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The "Friends of the Florida Seminoles" Society: 1899-1926

By HARRY A. KERSEY, JR.*

In the decades immediately following the Third Seminole War (1855-58) those Indians who remained in Florida were able to develop their culture in relative isolation from encroaching white settlement. Although from time to time there was agitation for their removal from the state, federal authorities displayed limited interest in the Seminole until the late 1870's.¹ The report of Lt. Richard H. Pratt, an Army officer who visited among the Seminole in 1879, convinced the national government that the Indians could be removed only at the risk of intervening with troops and rekindling the old bitterness of the Seminole Wars; the probable costs in lives and adverse publicity were deemed too high a price to pay for moving a handful of Indians, so the Seminole were left in peace—for a time. The decision of the government not to tamper with the Seminole allayed the threat of removal to the Indian Territory, but left them vulnerable to the vicissitudes of local justice as an increasing number of settlers poured into south Florida. Throughout the 1870's and 80's various incidents involving apparent mistreatment of Indians came to light, and there were calls for protection of the native population.

Much of the conflict between the Seminole and settlers grew out of disputes over livestock on the open range. The Pratt Report of 1879 mentioned the complaints of cattlemen that the Seminole annually killed beef worth \$1,500.00 to \$2,000.00, but he also noted that "like offenses are committed against Indians. Within a few months a man named Lightsey was charged by an Indian with having stolen sixteen of his hogs. The Indian brought the men who helped cut them up, as proof. At the time of my visit public opinion was so strong against Lightsey that he was expected to pay for the hogs. Another notable case was when an Indian named Streety Parker had bought from a white man named Collier fifty cattle which proved to be stolen. Parker had to give them up, and Collier was tried before the courts but escaped punishment. No restitution was made and the friends of the Indians wrote to the Governor of the State

who replied that an Act of the legislature was the only remedy, and there and there the case rests, with the Indians still indignant.”² In her account of life along the Indian River in the last century, Emily Lagow Bell recounted that her husband and his family had to resolve a case of cattle rustling where Indians were the aggrieved party.³ Similarly, by 1888 the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, acting on a report from his agent in the field, reported to Congress on the necessity of acquiring land for the Seminole because “...the increasing white settlements in Southern Florida are fast driving these people from their accustomed haunts and depriving them of their means of support. It is charged that they kill cattle belonging to the large herds in that section of the state, to the value of some \$2,000 or \$3,000 annually. In view of these facts, trouble between them and the whites is likely to occur at any time.”⁴ However, not all white settlers were anti-Seminole, and many individuals interceded in their behalf with state and federal officials. Miss Lilly Pierpont of Winter Haven, a staunch supporter of the Seminole who later was to become the first woman Indian Agent in Florida, wrote directly to President Grover Cleveland’s wife protesting that “they are at present inclined to be friendly, though they are often imposed upon by white settlers. A short time ago a party of white men made a raid upon the property of some Indians stationed near Titusville and destroyed their hogs. The Indians, instead of fighting, appealed to the Mayor of Titusville, D.L. Gaulden, for Government protection; I have not heard if they received it.”⁵ Miss Pierpont and others who were appointed to locate lands for the Seminole had little success in the face of local conditions and Indian reluctance to deal with anyone, even their friends, who represented the national government. Nevertheless, the time was coming when a permanent agency would have to be established in Florida to protect Indian rights and secure land for their use.

In 1891 the Women’s National Indian Association of Philadelphia purchased 400 acres of land and established a mission at Immokalee in what is now Collier County. The following year the U.S. Government opened a station on 80 adjacent acres, with a sawmill, store, school, and medical service available for the Seminole. A short time later the WNIA mission was taken over by the Protestant Episcopal Church, and the medical missionary Dr. J.E. Brecht ultimately became the government Indian Agent. Although the conscientious Agent Brecht made good progress in purchasing lands for the Indians, having acquired some 10,000 acres by 1899, he had no authorization to provide legal protection for the Seminole who consistently refused to move on to federal land and settle there permanently. The Indians were a semi-nomadic people who depended heavily on hunting and trapping for their livelihood, and their

range was the entire Everglades and Big Cypress Swamp region of the lower peninsula. If an Indian was cheated out of his hides and pelts by an unscrupulous trader, received bad liquor from whiskey vendors, or had his domestic animals taken in the night, Agent Brecht could only complain on his behalf to the local magistrates. Occasionally officials from the Indian Service in Washington, such as Col. A.J. Duncan, would come on inspection tours to advise about land purchases or the control of whiskey selling, but federal power was never interposed to settle Indian-white controversies in the state. Thus in his annual reports Dr. Brecht complained of an inability to prosecute whiskey vendors, crooked traders, and those who ran Indians off of lands that they had occupied for years. He did note, however, that a group of citizens living north of Lake Okeechobee was raising funds to purchase lands, provide education, and seek legal protection for the Cow Creek band of Seminole living in that region.⁶ This newly formed organization known as the Friends of the Florida Seminoles was to become the first effective citizens voice for Seminole rights in the state.

On the seventh day of January, 1899, the Friends of the Florida Seminoles was organized as "a humanitarian, benevolent and charitable Society or unincorporated Association" in Kissimmee, Florida.⁷ The group which met at the Kissimmee Hotel to adopt a Constitution and By-Laws for the society was comprised of well known and articulate spokesmen for the Seminole cause; the membership which ultimately rose to over eighty persons included many prominent Florida business leaders, journalists, politicians, and clergymen, as well as concerned citizens.⁸ The slate of officers named at the first meeting was a veritable roll call of those who had been fighting for the establishment of a Seminole reservation in Florida. The first president was the Rt. Rev. William Crane Gray, Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church's Missionary Jurisdiction of Southern Florida, who had been instrumental in sustaining the mission work in the Immokalee region. Vice President was the Rev. D.A. Dodge, pastor of the Presbyterian Church in Kissimmee. The position of Treasurer went to Senator C.A. Carson who represented the district in the state legislature, and would be invaluable in future legislative activities of the society. James M. Willson, a local realtor and perhaps the closest confidant of the Seminole in that part of the state, was elected Secretary—a post he was to occupy until his death in 1943. An equally prestigious Executive Committee was soon appointed which included: George W. Wilson, editor of the *Times-Union and Citizen*, Jacksonville; Dr. J.E. Brecht, United States Indian Agent, Fort Myers; Francis A. Hendry, a leading cattleman and member of the legislature, Fort Thompson; P.A. Vans Agnew, an attorney editor-publisher of the *Kissimmee Valley*

Gazette, Kissimmee; and R.H. Seymour, a prominent attorney and mayor of Kissimmee. And always in the background but a driving force in the deliberations of the society was Minnie Moore-Willson, wife of Secretary J.M. Willson, whose book *The Seminoles of Florida* had brought national attention to the plight of her indian friends.⁹

In most respects the Friends of the Florida Seminoles was similar to other benevolent societies of the period which were devoted to alleviating the "Indian Problem" in the United States. This issue had been brought into sharp focus in the last quarter of the nineteenth century primarily through a number of journalistic exposés such as Indian Commissioner G.W. Manypenny's *Our Indian Wards* (1879), and Helen Hunt Jackson's *A Century of Dishonor* (1881) and *Ramona* (1884) which had seared the national conscience and brought outcries to redress some of the injustices done to native peoples. The outstanding federal response to this movement was the Dawes Act of 1887, which proposed to turn Indian families into freeholders of individual farm allotments rather than having tribal lands held in common as provided for by treaty; this was brought about by the Dawes Commission of 1893. Although the Dawes Act was hailed at the time as a step in the direction of assimilating the Indian into the social and economic life of the nation, its great cost in terms of loss of personal and tribal identity, as well as the siphoning off of millions of acres of Indian lands through chicanery, is today recognized as a national tragedy for the Indian peoples.

Nevertheless, the American altruistic spirit responded to this new *cause celebre* in typical fashion: Private associations were formed to assist the Indian. National organizations such as the Women's National Indian Association and the Indian Rights Association took the lead in establishing missions, sending educational and medical workers into the field, and acting as watchdogs against attempts to further usurp Indian lands. Both of these national societies would ultimately become active in Florida with the WNIA establishing the original mission station at Immokalee in 1891, and the IRA adding its support to the drive to establish a state reservation after the turn of the century. The publication of Minnie Moore-Willson's *The Seminoles of Florida* (1896) and Charles Coe's *Red Patriots* (1898) catapulted Seminole mistreatment to national visibility and it became an emotional issue around which reformers could rally; thus it was only a matter of time until local societies would be formed and the battle joined in Florida.

The press of the state generally lauded the society's founding as a progressive step forward in protecting the Indian. As might be expected the Jacksonville *Times Union and Citizen* and the *Kissimmee Valley Gazette*, the editors of both being officers in the society, took the lead in

publicizing its work. Throughout the spring and summer of 1889 — a period of intense activity for the society — practically every issue of the weekly *Gazette* carried some report of the activities of the Friends. The *Gazette* openly functioned as a clearing house for information about the Seminole appearing in other newspapers throughout Florida. The Friends also received attention at the national level during this period. Extensive editorial comment in *The Indian's Friend*, published in Philadelphia as a house organ of the Women's National Indian Association, hailed the formation of the Florida group; however, the WNIA did not hesitate to take credit for being first in the field: "Our readers will need no reminder that it was our Association which inaugurated the present movement for the granting, in due legal form, their Florida homes to the Seminoles...the advent of the new association above named will we trust grandly aid in gaining the end desired, viz, permanent homes where their dead are buried, where they have lived for many years, and where their hearts are."¹⁰ Throughout the year the same journal had made a strident plea for federal action on behalf of the Seminole, asking: "Will Congress see and regard the justice and force of this, or will it listen to those who, caring nothing for the Indians or their rights, would have them removed from the State altogether, or, what is equivalent to a temporary reservation only?..."¹¹ "Is it possible to stop these robberies? Is there no power anywhere, to give to enforce protecting orders for these Indians who cannot protect themselves? And if not, are not some of our troupes needed to protect the homes of our own home-born oppressed race..."¹²

The mere suggestion that federal troops might be used quickly aroused the ire of southerners still smarting from armed occupation during the Reconstruction Era. The editorials in *The Indian's Friend* were answered by the strongly pro-Seminole editor of the *Times-Union and Citizen*: "No, the troops will not be sent here — the Indians do not count at election time, and their wrongs are little regarded. But it is a reproach to the State of Florida that these things are so — just as it is a reproach to the nation that the same wrongs are constantly inflicted on the tribes in the West...But, usually, the injury done to the Seminole here is not by Floridians, but by the new and irresponsible immigrant. The sin of Floridians is mainly confined to laxness in punishment, but this evil seems to cling forever to our skirts and mark us out as most patient of the wrongs of others. Governor after Governor has talked and failed to do anything; perhaps we shall continue on the same path to the end of time. Yet our Governors are usually amenable to gentler influences — where we fail utterly perhaps the ladies might win. Might we suggest that the ladies who publish *The Indian's Friend* express themselves forcibly and freely in remonstrance to our State authorities instead of threatening us with an

invasion from outside at the instance of Federal authority?"¹³

Just how difficult it would be to secure the legal rights of the Seminole in Florida became apparent in the first venture of the Friends society known as "The case of Tom Tiger's Horse." Tom Tiger was a well-known and respected member of the Cow Creek Seminole band who figured prominently in the accounts of many visitors among the Seminole during the last quarter of the nineteenth century, especially those of Ober,¹⁴ Pratt,¹⁵ MacCauley,¹⁶ Wilson,¹⁷ and Willson.¹⁸ In many respects it was this incident, in which a white man had apparently cheated one of the most respected Indians of the period, that impelled many of the founders of the Friends to form an organization which could exert a unified influence in behalf of Seminole rights. Many of them were already involved in the case long before the society was formally organized and had laid the groundwork for the trial that took place in April, 1899. Tom Tiger alleged that Harmon H. Hull had taken a horse from his camp near Fort Drum, and wrote his promise to return same in two months on the top of a cartridge box; however, a rainstorm soaked the box making whatever was written there illegible, so the Seminole had no proof of his claim. Nevertheless, after the time passed Tiger wanted his horse returned, and brought his complaint to his friend Jim Willson in Kissimmee. Willson corresponded with Hull to no avail, the latter claiming that he bought the horse and held "...some white man has put him up to claim that and get me scared up best that he can do. All the Indians in the South can't do that."¹⁹ Faced with Hull's refusal to either return the horse or pay for it, Willson sought financial and legal aid in bringing the Indian's case to court. His initial contact with the Commissioner of Indian Affairs brought the response that the government had no right to intervene; "...there being no authority of law for the appointment of counsel," and it was suggested that "if he cannot regain possession of his horse in any other way about the only thing for him or his friends to consider is the advisability of suing the white man before a Justice of the Peace. This can better be determined by persons conversant with the local conditions than by this office."²⁰ Although federal authorities at the national level disclaimed any responsibility in the matter, Dr. J.E. Brecht, the Special Agent working with the Seminole at the Immokalee station, offered his personal unofficial support for the effort to bring Hull to trial, and pledged funds to help hire a lawyer.²¹

During the summer of 1898 a lawyer, R.H. Seymour of Kissimmee, was retained to represent Tom Tiger. He and Willson contacted all parties familiar with the horse transaction and presented this information to the States Attorney in Titusville, the county seat of Brevard County where the offense was ostensibly committed. All of this took time, and Tom

Tiger was growing increasingly impatient with white man's justice which moved ever so slowly. A series of letters written by white traders such as R.A. Swearingen,²² P.P. Cobb,²³ and James Gray²⁴ of Fort Pierce, and Ben Doster of Jupiter²⁵ kept Tom Tiger in touch with Jim Willson and his lawyer. When the Friends of the Florida Seminoles was organized in January, 1899, the society made Tom Tiger's case their primary concern and provided additional financial support. Of course Willson and Seymour, who were founding officers of the society, worked for expenses only in traveling about the state gathering evidence. Ultimately, charges were brought against H.H. Hull and he was jailed awaiting trial at the April session of the Circuit Court meeting in Titusville.

The case of *The State v Harmon Hull* came to trial on April 28, 1899 with Judge M.S. Jones presiding.²⁶ States Attorney J.D. Beggs, assisted by Seymour, presented the case for the prosecution, and W.H. Jewell of Orlando represented the defendant. Actually, the case rested on the testimony of Tom Tiger and another Seminole, Billy Ham, who had been sworn as witnesses for the prosecution; R.A. Swearingen served as their interpreter when needed. After hearing testimony and cross examination, Judge Jones directed the jury to acquit the defendant as there was no proof of a crime. As one of the newspapers covering the trial reported "It was vital to the prosecution that the instrument in writing by which the fraud was committed should be proved to have been signed by the accused, and the two Indian witnesses, Tom Tiger and Billy Ham failed to testify satisfactorily to the actual signing in spite of the assistance of the interpreter, R.A. Swearingen [sic], who accompanied the Indians to Titusville."²⁷ Immediately following this unexpected conclusion to the trial a fund was raised in the courtroom to buy the Seminole another horse, and even the members of the court reportedly contributed. The Indians and their interpreter then returned home as guests of the Florida East Coast Railroad which had arranged their trip at the request of Jim Willson and the Friends society.

Although the society had scored a limited success in its legal defense of Tom Tiger, the major thrust throughout the spring and summer of 1899 was toward acquiring land for the Seminole. Specifically, they hoped to purchase certain tracts which were occupied by the Cow Creeks, those Muskogee speaking Seminoles who lived north of Lake Okeechobee. The Indians were actually without legal title to the land, most of it belonging to either railroads or land development companies which were selling the acreage to white settlers. As late as the 1880's the Cow Creek band had lived and hunted in the upper reaches of the Kissimmee River basin in the vicinity of present day Polk and Osceola Counties. Gradually, however, they were pushed southward by cattle and agricultural interests

until by the turn of the century most of their camps were located near Lake Okeechobee in the Hungryland-Bluefield district, and in the vicinity of Indiantown in Brevard (now Martin) County.

The Friends set a goal of \$1,000 for their solicitation campaign which was first announced in April, 1899; unfortunately, by June little had been collected despite the best efforts of J.M. Willson who headed the fund raising effort. Then the society received tremendous national exposure for its work through E.W. Martin's column in *Harper's Weekly* which noted in part "A pathetic appeal comes from Florida in behalf of a band of Seminole Indians, for whom a thousand dollars is wanted to secure them in the possession of their present home. This band is known as the Cow Creek tribe, and contains about twelve families, numbering about seventy-five persons...Mr. Willson, writes that the only way to protect these Indians to the possession of their homes is to locate their camps, buy the land, and hold it in trust for them. A thousand dollars, he says, will serve the purpose amply, but he wants that thousand dollars very much, and he says he can't raise it in Florida. The society therefore 'earnestly appeals to humane people in the North to subscribe the amount necessary to protect this remnant of a brave and historic people from robbery.'"²⁸ From that point the tempo of contributions picked up appreciably, with small dollar amounts coming in from throughout the nation but primarily from the northeastern states. Weekly the *Kissimmee Valley Gazette* published a listing of donations of the "Cow Creek Fund" as reported by J.M. Willson. The last published report on October 20, 1899 showed that the sum of \$595.85 had been received.

Apparently fearing to wait any longer for the thousand dollars to be raised lest all the desired Indian lands be taken, the society voted in June to send J.M. Willson, P.A. Vans Agnew, and a surveyor, J.E. Moseley, to the Indiantown area to see what was available. Their report to the society on July 7, confirmed everyone's worst fears: "Indian Town Taken" headlined the *Gazette*, and its columns reported that the three men had found "All of this tract has been bought from the railroad and land companies owning it mostly within the last few months. One purchaser had just built a house in the hammock within 300 yards of Chief Tallahassee's shack, on a piece that includes several Indian fields, and is fencing and preparing the place for cultivation. Another purchaser is temporarily camped on his hammock track. A store stands on one forty...The influx of the white settlers has disturbed them greatly as they do not know where next to go and are loath to leave the rich Cow Creek country."²⁹ Distraught over their inability to save any Seminole camp sites in the Indiantown area the society did manage to purchase an 80 acre tract known as "Polly Parker's Camp" in what is now St. Lucie

County, in essence creating a "private reservation" that was held in trust by the Friends of the Florida Seminoles until 1926.³⁰

Thwarted in the attempt to save existing Cow Creek camps through outright purchase, individual Friends turned their considerable energies to the support of legislation establishing a state Indian preserve in Florida. This idea was not original with the Friends. Throughout the 1880's and 90's a succession of Special Agents of the U.S. Indian Service sought to buy land in south Florida for the Seminole, and by 1899 some 10,000 acres had been secured mostly in Monroe and Lee Counties. The 1891 legislature passed legislation setting aside some 5,000 acres of state land as a reservation, but this was never implemented. With the support of Governor W.D. Bloxham and several key legislative leaders who had taken up the Indian cause, the time seemed propitious to again seek state land. A bill to establish an extensive reservation was introduced in the House by Francis A. Hendry, representing Lee County, and a companion measure was authored by C.A. Carson of Kissimmee in the Senate. With the astute maneuvering of these veteran legislators the bill had little opposition in either house, and was signed into law by Governor Bloxham on May 29, 1899.³¹ Again, however, legislative action was to prove futile as the sections of land named in the act had already been taken up by various companies and individuals. The Friends and their supporters would have to wait another 17 years before their goal of a state reservation could be realized.

A second piece of legislation passed in the 1899 session, though less dramatic than the ostensible donation of land to the Seminole, drew heavy support from the society and recognized an equally urgent need to help the Indians develop an economic alternative to the hunting-trapping economy that was beginning to play out. With a typical nineteenth century faith in the power of education and technical training as a means to bring the Indian into the mainstream of American life, the more aggressive elements among the Friends had Rep. J.W. Watson introduce legislation establishing a Seminole Industrial School. This measure, which completely disregarded both the Seminole attitude toward formal instruction and their ability to profit from it in their unsettled condition, was reminiscent of R.H. Pratt's recommendations of 1879 which advocated using old Fort Brooke in Tampa as a Seminole industrial education center. The bill recognized the executive committee of the Friends of the Florida Seminoles society as a "Board of Seminole Educators" to oversee the school "to be located in the Cow Creek settlement of the Seminole Indians in Brevard County."³² Moreover, it specifically named J.R. Parrot, G.W. Wilson, and F.A. Hendry to these unremunerated positions, and appropriated a sum of \$500 annually for two years with which they

were to establish and maintain the “experimental” school.

The bill passed the legislature and became law on June 1, 1899.³³ Shortly thereafter the three man board met and organized itself for the task at hand; in a newspaper interview Capt. Hendry held that “We expect to spend \$500 each year, and to do such efficient work in the direction of making good citizens of the Seminoles that not only the State, but the general Government, will be so impressed as to continue what the Legislature has begun. The Seminoles on Cow Creek are not at all different from those in other parts of Florida. They are the same people, neither superior nor inferior in morals and ambition to their kindred elsewhere in the State, but they are nearer civilization, and it is more practicable to conduct schools among them than it would be among those in more remote parts of the State.”³⁴ Despite these good intentions the school project never got off the ground, none of the money was spent, and no annual reports to the Governor called for in the law were ever filed.

Apparently the visit of Willson, Vans Agnew, and Moseley to the Indiantown region had left them highly skeptical of possible success for an Indian school. A *Gazette* account of their report to the society noted “Regarding the industrial school the report recommends that no attempt be made in the present unsettled condition of the tribe to establish a regular school down there, but that the children there be taught in a simple way at first by a local resident, and that one or two bucks and squaws be persuaded to come to Kissimmee and learn how to tan skins and make salable articles out of them, how to do needlework, make barrels and other useful crafts.”³⁵ The Friends adopted this report, although it exploded another of their cherished goals for improving the Seminole lot, and appointed the white trader at Indiantown, Joe Bowers, as the society’s agent to do what he could to help the Indians there. No doubt the decision to forego formal schooling was a wise one, and in no way negated the impulse to educate those few Indians who sought to learn the 3R’s; this was carried out on an individual basis by members of the society and particularly the families of white traders in South Florida.

In retrospect it appears that the year 1899 saw the zenith of the society’s activities on many fronts — organizational, legal defense, education, and land acquisition. After that first scintillating year the society settled into those routines associated with any charitable cause, providing largess for needy Indians, and within the limits of their coffers supplying Seminole representation at state and local affairs to build public good will. After the turn of the century, however, the society’s efforts centered primarily on the passage of meaningful legislation to establish a reservation. In the process it increasingly became a showcase for

the unique talents of James and Minnie Moore-Willson.

