## The Pelot-Babcock Duel

This was a fatal duel between two citizens that had been the best of friends. They had been drinking and during a game of billiards a controversy arose and the lie was passed. In that day to call a man a liar was equivalent to a challenge, and this case was not an exception. The principals were Dr. Pelot and Mr. Babcock, both residents of Jacksonville. Rifles were agreed upon as the weapons, the duel to be fought at 100 paces. Amelia Island was chosen as the place. For ten days the principals practiced for the affair. They met at the appointed time and place. The day was raw and very cold. The paces were stepped off and each principal received his instructions. At the word both fired simultaneously. Pelot fell, shot through the stomach, the ball severing the spine; he died shortly afterward. Dr. Henry D. Holland of Jacksonville was Dr. Pelot's second. Babcock went to New Orleans where, in utter grief, he drank himself to death.

*The code of ethics under which men lived in those days was undoubtedly wrong in some respects, but certainly not in all. Much of it was founded upon the principle of morality in the truest sense. It was an honor system backed by public sentiment, without which no law is effective. Drinking was their sin.

This incident in the life of the early town was of the nature to be perpetuated in the memory of the citizens, and the succeeding generation became familiar with the circumstances through hearsay. The account here given was written by a citizen of Jacksonville at the time.

## First Bulkhead

During a gale in October, 1846, the water from the river was backed up by the wind until it reached across Forsyth Street; water stood in the stores on Bay Street two feet deep. The brig "Virginia", owned by Capt. Willey, dragged her anchors and was driven from the foot of Market Street into Ocean Street, her bowsprit extending across Bay. This led two years later to the bulkheading and straightening of the river front from Ocean to what is now Main Street. Hewn logs were laid one upon the other and fastened together by staples and chains. It was called a "buttment" and served the purpose for a long time.[f]