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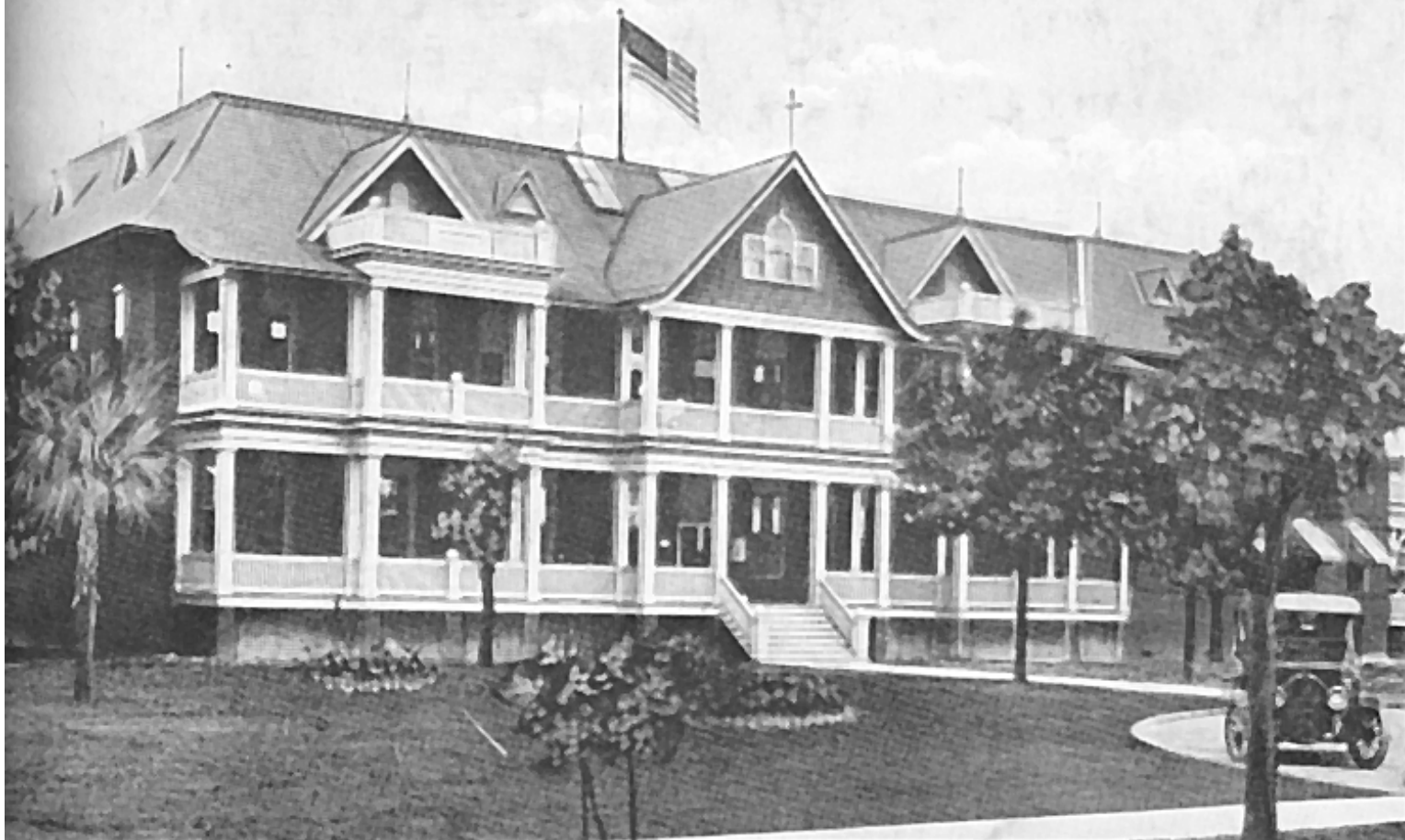
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THE SUNLAND TRIBUNE

Journal of the Tampa Historical Society

Keller Memorial Hospital, Tampa, Fla.



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by Hampton Dunn

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DR. HOWELL TYSON LYKES, FOUNDER OF AN EMPIRE

By James M. Ingram, M.D.