Usually provocative, often abrasive, but always interesting, the mercurial Mrs. Willson became synonymous in the state press with Seminole advocacy. She had initially reaped notoriety in 1896 with the publication of her book *The Seminoles of Florida*, which was the first full-length work dealing with the post-removal history and culture of the tribe. It was a poorly written, undocumented, maudlin creampuff, and almost totally unreliable for its ethnohistoric content — yet perfectly attuned to the national sentiment for reform of federal Indian policies at the end of the nineteenth century.³⁶ Thus, it became a best seller which went through several printings, and Minnie Moore-Willson became a celebrity among the reform set. Even so, her outspoken, no-holds-barred push for redress of Indian ills, and especially land for the Cow Creek band, often alienated other individuals and groups working for similar ends. She occasionally seemed oblivious to the social and political ramifications of her activities, and apparently was prone to make unfounded allegations about state and federal officials who did not share her own single-minded devotion to the Seminole. This led to some fierce encounters with such prominent figures as Mrs. May M. Jennings,³⁷ President of the Florida Federation of Women's Clubs, and Mrs. Frank Stranahan, Chairman of the Federation's Indian Committee, who diplomatically suggested that "I trust that you will receive this letter in the spirit in which it is sent. I really feel that your being connected with my committee does [sic] not give you the liberty you would have if you were free to act independently, you might accomplish more and I feel sure you desire to do...I am putting Mrs. Julia Hanson on my Committee."³⁸ Despite these rebukes Mrs. Willson persisted in her letter writing, speech making, and general clamor for action in behalf of the Seminole; she also refused to resign from the Indian Committee of the Federation of Women's Clubs and spelled out her views in a letter to Mrs. Stranahan:

"Your letter of recent date received suggesting that possibly my being on the Seminole Committee is a hinderance to me. I feel that we as a committee have a more serious responsibility than any of the Federation committees, because we are working for innocent and oppressed humanity, and for this reason my duty is with the Seminole Committee. I do not feel that being a member of the Seminole Committee is hampering me, nor interfering with any work that I may be able to do to further the cause of our Seminole Indians. Any work that I may do outside our committee work is just that much additional help toward the Seminole cause. I feel that during the present year we ought to make great strides for the future

good of the Florida Indians. As an additional member of the Seminole Committee Mrs. Hanson will no doubt prove beneficial as she has always shown an interest in the Seminoles. Wishing you a prosperous and happy New Year, I am sincerely yours. Signed (Mrs. James M. Jr.) Minnie Moore-Willson.”³⁹

From one frustrating biennial legislative session to the next the Willsons and their loyal supporters, particularly the *Florida Times Union* and *Kissimmee Valley Gazette*, carried on the fight for a state reservation. In 1911 a bill providing 15 townships in Monroe County passed the House only to meet defeat in the upper chamber. Success was almost theirs in 1913 when the measure passed both houses of the legislature but was vetoed by the Governor as being too costly. In 1915 the anti-reservation forces in the legislature again prevailed, but time and public sentiment were running against them. Before the next session of the legislature the Willsons had entered into an alliance with a powerful national organization, the Indian Rights Association of Philadelphia, which threw the full weight of its prestige, funds, and able secretary, Matthew K. Sniffen, into the fray. In 1915, Sniffen and a director of the Association, Joseph Elkinton, had visited with the Willsons and the Friends of the Florida Seminoles at Kissimmee, and after visiting the Indian camps they decided to place their support behind the Seminole land effort.⁴⁰ The lobbying efforts of Sniffen, both in Washington and Tallahassee, did much to ease the way for passage of a bill in the following session. The federal Indian Service was also a party to the proceedings through the expert testimony of special commissioner Lucien A. Spencer before the various legislative committees. On May 18, the legislation cleared both houses and Governor Sidney J. Catts signed it into law two days later. As a tribute to her long struggle in behalf of the Seminole people, the Governor gave the golden pen with which he signed the bill to Minnie Moore-Willson.⁴¹

It was a time of personal triumph for the Willsons, and especially for Mrs. Willson who was lauded by the press of the state as the “mother of the Seminole Land Bill,” although her husband who had worked as long and vigorously was curiously overlooked except by those closely associated with the Friends society. Even the U.S. Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Cato Sells, acknowledged only the distaff side of the family in his congratulatory telegram: “Being just advised that Governor Catt has signed the bill creating a hundred thousand acre reservation for the Seminole Indians I wish to congratulate you on the happy result of your long and effective campaign in their behalf.”⁴² Similar accolades were accorded the Kissimmee pair from all quarters, and while most press ac-

counts recognized the role of the Friends of the Florida Seminoles society, the Willsons had somehow assumed a separate existence in the mind of the public which transcended their membership in the organization. In the exuberance of the moment little attention was given to the quality of the land acquired, or else it was chosen to ignore the fact that only 5% of it was tillable and all of it was outside the drainage district. In short, as the *Florida Times-Union* bitterly noted, the state had met its "...obligation by donating worthless, at least in an agricultural sense, swamp land to the Seminole."⁴³

It is somewhat ironic that Jim Willson was shunted aside when the tributes were being passed out. As secretary of the Friends of the Florida Seminoles from its founding until it became defunct, he was a dogmatic and tenacious defender of Indian rights as well as a close personal friend to many Cow Creek families. He always seemed to have time to spend traveling to the Everglades, to the state capitol, or wherever he was needed to assist his Indian friends. This was generally done at his own expense as the society had limited funds for such activities, and there is some conjecture that his various business ventures perhaps suffered by these frequent and prolonged absences from Kissimmee.⁴⁴ Far less flamboyant than his famous wife, he nevertheless maintained an equally voluminous correspondence on all types of problems affecting Seminole welfare, and did not limit his efforts to securing a reservation. In 1907 he intervened, on behalf of the society, in an incident where a northern amusement park operator had desecrated the burial site of Tom Tiger and attempted to sell the Seminole leader's remains to the Smithsonian Institution.⁴⁵ When the Cow Creek band learned of this vandalism they threatened, although few in number, to take their revenge against surrounding white settlers unless the old warrior's remains were returned. Through the good offices of Willson and various state and local officials the issue was resolved with the return of Tom Tiger's bones to the burial site, thus averting what might have become a calamity for the Seminole.

Jim Willson also pursued even the most trivial reports of wrongdoing where Indians were concerned. When it was reported that the Seminole were being charged a dollar to pole their canoes on the drainage canals which laced Southern Florida, he immediately confronted many officials and found it to be an unfounded rumor.⁴⁶ As a prominent Baptist layman Willson actively supported the work of Creek-Seminole missionaries from Oklahoma who had come to convert their brothers in Florida, and he led the movement for the Southern Baptist Convention to assume full financial responsibility for his mission work which it did in 1936.⁴⁷ One of his last acts as an officer of the society was to work with P.A. Vans Agnew in preparing a defense against a suit brought to acquire title to the

“Polly Parker’s Camp” land originally purchased in 1899. A prominent resident of St. Lucie County, J.G. Coats, brought suit to quiet title to the land which he had bought for taxes. The defense of the Friends was that as a benevolent and charitable institution holding the land in trust for the Seminole, it was exempt from taxation, and for that and other technical legal reasons the suit should not be allowed. Nevertheless, the land was lost.⁴⁸

As the older members passed away the effectiveness of the Friends society rapidly faded.⁴⁹ In the development fever that gripped Florida during the “Land Boom” of the 1920’s, as well as the terrible years of economic depression which followed, the problems of the Seminole were forgotten except by a few staunch friends such as the Willsons, Stranahans, and Hansons. Ultimately, the social and economic salvation of the Indian in Florida came with the establishment of federal trust lands on which they could live in peace. This land base would provide the source for the tribe’s future economic well being, as well as a focus for federally sponsored health, education, and housing programs aimed at making the Seminole independent and self-sustaining once more. If the time had come when private associations or devoted individuals could no longer effectively meet the needs of their Indian friends, it in no way diminished the importance of their earlier aid and friendship.

It might be contended by latter day critics that organizations such as the Friends of the Florida Seminoles fostered a paternalistic and naive image of the Seminole people and their needs. If so, this was only consistent with the prevailing nineteenth century Christian, humanitarian reform concept of being thy brother’s keeper — whether he wanted to be kept or not. And in the case of at least one segment of the Seminole people, the Cow Creek band, there is good evidence that they did not shun the attention of their white friends and actively sought aid on a number of occasions. When society members and the state press spoke in glowing terms of turning the Seminole into a race of farmers and herdsmen, who would be “good citizens” and a credit to Florida, they were only echoing the most enlightened views emanating from national Indian welfare organizations of the day; it was also the official policy of the national government as expressed in the Dawes Act and other legislation.⁵⁰ Luckily, the Friends membership was liberally laced with Florida frontier folk like F.A. Hendry who had lived with and among the Seminole, and who despite their rhetoric tempered a reforming zeal with practical wisdom — as in the decision not to pursue a Seminole Industrial School.

The criticism that the Friends focused their efforts narrowly on the needs of the Cow Creek band, but did little for the other Seminole groups, is well taken. Certainly the Cow Creeks received the bulk of the

society's attention if for no other reason than they were the closest group to Kissimmee, were best known to the townspeople, and appeared to be most receptive to the overtures of friendship from people like the Willsons. Leaders of the Cow Creek band were frequent visitors in white communities, and the *Gazette* regularly reported the arrival of Billy Bowlegs, Chief Tallahassee, Tom Tiger, and members of their families. The Indians were welcome visitors and the town (or at least the newspaper) seemed genuinely proud of them. In 1917 the Kissimmee Board of Trade went so far as to make Billy Bowlegs an honorary life member in recognition of his being an enthusiastic "booster."⁵¹ It is unlikely that any other town in Florida went to such lengths to honor Indians that early in this century, but then no other town had the Willsons in residence.

In all fairness to the Friends it should be pointed out that members such as F.A. Hendry, Bishop Gray, and Dr. J.E. Brecht were actively involved with the Mikasuki-speaking Seminole bands living south of Lake Okeechobee. Anyone familiar with the efforts of Gray to establish a medical mission in the Big Cypress region, or Brecht's nine years in Indian service, can not help but compare the hostility and suspicion which the Mikasuki held for most whites with the relative openness of the Cow Creek. Certainly the Friends considered themselves working in behalf of all Seminole people when seeking the establishment of a state reservation, although it is unlikely that the Indians of that day could have lived together in such a limited territory due to both language and socio-political differences. Interestingly, the 100,000 acre state reservation which now stretches across the western edges of Palm Beach and Broward Counties does belong to the Seminole Tribe (25%) and the newer Miccosukee Tribe (75%), but very few of their people live on it to this day.⁵²

In much the same way that the Friends society was formed to assist the Indians living in the area north of Lake Okeechobee, later groups would come into being to work with the Seminole of the Big Cypress region, as well as those living along the lower east coast. The first of these was the Seminole Indian Association founded in Fort Myers in 1913.⁵³ It was initially formed by the Episcopal missionary Dr. W.J. Godden, and W. Stanley Hanson, Jr. who was perhaps the closest friend of the Indian people living on the west side of the Everglades during the first half of this century.⁵⁴ An equally impressive organization would emerge in the 1940's at Fort Lauderdale, dedicated primarily to carrying on the work started by Mrs. Frank Stranahan, and named "The Friends of the Seminoles."⁵⁵ Both of these organizations are still in existence, although for all practical purposes they provide only token assistance to the Seminole and Miccosukee people. All significant functions affecting the Indian people

in Florida today are handled by the U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs, the tribes themselves through their own institutional structures, or by other state and local agencies. Nevertheless, the private associations, of which the Friends of the Florida Seminoles was the first, filled the gap at a time when none of these services were available to the Indian people. Those individuals dedicated to the work accepted the challenge and did what they could within the limits of their abilities, often achieving remarkable results in the process, and they must be accorded a prominent place in any definitive history of the Seminole people.

FOOTNOTES

*Dr. Kersey is a Professor of Education at Florida Atlantic University.

- 1 U.S. Congress, Senate, *Report of the Secretary of the Interior*, Exec. Doc. 55, 40th Cong., 3rd sess., 1869, p. 4. In this communication the Secretary referred to the "remnant of the Tribe of Seminole Indians now living in or near the Everglades in South Florida," and presented letters from white settlers in the region requesting that action be taken to remove the Indians. However, another decade passed before any effort was initiated to investigate the condition of the Florida seminole.
- 2 William C. Sturtevant, "R.H. Pratt's Report on the Seminole in 1879," *Florida Anthropologist*, IX (March, 1956), 12-13. The Seminole whom Pratt called Streety Parker had apparently adopted the name of a well known white settler in the Bartow region, Streety Parker. See D.B. McKay (ed.) *Pioneer Florida*, Vol. III (Tampa, 1959), pp. 192-193. Also Vol. II, p. 565. McKay uses both spellings of Parker's given name.
- 3 Emily Lagow Bell, *My Pioneer Days in Florida, 1876-1898* (Fort Pierce, 1928), p. 43.
- 4 U.S. Congress, Senate, *Message From the President of the United States Transmitting a Letter of the Secretary of Interior Relative to Land Upon Which to Locate Seminole Indians*, Exec. Doc. 139, 50th Cong., 1st sess., 1888, p. 3.
- 5 *Ibid.*, P. 5.
- 6 U.S. Congress, Senate, *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, Exec. Doc. 5, 56th Cong., 1st sess., 1899, p. 179.
- 7 Coats vs. Gray et als., Circuit Court of St. Lucie County, July 5, 1926. *Answer of Friends of the Florida Seminoles, Defendant*, p. 5. Record File 1270, St. Lucie County Court House, Fort Pierce, Florida.
- 8 *The Indian's Friend*, March, 1899, pp. 7-8.
- 9 Minnie Moore-Willson, *The Seminoles of Florida* (New York, 1896).
- 10 *The Indian's Friend*, March, 1899, p. 7.
- 11 *The Indian's Friend*, January, 1899, p. 6.
- 12 Editorial comment from *The Indian's Friend* (undated) quoted in the *Kissimmee Valley Gazette*, June 9, 1899, p. 2.
- 13 *Florida Times-Union and Citizen*, June 28, 1899, p. 4.
- 14 Fredrick A. Ober, "Ten Days with the Seminoles," *Appleton's Journal of Literature, Science, and Art*, XIV (August, 1875), 173.
- 15 Sturtevant, "R.H. Pratt's Report," 8.
- 16 Clay MacCauley, "The Seminole Indians of Florida," *Fifth Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology* (Washington, 1887), p. 518.
- 17 U.S. Congress, Senate, *Message From the President . . . Lands Upon Which to Locate Seminole Indians*, p. 8.
- 18 Minnie Moore-Willson, *The Seminoles of Florida*, pp. 148-154.
- 19 Letter, H.H. Hull to J.M. Willson, May 29, 1898. Unless otherwise designated all correspondence is located in the Willson Collection of the University of Miami Library, Coral Gables, Florida.
- 20 Letter, Commissioner of Indian Affairs to J.M. Willson, June 18, 1898.
- 21 Letters, J.E. Brecht to J.M. Willson, June 13, 28, July 8, August 15, 1898.
- 22 Letter, R.A. Swearingen to J.M. Willson, September 6, 1898.
- 23 Letter, Tom Tiger to J.M. Willson, June (no date), 1898. Written on P.P. Cobb stationery.
- 24 Letter, Tom Tiger to J.M. Willson, June 30, 1898. Signed as written by J.T. Gray. Also J.T. Gray to J.M. Willson, August 4, 1898, confirms his role as an intermediary.
- 25 Letter, Tom Tiger to J.M. Willson, July 23, 1898. Written on B.H. Doster stationery.
- 26 *Circuit Court Minutes*, Vol. I., Brevard County, Florida, April 28, 1899, pp. 471-472. The case was tried before a six man jury and ended in a directed verdict of not guilty.

- 27 *Kissimmee Valley Gazette*, May 5, 1899, p. 3.
- 28 E.S. Martin, "This Busy World," *Harpers Weekly*, Vol. 43, No. 2215, (June 3, 1899), 3.
- 29 *Kissimmee Valley Gazette*, July 14, 1899, p. 3.
- 30 *Deed Book FF*, St. Lucie County, Florida, p. 510. The records show that Bishop Gray purchased 80 acres (SE¼ of NE¼ and NE¼ of SE¼ of Section 8, Township 35S, Range 37E) from Frank Q. Brown, Trustee for the Florida Southern Railroad. The deed was recorded on July 19, 1900.
- 31 *Acts and Resolutions Adopted by the Legislature of Florida at its Seventh Regular Session Under the Constitution of A.D. 1885*. Ch. 4765, No. 104. (Tallahassee, 1899), p. 149.
- 32 *Ibid.*, Ch. 4764, No. 103.
- 33 *Ibid.*
- 34 *Florida Times-Union and Citizen*, June 12, 1899, p. 5.
- 35 *Kissimmee Valley Gazette*, July 14, 1899, p. 3.
- 36 Minnie Moore-Willson, *The Seminoles of Florida*, (Kingsport, Tenn., 1928), p. 148. It should be noted that this source is held in low repute by some authorities on Seminole history and culture, most notably W.C. Sturtevant who wrote: "It may be classified as an example of poor amateur ethnology. To sift the few useful facts from the mass of inaccuracies requires considerable knowledge of Seminole culture and Seminole personalities; and the book is not to be recommended for any purpose." William C. Sturtevant "Accomplishments and Opportunities in Florida Indian Ethnology" in *Florida Anthropology*, Charles H. Fairbanks (ed.) Florida Anthropological Society Publications No. 5, Tallahassee, 1958, pp. 20-21.
- 37 Letter, Mrs. May Jennings to Minnie Moore-Willson, May 12, 1915.
- 38 Letter, Mrs. Frank Stranahan to Minnie Moore-Willson, December 27, 1916.
- 39 Letter, Minnie Moore-Willson to Mrs. Frank Stranahan, January 7, 1917.
- 40 Letter, M.K. Sniffen to Minnie Moore-Willson, April 25, 1915.
- 41 *Florida Times-Union*, May 10, 1917, p. 8.
- 42 Telegram, Commissioner of Indian Affairs to Minnie Moore-Willson, May 14, 1917.
- 43 *Florida Times Union*, May 10, 1917, p. 4.
- 44 Nevertheless, as a realtor J.M. Willson was instrumental in the development of Osceola County, and particularly the City of St. Cloud. In 1906-07 he was owner-agent for sizeable land holdings, the remnant of Hamilton Disston's empire, in the vicinity of current day St. Cloud. This acreage was advertised in the *New York Tribune* where Raymond Moore, a Washington, D.C. promoter, saw and filed it for future reference. Then the *National Tribune* of Washington, an influential paper among Civil War veterans, began to look for a Florida site for a Union retirement colony. A group headed by Moore made a deal with J.M. Willson for 55,000 acres, and formed the Seminole Land and Investment Company which platted modern St. Cloud—appropriating the name originally given to the Disston Sugar Mill on East Lake Tohopekaliga. For a complete historical account of this transaction see: *St. Cloud Tribune*, December 6, 1934.
- 45 Harry A. Kersey, Jr., "The Seminole 'Uprising' of 1907," *Florida Anthropologist*, Vol. 27, no. 2 (June, 1974), 49-58.
- 46 Letter, Gov. Cary A. Hardee to J.M. Willson, November 4, 1922. Also, L.A. Spencer to J.M. Willson, November 15, 1922.
- 47 Letter, J.M. Willson to J.C. Morrison, April 29, 1921. Also, J.M. Willson to Alice B. Davis, December 10, 1920. These letters to Indian missionaries from Mounds and Wewoka, Oklahoma, spell out Willson's concern with the Baptist missionary efforts among the Florida Seminole.
- 48 Coats vs. Gray et als., Circuit Court of St. Lucie County, July 5, 1926. Record File 1270, St. Lucie County Court House, Fort Pierce, Florida. Records reveal that J.G. Coats acquired a tax deed to the 80 acre parcel on February 16, 1923. Apparently he felt the need to quiet title on the property before he sold it so the suit was initiated on May 1, 1926. The Friends filed their answer on July 5, 1926, taking the position that the land was exempt from taxation due to its unique status of being held in trust for the Seminole people. The court records reveal no further proceedings and the case remains technically open. However, Mr. Coats later sold the land.
- 49 Actually, the Willsons were among the last surviving members who founded the Friends Society. James Mallory Willson was born at Somersset, Kentucky on August 4, 1860; he died at Kissimmee on August 5, 1943. Minnie Moore-Willson was born at West Newton, Pa. on August 14, 1859; she died at Kissimmee on August 8, 1937. Both are interred at Rosehill Cemetery in Kissimmee. Interview with Mr. Ed Grissom, Kissimmee, July 25, 1974.
- 50 *U.S. Statutes at Large*, Vol. XXIV, p. 338. The attempt of the Dawes Commission to transform the American Indian into yeoman farmers through a series of acreage allotments, all but destroyed the traditional tribal patterns of communal land ownership. It also opened some forty million acres of former Indian lands for settlers.
- 51 *Kissimmee Valley Gazette*, March 30, 1917, p. 1.
- 52 Florida, *Statutes*, 285.061. Some 28,000 acres of this state reservation land in Palm Beach and Broward Counties was recently transferred to the federal government to be held in trust status for the Seminole Tribe. Legislation was also enacted allowing the tribe to develop the land without interference from the various counties.

- 53 Postcard, W. Stanley Hanson, Jr. to Dr. Hamilton Holt, September 3, 1933. This was part of a mass mailing to announce the "Reorganization meeting of the Seminole Indian Association...Tampa...Sept. 8th, 1933." In the message it was noted that "the Seminole Indian Association, a corporation not for profit, was chartered in 1913, with headquarters in Fort Myers." Mr. Hanson served as secretary of the organization.
- 54 The work of W. Stanley Hanson, Jr. in behalf of the Seminole is detailed in numerous newspaper clippings spanning almost half a century, and in books such as: Karl H. Grismer, *The Story of Fort Myers* (St. Petersburg, 1949), pp. 285-286. Allen H. Andrews, *A Yank Pioneer in Florida* (Jacksonville, 1950), *passim*.
- 55 In Fort Lauderdale the "Friends of the Seminoles" was chartered as a Florida Corporation on November 28, 1949. *Corporation Book 13*, Broward County, pp. 616-622. Office of the Comptroller Broward County, Florida.

Judge Henry Hudson Hancock, 1868-1951

By RUBY JANE HANCOCK*

The name Hancock is prominently identified with pioneer history of Florida. Around the middle of the nineteenth century they came into the new state and took up land. Many of them married into territorial families, and were influential in making Florida an integral part of the Union. Also when the tragic division came with the Civil War, they were well represented in the ranks of the South. Some are buried as far away as Franklin, Tennessee. Those who remained behind were members of the militia and raised beef to help feed the Confederate army.

