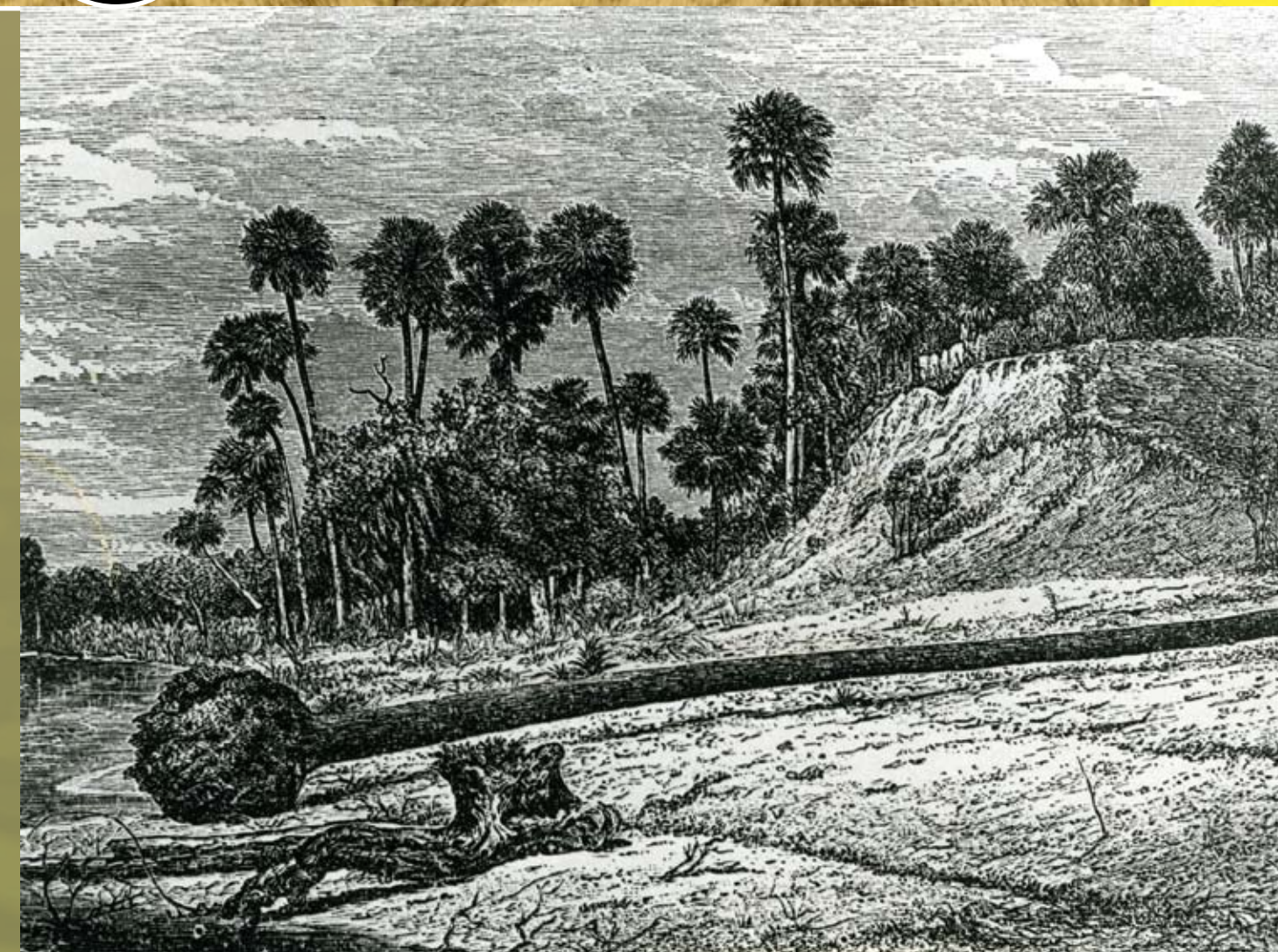
Image courtesy of the Peabody Museum Press, Harvard University.

The Enterprise midden—with portions missing—in the late nineteenth century. Taylor's inn had vanished from the top years earlier.

Stereoview (about 1880)
courtesy of Tom Baskett, Jr.



An 1874 sketch of the mound published by Jeffries Wyman. A decade later, another observer found the midden in a state of "dilapidation" from shell mining.



In the 1840s, Cornelius Taylor built a riverboat inn on the midden—and pioneering anthropologists began studying the shell mound. Harvard's Jeffries Wyman declared it the most important native dwelling place on Lake Monroe, and he reported in 1860 that the midden stood 18 to 20 feet high. Later studies have revealed shell deposits extending 1,200 feet along the lake and as far back as Braddock Road.

What became of the midden? Owners mined it until the 1920s for fertilizer and roads, leaving little above ground. Even so, modern archaeological excavations (including Dr. Barbara Purdy's wet-site work in Lake Monroe) have turned up ceramic, bone, and wood artifacts; and deposits along the shore have been radiocarbon dated to 6,000 years ago. Archaeologists remain curious about the Enterprise midden—and about native people whose lives centered on gathering shellfish and the area's other natural gifts.