

**Chamber of Commerce, 1884**

There is a record of a Board of Trade in Jacksonville in 1856; it was an advertisement published that year, setting forth the advantages of Jacksonville as a place of residence. Dr. Theodore Hartridge was president of the organization and probably it was kept up until the beginning of the War Between the States. In 1866, an effort was made to revive the Board of Trade, and there are traces of it as late as 1872.

The present Chamber of Commerce dates back to January 31, 1884, when a meeting was held in the office of J. Q. Burbridge for the purpose of forming a permanent Board of Trade in Jacksonville. Mr. Burbridge presided and Henry S. Ely acted as secretary. Twenty business men attended that meeting, and after a general discussion of the necessity for such an organization a resolution was adopted declaring "the interests of Jacksonville demand the organization of a Board of Trade". At a meeting February 7, 1884, a constitution was reported and adopted. On February 18, 1884, ex-Governor George F. Drew was chosen president, and J. Q. Burbridge, J. E. Hart, J. M. Schumacher and M. A. Dzialynski were elected governors. These were the first officers. Forty names represented the first enrollment. The first secretary, J. P. Varnum, was appointed March 15, 1884. There were some defects in the original constitution and a new one was adopted May 14th and the by-laws May 21, 1884. The Board of Trade was incorporated July 8, 1893. The charter was greatly amended May 16, 1913, to meet the growing needs of the organization. The name was changed to Chamber of Commerce January 6, 1915, and it was incorporated under that name March 24, 1915. On October 25, 1921, a new constitution and new by-laws were adopted.

The record of the Chamber of Commerce since the organization in 1884, is a constructive history of many pages in itself. It was successful in its first year in securing an improvement in the rail and mail facilities for Jacksonville; and started the agitation for a Federal building; it immediately took up the fight for bar and harbor improvement, an activity that was never afterward allowed to wane. It was in all of the skirmishes and battles on the side of progress for Jacksonville when the place was developing from the town class into that of city. It advocated without exception the measures for local advancement in those days and originated many of