

to build a railroad from Macon to the Florida line. Nothing was done immediately under this charter, but when a rival company was organized which secured a Florida franchise, the two enterprises were merged and construction was begun in 1887. The route was from Macon to Palatka, and the line was completed and opened March 1, 1890.<sup>b</sup> Before this, however, the line had been completed between Macon and Lake City and a schedule opened to Jacksonville, the first train arriving here December 1, 1889.<sup>c</sup> From Lake City to Jacksonville the Georgia Southern & Florida operated over the tracks of the Florida Central & Peninsular Railroad. It was called the "Suwanee River Line to Florida".

The Georgia Southern & Florida Railroad was built by the Macon Construction Company. After completing the line to Palatka this company embarked on other ambitious enterprises and met financial reverses, carrying the Georgia Southern & Florida down with it. The company went into the hands of a receiver on March 10, 1891, and was reorganized May 22, 1895, as the Georgia Southern & Florida Railway Company. The trains of this road continued to come into Jacksonville over leased trackage until November 1, 1902, when as a result of the purchase by the Southern Railway of the property of the Atlantic, Valdosta & Western Railway the Georgia Southern & Florida, now a part of the Southern Railway system, was enabled to operate through trains from Macon to Jacksonville over its own tracks.<sup>b</sup>

#### **Atlantic, Valdosta & Western Railway.**

In 1896-7, G. S. Baxter & Company acquired by purchase approximately 150,000 acres of timber lands in Clinch and Echols counties, southern Georgia. In order to develop these lands, it was necessary to build fifty miles of tram-road, which Baxter & Company proceeded to do, starting at a point on what was then the Plant System ten miles south of Dupont. Here a station was erected and given the name Haylow. Ten miles of tram-road were built from this point to the operations of the company in naval stores, cross-ties and lumber, but when the first shipment was offered to the Plant System at Haylow, that company demanded higher rates for hauling to different ports—Jacksonville, Fernandina, Brunswick and Savannah—than Baxter & Company could afford to pay. Failure to secure more favorable rates resulted in