Robert E. Smith

**THE
SUNLAND
TRIBUNE**

Volume IV Number 1
November, 1978

Journal of the

**TAMPA
HISTORICAL SOCIETY**
Tampa, Florida

HAMPTON DUNN
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245 Hyde Park Ave.
Mailing Address: P. O. Box 18672
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On Our Cover

Old post card depicts Gordon Keller Memorial Hospital, a "permanent monument" to the memory of City Treasurer and merchant Gordon Keller.

-Photo from HAMPTON DUNN COLLECTION

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GORDON WHO? GORDON KELLER

By Hampton Dunn

The community wept. Indeed, the entire state of Florida cried that day in 1909 that Gordon Keller died.

He was truly "a beloved citizen."

Many years later, in 1953, the late D. B. McKay-historian, publisher, politician-wrote on his "Pioneer Florida" page of the Tampa Sunday Tribune that "One of the most magnetic personalities of my entire acquaintance was Gordon Keller." Certainly, McKay, three times Mayor of Tampa and long-time owner of The Tampa Daily Times, knew a multitude of people.

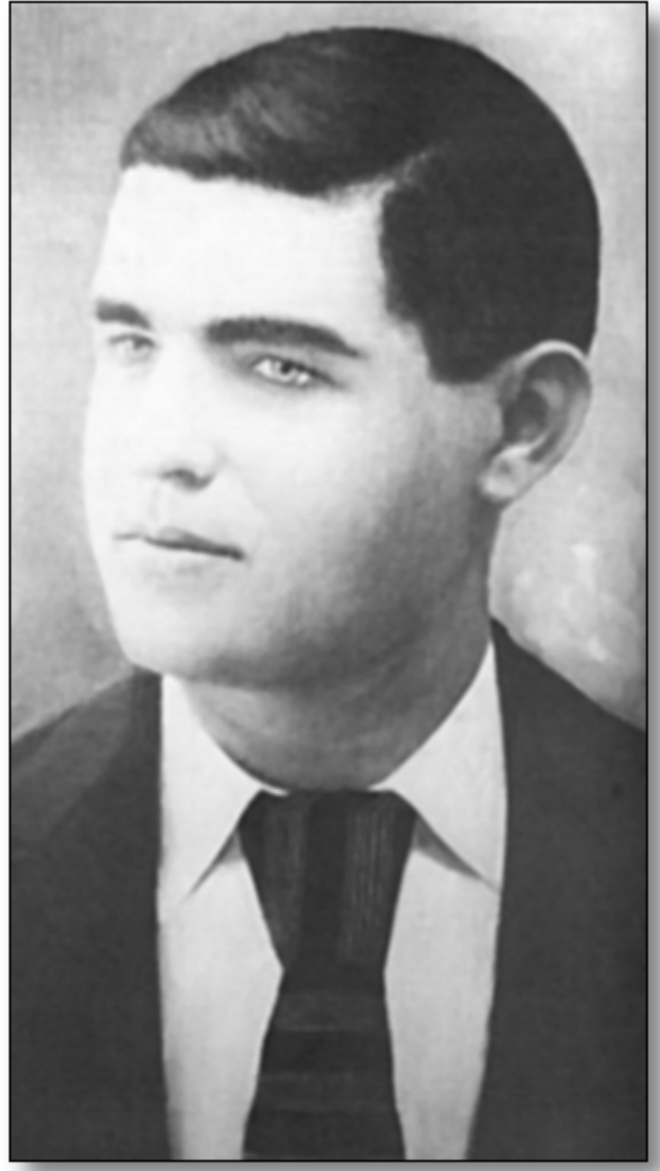
McKay further eulogized Keller: "I am confident that everyone who knew him will agree-it is doubtful if he ever had an enemy. Not that he was a negative character-he was a virile, impulsive, manly man, with an over-supply of the milk of human kindness."

Spontaneous with the spreading of the news of Keller's death on July 10, 1909, a grief-stricken city instantly decided to build "'a permanent monument" to honor "the blessed memory" of the City Treasurer, merchant and civic leader. F. Badger Wilder started a fund with a \$100 contribution. The Tribune "cheerfully adds \$100 to Mr. Wilder's \$100," the newspaper reported in the same issue that carried the story of Keller's death.