Here they prospered and aided in formation of new communities which began their record for public service that has been characteristic of their descendants, among whom was Henry Hudson Hancock. He is remembered for his long and distinguished service to mankind. After his move from Polk County to the Lake Okeechobee region (a tremendous undertaking at the time), he continued to be set apart as a leader in business, political and social activities that had begun in the nineteenth century and lasted well into the twentieth.

Judge Hancock, as he was to become familiarly known, was born in Polk County, Florida, January 30, 1868, at his father and mother's homestead set among orange groves, timber lands with grazing cattle just west of Fort Meade, Florida, the scion of one of Polk County's foremost families. His father was James Thomas Hancock (always 'James' to his family and friends) and his mother was Serena Willingham. Both natives of Georgia, they did not meet until their families had moved and settled in Polk County, Florida. The first Hancocks to enter Florida were from Thomasville, Georgia. In the main, they were cattle herders who had spread to what is now Madison, Florida, then spread on down the west coast of the peninsula with James Thomas Hancock's family homesteading and taking up more land on the banks of the Alafia River in Hillsborough County. As a young man James set out on his own and took up a homestead in Polk County. There he met and married Serena

Willingham, the daughter of the richest man anywhere around. She was a pretty self-possessed girl with dark eyes and abundant coal black hair above a high forehead (those of her children who most resembled her were Henry and his sister, Isabel). His wife proved to be a woman of great stamina.

Serena's father had come from Scotland, a mere lad thought to have been impressed by a ship's captain who brought him to a port in Virginia where he escaped. He made his way southward to east Florida and married into the Baker and Hilliard Families. His wife, Annie, was the first person to be buried at the Basinger Cemetery now in Okeechobee County. William Willingham it is said had ten thousand head of cattle grazing on Kissimmee Island. His wife died while accompanying him there and it was impossible to get her body back to Polk County to the Willingham cemetery; however, today the Basinger Cemetery is a well kept historic pioneer burying place. There are those who say Serena had traces of Spanish blood, her facial features gave these hints some credence. Her husband, James, was blue-eyed and had light brown hair which bore out his English and Scotch-Irish heritage.

They built a spacious house on their homestead much in the tradition of southern pioneer dwellings of the more prosperous where they raised their twelve children. As James acquired more land, he planted more citrus, bought and sold timber land and ran several hundred head of cattle. Not only did the Hancocks do well materially speaking, James took on an active part in his community's affairs. He served as chairman of the County Board of Commissioners, was a school trustee and performed any service he was called on to do willingly, and left behind an excellent reputation as a wise counselor to his family and fellow human beings. Both he and Serena set an example to their children as being citizens of distinction and usefulness.

Serena inherited the Willingham homestead near Fort Meade and after she became a widow, she moved back there. Following her husband's death, she divided the estate giving each one of her children a section of land and a hundred head of cattle. The Willingham house where she grew up was one of the first 'fine' houses to be built in this part of Florida, a sturdy hand-pegged two-story dwelling painted white and with gingerbread trimming on the broad veranda. In the 'front room' was a huge fireplace made of limestone, large blocks hand cut from the Peace River by her father. Her oldest son James Thomas Junior, had married before his father died, and his patrimony had been given to him for a wedding present; he had already built his own large white house, and so Serena gave the Willingham place to her second son, Robert Washington, and she moved in with him and his family. To her youngest son,

Durham, she gave the Hancock homestead she had shared with her husband. Also Serena had inherited what would be today a sizeable fortune in Spanish gold. Long after the last of her family to live at the Willingham place, one could go there and find those hopefully digging for a fortune in gold around the fireplace where it was rumored William Willingham had buried his gold. Today it is owned by a phosphate company, beneath the homestead was another fortune that the Willinghams did not know about in their day. She saw to it that each of her children built a home on his or her property as well as planting a grove. True pioneers! Records of 1853 shows the Hancocks and the Willinghams among the earliest settlers of central Florida.

To pioneers in general and to Southern ones in particular, kith and kin, whether saint or sinner, cemeteries are an important part of their lives along with family reunions and church dinners 'on the ground'. But funerals and cemeteries have priority even over births and weddings! Of course, the Hancock and Willingham clans each had its own cemetery located near their homes and in view of passersby. It was a Sunday afternoon pastime to go to the cemeteries, a social occasion not unlike the Chinese of whom they knew very little, but today these provide invaluable records for Florida historians. Both the Hancock and the Willingham cemeteries are still maintained and burials continue in the Hancock's. Judge Hancock, however, is the only one of his immediate family not to be buried there. It was his wish to be buried in the country that had lured him as a young man, and so he rests at the Okeechobee cemetery.

Even at the present time to attend a Hancock funeral is something to remember! In no way is there any irreverence meant, for they pay utmost respect to one of theirs who has departed this life no matter how distant the relationship or how he has spent his life. Blood to them, indeed, is thicker than water! It is an event! The news spreads quickly and widely. They gather one and all, not only Hancocks but in-laws and in-laws of in-laws. One could never believe there are so many 'kissin' cousins left in the world! Then there are the friends and friends of friends along with the preachers and the politicians. These funerals are held out in the open at the site of the cemetery. One of the criteria of just how much esteem one of them is held can be judged by how many preachers hold sway, in the main, 'hard-shells' (some who are more urban seem to prefer Presbyterians). The 'mourners' make no complaint of their long-windedness for it prolongs the handshaking, hugging, kissing and getting up on the news of those whom they have not seen since the last occasion. A distant cousin was heard to reply when she was asked about some pleasurable event, "I never had such a good time since the last Hancock funeral." The events, however, embody a great deal that was important

to a large portion of the South, mores and customs so much in the flux of change, the younger generation will forget simply because they do not have them to remember.

James Thomas, Junior, known as Jim, became a civil engineer, a very good one. His surveys were accurate and dependable and so he was asked to go into the Kissimmee River Valley and Lake Okeechobee region to make accurate surveys where there were not any. Today his *Hancock Meander Line* and corners he set there are used and respected by any surveyor who desires a true description. Government engineers had been sent in, but to them it was such a wild and unwilling land they never penetrated far enough to make a true charting and only guessed at the lay of the land. Often Judge Hancock would chuckle and his deep brown eyes would twinkle as he said, "Had I built my house according to those government engineers, it would right now be sitting in the middle of Lake Okeechobee!" It was his brother Jim's assignment that was responsible for Henry's move from Polk County. Henry also had some knowledge of civil engineering (as did their father) and so Jim enlisted his aid for the very difficult task.

Before Henry Hudson Hancock had left Polk County to take up a new homestead in the Lake Okeechobee country, he was an educator and a public figure of some consequence. Not only had his grandfather set an example, as did his brother, Jim, but especially from his brother, Bob, (Robert Washington) who was just older than he. Bob from the outset had chosen to be a leader in public affairs. Sunday mornings would find him leading the singing in church, but mostly through the week he was off to chair the county commissioners, the school board, politicking or some kind of meeting. He was a well known figure around the county seat of Bartow twelve miles away. Often his mother would chide him, "Bob, you are so busy 'tending to other peoples' business, you don't have time to 'tend to yours.'" Nevertheless, Bob Hancock did distinguish himself in what he liked best—county and state politics. He was a personal friend of Henry B. Plant and a member of the Florida Legislature. At that time he wielded a great deal of influence in getting Plant to serve isolated communities with his railroad. Also he was one of the founders of the citrus exchange and its first field secretary. In his last term in the legislature Hardee County was carved out of huge Polk. Personally, he was not against it but his constituents were. He thought he should abide by what those who elected him wanted, and so he resisted such pressures that the new county would be named for him if he voted for it. He declined the honor and suggested it be named for the new governor, Carey A. Hardee.

Henry was the most scholarly inclined of James and Serena Han-

cock's children. He was eager to go to school and did well. His basic education was received in the schools of Polk County including the Summerlin Institute at Bartow, a school financed by Jacob Summerlin, the wealthiest cattleman in Florida, himself practically unlettered but who had a great respect for learning. Many leading figures of central Florida received their formal educations there. Jacob Summerlin was a distant relative of Henry's.

On completion of high school, Henry was issued a teacher's certificate. Barely eighteen he began teaching school at the same continuing his education by going to normal and summer schools along with self-education. He became principal of the school at Fort Meade then later Avon Park, Florida. But, in the meantime, he received his inheritance and felt he had to leave the profession he loved to give it his attention; however, he was appointed a member of Polk County's school board. When he decided to accompany his brother, Jim, to help make the surveys of the big lake country, he resigned from the school board not knowing at the time it was his first act of severing his official ties with Polk County and its affairs.

In the meantime, too, he had married. His bride was practically "the new girl in town," Jane Sturgis. Jane had been born in Branford, Florida, but she grew up at Waldo, Florida, where her father was an early railroad man. When she was seventeen her mother, Martha Jane, was left a widow and faced the task of making a living. She and her daughter left Waldo and went to Fort Meade where Mrs. Sturgis ran an inn, in the main, to accommodate the new railroad. Also she acquired a piano for her daughter who was a somewhat accomplished musician. It was not long until Henry Hancock, who liked to sing, was visiting at the Sturgis Inn to the point that the townsfolk were beginning to notice how much time his fine Tennessee walking horse spent at the hitching post in front of the Sturgis place. It was June 30, 1889, when Henry Hudson Hancock married Jane Sturgis in her mother's parlor.

Jane's fragile appearance with her gentle blue eyes and soft smile often concealed her iron will, patience and a sly sense of humor. All of which she needed in abundance for her life with Henry. It was a happy union. The Henry Hancocks had seven children, five born in civilized Polk County and two more born in a wilderness she did not even know about at the time of her marriage. She outlived her husband by eleven years. From the time the two brothers, Jim and Henry Hancock, astride their Tennessee horses, left the sandhills dotted with small blue lakes and descended into the lush green valley of the Kissimmee River, Henry was entranced with the boundless horizon of the green valley meeting an azure sky and it cast a spell over him. This pristine wilderness awed and

fascinated him. Unlike the government engineers, he wanted to explore it and did not fear it. Henry exclaimed to his brother that he thought it a beautiful country, one in which he might want to homestead. Jim with less romance in his soul reminded his brother they had come to do a job and would do it, but once it was done he wanted to return to Polk County as soon as possible. Once they explored it, Henry was determined more than ever to homestead on the north shores of Lake Okeechobee.

This was January, 1901, when the Hancock brothers had come to this strange and unique world — the entrance to the Everglades. Before they had left home they knew that January was the best time to set out. It was the 'dry' season, however, back then there were no real droughts as of today. As they approached the Kissimmee River, their trained eyes saw that it was a 'drain' (much as African Rivers) and what is called "a braided river." Its multi-channels with their hurrying currents suddenly would narrow and this cut bluffs which were the only semblance of permanent banks. The river, its water the color of strong tea, flowed from northwest to southeast cutting a wide valley depression from Lake Tohopekaliga to Lake Okeechobee. Before it emptied into Lake Okeechobee its huge delta was a series of swamps, backwaters, lagoons, dead rivers, ponds, islands and sandbars. It was easy to observe it battled forever with wind, water and land (later with people!). Solitude brooded here! Along the river it was teeming with aquatic life. Fish could be caught with the bare hands except for the largest of the big-mouth bass. Their meals were cooked over an open fire and always had a pan of fried speckled perch or the big bass, often both. From the ponds and the lagoons beneath the water lettuce came the sounds and croaks of myriad frogs including that of the jumbo bullfrogs; it sounded like a convention without any rules. On the sand banks, especially where water had recently receded and fish were still gasping for air, lay great slimy piles of cotton-mouth moccasins with their wide ugly mouths agape ready to feast on the dead fish or bite anybody who disturbed them. Jim and Henry had been careful even though expert horsemen to avoid the snakes. They watched out for the tortoise gopher holes where the danger was two-fold, a horse could stumble in one of them risking breaking a leg and at the same time being bitten by a huge diamond back rattlesnake that had holed up there. Once they saw a rattler they guessed was about eight feet long swimming gracefully across a lagoon toward a hillock of saw palmettoes on the other side. Alligators were everywhere along the oozy banks of the river as were turtles of all kinds and sizes. Some were sunning and others were sliding in and out of the water. All about them were the aquatic birds. Gorgeous ones! One could hardly believe there were so many in the world! Wailing limpkins, snowy egrets that hung from the

willows like ornaments on Christmas trees, big white American ones that stood about with the herons, great and small, galinules and even plenty of Everglades kites back in 1901. Except for the limpkins, they watched silently the intruders trespassing on their domain. Overhead were flights of ibises both snow whites and glossies, and off to themselves standing in a ring were big birds that belong to the stork family called by the natives "ironheads," from the rusty-colored topknot on their big black heads above their large white bodies. The ironheads were doing nothing more than concentrating on the little pond frogs they were going to eat but they reminded one of praying elders. The most unusual were the anhingas commonly called "snakebirds" and for good reason. When swimming only long twisted necks and their heads could be seen, a bird with no oil in its feathers and so when out of the water spreads its broad black wings on a bush to dry like a Seminole's wash. In a glade nearby were a flock of the luscious pink roseate spoonbills and three tall sandhill cranes that always went in pairs unless with a young one. Birds, Birds! Aquatic and of the air. Giant woodpeckers and other flickers, colorful painted buntings, kingfishers — just too many to name — of course, the Hancock brothers had been dining well along the way on quail, doves and wild turkey.

Flora and fauna everywhere! Flags, mallows, small white water lilies. It would take an expert to identify them all. Jim and Henry Hancock knew more about the fauna: rabbits; opossums; armadilloes; the land tortoises, called 'gophers'; foxes, otters; deer; bobcats; black bears and panthers, Florida pumas. They saw the bears sauntering near the bay galls and one night heard a panther scream and so they got up and built up their campfire and then went back to sleep. They felt they had explored the west side of the river enough for the timebeing, so Jim and Henry decided to look for the best place to ford the river to keep their instruments, saddle bags and guns dry. They came to some islands and sandbars and saw cattle tracks, the concave "banks" of the river made fine grazing, there they crossed over without any trouble. On the other side they saw reddish rangy cattle grazing and some deer and they were sleek. Jim told Henry he thought they would soon come to Peter Raulerson's. As they rode along, they came upon more of the cattle and before them a man on horseback leisurely riding in and out of the cattle. They spurred their horses and caught up with him. It was Peter sitting tall in his saddle astride his cow pony. The cattle were descendants of Spanish cattle as was the kind of horse Peter rode, these were fast and cut herds quite well but because they were a small breed always called 'ponies.'. Peter Raulerson, known as 'Pete,' also was a native of Polk County. Relatives there often spoke of his wandering down into the lake country.

First, he had settled at Basinger ten miles to the north of Lake Okeechobee, but the land was for the taking so for his own reasons he moved on. He likely decided that if his wife, Louisiana, and their several children did not mind the isolation, why should he worry about what his relatives thought?

The Raulersons understood the country's climate and terrain, so they had built a big two-story house of virgin pine, a square structure with a bannistered porch that went all the way around it. Louisiana and her husband were hospitable people and welcomed the Hancock brothers. Long after the surveys were made, Jim would return periodically to stay with the Raulersons and preach at the 'Hardshell' church built on their homestead. After the 'meetin', he, Pete and Louisiana along with their friends and relatives would sit on the cool porch to discuss their interpretations of the Bible. In spite of Jim's powerful preaching, Henry did not become a 'Hardshell' (Primitive Baptists, a denomination of the lower South).

Henry selected a homestead on the east bank of Taylor's Creek just opposite the Peter Raulerson's on the west bank. Taylor Creek was a water-way into Lake Okeechobee, two miles to the south of the homesteads, named for Zachary Taylor who fought the famous Seminole Battle of Okeechobee, Christmas Day, 1838. Peter Raulerson gave Henry some good advice, which he took. First of all, he advised him to drive his cattle down from Polk County and build a temporary shelter for his family. In the meantime, he would look after the cattle until Henry could bring his family. This was the tradition of the pioneer cattleman, each had his own marks and brands, used the common range and never mismarked even a motherless calf.

Henry Hancock's son, Clyde, still lives at Okeechobee. He recalls the 'cattle drovin' (drive) and when his family moved to the Lake Okeechobee region very vividly. "I will always remember the day my father told us we were going to move to Lake Okeechobee. First he was going to drive the cattle down. He was making preparation for him and his brother, uncle Martin, to make the drive. Even though we had cattle, I had never been allowed to be a cowboy and that was why I wanted to be more than anything. I thought this was my chance so I begged to go along. But Papa kept saying I couldn't go. It was too much of an undertaking to have one as young as I tagging along. Finally, Uncle Martin interceded and said, let the boy go, it will be good for him. Later this proved to be right when it came time for the family to go. My father, though, told me there would be only two horses and I would probably be a 'walkin' cowboy.' This hopefully would discourage me, but it didn't. My mother made an extra bedroll of some old blankets and put some extra supplies

in the saddle bags for me. I have never been so happy in my life! I really did walk much of the way, I got very tired, my feet hurt but I did not complain because so much of the trip was fun. We hunted, fished and cut swamp cabbage, the tender heart of the sabal palm. By the natives it is cooked with bacon in a heavy pot. Now it is a gourmet salad served raw or canned and called "hearts of palm." All one needed was a gun and a fishing line to eat well off the land. The second day out was my birthday. I was twelve years old October 22, 1901 and I never had such a fine birthday! As we went into the Kissimmee River Valley, I thought it the most beautiful sight I ever had seen. Endless green beneath a high blue sky. It was like a world at the beginning!"

With the hundred head of cattle ready to cross the river, Henry decided he would send his bull across first and the cows and calves would follow. The bull became excited and fled from the shallow waters of the islands and sandbars and jumped into a deep lagoon where he went round and round. This almost caused a stampede, but fortunately there was a small paddle boat nearby and so Henry got into it and with the paddles subdued the bull and drove him back to the crossing place where he obediently did his duty and led the herd safely to the other side. Clyde said, "Papa never backed down about anything he was determined to do."

They turned the cattle out with Pete's on the common grazing land (no fences in those days), then they went to the Peter Raulerson place where they stayed until Henry constructed a log house as a temporary shelter for his family. Later there would be the big white one after Captain Hall had brought down the river the implements and tools to cut and polish the lumber for it, glass for the windows, paint etcetera. After the log house was completed Henry, his brother, Martin and Clyde returned to Polk County to complete the arrangements for the big move.

Henry had sold his patrimony in Polk County against the wishes of his relatives and neighbors; however, they were glad to have him and his family stay with them until school was out, besides it would take at least three months for their furniture and household goods to finally reach their destination. These had been sent by rail to Kissimmee, a small cow town located on Lake Tohopekaliga, where Captain Benjamin Hall's little paddle wheel wood burning steamboat (an extension of the railroad's service) would when the unpredictable river could be navigated take them on down to Lake Okechobee. If by any chance, their things arrived before they did Peter Raulerson would see they were cared for.

Up to now Henry's relatives, friends and neighbors had thought him a very intelligent fellow, but his stubborn decision to move to the wild isolated country near the big lake made most of them think he had lost

his senses, especially when he decided to buy a wagon and a pair of oxen. In fact, Henry was a very logical and sane individual for he knew that was the only way for his family to make it over the dangerous and varied terrain. The world owes a great debt to oxen! In spite of his lack of experience with this kind of transportation, he went ahead and acquired the wagon and bought a pair of sturdy oxen from Judd Pylant, a shirt-tail relative of his from the fact that Judd had married Bob's wife's sister. This put them on familiar terms, and so Judd joshed the proud and vain Henry Hancock the day he came to drive the oxen to his brother Jim's place where his wagon was. "What are you going to do when the mosquitoes eat your oxen alive, your 'victuals' give out and Indians come along and scalp your family?" At first, Henry tried to tell him that none of these were going to happen but there was so much doubt as Henry could sense in Judd's mind that he gave up trying to rationalize his move. Then came up a fellow, they knew as Roebuck, who voiced the same sentiments as Judd. Henry's temper at this point had reached more than the boiling point. He yanked at the oxen a bit too hard and before he could say "whoa," they had dragged him down the little sandhill into the inevitable little lake at the bottom of it. Of course, there was laughter at the top of the hill. But he was determined to conquer the unruly beasts and did not look back. He clung to the rope of the yoke, kicked with his feet until he had the animals out of the water and docilely lead them on to his brother Jim's place. By this time he no longer cared how much he was laughed at.

Also Clyde tells when his family left Polk County, "it was a fine day in the late spring of 1902 when we left Fort Meade. The weather continued to be pleasant the five days it took us to make the journey. Papa went on ahead riding his horse, but he left orders that Mama and the girls, Ruth, Elsie and Janie Belle were to ride at all times in the wagon except when we camped. It was a good thing I went along when we drove the cattle down. I was put in charge and drove the wagon, I had got used to the oxen before we left. My younger brother, Winnie (Winfield Scott) rode the other horse and his job was to look after the guns and the dogs. We had four fine cow dogs, hound and bulldog, which were worth a great deal to a cattleman, even at that time a good cow dog could bring well over a hundred dollars, and they were good for hunting too. Needless to say, Mama and the girls always had plenty of fresh game and fish — we all went fishing — to cook for our meals. We almost grew tired of quail and young wild turkey. Once Winnie shot a limpkin and cooked it, but we refused to eat it so Mama told him to let the pond birds alone. Also we had plenty of staples in the wagon and so every night we had fresh bread and hushpuppies to go along with the swamp cabbage, fish and game.

Too, guavas, pawpaws, sour oranges and berries provided supplements to our diet. We camped in the hammock, circumscribed high ground, where we played on the swooping limbs of the big live oaks, and before supper went swimming in the chain of lakes of the Kissimmee. We avoided camping near the bay galls that were blooming at this time, beautiful slender shining green trees growing close together covered with waxy white blossoms that glistened in the sunlight, but these were the haven of the black bears and the panthers. It was a wonderful five days! We loved the hunting, fishing and camping; and sleeping under the stars at night. There were the thousands of beautiful birds. We liked the roseate spoonbills best of all in spite of their funny scooping bills. And the flowers! Lupines covered the sandhills, red lilies on the prairies, the purple and white flags at the edges of the ponds and lagoons, spidery white lilies and mallows of the marshes, orchids and air plants dangled from the cypress trees. The girls would pick them and put them in a fruit jar for our 'table'. Mama always spread a cloth at night for our evening meal. Sitting around our campfire at night Winnie liked to tease Mama and the girls by slipping into a thicket and screaming like a panther or claiming he had seen Indians approaching our camp. But Mama just laughed at him and said his antics were enough to scare anything away from us. We arrived at our new home near Lake Okechobee not even tired, but Papa had bad news for us. Our household goods had not yet arrived! He, however, had been given a letter that morning by the mailman who rode horseback once a week from Fort Drum to deliver mail to the Raulersons and him. It was from Captain Hall who said if he would cut three cords of wood for his wood burning steamboat, he would bring our things free of charge. Papa lost no time handing Winnie and me an axe and putting us to work cutting wood for Captain Hall. By return mail he told the Captain that the wood would be waiting for him. Within two weeks the little steamer made its way down the tortuous river and up Taylor Creek to our place. One of the most exciting days of our lives was when we heard the boat's whistle.

