

Newspapers and Politics

With the exception of 1841-2, Jacksonville had a weekly newspaper during nearly all of this period, and after 1848, there were two here. In the winter of 1842-3, George M. Grouard, of Washington, D. C., established the Tropical Plant; he published the paper until 1845. I. D. Hart, who was running for (probably a State) office at the time, started what he called the "Florida Whig and People's Advocate" in the interest of his candidacy—he was a Whig. This paper became defunct in about 30 days. In the fall of 1845, the News was moved from St. Augustine to Jacksonville and published by A. C. Gillett and A. B. Hazzard; it was Democratic in politics. In 1848, the Florida Republican was established with Columbus Drew as editor. At this time national politics and policies were undergoing an upheaval and the two local papers were frequently engaged in a spicy newspaper war in the interest of their respective parties. They did not print much local news and often used a considerable amount of "clipped" matter; yet it is remarkable that Jacksonville with a population less than a thousand should offer inducements for the support of two good newspapers.

First Epidemic

In 1849, an epidemic of what was called "Broken-bone Fever" started in Jacksonville. It was so general that in many families all members of the household were sick at the same time. Fortunately the epidemic was of short duration and no deaths occurred as a result of the visitation. This was probably a mild form of what is now called dengue.

Jacksonville passed through this period 1840-1850 without any serious set-backs to its growth and advanced its position from a village to that of a small town. In the latter half of the decade the timber business began to come forward as a large industry, which developed into a relatively enormous lumber business in the 1850's.^f

Bibliography, Chapter VIII

^aColumbus Drew; ^bNewspapers of the period; ^cFlorida Union, March, 1881; ^dIndicated in early accounts; ^eH. S. Farrar; ^f"Recollections."