ENDURING MEMORIAL

"Let an enduring memorial bear testimony to future generations of the esteem in which Gordon Keller was held by the people

among whom he lived and moved," The Tribune editorialized on its front page.



GORDON KELLER

- Photo from HAMPTON DUNN COLLECTION

The fund flourished and the monument was appropriate and impressive: A hospital called the Gordon Keller Memorial Hospital. It was completed on June 1, 1910, less than a year after Keller's untimely death (he was only 44). The new two-story, 32-bed facility went up on North Boulevard on the site

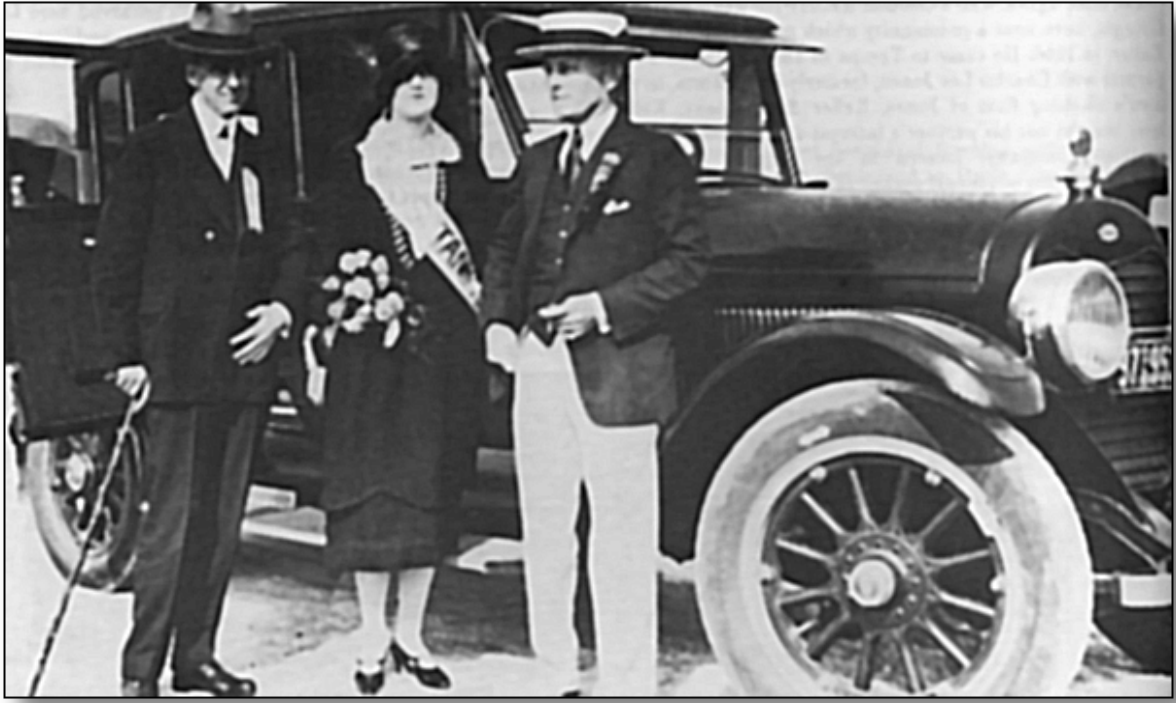
which later became part of the sprawling Florida State Fair complex. It cost \$25,000. The same year, the Gordon Keller School of Nursing was established and the first class was graduated in 1913.



MEMORIAL TO GORDON KELLER

Originally, on the archway over the entrance to the new Tampa Municipal Hospital on Davis Islands, there was the legend, "Memorial to Gordon Keller, " since the City institution originally was known as the Gordon Keller Memorial Hospital. The legend is still somewhere in the present building, but concealed by reconstruction. This is a photo of the 1944 graduating class of the Gordon Keller School of Nursing.

-Photo from HAMPTON DUNN COLLECTION



GORDON KELLER'S DAUGHTER

Sara Lykes Keller Hobbs is the daughter of Gordon Keller. In 1924 she was "Miss Tampa" and participated in ribbon-cutting festivities for the opening of Gandy Bridge. She's shown with D. P. Davis, (right) who was developing Davis Islands at the time. Still living in Tampa, she is the widow of prominent attorney W. Frank Hobbs.