It did not take long for the Hancocks to settle in the log house while they were making plans for the new one. The big white house was completed in 1906. It was built from hand cut virgin pine, hand-pegged, and Henry remembered his rare visits back to Thomasville where he admired the columned houses. So, he cut and rounded, smoothed and polished columns for his own house here in a strange wilderness that had never seen a house like it. Around it he built a picket fence to keep livestock and other intruders from the yard filled with Jane's fruit trees, shrubs and flowers, many of which she had brought with her from Polk County and others were given to her by Louisiana Raulerson, who had a green

thumb for anything she planted. There were citrus of various varieties; guavas, the small cattlya and the large white ones (she had brought the seeds with her), especially good for making guava jelly; surinam cherry and alligator pears (avocados). Alamandas, flame vines and jasmine overran the fence. There were rose cuttings, hibiscus and devil's backbone from Louisiana plus the annuals from seeds (saved from year to year). The one flower that was the thriftiest of all, the phlox, Jane weeded out. She said they were 'cemetery flowers.'

At first, it was a somewhat savage existence and took fortitude to make it more civilized. One of the first things they did was to build a foot bridge across Taylor Creek which made it easy to neighbor with the Raulersons. Their children played together and there was so much day to day adventure for them, they did not mind their isolated existence.

Two more children were born to the Henry Hancocks, Martin and Robert. Henry had been busy enough to provide shelter and necessities for his family, and now in 1907 he had been appointed Justice of the Peace for his end of the large county of Brevard. The county seat was Titusville, which meant he had to be away from home for long periods to attend court there. There was no way to go except by horseback and during the rainy season crossing the Allapatty (Allapattah) Flats between his place and Fort Pierce could be treacherous. Sometimes he was not able to cross them for days, once he and his horse had become mired there and he had feared for the safety of both. Too, his grove at the Opal hammock, several miles to the northeast of his homestead, was demanding his attention. There was no time for him to continue a makeshift school for his and the Raulerson children. Also Louisiana Raulerson was concerned. So he contacted his old friend, Willian N. Sheats, state school superintendent, and told him their need for a regular teacher. A maiden lady, evidently with missionary zeal in her soul, came to teach the little school. Her name she said was Tantie Huckabee ('Tantie' was probably a form of 'auntie', often Southern spinsters like to be called that by nieces and nephews and children of their friends). Some have described her as being a formidable red-headed old maid, but this is not true. There are those still around who went to school to her, and they say she was a beautiful woman with white hair, a trim figure, and an engaging smile with a musical voice enhanced by her native South Carolina accent.

Now that they had a school, it was time Judge Hancock decided to apply for a post office designation. It was granted. Miss Tantie was held in such high esteem that he wrote 'Tantie' on the form for the new post office. It was called that until the new county was formed. The outside world began to discover the lake country. Until the boom, the largest group of invaders, even more so than the farmers, was the commercial

fishermen, largely men void of family ties who had come to make great catches of fish from the abundant waters of Lake Okeechobee for Boothe Fisheries of Chicago (the largest in the world), Standard Fisheries and others. The companies built fish houses along the banks of Taylor Creek where they iced and packed fish for northern cities.

In many ways the fisheries brought prosperity to the region, in others a great deal of troubles. For the most part the fishermen were a bibulous bunch, especially on Saturday nights after they received their pay. This payroll set moonshiners to work in the high palmetto thickets; a gambling parlor behind the front of a 'Trading Company' also built near the fish houses and an establishment known as 'Miss Fanny's'. To cope with Monday morning's docket, Judge Hancock set up his court in a shack near the trading company and for a jail he found an abandoned freight car; however, by this time the legislature had formed Saint Lucie County from Brevard and Osceola counties which made the county seat of Fort Pierce nearer than Titusville, but still forty miles away. The more obstreperous ones were sent there to jail.

Separating it from Saint Lucie, the legislature created Okeechobee County in 1915 and it had its own county seat. Judge Hancock was appointed its county judge, duties he had been performing all along. The first building of any consequences in Okeechobee County was its two-story brick jail. The county court took quarters over O.W. Davis's new furniture store. Sanford farmers had discovered the magic black soil at the north end of the lake (Pahokee, Belle Glade and Chosen had not come into existence). Henry Flagler's spur to the region was to accommodate these farmers as well as the fisheries, and the railroad began the development of the new town of Okeechobee (no longer Tantie). The train came in three times a week, freight cars and one passenger coach sandwiched in between them and the caboose. It turned around at Okeechobee. Some of the early riders say that by the time one made the journey from Orange City Junction to Okeechobee, a horse and wagon would have been faster; however, that one uncomfortable day coach connected the isolated region with the outside world where there were no paved highways into it until the boom.

Flagler's Model Land Company laid out the new county seat of Okeechobee on a grand scale. One of its outstanding features was a large mall dedicated as a park named for Flagler. The north side of Park street saw no development until the boom, but on South Park Peter Raulerson's oldest son, Louis, built a modest brick structure to house his general store and the post office. The Model Land Company had advised a young man from Saint Augustine that the farmers needed a hardware business in Okeechobee, and so Ellis Meserve rode the first train to Okeechobee

where he remained to go into business and built a wooden pioneer structure that housed his hardware goods and living quarters. Also he married Peter Raulerson's youngest and prettiest daughter, Faith. Somehow a Hungarian named Albert Berka found his way to the region and set up a bakery. These and O.W. Davis's furniture also housed in a wooden two-story structure with a corrugated tin roof along with two other buildings that adhered to the same architecture. They with the *Northern Hotel* and across the street *The Southern Hotel* (at least, the new town did not take sides) comprised, in the main, the business district of Flagler's new town. The anomaly was the installation of a great whiteway. Not only were its gleaming white globes, that were lighted up all night, placed completely around the mall, but reached out where there was nothing but raw land and white stakes. These shone for miles mostly lost on the local scene but when one came in on the train that usually arrived after dark, one might be astonished to see deep in the Florida wilderness what might be another Paris! By day the illusion was utterly dispelled.

In 1916 due to the great efforts of Judge Hancock and the support of Louisiana Raulerson, a large red brick school house was completed in time to have its first senior high school graduating class, four pupils, in its spacious auditorium.

Judge Hancock served as county judge until 1922. Thereafter he was mayor of the town several times, served as county school superintendent more than once and occupied whatever office that called for his talents. His mother had a penchant for naming her sons after men of achievement, and "Solon" would have been more suitable for her third son than "Henry Hudson." Over the years he was issued nine different certificates for public office from various governors.

1922 brought some respite in Henry's busy life, a man who was careful of his civic duties. It gave him time to devote himself to cultural matters such as his love for music; he played several wind instruments and sang tenor. At his urging the town built a bandshell in Flagler's mall and he organized a band. He ordered instruments and taught anybody willing to learn free of charge. It turned out to be a rather respectable band and for many years performed weekly concerts. His best trombonist was a moonshiner but when it came to his band, it was not a day in court.

This also was the year he and his wife took a trip to New York City. The Judge had visited the Florida's 'Gold Coast' enough to be impressed by the white palm beach suits and panama hats. He purchased a white suit and a snap wide-brimmed panama hat for the trip (fortunately his wife wore her usual dark blue). They went by train to Jacksonville where they boarded the Clyde Line's "Apache." Once aboard the ship, the

Judge donned his new clothes. By nature a sociable man and a good storyteller, he was as his wife related on their return, "the most popular passenger on the boat." On their arrival in New York, Judge Hancock went ashore clad in his cherished white suit and panama hat. While registering at the hotel, his wife noticed her husband seemed to be getting everybody's curious attention, it was in the days when it mattered what one wore in the city. Jane Hancock began to look around and realized why everybody was looking at her husband. She moved closer to him and whispered, "Henry, I think you are the only man in New York in a white suit!" Unperturbed he completed the registration, but once in their room he changed to his dark suit and left his new clothes hanging in the closet until the return voyage.

By this time mission boards were active in the region, especially the Southern Baptist and the Methodist. When she was twelve years old back in Waldo, Jane Sturgis Hancock had joined the Missionary Baptist Church (Southern Baptist). She was pleased when the mission board in Jacksonville recommended a new church at Okeechobee. Her husband became a member of her denomination and was made chairman of the board of deacons. Also of the building committee, choirmaster and was superintendent of the Sunday school for seventeen years. He, however, made no effort to proselyte his son, Winnie, who became an active member of the new Methodist church. He was too aware that culture of a community represented its environment and so he welcomed the influences that would improve it. Also Judge Hancock dedicated much of his time and himself to the formation of a new chapter of his lodge, the Free and Accepted Masons. The new one at Okeechobee was number 237, of course, he was worshipful master.

Aside from political and civic accomplishments, the Judge enjoyed success in other enterprises such as cattle herding, his orange grove which produced what is now the famous Indian River fruit, and boat building. The latter was a good-sized craft he operated, in the main, to haul his fruit across the lake to Fort Myers where the yankees were providing a good market for it. Those who remember the *Serena*, named for his mother, praise its appearance and worthiness. Judge Henry Hudson Hancock lived a good and worthwhile life. He made the move to the lake country from his secure surroundings in Polk County with no regrets. There he had lived on the same site while serving three Florida counties. He had survived pioneer hardships, boom and bust, vicious hurricanes which left his sturdy house standing without much damage while the binder boys found theirs flattened and lost beyond redemption. Bank failures were not his lot for he had his fortune in the land and things he loved never thinking of their intrinsic values if it meant the greater good.

His sons and grandsons marched off to war because they were called by their country. The great depression affected him and his family little except what he read in the papers and his heart went out to those who suffered and so he made every effort to see that Franklin Delano Roosevelt was elected the next president. He used his keen intelligence for what he thought was best, right and just. A genial and compassionate man. His relationships with his family, community and country were of the highest order. After a brief illness, just short of his seventy-fourth birthday, he died at his home January 7, 1951. Those attending his funeral at the First Baptist Church of Okeechobee found it overflowing with relatives and friends who had come to demonstrate their affection and respect for a good man.

FOOTNOTES

*Mrs. Hancock married James Thomas Hancock, a son of Robert Hancock, and lived until after his death on a ranch at Okeechobee.

Ernest Graham and the Hialeah Charter Fight of 1937

By PETER D. KLINGMAN

New Dealers in Florida during the 1930's were few and uneasily identified. Most Florida politicians were reluctant to become associated with President Roosevelt's big-government politics, with the notable exceptions of Florida Governor David Scholtz and United States Senator Claude Pepper. Nonetheless, in the 1937 state legislature there were Democrats committed to certain reforms. Their principal targets were the abusive practices of racing and gambling interests in Florida and the proliferation of political machines in local cities created to advance these special groups. To counter these unwelcomed trends, the 1937 state legislature passed several important reform measures, including the repeal of the slot machine law passed in a previous session, municipal reform bills, and the abolition of Florida's poll tax.

Much of this reform legislation resulted from the efforts of Ernest Graham, Dade County state senator. Not only did Senator Graham play a key role in abolishing the poll tax, a benefit to all depression-poor Floridians, but he also challenged a political machine in his own district, a fight that led to the Hialeah charter bill of 1937.

The poll tax controversy and Graham's participation in the measure's repeal counters one of the more traditional notions in southern political history. The poll tax was a failure as a measure to disfranchise Negroes; as a measure designed to re-enfranchise blacks, its abolition had little effect. Graham's activity confirmed the conclusion of V.O. Key in reference to the impact of the poll tax. Key had observed in his landmark study of southern politics that the tax produced a greater hardship for whites than for blacks, that more whites had been disfranchised as a result of the tax.¹ Nor was race a factor in the debate over repeal of poll taxes in Florida; it was not even injected artificially.²

The poll tax concerned Florida machine politics. Graham had campaigned for the state senate in 1936 in Dade County on a platform advocating repeal. As a dairy farmer in South Florida, he utilized his milk salesmen as his campaign organization. While selling milk on their regular routes throughout Dade County, they drummed support for their candidate. Even Graham as a businessman was forced to note that it seemed his salesmen "did more campaigning than selling."³

Graham and his organization of milk salesmen discovered that many local white residents could not vote because of the poll tax. Among those who were able to vote, moreover, a large number had their poll taxes paid for them by others. Graham identified certain gamblers in Dade County as his chief opposition: "They control between 4,000 and 5,000 votes. Most of this vote I think opposed me as I openly panned some of the leaders. It is possible for a block of this kind to control an election, especially when there are three or more candidates running."⁴ Graham won a close primary fight from Henry Filer, a Dade County businessman whom he labeled a tool for gamblers, and he began his battle with Hialeah's city government.

The "machine" Graham opposed was the city council of Hialeah, which the senator felt to be in close alliance with two criminals, C.K. "Red" Slayton and Frank Hyde. Slayton and Hyde ran gambling casinos, bookmaking, and prostitution operations from Hialeah, and in 1931 they had been convicted of kidnapping and murder. The body of a man, Joseph Durrance, had been found in the Miami Canal to the west of Hialeah, and Slayton and Hyde were convicted of his murder. Durrance had been employed by them and his death was in retaliation for his "skimming" bookmaking receipts. Slayton and Hyde were sentenced to twenty years in the state penitentiary at Raiford; however, on appeal to the state supreme court, their convictions were overturned. The highest court in Florida ruled that the Dade County jury impaneled to hear the murder case had been improperly drawn. Thereafter, Slayton and Hyde continued illegal but highly profitable operations in South Florida. By the end of prohibition in 1933, Slayton and Hyde were bringing in an estimated \$30,000,000 annually from gambling, bookmaking, and prostitution.⁵

Slayton and Hyde appeared in court again late in 1936, in connection with the theft of slot machines. The Florida legislature the year before had made the use of slot machines legal. On October 12, 1936 the two gangsters were arrested for the assault of two Negro men whom Slayton claimed had stolen two slot machines from one of his nightclubs. The incident took place two blocks from the Hialeah police station. Slayton was freed in a mistrial while Hyde pled guilty and paid a fine of \$50.00 and court costs on November 13. In a second trial, Slayton was also found guilty, and his fine was \$200.⁶ Graham, however, had developed a personal as well as a civic opposition to Hyde and Slayton. During his primary campaign, they had beaten up a crippled boy, Les Lewis, a friend and a campaign worker for Graham. As the senator noted: "That kind of raised my ire, and I began to dig into their activities."⁷

Graham found a nexus between Hyde and Slayton and the Hialeah

city council, especially the mayor, L. O'Quinn, the council president, J.K. Stripling, and two council members, Charles Barr and Carl Ault. His efforts to repeal the poll tax and the Hialeah charter bill reflected his intent to defeat them. With Senator John Beacham of West Palm Beach and Representative Robert Hodges from Orange County, Graham as a freshman senator became a principal architect of the anti-poll tax bill which was passed in the 1937 legislative session.⁸

There had been previous attempts to achieve poll tax repeal before 1937 and although there was widespread support for it, the bulk of the legislators would have preferred to ignore the issue. When debate and persuasion failed to stir agreement for repeal of the tax, Graham and Beacham were forced into parliamentary maneuverings. It was customary in every session of the state legislature for each member to present one "pet bill" for immediate consideration. The intent of the practice was to enable non-controversial measures to reach the floor by side-stepping committee deliberation. Graham and Beacham used their pet bill privileges to force a vote on the poll tax. Fearing public disapprobation if it were defeated, first the senate and then the house, under Hodges' direction, voted overwhelmingly for repeal.⁹

The poll tax was the opening skirmish. On May 25, 1937, Graham introduced a bill to reform Hialeah's city charter. His bill would have turned the city council out of office and appointed in its place a five-man commission to serve uninterruptedly until 1940. In introducing the bill, the senator pointed out that under the city council's administration, Hialeah's financial resources had been ruined. He complained that the city's bonded debt had grown irresponsibly large and that there was "too much politics and undue influence" in the police department. As a result, there was not only a "breakdown of law enforcement," but also "much dissatisfaction and unsatisfactory results from the present form of government in Hialeah."¹⁰

The charter reform measure Graham sent to the senate was the result of intricate political dealing. Although any connection with the bill later was repudiated, Graham contended that the origin of the charter act came from Hialeah's major development company, Curtiss Properties. One of the bill's earliest supporters was W.J. McLeod, vice-president of the First State Bank of Miami Springs and also an official with Curtiss. According to Graham, it was McLeod's promise that the city council would resign if a new reform charter was enacted that led the senator to draw up the bill. McLeod partly shared in the naming of the new commissioners, along with Graham and a citizens' group from Hialeah opposed to the council.¹¹ The new commissioners named in the proposed act were: B.L. Smith, a former marine officer; W.S. Berling, Pan-Ameri-

can Airways chief mechanic; Floyd Edleman, local grocer; Paul Simpson, contractor; and Rufus Nutting, a Hialeah carpenter.¹²

The charter bill contained two controversial measures, each of special concern to Hialeah residents. Because of the city council's wide support among registered voters, Graham needed to maintain as much influence as possible among other interests. One of the most obvious local pressure groups was the Hialeah racing interest. There had been since 1931, when Florida legalized saddle racing, a conflict between the city council and the race track. Prior to the 1931 act, the track had paid to the city a ten-cent head tax; when Florida legalized racing at large, the track refused further payment. The city council charged that the track still had an obligation to pay the head tax, and that the total amounted to \$300,000 in back taxes by 1937. Graham's original bill would have allowed the track to be relieved of any head tax, but he was forced reluctantly to accept a proviso in his charter that would have enabled the city to collect an occupational license tax from the Hialeah track.¹³

Because his bill would have reduced the back taxes considerably, the old city council found it a convenient issue on which to attack both Graham and the charter itself. The same evening that Graham introduced the bill, May 25, 1937, the Hialeah city council met in special session. The council charged that the Dade senator was only a front-man for the racing group. His charter bill, the council claimed, had no connection with municipal reform in Hialeah. Instead it was designed by Graham and Dan Mahoney, general manager of the *Miami Daily News*, to prevent the city from collecting tax monies from the track.¹⁴

The other politically explosive section of the charter act prohibited city elections, recall of officials, and referendum voting until 1940. Graham claimed he wanted only to isolate the new commissioners from politics until they had time to straighten out the city government. Here Graham faced opposition not only from the old council but also from his fellow Dade County legislators who were reluctant to deny such basic rights to Hialeah's citizens. To preserve unity among the Dade legislative delegation, Graham conceded the right of recall of officials in the bill, but he managed to prohibit elections and referendums for the trial period.¹⁵

Even before the measure reached the senate floor, Graham and the city council clashed. In April the council and the chief of police in Hialeah, John Porth, met in Tallahassee with the Dade delegation to discuss the proposed bill. The meeting degenerated into a shouting match. Carl Ault declared that Graham was not only representing the special interests of the track in the issue of the head tax, but its future profits as well. The racing group was expected to expand into the new Jai Alai fronton in the county.¹⁶ The senator countered by charging that Charles Barr

was racketeering the plumbing trade in the city and was a front-man for Slayton and Hyde. Graham also charged Barr with assaulting another of the senator's friends. To these statements, Barr publicly labeled Graham as "a liar," "a punk," and "an egotistical ass."¹⁷

One June 1 the state legislature approved the Hialeah charter bill as Graham presented it. The most controversial portion was intact; there would be no referendum votes, not even on the charter itself, for a three year period. The entire Dade County delegation issued a joint statement in praise of the charter reform. The message noted that conditions in Hialeah's city government had reached a point requiring "firm, if not drastic action" by the state. The city was analogized to an insolvent corporation headed by a board of directors quarreling over policy and unwilling to take action.¹⁸

The old city council elected to fight against the bill. They chose to attack the charter's weakest section, the lack of a referendum provision. Barr warned that "civil war" would be the result of no such right in the charter. Graham, on the other hand, considered it the most critical section and had compromised to keep it out. He had accepted a recall provision and had also replaced Nutting with H.A. Vivian, Hialeah's tax assessor, to satisfy Curtiss Properties.¹⁹ When the bill passed, McLeod stated his opinion that the lack of a referendum would give the city "a three year breathing space."²⁰

The council continued to hold meetings against the bill. Charles Barr maintained that Senator Graham had "misled" the people as to the true intent of the charter act. To offset Barr's claims, the senator was advised to sponsor a bill in the next session requiring the Hialeah track to pay the back tax; in that manner Graham's ties to the track interests could rise above suspicion.²¹ A group in Hialeah friendly to the old city council formed a citizens protective league to lobby against the bill and for its repeal. Its major targets in a letter-writing effort were the non-Dade County legislators who had supported the charter bill.²² The potential injustices of the no-referendum provision was not lost on the old council. Even J.R. Stripling, council president, noted: "We may have dirty politics in Hialeah,...but it's not fair and it's not honest to change our form of government without a referendum."²³

The bill became a serious issue among Hialeah residents. During the weeks prior to its final passage, Graham was kept informed as to the measure of opposition it aroused. Supporters sent word that fights between Graham and anti-Graham people were common and that things might grow worse: "There are several there who are dirty enough to resort to anything, including a burn-out."²⁴

The city council filed suit against Graham's bill as soon as it passed

the legislature. However, the state supreme court ruled tentatively in favor of the bill's constitutionality on July 25, positing only the statement that nothing in the Florida constitution prohibited such bills from being passed: "Under the plenary power given the legislature by the Constitution to deal with municipalities in the state, we find no invalidity of the act complained of."²⁵

The ruling did not touch upon the proposed charter's content, and the court agreed that further study, if requested by the council, would be undertaken by the court. The city attorney, Mitchell Price, was granted an additional fifteen days in which to file a motion for further analysis. Vernon Hawthorne, attorney for the proposed new commission, on the other hand, objected strenuously to further delay, arguing that such time was injurious to the rights of Hialeah's citizens to have a municipal government. While court action proceeded, Hawthorne argued, the people "are practically without government."²⁶

The old city council continued to function, however, while the charter case was in court. Their activities were severely hampered by the fact that the city's finances were impounded until the case was decided and, as a result, they were unavailable for use. On July 28, 1937, the council met and passed a new budget for the next fiscal year. They also heard the city's employees — policemen, firemen, and other officials — complain about their lack of pay since June 1.²⁷

While the court case was pending, the old city council continued to function under the rules of the old charter. They opened the registration lists for September city elections in July and closed them again in August. The results of the election showed Hialeah's growing impatience with the court delay; the old council was returned, except for Mayor O'Quinn who had not run for re-election.²⁸ It appeared that the city council had used the delay to good advantage. George Holt, a member of the legislative delegation from Dade County, warned the court that not only could Hialeah not function without funds, but there were political implications resulting from the absence of a clear decision in the matter. In a letter to the clerk of the supreme court, Holt noted: "a certain element in the City are arousing the people and are using the delay in the decision of the case as an excuse and basis for advancing their own political future....Public meetings continue to be the rule with the people becoming more and more excited."²⁹

On October 27, 1937 the court reached a verdict in the case. By a vote of five to one, it reversed its earlier ruling and declared Graham's bill unconstitutional. Judge Roy Chapman, Governor Fred Cone's appointee, was the lone dissenter. The majority opinion was written by Judge Rivers Buford. His review pointed out that while the title of the

charter act promised to “amend” the existing city charter, in fact it had proposed to establish a whole new municipal government in Hialeah: “It abolishes the form of government enjoyed and sets up a new and different form of government. It strikes down local self-government and sets up a government to be administered for a period of three years by five persons named in the act. There was nothing in the title which indicated that was the purpose of the act.”³⁰ The court’s ruling thus validated the September election results in Hialeah, and the charter fight was over.

