

1897

at the Park Opera House and was claimed to be a moving picture of the Corbett-Fitzsimmons prize fight. The reel broke in half soon after the picture started and the subject proved to be a fake, nevertheless it was the forerunner of motion pictures in Jacksonville.

July 26: Long distance telephone service with Savannah inaugurated; day rate, 85 cents for three minutes; night rate, 45 cents.

September: Jacksonville quarantined against New Orleans and other yellow fever infested places in the lower Mississippi Valley. Quarantine in force until November.

November 9-12: Inauguration of a festival of fun called Gala Week, during which Jacksonville was given over to whole-hearted recreation and play. The city was crowded with visitors from all over the State. Fire companies from other places were here in competitive drills; there were semi-professional bicycle races, military maneuvers, fantastic parades, trades display embracing 170 floats, and numerous other attractions of all kinds. At night the carnival spirit was uncurbed; there were fireworks and confetti throwing and a good, wholesome time for everybody and Jacksonville turned out en masse. It was as an old negro said: While watching a passing parade a visitor set down a jug, which promptly foamed over and left a little pool of Florida syrup where it stood. Soon a foot was in it, followed by the testy inquiry, "What is that stuff? The old darkey replied, "Boss, dis town is so full of fun dat it biles out 'bove de sidewalk".

*Gala Week proved to be such a success that an association was formed to perpetuate it by making it an annual affair. It was held yearly until 1904, increasing in magnitude until it became a State affair which was widely advertised. The carnival of 1903 was the most elaborate ever held in Florida. Gala Week as a distinct celebration ceased with the Trades Carnival of 1904. Even now one sometimes hears the remark, "Have you seen George? You'd better hurry, hurry, hurry", all of which carries the memory back to old Gala Week in the days before the fire.