-Photo from HAMPTON DUNN COLLECTION

A THING OF THE PAST

The Keller Memorial Hospital served the community well for a decade and half. Then, in the mid-1920's, D. P. Davis created the exclusive Davis Islands residential area and anchored it with a new, modern hospital, which the City proceeded to name the Tampa Municipal Hospital. And the old Gordon Keller Hospital was a thing of the past. Over the archway of the new boom-time facility was the legend:

**TAMPA
MUNICIPAL HOSPITAL
MEMORIAL TO GORDON KELLER**

The archway is still on the building, but mostly concealed due to additions and alterations of the massive structure. In 1956 the name of the hospital once again was changed to reflect its role-to Tampa General Hospital.

The Gordon Keller School of Nursing moved with the Hospital from North Boulevard to Davis Islands, kept its identity and continued to educate and graduate nurses until 1972. At that time, the old faithful diploma school was phased into a program at Hillsborough Community College-and the school lost its identity of more than six decades.

NOT 'PERMANENT'

So, today, after the passing of nearly 70 years since the passing of Gordon Keller, there is no "permanent monument" such as was envisioned by his fellow citizens back there in 1909. It's a shame, too, for greatness should be enduring.

But once again, who's Gordon Keller? He was a native of Georgia, born near a community which now bears the name

Keller, in 1866. He came to Tampa in 1883 and soon was a partner with Charles Lee Jones, formerly of Valdosta, in the men's clothing firm of Jones, Keller & Company. Keller later bought out his partner's interest and the store, Keller Clothing Company, located in the Hendry & Knight Building on the southeast corner of Franklin and Lafayette (now Kennedy Blvd.) Streets, became a gathering place for the men of that time. The building was demolished recently to make way for the new City Hall annex.



GORDON KELLER SCHOOL OF NURSING

For six decades, the three-year diploma school of nursing affiliated with the City hospital was known as the Gordon Keller School of Nursing. This is the last building occupied by the school before it was closed in 1972 and the program phased into the Hillsborough Community College. The building is now used by HCC as an administrative building.

-Photo from HAMPTON DUNN COLLECTION

McKay recollected that the men folks gathered here for the discussion of civic and political questions-and "almost daily fights, so that it was facetiously given the name of 'San Juan Hill.'"

McKay went on: "One afternoon I saw two irate brothers chase a political opponent from the Henry Giddens store, on the opposite corner, entirely through the Keller store, then across the street to the courthouse, where he found refuge in the Sheriff's office. And that, by the way, was an outburst of Republican, not Democrat, politics."

MARRIED FLORIDIAN

Keller was married in 1897 to Mary Elizabeth Knight, daughter of pioneers of Charlotte County, Florida.

Keller particularly loved young people and animals. At his home on Eagle Street, then one of the few houses on the west side of the Hillsborough River, he kept a deer park on two large back lots, and children and grownups, too, used to flock there. He also kept a large collection of hound dogs, for fox-hunting on horseback was one of the popular sports of that time and Keller was an ardent enthusiast.

NO CAUSE TOO SMALL

A biographer has noted that "No cause was too small nor too great for him to champion and he was a friend of everyone."

Many young boys of the 1890s and early 1900s remember their visits to Keller's store and the buying of their first long pants. If the fathers' circumstances were such that they could not pay, it was all the same to the proprietor, for "he was too generous for his

own good and his hand always was in his pocket for a 'hard luck' story."

Two daughters were born to the Kellers-Susie, now Mrs. J. E. Harris, and Sara Lykes-named for Keller's close friend, Dr. Howell Tyson Lykes-now Mrs. W. Frank Hobbs.

Keller served as City Treasurer of the City of Tampa for the 15 years prior to his death. He was succeeded by two of his brothers, Robert and Thomas.