Ernest Graham challenged Buford’s role and motivation in rejecting the charter bill. During the latter’s re-election campaign against former state senator D. Stuart Gillis, Graham accused Buford of having accepted bribes and of becoming improperly influenced.³⁰ Graham supported Gillis in 1938 on a platform which called for judicial reform in Florida, but Buford won a convincing victory. While the charter defeat did not end Graham’s political career (he ran for governor in 1944), it did reveal the parameters to even legitimate reform in Florida during Roosevelt’s era. As local consolidation debates indicate, Conservative Floridians around the state today resist outside tampering with local government institutions. The Hialeah charter dispute in 1937 illustrates that such attitudes are of long duration.

FOOTNOTES

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- 1 V.O. Key, *Southern Politics in State and Nation* (New York, 1949), p. 579,605,618.
- 2 Frederic Ogden, *The Poll Tax in the South* (University, Ala., 1958), pp. 182-185; Charles D. Farris, “The Re-Enfranchisement of Negroes in Florida,” *Journal of Negro History*, XXXIX (October 1954), pp. 259-283.
- 3 Ernest R. Graham to Robert W. Bentley, December 18, 1936, Ernest Graham Papers, Miscellaneous Correspondence, 1936-1938. P.K. Yonge Library of Florida History, University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida.
- 4 *Ibid.*
- 5 Graham to J.V.N. Dorr: November 10, 1937, Graham Papers, Misc. Corres.: Graham to Katherine Lewis, November 5, 1937, *ibid.* *Miami Herald*, April 22, 1937.
- 6 *Miami Herald*, April 22, 1937.
- 7 Graham to Dorr, November 10, 1937, Graham Papers, Misc. Corres.
- 8 According to Spessard L. Holland, author of the national amendment to abolish poll taxes, Graham “was the real leader,” although Holland was in that session. See Charles Stafford, “Sen. Spessard L. Holland: Statesman and Southerner,” *The Floridian*, October 11, 1970, pp. 15-20; Ogden, *The Poll Tax in the South*, pp. 182-185.
- 9 *Journal of the House of Representatives* (1937), pp. 35, 398, 1409. Actually, the legislature did not abolish the poll tax *per se*, but only the schedule of payments for it. Some controversy resulted from this distinction. See Tallahassee *Daily Democrat*, May 26, 1937; also James B. Hodges to L.A. Grayson, February 10, 1938, James B. Hodges Papers, mss. box 138, P.K. Yonge Library of Florida History.
- 10 *Miami Herald*, May 26, 1937.
- 11 *Miami Daily News*, May 25, 1937; “Just to keep the record straight,” Ernest Graham Papers, Hialeah File.
- 12 *Miami Daily News*, May 25, 1937; *Miami Herald*, May 26, 1937.
- 13 Graham to H. Sayre Wheeler, May 16, 1937, Graham Papers, Hialeah File.
- 14 *Miami Herald*, May 26, 1937.
- 15 Graham to John T. Christiansen, May 21, 1937; also memo undated and unaddressed, Graham Papers, Hialeah File.

- 16 *Miami Herald*, April 22, 1937.
- 17 *Ibid.*
- 18 *Miami Tribune*, June 2, 1937
- 19 "Just to keep the record straight;" also, Graham to Christiansen, June 1, 1937, Graham Papers, Hialeah, File.
- 20 *Miami Tribune*, June 2, 1937
- 21 G.C. Sparks to Graham, May 27, 1937, Graham Papers, Hialeah File.
- 22 Letter from the citizens protective league, Graham Papers, Misc. File.
- 23 *Miami Herald*, May 26, 1937.
- 24 Thomas L. Arthur to Graham, May 23, 1937, Graham Papers, Misc. Corres., 1936-1938.
- 25 *Miami Herald*, July 27, 1937.
- 26 *Ibid.*
- 27 *Ibid.*, July 29, 1937.
- 28 *Ibid.*, October 28, 1937.
- 29 George Holt to G.T. Whitfield, July 20, 1937, Graham Papers, Misc. Corres., 1936-1938.
- 30 *Miami Herald*, October 28, 1937.
- 31 Graham to D. Stuart Gillis, March 2, 1938; Graham to Dorr, November 10, 1937; Rivers Buford to Graham, Graham Papers, Misc. Corres., 1936-1938.

Foreign Colonies in South Florida, 1865-1910

By GEORGE E. POZZETTA*

In that unsettled period following the Civil War, Floridians anxiously sought ways of inducing capital and business talent to Florida so that the state could recover its economic vitality and grow to its fullest potential. Land promotion, railroad expansion, and intensive farming all received consideration as being the key to developing the virtually untapped peninsula. At the base of all proposals, however, lay the conviction that what Florida needed most was *people* — settlers to populate countless acres of unused lands and to provide a reliable labor force for the state's anticipated industrial development. Francis Irsch, a prominent real estate agent and immigration booster, voiced the concerns of many residents in this troubled time when he argued, "It would take centuries to populate the thinly settled State of Florida through the natural increase of the native population, and if her vast resources are to be developed with reasonable expedition a desirable immigration into the State is the most important factor to accomplish this end."¹ In response to these considerations, various agencies within the state, both private and public, produced an impressive volume of promotional literature designed to attract immigrants to Florida.

At first those involved in the immigration campaign directed their inducements primarily to individual foreigners or to families. In general, there was little effort to attract newcomers in large groups. The state Bureau of Immigration, for example, published several guide books stressing the ease with which immigrant farmers might obtain homesteads and become independent land owners. Similarly, land companies often emphasized that their large holdings had been broken into smaller tracts and were now available for individual settlement. By the early 1880's, however, when the expected flood of immigrant farmers and laborers failed to materialize, a re-evaluation of the promotional pitch took place. Hereafter, although appeals to individual settlers did not disappear, the emphasis of the promotional literature shifted toward the procurement of foreign colonies — that is, settlement in mass.

Immigrant colonies appealed to promoters on several grounds. First, this mode of selling disposed of large tracts of land in one transaction and thereby reduced paperwork and sales effort on the part of real estate agents. Also from the developer's point of view, it brought significant

numbers of newcomers into an area immediately and served to enhance the value of adjacent property. Even more importantly, however, land agents sincerely felt that the colony settlement plan would insure the permanence of immigrant communities. By settling people from the same nation or province together, colonists could more easily perpetuate familiar customs and practices and ease the difficult transition to a new home. Moreover, such laborious tasks as clearing virgin land and digging drainage ditches could be accomplished cheaper and quicker with a group effort. Lastly, salesmen hoped that by supplying foreigners with "instant communities" they could more readily be supplied with at least some of the amenities of life (schools, churches, medical services, etc.) that they had been accustomed to in their homeland. In short, Floridians believed that the colony plan would provide maximum advantages to all parties involved.

Though promoters attempted colonization projects in all parts of the state, south Florida was the scene of the most intensive settlement activity. It is not difficult to understand why this was so. Vast acreages of excellent farm land lay unexploited in the southern part of the peninsula, awaiting only the development of an adequate transportation system and the arrival of enterprising farmers. Even more land lay under water, to be rescued by proper drainage procedures. Here, then, was an area in which land-hungry settlers could find ample opportunity for investment. This section of the state was also the site of significant railroad expansion during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Practically all railroad companies owned extensive lands bordering their lines and were vitally interested in populating these tracts. The logic of events, therefore, focused colonization enterprises on south Florida.

Perhaps the most serious handicap besetting respectable promoters in their attempts to induce foreign colonies southward was the uncomplimentary image of Florida land deals that circulated both in Europe and the United States. In truth the activities of many real estate agents did deserve censure. Since the business dealings of these individuals went virtually unregulated by state and local governments, they were characterized by an unusual degree of fraud and deception. Abuses ranged from simple overglorification of Florida's benefits, a practice which most people probably recognized and made amends for, to gross and wilful distortion of conditions that awaited trusting settlers. Far too many investors found themselves owners of worthless swamp land or uneconomical farm acreage. These deceptions generated a widespread distrust of Florida land sales, and, in the case of those who paid their money and failed to find the anticipated Garden of Eden, considerable disillusionment. The experience of an 1885 effort to settle a Scottish colony at

Sarasota was typical of many abortive settlement efforts.

Depressed economic conditions in Scotland during the early 1880's and the widespread availability of information about Florida induced some fifty settlers to immigrate to the sunshine state. These adventurers were influenced primarily by the writings of one J. Selven Tait (Tate), a former English land developer and colonizer reputed to be a nephew of the archbishop of Canterbury. On the basis of assurances given by Tait's company, the colonists purchased six thousand acres of allegedly choice land near the "thriving" community of Sarasota. Once settled the group was to utilize their forty acre plots for citrus and truck farming. Tait kept interest high by announcing that a further increment of one hundred and fifty families would arrive as soon as the colony was well established. Several Florida publications noted with obvious pleasure that "each of the settlers is expected to spend \$1,250.00 during the first year and \$500.00 per annum thereafter."²

The colonists left Glasgow aboard the *Furnessia* late in 1885, and like immigrants everywhere and at every time, they undoubtedly looked to the future with a large measure of hope and good faith. Such feelings were not to be rewarded. Their mid-winter landing revealed that they had been completely deceived. Instead of the promised acreage, they found, "a flat and sandy stretch of soil, where no proper provisions had been made for receiving a large group of people...no communications with other parts of the state...desolate." No bustling town with wide thoroughfares existed, only a few scattered buildings. Faced with this situation, most of the Scotsmen abandoned hopes for their colony and dispersed as best they could. Some months later a Scottish newspaper in New York City noted that a small party of these adventurers arrived "in a destitute state from Sarasota, Florida." The paper discussed the "swampy wilderness" that had greeted their countrymen and concluded with the rhetorical question, "How many such lessons are needed to put emigrants on their guard against land speculators?"³

Florida developers attempted to minimize the effect of this failure by claiming that only a few settlers had actually left the state; the majority had supposedly scattered themselves among several middle Florida towns and were now contented residents of the state. For the most part these claims fooled no one. *The Florida Agriculturist*, perhaps the state's most consistent and articulate booster of immigration, correctly perceived the impact of this incident. After condemning those "who delude strangers by false assurances" the journal concluded that the Sarasota affair and all similar practices would "do us a great deal of harm."⁴ In this assessment the paper was assuredly correct.

The Danish colony of White City in St. Lucie County experienced

somewhat similar difficulties in its dealings with land agents. During the early 1890's news of Florida's advantages reached many Danes, both in their homeland and in the northern states of America. *The Danish Pioneer*, a promotional magazine published in Omaha, Nebraska, was just one of many Danish language sources disseminating information about the sunshine state. Consequently, when a Danish land agency ran advertisements offering Florida land for sale in 1893, the proposal found a receptive audience. Approximately five hundred Danes, primarily from the Chicago area, under the guidance of promoter Louis Pio, responded to this particular inducement and made ready to move. A special excursion train financed jointly by the land company and the state Bureau of Immigration brought the colonists to their new home.⁵

Two disasters struck the community before a week had passed. The indefatigable Mr. Pio died shortly after arriving in White City and his experienced leadership was sorely missed. Hard on the heels of this disappointment, the colonists learned that their financial manager, a man named Myers, had sold them land that he did not own and had absconded with their money before his chicanery was discovered. Those settlers possessing some monetary resources left the area immediately. The majority, however, were absolutely destitute and had to remain.⁶

Local residents provided some relief to the abandoned Danes, but it was millionaire oil and railroad magnate, Henry M. Flagler, who proved to be their rescuer. Flagler was undoubtedly moved by the plight of these people and the help he offered came at least in part from humanitarian motives. He also surely recognized that the present situation afforded him an excellent opportunity to establish a productive settlement along his railroad line. Combining altruism and self-interest, he undertook to save the White City colony.

Flagler's Florida East Coast Railway (FECR) erected a large "Immigrant House" near the settlement which provided lodging for any man and his family until crops were harvested and sold. Additionally, the railroad provided seed, fertilizer, and a small weekly stipend to any settler willing to stay in Florida. The experiment proved successful. By 1897 there were seventy families living at the colony; mere survival was no longer an issue. James E. Ingraham, General Agent and Land Commissioner of the FECR, reported in that year that White City was now completely self supporting and that after next year's crops, the colonists would "begin to make payments on their indebtedness." Newcomers were trickling in, Ingraham further indicated, and "the prospects for the colony are encouraging."⁷

Railroad aid did not cease with these emergency measures. Ingraham made consistent efforts to provide for the agricultural diversity of

the colony. In 1895 a planting of citrus trees arrived in White City, a gift of the railroad. Early in 1899 Ingraham sent a boxcar of seed for Kaffir corn to be used as livestock forage and two carloads of seed cane from Hastings so that colonists might attempt to grow sugar cane. Of equal importance, the railroad appointed as White City agent, Mr. C.H. Rooks, a careful and judicious manager who guided the settlement to permanent stability. By 1900 the community was sufficiently affluent that it could advertise a surplus of males and claim that "the first young marriageable ladies that come in can have their pick and choice..."⁸

It was no accident that the Florida East Coast Railway was on hand to assist in saving the White City venture. Flagler's system was the single most aggressive and energetic promoter of foreign colonization within the state. Unlike independent real estate agents, the railroad was able to offer a comprehensive range of services and business arrangements to prospective settlers. Ingraham's land department, for example, was empowered to offer special purchase transactions which often reduced the cost per acre of colony land by fifty percent. Additionally, the railroad regularly featured special transportation rates for homeseekers, rebates on shipping for the initial years of a colony's settlement, and periodic help in the procurement of farm supplies. For a time the FECR rented tractors and other motorized farm equipment to settlers at daily rates ranging from three to five dollars. It should also be mentioned that Mr. Flagler himself manifested a decided sense of integrity, fair play and liberality in all his colonization enterprises. During an 1899 citrus freeze, it was entirely characteristic of him to direct that officials "err on the side of generosity" in dispensing a \$100,000 emergency loan fund for settlers.⁹ These factors combined to produce a remarkably successful settlement record.

The establishment of Dania, Florida, grew out of land arrangements coordinated by the FECR. In 1896 Ingraham was approached by James Paulson, a Chicago land agent, with a proposal to settle a section of south Florida with Danes. The FECR was to act as a middle man between Paulson's firm, the Linton Land Company, and the other major land holders in the area (principally the FECR and the Boston and Florida Atlantic Coast Land Company). As its part of the proposed agreement, the railroad pledged to supply a subsidy of 10,000 acres of land as well as an arrangement giving Paulson the sole authority to sell land directly to the Danish colonists. Land was to be sold at the rate of \$100 per acre of muck land and \$17 per acre for pine and spruce land. Moreover, the FECR agreed to give any settlers coming to the colony the same privileges offered to purchasers of railroad land. At this particular time these inducements included a fifty percent rebate on freight charges for house-

hold goods, free transportation for heads of families, and the grant of a free lot in town if any purchaser agreed to build in town. The Linton Land Company was to receive a 25% commission from gross sales as payments were made by Danish buyers; the remaining profits were to be split equally between the FECR and the Boston and Florida Atlantic Coast Land Company. Ingraham committed the railroad to these agreements and enthusiastically predicted to his superiors that four hundred families would soon move to the new colony called Modelo.¹⁰

Such optimism proved to be unfounded. Despite much promotional effort, only a small stream of settlers made the trek to south Florida. In 1898 Paulson personally brought a dozen Danish families from Wisconsin. It was largely this group that changed the name of the community to Dania, ostensibly because the name of Modelo had already been used by an earlier settlement elsewhere. Few of these newcomers remained. Unfamiliar crops and farming conditions, recurrent freezes, and the theft of \$1,100 in community funds by Paulson served to discourage the majority of Dania's residents.¹¹ By the turn of the century the experiment was judged by nearly everyone to have been a dismal failure. Had it not been for the ability and drive of Mr. A.C. Frost, a newly appointed land agent for the FECR, Dania may well have collapsed at this point.

Frost was an experienced colonizer, having successfully established two new towns in his home state of Wisconsin. He arrived in Dania in 1901 determined to reverse the sagging fortunes of the community. Upon arrival he was greeted with a scene that would have discouraged a lesser man. Only one white woman and two unmarried white males remained; the rest of the settlement was composed of scattered negro farmers and laborers. With the aid of his contacts in the Northwest and overseas, Frost energetically recruited settlers and, after several initial setbacks, he proved to be the stabilizing element that the community needed. By 1908 Dania's population reached nearly a thousand residents and the community produced an impressive three hundred and sixty-five train car loads of tomatoes and fifty car loads of pineapples.¹²

In the same year that the Florida East Coast Railway began to colonize Dania, the company laid plans for a settlement of Swedes in their lands just north of Miami. Ingraham created the Halland Land Company to administer these tracts and opened an agency in New York City under the control of Mr. Olof Zetterlund, general manager. Zetterlund organized a promotional campaign which circulated Swedish language reports of the lands throughout the Northwest and Sweden. His efforts bore fruit in 1897 when the Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Bethlehem Church of Brooklyn purchased some small tracts from the Halland Company with the intention of creating a community of Swedes in Florida.

The railroad donated additional acreage to the church's pastor, Rev. F. Jacobson, in the hopes that this inducement would encourage further settlement. In the space of the next year the community, named Hallandale by its founders, became a reality. The railroad supplied the usual drainage and surveying services while the settlers engaged primarily in truck farming.¹³ Although no major catastrophe befell Hallandale during its formative stages, throughout its first three years of existence many colonists became dissatisfied with the remoteness and isolation of the area and left. These disillusioned travellers attempted to obtain refunds from Zetterlund, without success, and when rebuffed, circulated tales of duplicity and fraud about their settlement effort in Florida.¹⁴

Perhaps the most ambitious colonization undertaking in south Florida involved the establishment of a Japanese settlement near the present day site of Boca Raton. This community was the creation of a Japanese land promoter, Mr. J. Sakai, who came to Florida in 1903 to select lands for purchase. He approached officials of the FECR with his plans for an agricultural colony and received pledges of support. After careful investigation, he bought one thousand acres of land and, as was normally the case, received free grants covering more territory from the railroad and other land holders.¹⁵

The Russo-Japanese war briefly delayed the movement of settlers to America, but by 1905 nearly thirty hard-working Japanese comprised the new colony of Yamato. Sakai and his countrymen gave over their lands entirely to the production of pineapples. Such was their success with this thorny fruit that the FECR established a station at Yamato in 1907 in order to expedite shipment of their bumper crops. During that same year Sakai received permission to open a branch of the U.S. Post office in the community, a further indication of economic and social stability.¹⁶

The colony's economic affairs were controlled by an incorporated entity called the Yamato Colony Association. Under the terms of incorporation, all members were required to be Japanese and to bind themselves strictly to the rules of the Association. The membership elected officers at an annual meeting in October and funds for operation were provided by a percentage of profits from pineapple sales. Prospective settlers in Japan who did not have the required passage money (about \$150.00 in this pre-Panama Canal era) could receive assistance from the Association in return for an indenture of three years. At the end of this work period, settlers were to receive a small grant of land and five hundred dollars in cash.¹⁷ The disruptive effects of the Russian war upon Japan's fragile economy provided a steady flow of newcomers willing to accept these terms in return for the opportunity to settle in America.

As so often happened in Florida of that day, nature intervened to

alter the plans of these settlers. A virulent pineapple blight struck in late 1908 and destroyed that year's crop. Before the community could re-establish itself, competition from Cuban pineapple fields, which were just now reaching full production, served to depress further the Florida markets. Many colonists grew discouraged with the uncertainties of farming in Florida and returned to their homeland. Those that remained were forced to seek employment elsewhere. Some emigrated to communities along the coast and worked at odd jobs; others took to sharecropping for American farmers.¹⁸ Though many of those that stayed became successful, the dream of a permanent settlement of Japanese, governing their own affairs and providing a field of opportunity for adventuresome countrymen, was dead.

Meeting a similar fate at the hands of Florida's fickle agricultural conditions was the English colony at Narcoosee. This settlement had its roots in the activities of the Florida Agricultural Company, a land promotion concern that speculated in lands bordering Lake Tohopekaliga during the early 1880's. The company purchased a twelve mile square tract of land approximately sixteen miles from Kissimmee and announced plans to induce English settlers to Florida. The original concept of the company was to furnish English people of some means with an opportunity to make homes for themselves and speculate in real estate. Only a few investors were attracted to the plan during its first years of operation; as of 1884 only scattered homes, one saw mill, and a few young orange groves gave evidence of the company's efforts. One energetic speculator, J.B. Watson of Gilthall, England, dramatically altered the course of events. He bought five hundred acres of virgin land and wrote an enthusiastic pamphlet describing the wonders of Florida for foreign consumption.¹⁹ His labors may well have sparked the larger movement into Narcoosee.

By 1885 other investors had become intrigued with the English settlement venture and several promotional pamphlets circulated throughout England. Within a year, these efforts generated significant new movement to Florida, centered in the new town of Narcoosee. The majority of these emigrees were from wealthy families and the development of the colony clearly revealed their financial position. Residents built tennis courts, polo fields, cricket fields, and golf courses — hardly the usual activities of Florida's immigrant settlers. A large frame hotel served visitors in a style that was more typical of London than south Florida of the 1880's.²⁰

The disastrous freeze of 1894-95 utterly destroyed the colony's citrus groves, and seemingly its will to survive. Unlike most other settlement ventures which met with adversity, the English colonists aban-

doned their creation with a haste that shocked the local citizenry. As one commentator remarked, they departed for England “abandoning groves, homes, furniture, with tables set and dishes unwashed...”²¹ Those few that remained after the freeze gradually drifted away, and dreams of an affluent English town in south Florida vanished.

