

Railroad Depots

The depot of the old Florida, Atlantic & Gulf Central Railroad was on the western edge of town near the intersection of the present Adams and Clay Streets. It was not a depot, but only a platform without even a shed, and the officials had no trouble in keeping it clear of freight and baggage, for there was but one arrival and one departure of trains in 24 hours.^b After the War Between the States the railroad terminus was extended and a small depot erected at the foot of Julia Street. When the S. F. & W. came into Jacksonville in 1881, its terminus and depot were near the waterfront east of the present Broad Street viaduct with a spur out on a dock where oranges and other fruits were loaded directly into the cars from the river boats.^h About this time the F. & J. was built and its depot was on East Bay Street a little west of Hogans Creek. The J. T. & K. W. depot was near the mouth of McCoys Creek, as was that of the J., St. A. & H. R. after the railroad bridge was built. The depot at Julia Street was moved to the foot of Hogan Street and the F. R. & N. built a cut-off or belt line from the F. & J. so that the passenger trains of the F. & J., which was then a part of the F. R. & N., could come into the Hogan Street depot; this belt line was opened September 27, 1886. This was the depot situation when the union depot was built.^g

The movement for a union station in Jacksonville was started by H. M. Flagler when on July 24, 1890, he bought the property then known as the Burch property from John Bensinger. The public did not know of this purchase until May 5, 1893, when the deed was filed for record and after the railroads had united in an agreement to build a union depot on the site.^g They secured a charter in 1893 as the Jacksonville Terminal Company: H. M. Flagler (J., St. A. & I. R.), president; H. B. Plant (S. F. & W.), vice-president; H. R. Duval (F. C. & P.), treasurer; J. R. Parrott, secretary. The J. T. & K. W. at this time was in the hands of a receiver.^g The location was low marsh land and 300,000 cubic yards of earth were hauled in to reclaim it. McCoys Creek was diverted by a great ditch. More than 2,100 piles were driven for a foundation, some of them to a depth of 70 feet. The cost of this preliminary work was \$100,000. Work on the train shed was begun in the summer of 1894, but when the framing was all up it was blown down during a hurricane on