LARGEST CORTEGE

News of the deaths of prominent residents rated conspicuous coverage in the Tribune in the early days. Keller's death was the top news story of the day and the headlines read, "GORDON KELLER, LOVABLE AND LEADING CITIZEN IS DEAD." But that wasn't all; there were long headlines in several "decks." They noted that "City Shocked by Announcement of End of Man Who Has Befriended Thousands in This City;" "Cortege Will be Largest Ever Seen In Tampa," and "City Flags at Half Mast and Thousands Lower Their Heads in Sorrow at Death's Visit."

Editorial writers poured out their sorrow and sentiment in mourning Keller's death. Excerpts from one of the local papers:

"Gordon Keller is dead. No four words that could have been uttered in this community would have seemed so unbelievably harsh and cruel, or occasioned such a shock of amazed sorrow to thousands of hearts all over the state, and far beyond its borders. To every soul who knew him, and few men had wider acquaintance, has come a sense of personal loss-as if death had stalked into his own family and seized a loved kinsman..."

LOVED FELLOW MAN

"Write him down, O, angel, as 'one who loved his fellow man.'

"Not only did he bear out the scriptural injunction: 'Love thy neighbor as thyself,' but, in the simplicity of his grand nature, exceeded the command, for all others came first in his consideration- himself last.

"Many men has he saved from financial ruin by his timely aid and counsel...

"Many men owe their start in life to the help and backing he gave them-and gave as if it was a favor that they offered him the opportunity.

"Hundreds of colored men and women will bewail the death of one who never turned a deaf ear to their troubles, and it is a saying among them that 'it must be a poor specimen of a "nigger" that Gordon Keller would not trust. . ."

THE PRESS MOURNS

All across the peninsula of Florida, the Tampan's death was mourned by editorial writers.

The *Plant City Courier* observed, ". . . Gordon Keller passed away without ever knowing just how much he was appreciated and beloved by those with whom his life had come in contact. . ."

The *Kissimmee Gazette* wrote that Keller "was a prince among men."

The *Wauchula Advocate* agreed that "a public hospital open to all suffering humanity" would be a fitting memorial to Keller.

The *Bartow Courier Informant* editorialized: "The death of Gordon Keller has brought forth a deep and general expression of sorrow which is rare in the rush and hurry of our modern business life. Everybody who knew Gordon Keller loved him. . ."

And, the *Clearwater Press* noted, "In the death of Gordon Keller, Tampa loses a citizen for whom such universal sorrow was never before felt in that city. . ."

What an impact this unusual man, who died in the prime of life, had on his hometown and his home state!

TAMPA HEIGHTS: TAMPA'S FIRST RESIDENTIAL SUBURB

By **MARSTON C. LEONARD**
Ybor City Campus
Hillsborough Community College



PALM AVENUE IN 1920

- Burgert Bros. Photo, Tampa Public Library

Tampa Heights was Tampa's first prominent residential suburb. From the 1890s to its zenith in the 1920s, the Heights was the favorite location for a home for a majority of the city's outstanding business and professional leaders.

When the 1900 *Tampa Tribune* Midwinter Edition featured a pictorial showcase of Tampa's finest homes, fully 70 per cent of them were Tampa Heights residences, eight of them on Seventh Avenue East.

Thomas Puch Kennedy, Jr., son of one of Tampa's earliest pioneers, is credited with the



WILLIAM B. HENDERSON HOME, 7th AVENUE, 1902

-University of Tampa Special Collections

district's name. In the early 1880s Kennedy moved from his home on the southwest corner of Franklin and Madison to the highlands one mile north of downtown and called the area, "the Heights." Earlier homesteaders like Joseph Robles and Northern orange growers along Nebraska Avenue quickly adopted the name.

There were many reasons for the Heights' rise to preeminence besides the natural expansion of Tampa after the 1885 boom. The yellow fever epidemic of 1887 convinced many residents that these uplands were a healthier place to raise a family. The emergence of Ybor City, the development of the Tampa Street Railway Company trolley to Sixth and Central Avenues in 1886, and the construction of the Fortune Street bridge to West Tampa in 1892 made Tampa Heights a convenient, but

still rural locality for the successful entrepreneur.