The record of colonization efforts in south Florida points out several unmistakable lessons. It is immediately clear that colonization proved to be a risky business for promoter and settler alike. Real estate agents often saw their expensive projects fall victim to the quirks of nature and end as failures. On the other hand immigrants were frequently bilked by dishonest agents and lost all they possessed. Additionally, experience showed that most private land companies possessed neither the resources nor the administrative talent necessary to fund and carry through group colonization projects. Such undertakings were far more difficult than most contemporaries imagine. We will never know exactly how many attempts failed — undoubtedly the records of many no longer exist and are lost to history — but even those we know about are considerable in number. In most instances those colonies which succeeded required the intervention of a large railroad or land company with ample capital reserves to meet unexpected contingencies. These companies not only supplied the financial stability necessary for the frontier-like conditions then existing in Florida, but they also frequently were able to provide the effective, on-site leadership in colonies that proved to be indispensable for success.

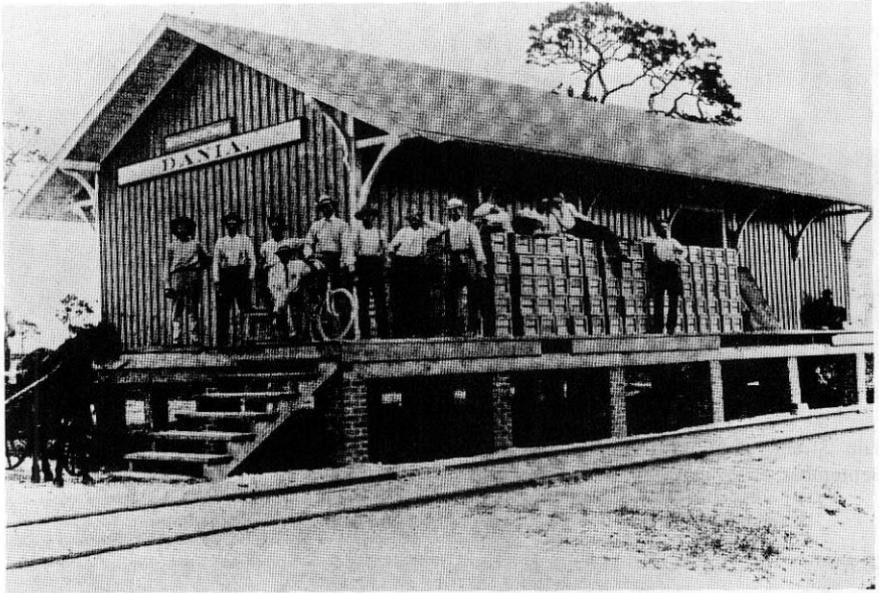
In spite of the fact that many of these ventures failed to live up the fullest expectations of their creators, they were nonetheless important in the development of south Florida. In a time period when population increases were crucial to this section of the state, they supplied badly needed manpower and productive capability. Colonists performed much of the basic clearing of the land and laying out of drainage systems — if not directly by the labor of their own hands, then at least indirectly by stimulating companies and governmental agencies to carry out these improvements in order to secure a continued flow of settlers. They were notable also for the impact they had on businesses. Colonists bought household goods, lumber, fertilizer, and an endless variety of other products — this purchasing power provided a base of support for many nascent Florida businesses and trades and undoubtedly aided in the economic development of the entire state. The last contribution made by foreign colonization is perhaps impossible to measure with any exactitude, but it is no less important than those already mentioned. The courage and fortitude many of these colonists manifested in their struggles against the perversities of man and nature assuredly energized

others to emulate them. Such qualities are significant in the development of any frontier region and [this] was certainly the case in Florida.

FOOTNOTES

*Dr. Pozzetta is an Assistant Professor of Social Science and History, University College, University of Florida.

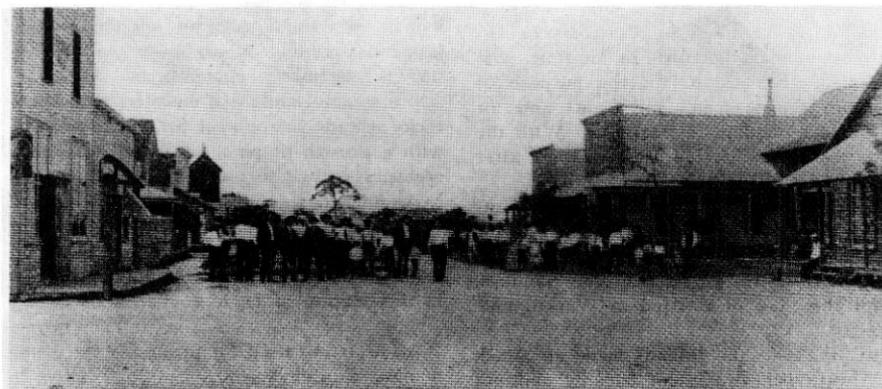
- 1 Francis Irsch, *Florida Immigration* (Jacksonville, 1891), p.4
- 2 "The Latest Method of Populating Florida," *The Florida Agriculturist*, VIII (December 16, 1885), 260. Journal hereafter referred to as *TFA*. Consult also, "The Scotch Colonists to Sarasota," *Florida Dispatch*, IV (December 21, 1885), 906; "The Florida Scotch Colony," *TFA*, VIII (December 21, 1885), 901; Karl H. Grismer, *The Story of Sarasota* (Sarasota, 1946), pp. 92-100.
- 3 "The Scotch Colony," *TFA*, VIII (March 3, 1886), 369; "The Scotch Colony," *TFA*, VIII (March 24, 1886), 400; Del Marth, *Yesterday's Sarasota* (Miami, 1973), p. 17.
- 4 "The Scotch Colony," *TFA*, IX (January 13, 1886), 300; "The Sarasota Scotch Colony," *Florida Dispatch*, V (March 22, 1886), 224. For information on other swindles involving the proposed settlement of foreign colonies see, "Immigration," *TFA*, XXXI (June 22, 1904), 392; "How a Colony Succeeds," *TFA*, XXXI (August 10, 1904), 504; "Immigration," *TFA*, XXX (December 16, 1903), 802.
- 5 Ada Coats Williams, *A Brief History of St. Lucie County* (Ft. Pierce, Florida, 1963), 19; Senate Journal, 1894-1895, "Immigration," (Tallahassee, 1896), 155.
- 6 Williams, *Ibid.*
- 7 James E. Ingraham to Parrott, June 30, 1897, Box 21.A-1, Henry M. Flagler Papers, Flagler Museum, Palm Beach, Florida; Dr. W.E. Douglas to Parrott, November 10, 1899, Box 21.A-1, Flagler MSS; Jacksonville *Florida Times Union*, October 13, 1897. Prior to 1896 Flagler's railroad was named the Jacksonville, St. Augustine and Indian River Railway.
- 8 "The Garden Spot of the South," *The Florida East Coast Homeseeker*, I (May, 1899), 8. Journal hereafter referred to as *FECH*. Also see, C.H. Rooks to E.V. Blackman, "Letters to the Editor," *FECH*, I (September, 1899), 2; "White City," *FECH*, I (January, 1899), 8; "White City," *FECH*, II (August, 1900), 3; "Our White City," *FECH*, II (October, 1900), 14.
- 9 J.E. Ingraham to Mr. Larson, February 16, 1899, Box 21.A-1, Flagler MSS.
- 10 J.E. Ingraham to A.P. Sawyer and George F. Miles, March 23, 1896, Box 21.A-1, Flagler MSS; George F. Miles to A.P. Sawyer, September 16, 1896, Box 21.A-1, Flagler MSS; J.E. Ingraham to A.P. Sawyer, October 20, 1897, Box 21.A-1, Flagler MSS. Paulson's company was often referred to as "The Modelo Land Company" because of the colony's name.
- 11 George F. Miles to A.P. Sawyer, February 20, 1897, Box 21.A-1, Flagler MSS; Lola R. Carr, "Dania adds Historic Interest to Greater Hollywood," *The Hollywood Record*, I (May 1, 1926), 1-2.
- 12 "Dania," *FECH*, VII (July 1, 1905), 6; "Dania," *FECH*, VIII (January, 1906), 7; "The Success of Dania," *FECH*, X (November, 1908), 357; "Two New Towns Near New River," *FECH*, XII (September, 1910), 335.
- 13 Fred S. Dewey to J.E. Ingraham, December 23, 1896, Box 21.A-1, Flagler MSS; F. Jacobson to J.E. Ingraham, March 26, 1897, Box 21.A-1, Flagler MSS; "Hallandale," *FECH*, I (May, 1899) 10; "Hallandale," *FECH*, VI (September, 1904), 8.
- 14 Olof Zetterlund to J.E. Ingraham, November 8, 1899, Box 21.A-1, Flagler MSS.
- 15 Jacksonville *Florida Times Union*, December 23, 1903; January 9, 1904.
- 16 A.G. Bradbury, *A Chronology of Florida Post Offices* (Florida Federation of Stamp Clubs, 1962), p. 91; *The East Coast of Florida* (St. Augustine, 1906), p. 58; Jacksonville *Florida Times Union*, March 9, 1906.
- 17 Jacksonville *Florida Times Union*, November 2, 1906; "Yamato - A Japanese Colony," *FECH*, X (November, 1908), 363; *The East Coast of Florida* (St. Augustine, 1908), p. 61; "Yamato," *FECH*, X (July, 1908), 225; "A Japanese Colony," *FECH*, XI (February, 1909), 40.
- 18 Interview with Mr. George Morikami, one of the original settlers of Yamato, June 11, 1974. Tape in files of Oral History Collection, University of Florida.
- 19 "The English Colony," *TFA*, VII (November 4, 1884), 703.
- 20 Richard J. Bowe, *Pictorial History of Florida* (Tallahassee, 1965), p. 126.
- 21 Bowe, *Ibid.*; William B. Blackman, *History of Orange County* (Chuluotta, Florida, 2nd edition, 1973), pp. 124-125; *Gate City Route* (South Florida Railroad Company, n.d.), p. 36.



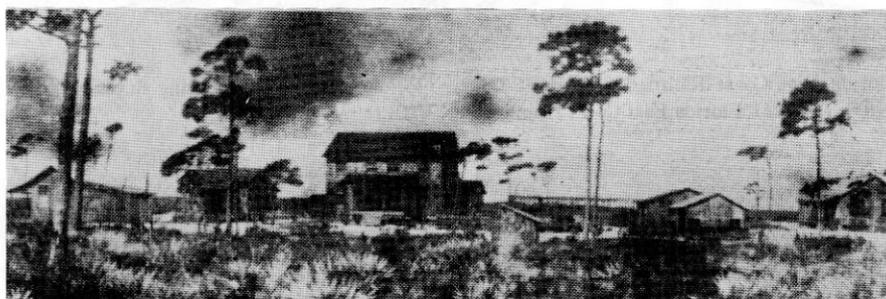
Florida East Coast Railroad Station at Dania, Florida. Tomatoes awaiting shipment, ca. 1907. (source) *Florida East Coast Homeseeker*, VIII, (May, 1907), 155.



A. C. Frost's pineapple fields, Dania, Florida, ca. 1911. Mr. Frost is in the center. (source) *Florida East Coast Homeseeker*, XIII (August, 1911), 292.



Main Street, Dania, Florida, ca. 1907. (source) **Florida East Coast Homeseeker**, IX (September, 1907), 283.



The main settlement area of the Japanese colony of Yamato, ca. 1908. Two story structure in the middle belongs to Mr. J. Sakai, founder of the colony. (source) **Florida East Coast Homeseeker**, X (November, 1908), 363.

Early Families of Upper Matecumbe

By RICHARD E. GENTRY*

Curving gently to the southwest from the mainland of Florida lies a string of small islands that make up the Florida Keys. Of these none is prettier than Upper Matecumbe, now synonymous with the town of Islamorada. This tiny island, consisting of less than 500 acres, lies almost equidistant between Miami and Key West. White settlers can be traced back as far as 1860,¹ but its role in modern Florida history began with the northward passage of Spanish treasure ships along the Florida reef where many of them met disaster. The recent history begins with three families who homesteaded the land and still live on the same property after the passage of more than a century.

The Russells, the Pinders, and the Parkers are the original Conchs of Upper Matecumbe.² Conch is a term applied to residents of the Florida Keys who are of British descent by way of the Bahamas. Being a people dependent on the sea and its bounty they chose the name "Conch" after a large mollusk found throughout the Caribbean. These people shared a oneness of background. Their forefathers were American Tories who left the American colonies at the end of the Revolution and went to the Bahamas, where they were given new homes on grants of land from George III.³ They settled throughout the Bahamas and some of them ultimately found their way to the Florida Keys. The Keys living afforded them a better and more varied life in which the sea yielded much of their needs and location along a trade route brought them into closer contact with civilization.

Upper Matecumbe is a small island of only 465 acres. Between 1880 and 1906 three families, the Russells, the Pinders, and the Parkers acquired the entire island under the provisions of the Homestead Act of 1862, and divided it among themselves more or less evenly.⁴ In 1880 the Russell family homesteaded 162 acres on the upper end of the island which came to be called "East End" by its inhabitants. Three years later the Pinder family settled on the middle section. Its 130 acres were the highest and considered the best of the land. Finally the Parkers acquired the lower third in 1903, and its 171 acres became "West End." Not all of the land was usable as much of it around the perimeter along the seashore particularly on the north or Florida Bay side was low-lying mangrove swamp.

The families actually lived on and worked the land some years before they acquired title to it. In 1860 Mary Ann Russell with her husband and family came to Matecumbe from what is now Marathon. They had visited the island much earlier and must have liked what they saw, but news of the Massacre of Dr. Henry Perrine on Indian Key on August 7, 1840 sent them back to Marathon, closer to the protection of Key West.⁵ Dr. Perrine was a distinguished horticulturist who came to Florida to experiment with the introduction of tropical plants. He was to receive a township of land on the mainland, but was residing temporarily on Indian Key which was an important trading center at the time, but did not afford the hoped-for protection. Chief Chekika and a party of so-called "Spanish Indians" came in canoes to attack and loot the trading post. Dr. Perrine was among those killed.

Soon after the Russells arrived, Mary Ann's husband died. She and two of her sons, James William and John Henry, continued to farm the land. The other children moved elsewhere but returned from time to time for visits.⁶

The Russell like most of their neighbors built their homes of driftwood. This was lumber washed overboard from passing ships wrecked on the Florida Reef, or from the ships themselves as they broke up. This material was plentiful and cement was not yet in wide use though pioneers made a lime by burning oyster shells. Matecumbe houses, of course, had wooden floors which their owners kept scrubbed clean with the skin of the turbot or triggerfish, a reef fish with a very coarse skin or "hide," still used today in the Bahamas. If they had lived on the palmetto and pine lands of mainland Florida they would probably have used palmetto roots as scrub brushes.

The natural environment also supplied the material for making beds. They collected "mattress grass" which grew wild along the beaches with which to fill the mattress. When the grass broke down or became unevenly distributed, they simply added more or refilled the ticking with fresh grass.

James and John Russell grew pineapples on East End and became fairly prosperous. They acquired two sailboats to carry their own produce and that of other dwellers along the Keys to market. With the larger boat they made trips to Mobile and New York.

The Russells also grew sweet potatoes in the rich soil on the Key. They made a bread of the potatoes which was baked in large outdoor ovens. The bread is still baked by the same recipe today on East End.⁷ Looking at the rocky and barren looking soil on the Key today one might wonder that it once was called fertile and produced valuable crops. Longtime residents of the Key say that recurring hurricanes that swept

over the low land stripped the Keys of their topsoil. When the dense vegetation was cleared for farming operations the soil could more easily be washed away. Some Conchs maintain that they do not get the rainfall that was common even a generation ago. Some recall a swale along the Atlantic beach ridge running the entire length of the Key which held brackish water almost the year around.⁸ For some, shallow wells provided a source of fresh water...Since the only fresh water was what fell on the land, it may be that the natural means of trapping it were destroyed. For instance, clearing the vegetation facilitated runoff. Residents offer further confirmation that there was water enough to provide a breeding ground for hordes of mosquitoes. Hats with mosquito netting to protect the face had to be worn out of doors and mosquito netting was required for sleeping. Smudge pots were used to drive out and keep away the pests. When wire screens did become available the material usually rusted quickly in the salt air.⁹

While the Russells were busy farming the East End, Richard Pinder was busy establishing his home and family in the center of the island. Like most of the Pinders who found their way to Florida, Richard came from Spanish Wells in the Bahamas where the name Pinder is still one of the most common. Richard brought with him his wife Sarah and two sons, Cephas and Adolphus. They came by way of Key West, and lived for a short time at Indian Key. In 1875 he applied for a homestead on Matecumbe. He received the patent or title to the 130.76 acres on January 20, 1883, in a document bearing the name of President Chester A. Arthur.

Richard and his two sons began to grow pineapples for market as well as vegetables and fruits for the family table. Pineapple growing was a flourishing business at the time and the Pinders often employed four or five men in their fields. When the pineapples were ripe they were cut and sent to market by boat. Since the water was too shallow for ocean-going vessels to come in to their docks, the "pines" were loaded onto small vessels and carried out to dry-well smacks which could not come inside Alligator Reef.¹⁰ These vessels were fast little cargo ships somewhat similar to the more famous clipper ships which sailed the high seas of the world at the time. There are Conch tales of one smack loaded with pineapples from Upper Matecumbe that sailed to New York in four days, quite a feat.

At the height of their pineapple growing activity Cephas and Adolphus Pinder established a small canning factory on the beach at Upper Matecumbe. It ran smoothly for a time, until a major disagreement arose between the brothers and the man who operated the plant. When he quit, the modest factory fell into disuse.¹¹

After Sarah Pinder died, Richard took a second wife, Caroline. There were no children from this marriage. On September 22, 1900, Richard Pinder died and the property passed undivided to the sons. However, on December 22, just two months after the death of his father, Adolphus died leaving a wife and seven children, and for the first time the homestead was divided.

The heyday of pineapple growing came to an end early in this century for the Russells and the Pinders and all of the other residents of the Keys and the South Florida mainland. Pineapples came by ferry from Cuba to Key West and moved north by way of the Florida East Coast Railroad which reached Key West in 1912. If the railroad which ran along the Keys opened to them a new world, it also let the competition of a wider world into their secluded and isolated land. At one time three ferries were running between Cuba and Key West; the *Henry Flagler*, the *Parrott*, and one other.¹² Pineapple growers on the Keys could not meet the Cuban competition and turned to the growing of limes. There too they soon met competition from growers in Dominica where labor was as cheap as twenty-five cents a day which made it possible to wrap the limes individually in paper.¹³

When the growing of limes and pineapples became no longer profitable, the Pinders tried, along with commercial fishing which always played a part in their economy, raising tomatoes and gathering sponges. The fine sheep's wool sponges they collected from the nearby shallow waters remained a lucrative occupation until a blight destroyed the sponge beds. Also the center of sponge gathering had moved from Key West to Tarpon Springs where Greek divers gathered the sponges from deeper water. But they too were ruined by the blight, and Tarpon Springs became more a tourist attraction than a commercial sponge capital. Meanwhile also synthetic sponges began to take much of the market. Only in recent years have natural sponges been gathered in any quantity in the Biscayne Bay-Florida Keys waters. The industry has to some extent been restored by Cuban refugees.

Several generations of the Pinder family have farmed tomatoes from time to time. In the early 1900s tomatoes often brought the family from \$400 to \$600 a year, considered a respectable cash income for the times in that area. Tomatoes were sent to Key West where they were placed aboard steamers bound for eastern ports.¹⁴ This was an early phase of Florida's winter vegetable industry. Key West was at the time a major port linking much of the Caribbean and Cuba to the United States in both the Atlantic and the Gulf ports.

Until the coming of the railroad almost all development was along the beach, which was the highway of travel and communication at the

time. The inner part of the island, narrow as it was, remained dense with native woods except where it was cleared for planting.¹⁵ In order to go from Russell's East End to Parkers' West End one simply walked the beach. The other alternative was a small boat. There were no horses for the farm work or transportation. On land all work was done by hand. Mules made their first appearance on the island when they were brought in for use in railroad construction early in this century.¹⁶

Everyone's home, as well as the general store and the church, was situated just above the high water mark, and often the smell of seaweed washed upon the beach was almost unbearable. There were advantages to living on the beach, however, for one could enjoy the cooling ocean breezes before the days of air conditioning.

Hurricanes often played havoc with the three Conch families. In 1935 the fury of the storm swept away and killed many residents on the Keys. Long before there was a functioning weather bureau, residents learned to trust God and his barometer between the months of June and October. Little could be done to protect a house on the beach, but the families maintained "hurricane shanties" on the higher ground of the island's interior in the midst of the thick vegetation that served to break the force of the wind and water. One such refuge owned by the Pinder family was constructed of heavy timbers, the windows, for example, being made of 1" x 12" boards.

In the 1935 storm four Pinders died. Sixty-one Russells were lost leaving only eleven descendants. Henry Russell, his wife and eleven children perished. All of the Parkers survived.

Mail delivery was always a problem in the Keys. John Wesley Johnson owned the first store in the Upper Keys and as was the case in so many early settlements it doubled as the post office. It was located at the now abandoned town of Planter just north of Tavernier. Mail came from the mainland by a side-wheel steamer, the *Chinnecock*. Since there was no channel deep enough to float the boat, the mail was left on a piling set in water deep enough for the steamer's keel. Johnson would row out, pick it up, and leave the outgoing mail for the return trip of the *Chinnecock*.¹⁷

There were no cows on the island and no supply of milk was available. Babies were all breast fed. It was often supplemented with grits at an early age just as children farther north were fed mush when very young.

Religion was an important part of the lives of these early settlers. Late in the nineteenth century, mainly by the efforts of Richard and Cephas Pinder a Methodist Church was constructed toward the eastern or upper end of the island. The location proved unsatisfactory and the building was dragged to the shore at low tide and floated on the high tide.

Two small schooners, the *Linton* and the *Virginia*, flanked the church and "sailed" it down to about the center of the island. It was brought ashore there and placed on a new foundation where it served very well until it was washed away in the 1935 hurricane.¹⁸

On his death bed Adolphus Pinder, a devout Christian, asked his son Preston to stand by the church. Preston kept his promise by acting as Sunday School Superintendent for fifty-five years and serving as lay preacher for twenty-five of them, often sharing the pulpit with Edney Parker.

In 1898 William Parker brought his family from Key West to Plantation Key, just north of Upper Matecumbe. He was born on a small point of land called "The Bluff" just off Harbor Island in the Bahamas. Before coming to Florida he had married Amy Cash. On Plantation Key the Parkers had much the same experiences as their neighbors on Matecumbe. They grew tomatoes, limes, and other vegetables for market and for the family table. William and several others constructed the first church on the Upper Keys.¹⁹ William also did commercial fishing at times, catching and salting the fish which were sold to a buyer out of Miami.

