

Company acquired the Jacksonville & Atlantic railway in September, 1899, immediately changed the gauge to standard and extended the line from Pablo to Mayport. The first Florida East Coast Railway train arrived at Pablo March 8, 1900.

#### **Railway Bridge Across St. Johns River.**

Surveys for a bridge over the St. Johns River at Jacksonville were begun in January, 1888; the newspapers here noted the fact, although they could not find out why the survey was being made. Then came despatches from Washington that parties unknown in Jacksonville were asking authority of Congress to bridge the St. Johns here. Nearly a year afterward announcement was made from St. Augustine that the Jacksonville, Tampa & Key West Railroad was the promoter and the J. T. & K. W. got the credit for a long time. H. M. Flagler was the actual builder of the bridge.<sup>s</sup>

Preliminary work for the substructure began in February, 1889. Steel drums filled with concrete were sent down to rock bottom, in one instance 80 feet below water level. The plans called for an all-steel bridge costing \$1,000,000. It was completed within a year, the first train crossing on January 5, 1890. Many people were on the wharves for the novel sight of a train crossing the St. Johns River. The first through vestibuled train from the North (New York) crossed January 14, 1890. The opening of the bridge was not celebrated in Jacksonville; St. Augustine, however, was agog over the event.<sup>s</sup>

After 33 years of constant use the bridge was still serviceable, but the requirements of the Florida East Coast Railway demanded a double-tracked bridge and the railroad is now building one. The permit called for a \$2,000,000 structure. The first shovel of dirt for the new bridge was thrown in September, 1923; at the close of 1924 the work of construction was still in progress.

The new bridge is a separate construction and when completed the pioneer will be demolished.

#### **Southern Railway**

##### **Georgia, Southern & Florida Railway.**

The Georgia Southern & Florida Railroad Company was voted a charter by the Georgia Assembly September 28, 1881,