The Parkers found homesteading no easier than did other Conchs. They lost one child to diphtheria shortly after their arrival. They tried raising chickens, but mosquitoes killed many of them. To supplement their diet with something other than fish, they ate cormorants and egrets abundant throughout the area. Since these birds usually had a salty taste from the diet of fish they were usually stewed. In season the young cormorants could be taken from the nest before they could fly and could be prepared in other ways such as frying, and they lacked the salty flavor of the older birds.²⁰ Beans, fresh or dried, were always a staple in the diet. Freshly shelled lima beans cooked almost to a puree and served with freshly baked bread was a favorite Sunday meal.

The nearest medical services were at Key West, and Conch pioneers like all others dealt with most medical problems with folk remedies. Kerosene was applied to cuts and lacerations, while a freshly cut aloe leaf relieved the pain of a burn. For fever they made a sage brush tea from a plant that grew on the island. A tea brewed from the leaves of the lime tree also made a delightful beverage. It was made by crushing the leaves and putting them in hot water.²¹ Once every year everyone received a dose of castor oil in order to get in the mood for "spring cleaning." For a chest cold William Parker made an onion plaster and wore it on his chest. Kerosene lamps were used to light the houses. Sometimes the flame would travel down the wick, and begin to burn on top of the kerosene in the reservoir. The response was to throw it out the window lest it explode.

In 1911 one of William Parker's sons, Edney, married Edna Mae Pinder, thus uniting two of the early families in marriage. For their first

house Edney acquired a two story building on Umbrella Key, now called Windley's Key, placed it on a barge and floated it to Upper Matecumbe. Edney chose a spot and placed a marker just above the beach where he wanted the front of the building to rest. The man who supervised the setting of the building placed the rear of the house at that point, and Edney's front door was only about fifty feet from the high tide. Later when the second story proved unsatisfactory, the neighbors turned out in the fashion of a barn or house raising and sawed off the second story and reroofed the building.

The coming of winter visitors spelled the end of frontier days on Upper Matecumbe. Some of the residents rented living quarters to them. The men also served as guides to visiting fishermen. Many a child on the island earned pocket money digging crabs on the beach to be used for bait by bonefishermen.²² The final response to visitors was the construction of Matecumbe Club for accommodation of visitors.

The founding of the club, like the coming of the railroad at much the same time, marked the end of a special way of life on Upper Matecumbe. Frontiers lose their romance when progress catches up with them. It was only a matter of time before the newer residents would say that they had never heard of East End or a dry-well smack. Life might be more secure, but it was less varied and less individual. Today Russells, Pinders and Parkers make up less than ten percent of the more than 1,000 inhabitants.

FOOTNOTES

*The author was a member of a Florida History Class at the University of Miami. He is a resident of Upper Matecumbe and related to two of the families named in the paper.

Editor's comment: This paper is an indication of what can be learned almost exclusively from interviews with pioneers and their descendants, and little or no documentary sources.

1 Interview with Mrs. Clifton Russell, Islamorada, April 14, 1973.

2 Land abstracts, Monroe Title Company, Key West.

3 Interview with Mrs. Clifton Russell, April 14, 1973.

4 Land abstracts, Monroe Title Company, Key West.

5 Interview with Mrs. Clifton Russell, April 14, 1973.

6 *Ibid*

7 *Ibid*

8 *Ibid*

9 Interview with Mrs. Burt Pinder, Islamorada, March 8, 1973.

10 *Ibid*

11 *Ibid*

12 *Ibid*

13 *Ibid*

14 *Ibid*

15 Interview with Mrs. Clifton Russell, April 14, 1973.

16 Interview with Mrs. Burt Pinder, March 18, 1973.

17 *Ibid*

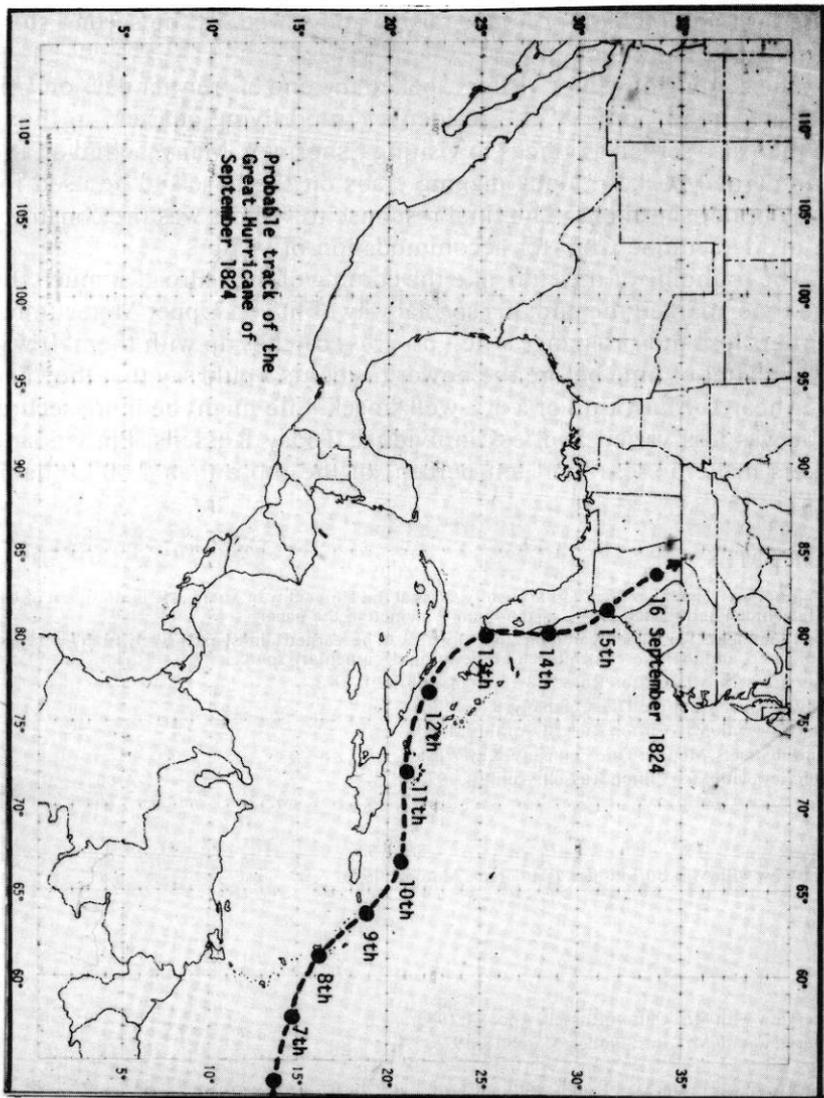
18 Jean U. Guerry, "The Matecumbe Methodist Church," *Tequesta* XXX (1970) pp. 64-68.

19 Interview with Mrs. Eddie Sweeting and Mrs. Earl Gentry, Islamorada, April 22, 1973.

20 Interview with Mrs. Earl Gentry, Islamorada, April 15, 1973.

21 See note 19.

22 See Note 9.



Miami's Earliest Known Great Hurricane

By DONALD C. GABY

On 13 September 1824 the area now known as Miami was battered by a severe hurricane, the like of which was not to strike this particular part of the coast again for over a century. Who was there to bear witness and tell the story? What other evidence might there be? It is an interesting account and the pieces to make the whole come from various sources.

In 1824 the United States had only recently acquired Florida from Spain and South Florida was considered by many to be only a wilderness. Yet several pioneer families did live here then and worked the land. The Davis and Lewis families lived on Key Biscayne, the Hagen's (Egan) lived north of the Miami River, another Lewis lived south of the Miami River, and the Pent's probably lived in what is now Coconut Grove^(1,2). These families had all lived in the region of Cape Florida and the Miami River for several years, but none left a written record of what must have been a most terrifying experience. Also in 1824, on the 26th of May, the U.S. Congress provided for the construction of three lighthouses along the Florida Keys, one of which was to be built at Cape Florida. During that same summer the revenue cutter Crawford surveyed the sites for the lighthouses, and a contract for the construction of these was given to a Mr. Samuel Lincoln. But because of the hurricane, the Cape Florida lighthouse would not be built until the following year.

In 1903, Dr. Charles Torrey Simpson, pioneer Florida botanist, retired from the Smithsonian Institution and came to South Florida to build himself a home. He chose a home site facing Biscayne Bay and along the Little River — some 15 acres consisting of mangroves, tropical hammock, and pine woods. Dr. Simpson was himself quite knowledgeable about hurricanes, having personally experienced many in the West Indies and Florida, and was ahead of his time in his understanding of them. The great hurricane of 18 September 1926, still well remembered by many local residents, did immense damage to the trees and plants about his beautiful home, and his observations of this provide our first clue⁽³⁾. In this hammock was living a venerable old oak that had been blown down in an earlier storm, and from its roots had grown a young oak that in 1926 was twisted off at its base. Cutting this younger oak to

clear a path through the hammock, he counted the tree rings and found about one hundred! Later, in going through the pine forest, he found it largely devastated, and wherever the county crews had cut trees to clear the roads he counted the rings. There were many trees with about one hundred rings, and a few with more. Here was clear evidence, speaking from the past, of a great hurricane that had passed this way about a century earlier!

What other evidence might there be? At the U.S. National Archives are the "Lighthouse Letters" from the first keeper of the Cape Florida light and certain correspondence prior to the building of the lighthouse. A letter from Mr. John Rodman ⁽⁴⁾, Collector at St. Augustine, to the Acting Commissioner of the Revenue (then the official responsible for the lighthouses) dated 30 November 1824, states that "I had the honour to address you on the 28th Sept. last informing you that Mr. Samuel B. Lincoln, with whom a contract had been made for the building of three Light Houses in this Territory, had not then arrived at this place. I deem it my duty to inform you that I am still without any information from him and it seems to be the general opinion here that he and his ship with materials on board were lost in the severe gale of *September last*, on the passage from Boston to this place". John Rodman was a man of fair character, a lawyer, previously District Attorney for the City of New York, well travelled, and by the record a prominent citizen of East Florida during the territorial period⁽⁵⁾. Reading of these "Lighthouse Letters" from 1823 through 1829 reveals no other reference to a storm in the vicinity of Cape Florida. Clearly a severe hurricane occurred in September 1824, about a century before September 1926, and no other appeared to pass before or after for some time. Was this our "great hurricane"?

There is yet more evidence. Poey⁽⁶⁾ mentions a hurricane at Guadelupe on 7-8 September 1824 and Ludlum⁽⁷⁾ describes a hurricane that passed through the Lower Bahama Islands on 11-12 September 1824, leaving a vessel driven high and dry at Turk's Island and others ashore on Rum Key, Long Island, and Harbor Island. Later⁽⁷⁾ the storm is recorded coming ashore in Georgia and eventually reaching the southern Appalachian mountains, being known as the Georgia Coastal Hurricane and Storm Tide of that year. The weather record at St. Augustine for 14-15 September 1824 showed a wind shift from northeast to south but no special remarks indicating that the storm was well offshore at that point⁽⁸⁾. Putting all of the evidence together, the pieces make a very coherent picture of what happened long ago. Clark⁽⁹⁾ has deduced a most probable track for this historic hurricane.

No doubt the hurricane was born in the lower latitudes of the North

Atlantic Ocean, perhaps developing from a disturbance that had its origin over Africa. On 7-8 September 1824 the hurricane passed near Guadelupe and on 9-10 September passed to the east and north of Puerto Rico but was little noticed by those living on the island. For the next two days it moved inexorably west by northwest to threaten what is now Miami. The hurricane, now grown to severe intensity, bore in across Cape Florida and its eye, with its awesome stillness and calm winds, came ashore very nearly at the mouth of the Miami River. Then it moved northward up the coast, devastating the Simpson hammock and the inland pine woods, and out to sea again in the vicinity of Cape Canaveral. It came ashore for the last time in Georgia leaving at least 83 persons drowned at St. Simon Island and immense damage to property with additional loss of lives for as far north as Savannah. The flooding of streams that followed as tropical downpours deluged both the coastal plain and the Piedmont brought great losses to the plantations of that region. Eventually it spent its final energy over the mountains. Somewhere along the east coast of Florida the ill-fated Mr. Lincoln with his heavily laden ship was overtaken by the great hurricane and laid to rest at the bottom of the sea. Not until the following year would the Cape Florida lighthouse be built. After its completion, the remainder of the decade passed without a storm to break the peace or delay the rebirth of the tropical growth along the coast that is now Miami.

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FOOTNOTES

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- 8Unpublished communication from the National Climatic Center, Asheville, N.C.
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Cape Sable and Key West in 1919

By WILLIS S. BLATCHLEY

Editor's note: Reprinted from *In Days Agone*: with the long subtitle "Notes on the Fauna and Flora of Subtropical Florida in the Days When Most of Its Area was a Primeval Wilderness," Indianapolis, The Nature Publishing Company, pp. 271-296. The author was collecting insect specimens but provides many descriptions of people and natural conditions that elaborate on his title. In 1922 he might have travelled from Homestead to Flamingo by highway. The Tamiami Trail was opened in 1928 to cross-state traffic. In a footnote he notes that he later made the trip from Dunedin to Homestead in seven hours over a paved road all the way, via Tampa, Sarasota, Fort Myers, Naples and the Tamiami Trail. Other changes were coming rapidly too. In another note he reports going back to East Cape twice, driving from the Lodge at Royal Palm Park. Hurricanes in 1926 and 1928 had changed the surface a great deal, and fire had destroyed the clubhouse. Copy supplied by a volume in the University of Miami's Florida Collection.

Wednesday, February 12, 1919.—Once again the Red Gods call me—call me with a fervor which will not be denied—and so again I leave Dunedin for the place where they abide. That at present is Cape Sable, the most southern point of the mainland of this country, and now a place very difficult to reach. I have learned that a "Cape Sable Land Co.," having its headquarters at Lakeland, owns or controls a large area a few miles east of the East Cape; that they have a so-called "Club House" there and that they make occasional trips to it from Lakeland, using automobile, train and boat. By correspondence I find that their agent leaves on Saturday and that, as I am a naturalist, not a prospective customer, I can for \$15.00, go with him as far as Homestead, where he leaves his automobile. To-day therefore, I left Dunedin by bus and arrived at Lakeland at 2:45 P.M. Securing a room at the place where I stopped last year, I called upon the agent and found that his trip had been postponed till Monday, so that I will have four days here when two would have been more than enough.

Thursday, February 13, 1919.—Taking with me a lunch, so that I could collect all day, I went out to Lake Parker and farther north along its shore than I was a year ago. It was a poor day for an outing, as the sky was overcast and the wind very strong.

Beneath chunks at the edge of the cypress covered margin of the lake I again found the slimy salamander frequent, six or eight being uncovered. Here also, sometimes in company with the salamander, I uncovered a long, very slender reddish-yellow myriapod, two of them being coiled around large masses of their yellow eggs. Beneath other chunks I found my only two Florida examples of a medium sized (15—18 mm.) black carabid, *Dicoelus elongatus* Dej. From other members of its genus it is known by all the elytral intervals being equal, convex or carinate, and by its elongate form. It ranges from Connecticut, west and south to Illinois and Texas and is frequent throughout Indiana, but very rare in Florida.

From a bunch of Spanish moss I beat a single specimen of *Pseudomus sedentarius* (Say), a robust little weevil heretofore known only from Ormond and Enterprise, Florida. I have since taken a single specimen at Gainesville by beating holly and another at Royal Palm Park from a decaying leaf of the royal palm.

Sitting on the porch of an empty house near the lake shore I enjoyed my lunch—as I always do—after several hours strenuous work. I afterwards entered the confines of a large nursery and was collecting from wild shrubs near its margin when the proprietor, with arms waving, came running toward me. For the first and only time in Florida, I was ordered off my collecting grounds. I told him who I was and what I was doing but it made no difference. He claimed that I would introduce some strange and injurious bug into his nursery, when I was only trying to rid his premises of some that were already there. He walked by my side, berating me and protesting against my trespassing, until we reached a gate and I was beyond his domain.

Friday, February 14, 1919.—Once again I went out for the day, this time to Lake Hollingsworth, two miles southwest of the city limits. As its shores are of muck, I could only beat, sweep and turn over chunks. From Spanish moss I beat a number of examples of the “broad-nosed grain weevil,” *Caulophilus latinasus* Say, a little reddish-brown species, one-eighth of an inch long and with a broad, cylindrical beak. It is a subtropical form, recorded in this country from South Carolina to Florida; the larvae feeding upon dried cereals, Indian corn and the seeds of alligator pears. From the moss I also beat a pretty little clerid, *Hydnocera verticalis* Say, not before recorded from the State but rather common in the north.

Saturday, February 15, 1919.—I again went out to Lake Parker, but was careful to keep out of the nursery grounds. The yellow jessamine, queen of Florida’s winter blooming vines, is now in full blossom, its pleasing fragrance wafted to me from afar by the strong wind—which

seemingly forever blows. My day's quest yielded me little but what I have before taken.

An old fisherman showed me a siren or "mud eel," *Siren lacertina* L., that he had caught last night on his trot line. It is apparently not often seen in Florida but is probably common enough in its chosen haunts. I searched for it for years in Indiana and finally got eight of them by following for a few rounds a man who was plowing up a recently drained marsh. He said that he had plowed up several hundred of them, none over 15 inches in length.

Sunday, February 16, 1919.—The morning is very cold and with a raw wind still blowing. I went out east along the railway but there was no good collecting ground for three miles and that was fenced in by a wire fence so tight and high that I could not enter. Beyond it a quarter of a mile there is a dense thicket where I worked a while and then passed through it to the edge of a vast grassy marsh. I did not care about entering the water, but remembering my experience of last year with the saw-grass near Moore Haven, I spread out my rubber blanket, cut off clumps of the tall cattail-like grass and pulled them apart over it. In this way I got four specimens of a small weevil new both to my collection and to science. This I afterward described as *Barilepton robusta*. It is a robust sub-cylindrical species a third of an inch long, black, densely clothed with fine gray hairs. I have since taken it from the same plant on the shores of Lake Butler, near Tarpon Springs, 50 miles northwest of Lakeland.

Living with this weevil between the basal leaves and stems of the grass were two other beetles unknown to me. One, of which only a single specimen was taken, was a small weevil, *Conotrachelus coronatus* Lec., heretofore known by only two specimens taken by Schwarz at Enterprise, Fla. I have since taken another, the fourth one known, at Gainesville, Fla. Of the other six examples were taken. It is a buprestid, *Taphrocerus puncticollis* Sz., the largest member of its genus, and was described from Enterprise and Ceda Keys. I have since collected it by sweeping in a saw-grass marsh at Royal Palm Park.

With these three prizes in my bottle I was content to call it a day and tramped back the four miles to my room. Here I packed and made ready for the long automobile trip to Homestead.

Monday, February 17, 1919.—There was a heavy frost this morning and the land agent's old car gave him trouble, so that we did not get started till 8:20. There were five of us in the car, the agent and driver, another man, a prospective customer of his, two ladies who went along for the trip, and myself. As in these days there are no closed cars I suffered much from the cold in the forenoons of the first two days. In order to get on a good road the agent went northeast to New Smyrna,

then 268 miles down the east coast, on what is now the Dixie highway, to Homestead. I will not dwell on the trip. There were several detours over sandy roads, much tire trouble, one blow-out occurring when we were six miles from any town. Another car came along and the agent paid its owner \$40.00 for a tire worth about ten. It took us three full days to reach Homestead, where we arrived at 7:30 P.M. on Wednesday night. There were no vacant rooms at the hotel. The landlord finally found us a bed in an attic room of a private house, where the agent and I tried to sleep. The bed sagged in the middle. He was a big man and filled the middle—but at last—”came the dawn.”

As there is no road from here to the Club House near Cape Sable, the agent left his car and we took the morning train on the East Coast railway for Long Key, 62 miles southwest, arriving there at 9 o'clock. Here we went on board a small launch belonging to the land company, which makes the trip from the Club House across the 30 miles of the Florida Bay once a week for mail and supplies. Due to engine trouble and rough water we did not reach the dock of the Club House till 3:45. This dock is a narrow two-boarded affair extending out a quarter of a mile before it reaches water deep enough for the boat.

The “Club House” is a large frame building raised on piling six feet above the ground. Belonging to it are half a dozen “cottages,” tents with board floors furnished with a fair bed, a wash stand, kerosene lamp and two chairs. Both bed and doorway are supplied with mosquito netting. The charge is \$2.50 per day for “cottage” and board, of which latter more anon.

After getting settled in my tent I went out for a short time to get the lay of the surrounding country and to do a little beating. Two small weevils proved to be my only catch of importance. Of these there were two specimens of a little shining black cossonid weevil with very short and broad beak. This I beat from dead limbs of buttonwood and afterward described as *Pentarthrinus brevirostris* sp. nov. The other, my first specimen of the very slender-bodied little barid, *Stenobaris avicennia* Linell., was taken from black mangrove. The types of Linell were from Punta Gorda. I have since taken it at Chokoloskee and it is known only from extreme southern Florida.

There are three Cape Sables, the Northwest, the Middle and the Eastern. The Club House is three miles east of the latter, while a stretch of six miles of a fine sand beach intervenes between the Eastern and Middle capes. The land forming these two is occupied to within 50 yards of the water's edge by coconut groves, which contain 50,000 or more bearing trees.

The country about the Club House differs much from other parts of

Florida, being for the most part a low, flat region devoid of pine, saw palmetto and sand, the three dominant features of the usual south Florida landscape. The soil, or rather the surface, is a grayish marl or comminuted limestone and, except along the brackish inlets and sloughs, supports only a prairie-like vegetation of weeds and grasses. The houses, few and widely scattered, are raised high above the ground to avoid the tides which, during hurricanes or violent storms, often cover the country for miles. There is no fresh water and rain water collected in large square surface concrete cisterns furnishes the supply for the settlers. Along the inlets and in the lower depressions are the so-called hammocks, composed of a dense growth of subtropical shrubs and trees among which Spanish bayonet, tall cacti and other thorn-bearing vegetation so abound that collecting has to be done mostly along the margins. A single phrase from my notebook, viz., "a few fair things and a million mosquitoes," was the average record of each day's collecting while here. In fact, late in the afternoon or on sultry days, a "million" would be a very low estimate of the mosquito population. Several times they drove me out of the hammocks onto the open prairie where there was a little air stirring but very poor collecting.

Friday, February 21, 1919.—The breakfast hour at the Club House is 7:30, so that I shall be late each day in getting started to work. This morning I walked west along the narrow sandy beach to the East Cape. This beach was piled high with winrows of sea-grass, shells and other sea debris, beneath which I took a few tenebroid and staphylinid beetles and earwigs. Reaching the tip of the cape proper I stood for a while on the southernmost point of the mainland of the United States. It is said to be nearly 50 miles farther south than any point in Texas. A channel of deep water runs in close to shore and along the beach were great winrows of shells, mainly "angel's-wings," *Pholus costatus* L. This mollusk, which burrows in colonies 10 inches to a foot deep in the sand and ooze of the sea bottom, is seldom found alive on the beach, but here were thousands of the detached valves, some of them 6 to 8 inches in length. They are white, bear on the outer side peculiar ridges and grooves, and in a way conform in outline and sculpture to the usual pictured representation of the expanded wings of angels, hence the common name. The animal is said to be a staple article of food in the markets of Havana and Key West.

The only structure on this cape is an old shed used for the storing of supplies for the people who once or twice each year gather the nuts. The trees are none of them over 40 feet high, but the coconuts, now almost ripe, are most of them too high to reach with any pole I could find, and I had no accommodating monkey or small boy to climb for them. I finally succeeded in bringing down two, and after some trouble got a hole

through their "eyes," so that for the first time I drank the juice or "milk" from a nut fresh from the tree. It was sweet and very agreeable to the palate of a thirsty man.

Near the center of this grove there is a grave with a concrete monument and inserted bronze plaque, the inscription reading:

"Guy M. Bradley

1870—1905.

Faithful unto Death.

As Game Warden of Monroe County, Florida, he gave his life for the cause to which he was pledged."

He was murdered while striving to protect the snowy egrets and other herons from the vandalism of the outlaws who were killing the nesting birds to satisfy the vanity of woman and the greed of man.

The collecting on the cape proper was poor. From the roots of some bunches of grass I sifted my first specimen of a small brick-red chrysomelid beetle, *Coptocycla repudiata* Suffr. It was described from Cuba and is known in this country only in Southern Florida as far north as Dunedin and Haw Creek. A single specimen of a curious little anthribid weevil, *Euxenus piceus* Lec., was found crawling along the beach. It usually occurs on dead leaves of cabbage palmetto.

The most interesting form taken was swept from low herbs just back of the sandy beach. It is a slender subcylindrical cerambycid, afterward described as *Heteracthes sablensis* sp. nov., a third of an inch long, dark chestnut brown, elytra with tips truncate, feebly spined, and with a large oval yellow spot at base and the apical fifth wholly yellow. The unique type is still the only specimen known.

For supper to-night we had a stew of wood ibis, "flint heads" or "iron-bills," as the natives call them. They are very fair, but I would have preferred stewed chicken. I had killed specimens of this ibis on my Kissimmee trip, but Hay and I did not consider them fit for food, though we ate their cousin, the white ibis.

Saturday, February 22, 1919.—There grows in abundance along the edges of low hammocks in this region a very thorny shrub or small tree, the saffron plum or buckthorn, *Bumelia angustifolia* Nutt. It belongs to the sapodilla family, reaches a height of 20 feet, has narrow, peach-like leathery evergreen leaves, numerous axillary clusters of small greenish-white flowers and an oblong, edible fruit, three-fourths of an inch in length. Like the Spanish bayonet it often grows in dense clumps along the margins of the hammocks, forming for them a veritable chevaux-de-frise, through which no man can pass. From its foliage and dead limbs I beat more insects while here than from all other plants together. Among the more interesting beetles taken only on this *Bumelia* were *Scymnillus*

elutheroe Csy., a very small black coccinelli, described from the Bahamas, and not before recorded from this country; *Toxonotus fascicularis* (Schon.), a prettily marked medium sized anthribid frequent on the dead branches; *Erodiscus tinamus* Lec., a peculiar, long-snouted shining black weevil known only from southern Florida; *Conotrachelus floridanus* Fall, frequent on the dead branches, also confined to this section of the State; *Lembodes solitarius* Boh., a small cryptorhynchid with a thick grayish spongy crust concealing the sculpture of the whole upper surface. It is usually considered rare, but 30 or more were beaten from the dead limbs of the *Bumelia*.

There was also beaten from this saffron plum a single specimen of that most handsome of Florida weevils, *Metamesius mosieri* Barber, a third of an inch long, black with front and hind margins of thorax and basal half of elytra bright red. The types were from Cayamas, Cuba and Paradise Key, Royal Palm Park. From the latter place I have since taken it in some numbers.

The forenoon was spent in beating this and other shrubs along the edges of isolated hammocks. The interior of these hammocks are so filled with thorny and spiny vines and shrubs that the collector can do little within them. He cannot use the sweep net and can open and use his umbrella only with much difficulty. One of the most common of these nuisances is a slender stemmed climbing or sprawling cactus, *Acanthocereus pentagonus* (L.). It often grows to a length of 25 feet, sending out numerous branches, each with three to five sharp angles, each angle armed with vicious spines an inch or more in length. Like other cacti it has no leaves and its large white flowers open only at night, so it is often called a "night-blooming cereus." Around this and often covering it and other shrubs with great tangled masses of its branches is the "pull and haul back" or "devil's claws," *Pisonia aculeata* L., a shrub or vine which often climbs to the tops of tall trees by aid of its strong hooked thorns. Simpson rightfully calls it the "vilest shrub in Florida." There are also numerous species of greenbrier or smilax and other vines, all ready to scratch or trip any one bold enough to try to work his way through these hammocks.

One of the more interesting beetles taken to-day in numbers is the most slender-bodied of our cerambycids, *Spalacopsis costulata* Csy. It is a third of an inch long with antennae as long or longer. The color is gray mottled with small black dots. When at rest it stretches the antennae straight out in front of body, then hugs its support as closely as possible, its hues so blending with that of the bark that it is almost invisible. Depending on this protective mimicry it usually remains motionless until picked up, though most of those taken were beaten into the umbrella.

I also swept in some numbers from low herbage just back of the shore of the bay the types of a little melyrid, *Attalus australis* Blatch. It is only one-sixteenth of an inch long, shining blue-black, femora black, tibiae and tarsi pale. It has not since been taken by me or recorded elsewhere.

Sunday, February 23, 1919.—This morning a Dr. King, who is in charge of the Club House, and I took the one mule-wagon, the only vehicle kept here, and drove across the prairie, eight miles eastward, to Flamingo, the solitary settlement on the coast between here and Homestead. A number of deserted houses were passed along the way which had been abandoned by settlers who had grown tired of the isolation, the ever present hordes of mosquitoes and occasional hurricanes. We also passed about five miles out a school house, a square unpainted building set high in piling. At Flamingo the principal building is the home of Uncle Stephen Roberts, a pioneer and original settler, who has been here 17 years. This house, a two-story gray unpainted shack, and the half dozen or more one-story ones of his sons and in-laws, comprise the settlement. I left Dr. King and went out to a near-by hammock bordering a grove of lime trees, where I collected until noon. We had brought our lunch with us, but on returning I found King and the family at dinner. They insisted that I join them, which I did in a kitchen which smelled to heaven of cockroach stink. The main items of the meal were wild duck stew, gingerbread and limeade.

After dinner I went out with a boarder who is burning charcoal in a buttonwood clearing a mile and a half away. There he had 390 bags, the result of his winter's work, piled up ready to be hauled out to a schooner and then taken to Key West. A cord of the buttonwood yields ten bags of the fuel.

A surveying party had recently cut a narrow trail through a large hammock north of his pits. I was thus able to penetrate the hammock and beat dead branches along the sides of the trail. By so doing I got a number of good beetles, among them the unique type and as yet the only known example of a new ptinid, *Ptinus tuberculatus*, an eighth of an inch long, head and thorax reddish-brown, elytra darker; thorax bearing four large conical tubercles, each with a tuft of short erect yellowish hairs. This peculiar thorax reminds me of the spiked collar often worn by aristocratic Boston bull terriers. Another good catch was one of the two type specimens of *Acalles sablensis* Blatch., a small robust cryptorhynchid weevil, reddish-brown with patches of white scales on thorax and elytra. The other cotype was taken a few days later from a dead branch of the saffron plum. A third specimen has since been found at Chokoloskee, the three representing the species to date.

Mr. Roberts raises a number of turkeys, but many of them are killed each year by wild cats which are numerous in this region. The whole country is unfenced and his horses and cows are kept in corrals at night, and his hogs on two small islands three miles off shore, where they live partly on fiddler crabs, which are nearly as common as the mosquitoes. We took home in the wagon several bushels of limes and also two men who had left the Club House yesterday to hunt on Whitewater Bay, but had found the water too shallow to use a boat. The poor mule had a big load to pull and we did not reach home till 8:30.

Monday, February 24, 1919.—I went out northwest for three miles along a prairie road which some negroes from Key West were using to haul charcoal from their pits to a landing east of the Club House. The collecting, except from the *Bumelia*, was poor, there being few insects on the herbage in the prairie. One of the many strange thorny plants along the margins of the hammocks is the gray nicker bean, *Guilandina crista* (L.), a sprawling shrub, with bipinnate leaves, one to two feet long, their petioles and the stems armed with stout hooked prickles; flowers in racemes, dull yellow, one half inch across; pods oval, two or three inches long, thickly covered with straight needle-like prickles. All these thorns and prickles catch and tear, and they and others of their kind leave the collector at the end of a day with his clothing in shreds and his nets torn in many places.

My main catch to-day was the two type examples of *Bagous pictus* Blatch., a small, prettily marked erirhinid weevil, swept from herbage along the edge of the beach. It has not since been recorded elsewhere. My first specimen of the scarce black tenebrionid, *Blapstinus alutaceus* Csy., were beaten from dead branches of the saffron plum. My other two specimens were taken at Key West by sifting dead leaves.

A morning glory, *Ipomoea cathartica* Poir, grows everywhere along the margins of the hammocks and the beach, its vines often trailing over and hiding low shrubs beneath its tangle of leaves and stems. Its pinkish-purple flowers are very pretty in the sparkling dew of the morning, but like those of the moonflower, close forever by noon.

The meat supply has run low, the main dish for supper to-night being stewed coot or mud hen, which the foragers had brought in. It tastes very good to a hungry man, but I would not wish it for a steady diet.

Tuesday, February 25, 1919.—This morning I took a lunch and walked along the shore to the East Cape, where I drank some fresh coconut milk and collected for a while; then went up along the bay about three miles to the house of Judge H. C. Low, the caretaker of the coconut groves on the capes. He is an intelligent man who has lived in this region for 27 years, part of the time at Flamingo. He came here from Ohio on account of

rheumatism, of which he has been wholly cured. His house is a one-room shack braced fore and aft with long poles to withstand the hurricanes. Coconut trees surround it, but on one side is a little garden where he raises tomatoes, sweet potatoes, guavas and figs. A good ripe tomato fresh from this garden was the best thing I have tasted since I left home.

After talking a while we went up to the Middle Cape, one of the most beautiful spots I have seen in Florida. A bare triangular beach of shell and sand extends out 500 feet into deep water, a channel, 5 to 15 feet in depth, running in close to its shore. Sharks are very plentiful in this deep water. At the very point of the cape we saw one which Low said was 15 feet long. On the way up I had seen a score or more of them; also numerous porpoises which at short intervals jumped straight up wholly out of the water, instead of swimming in an undulating way as they do in the bay at Dunedin. Back of this beach which, between the two capes, averages 100 yards or more in width, is the living green wall of coconut trees. Back of them is a sombre hammock and then a dreary mangrove swamp, reaching north to Whitewater Bay. Low says there are 60,000 coconut trees in the two groves. Some of the trees bear 100 or more nuts each year. The owners get \$70 a thousand for them in Miami and Key West, but have trouble in getting help to gather them.

At 3 P.M. I started back for the 9-mile tramp to the Club House, taking with me in memory's cells a picture of this Middle Cape which will last while life remains.

My prize capture during the day was the type of a new weevil, *Pseudoacalles maculatus* Blatch., which I swept from herbage on the East Cape. It is a sixth of an inch long, piceous black, prettily marked with spots of pale scales on the upper surface. I have since taken two of them at Royal Palm Park. But one other species of the genus, *P. nuchalis* (Lec.), occurring in South Carolina and Florida, is known.

Wednesday, February 26, 1919.—The cook at the Club House has a garden two miles east in the grounds surrounding an abandoned house. Dr. King took the mule and wagon and drove up there for turnips and beets, the only things left growing after the heavy frost of a month ago. I rode up with him and walked back, collecting on the way. The tracks of coons and wild cats were very plentiful along the roadway, and also in places those of a much larger cat, probably the Florida panther.

One of the vilest trailing or sprawling herbs on these prairie flats is the "poor man's plaster," or "stickleaf," *Mentzelia floridana* Nutt. It grows to a length of 6 feet, has very brittle stems, alternate ovate lobed leaves and bright yellow flowers nearly an inch in width. The whole plant, including the seed pods, is densely clothed with minute barbed stinging hairs. If one touches it or walks near it all parts of it break away

and cling tenaciously to clothing and shoes; in fact so tightly that they cannot be scraped off, but remain until they wear away. The plant occurs frequently in open places in South Florida and also in the Bahamas.

In one place I came near stepping on a ground or pygmy rattlesnake which had the body prettily marked with red spots. I have seen none of the big diamond rattlesnakes which Simpson says are very common in this region. In fact up to this time in all my tramping about Florida I have never happened upon one of them alive.

My noteworthy insect captures were few along the prairie road. From the roots of tufts of grass I sifted 20 or more examples of the little *Coptocycla*, one of which I took at the East Cape last Tuesday, and in the midst of the only hammock I entered I beat a number of examples of the prettily marked little barid weevil, *Catapastus albonotatus* Linell, the only ones I have ever taken. It was described from Key West and Lake Worth and is not known outside this State.

In the afternoon I worked for a time along the beach, turning over drift and beating the foliage of buttonwood and saffron plum. From beneath the former I took a second specimen of my *Cryptorhynchus schwarzi*, previously mentioned, and from the buttonwood secured two examples of a scarce weevil, *Conotrachelus belfragi* Lec., known only from Texas and Florida. I had taken a single specimen at Eustis, the first one previously known from this State.

On my last beating of the *Bumelia* I was delighted to find in the umbrella a fine female of the giant katydid, *Stilpnochlora coulouiana* (Sauss.). It is the largest tettigonid occurring in the eastern United States, the females reaching to a length to tips of wings of three and a quarter inches, the males but little smaller. I had one from Eustis, and though recorded by others from a number of stations in the State, I have since taken it only at Chokoloskee. Its range includes Cuba, the Isle of Pines and Florida.

Our suppers at the Club House are supposed to be the principal meal of the day. They have had no fresh meat except wild water fowl. To-night they served us stewed die-dapper or hell-diver. As I am always willing to try any dish *once*, I went to it. It was tender and very good—better than the coots we had a few nights ago. There are plenty of large cooter turtles about the ditches of the prairie, but the cook evidently passed them up as being too hard to catch and dress. I am always willing to try a turtle twice or even oftener if properly cooked.

Thursday, February 27, 1919.—This morning I bade farewell to the Club House at Cape Sable, as the boat is going out on its weekly trip. It is the only place in all my ramblings where I paid \$2.50 a day for a tent and stews of iron-heads, coots and hell-divers. It is located in a wild and

lonely region which every few years is swept by hurricanes and subject always to the barrage of a million mosquitoes. Its only redeeming feature is that it is still almost as the God of Nature made it— when he had much else on hands and so was in a hurry.

When the boat had gotten four miles away from the dock the captain discovered that they had forgotten the mail and so had to return for it. About half way across the bay we saw a black-headed or laughing gull, *Chroicocephalus atricillus* (L.), standing erect on a small plank and merrily riding the waves. We also passed close by Sandy Key, a spit about half a mile long and half as wide, which the government has reserved as the site for a future light house.

The boat reached Long Key at 12:20. It is a fishing resort for the high and mighty, patronized by millionaires and presidents. I paid \$1.00 for only a fair dinner at the hotel, but it was so much better than I had been getting that I was satisfied. There were the wrecks of two aeroplanes in the shallow water which were not there last Thursday. Another one had recently made a forced landing on the prairie about a mile from the Club House at Cape Sable and had been stripped of everything but the engine by the natives. These planes were all from the big airport at Key West and were owned by the government. The loss of several thousand dollars each was but a drop in the bucket of the several billions spent in aviation equipments by a frenzied nation in time of war. The public, or you and I, eventually pay the bills, but the "public be damned" as far as the ones who control the expenditures care.

As the train for Key West was not due until 4:45 I went out along the sandy beach in search of what I might find. The only thing worthy of note was about 30 specimens of the big chrysomelid tortoise beetle, *Chelymorpha geniculata* Boh., which was mating on and beneath its host plant, the goat's-foot morning glory. It was after dark when my train reached Key West, but I was fortunate enough to get a good room in a private house for \$1.00 a day.

Friday, February 28, 1919.—After breakfast I bought a box lunch at a restaurant and took a street car out to the end of its run, which was on a county road, several miles from my room. The island of Key West has been visited by many entomologists and its insect fauna is well known. The conditions for collecting are, however, poor and growing worse. This is due to the lack of vegetation and fresh water. Only a few stunted shrubs and trees remain on the island, and all the herbage near the city is closely grazed by the cows and goats of its poorer classes.

On the flowers and foliage of a large purple morning glory I took in numbers that very handsome greenish-blue weevil, *Pachnoeus litus* (Germar). It is known only from Florida, where it is said to be injurious to the

foliage of the orange, and to that of limes on the southern keys. With it were numerous specimens of *Artipus floridanus* Horn, the most common weevil found at Key West. By sifting dead leaves near the cemetery I found the small carabid, *Selenophorus fatuus* Lec. in some numbers, and with them my main catch of the day, nine specimens of a dytiscid, *Copelatus debilis* Sharp, a Central American species not before known from this country. I was much surprised to find this water beetle on dry land and in a place where there was no fresh water. It may, however, be a sumatritime species breeding in brackish or salt water pools, some of which were within 200 yards. From all other species of *Copelatus* it is easily known by having only five striae on each elytron.

Saturday, March 1, 1919.—I worked this morning along the west shore, near where I was on yesterday. From the foliage of the seaside grape, I beat 18 specimens of the very robust weevil, *Pseudomus inflatus* Lec., and by sweeping in the low scant herbage along the margin of tidal lagoons I took eight examples of a little dull red weevil bearing numerous patches of large gray scales on its upper surface and with the lower one densely clothed with smaller scales. It is *Smicronyx halophilus* Blatch. and is not recorded except from this, its type station.

In the afternoon I went down to the docks and watched a big fleet of sponge boats come in from a two weeks' cruise. Their decks were covered with great piles of large sponges, 6 to 10 on a strand. They do not dive for them as do the Greeks at Tarpon Springs, but gather them with hooks in clear water 7 to 12 feet in depth.

I am always interested in these maritime vocations of man and in the men themselves who get by strenuous toil, direct from Nature's great store-house, the sea, many things which it so freely offers. Far and wide the water stretches, deep and shallow it varies, yet everywhere it yields its gifts to those who seek them by honest toil. Fish, shells, lobsters, crabs, sponges, turtles and a host of other things old ocean freely gives. Rough and rugged, yet kind of heart and generous of soul, the men who make their living in this, their own wild free way, asking no odds, fawning not at the heels of so-called "higher ups," seeking only; some days full of luck, others barren of catch—hope ever in their souls, the element of chance, the daily gamble ever lending zest and pleasure to their lives.

For supper to-night I tried "green turtle steak." It might have been horse meat for all I know. At any rate it had a fine flavor, but was rather tough.

Sunday, March 2, 1919.—Last evening when I turned on the light there were two large cockroaches on the walls in my room. I succeeded in catching one of them and found it to be the large brown roach, *Periplaneta brunnea* Burm., a house-dwelling circumtropical species,

nearly an inch and a half in length and exuding a very vile odor. It is a adventive from Cuba which in this State occurs mainly in the southern counties.

My morning's trip to-day was out southwest of the city to near the old fort. Here beneath shreds of bark of a gumbo-limbo I took two pairs of the "muskmare," or large striped walking-stick, *Anisomorpha buprestoides* (Stoll). It occurs frequently throughout Florida, at this season usually mating, the female stretched out on stems of weeds and bearing her diminutive mate, less than one-half her size, on her back. When disturbed or picked up she exudes from glands beneath the pro-thorax a white milky fluid which has a peculiar, though somewhat pleasing odor, recalling that of the common "everlasting" of the north. This excretion is doubtless used as a defense against certain enemies to which its taste or odor is repugnant.

From low herbage near the old fort I swept a single and my only specimen of the little coccinellid, *Psyllobora nana* Muls., a Cuban and Jamaican species known in this country only from the Florida keys. With them were a half dozen specimens of my *Paragoges minutus*, a little spotted brown weevil heretofore known only from the unique type taken at Fort Myers in 1911. I always rejoice when I find additional examples, especially at a new station, of any species founded on a single specimen or even a single pair, as such a find puts the species firmly "on the map," and removes any doubt that the type may have been a freak or hybrid.

The afternoon was spent in resting and reading, and for supper I had a meal which tickled not only my gullet but my stomach. It consisted of green turtle soup, broiled sea crawfish, hashed browned potatoes and ice cream, a feast fit for the gods, all for only 80 cents.

Monday, March 3, 1919.—I went out for the forenoon by trolley to its terminal, and worked back close along the tidal pools in the limestone rock, taking on the way two species of *Scymnus* new to my collection, viz., *S. dichrous* Muls. and *S. bivulnerus* Horn, the former a West Indian species not before recorded from this country, the latter described in part from Key West. In the roadway I found lying on its back, alive and kicking, my only specimen of a large oval, gray scaly tenebriod, *Branchus floridanus* Lec. It was described from "Florida" and Schwarz lists it as "On Atlantic seashore, very rare."

Additional specimens of *Copelatus debilis* Sharp and *Smicronyx halophilus* Blatch. were taken by sifting and a few of the little weevils, *Anthonomus varipes* Duval by sweeping.

My collecting at Key West forever finished I went back to my room and packed my belongings ready for the steamer "Miami," plying between Havana and Tampa, due to leave to-night at 8 o'clock.

As my trip to the Okeechobee region last year was productive mainly of water beetles, this one, when I came to sort, mount and label my specimens, abounded in Rhynchophora or weevils. More than 40 species of these were taken in my week's stay at Cape Sable and half as many at Key West. At the former place most of them were hibernating in Spanish moss, bunches of dead leaves or in dead wood, but a number were active on the foliage of the saffron plum. Many of these were new to my collection, six of them (as well as four of other groups) new to science, and a number of others furnished the first records for the United States.

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