Individual Contractors

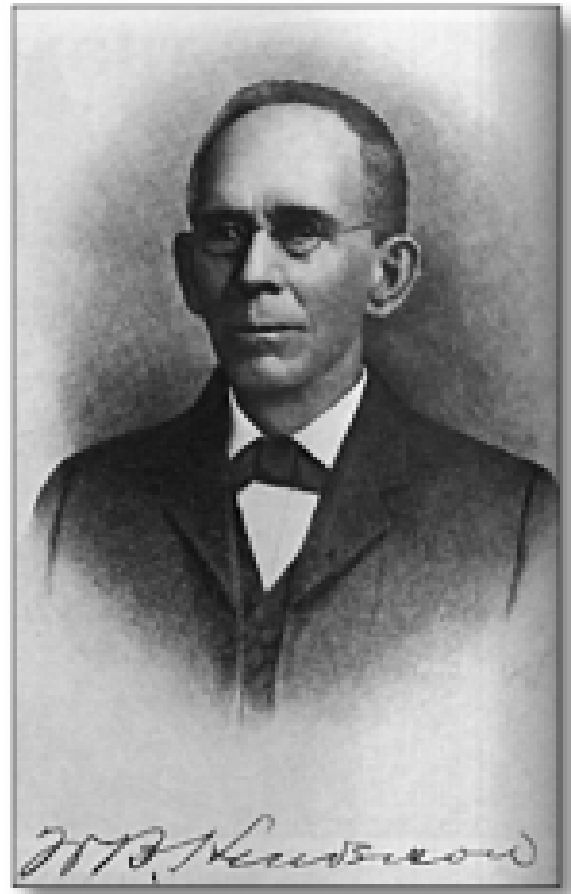
By the 1920s, a resident of East Oak Avenue could step from the sidewalk in front of his house onto a trolley heading south into downtown Tampa, or east into Ybor City, or west to West Tampa, or north along the Osborne Street line or the Sulphur Springs line.

Unlike many of Tampa's identifiable sections, Tampa Heights was an area of many small subdivisions, established by original homesteaders or developers. Most of the early homes were constructed by individual contractors and while the area had its share of land speculators, the Heights was designed for

Tampans with little newspaper promotion and attractions for Northern winter visitors.

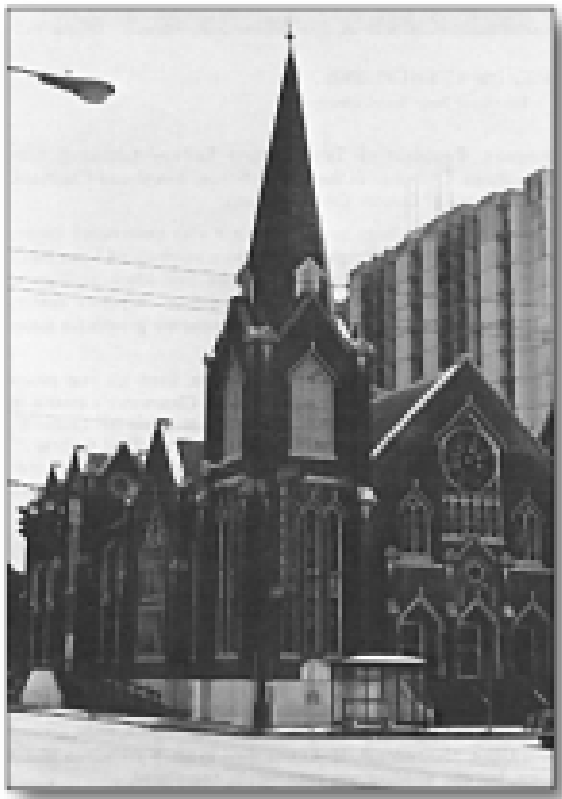
Perhaps the four block Tampa Heights subdivision, created in September of 1889, by William Benton Henderson, best reflected the growing prestige of Tampa Heights in the last decade of the nineteenth century.

The eldest child of a large Georgia farm family, Henderson made his own way in life at the age of twelve. He came with his father to Fort Brooke in 1846 and started one of the first stores on the Alafia River. He married Caroline Spencer, daughter of Palma Ceia homesteader William Samuel Spencer. It was during the Civil War that Henderson gained his Colonel status, serving first in Captain (judge) James Gettis' Company D of the 7th Florida Regiment and later commanding John T. Lesley's Company after Lesley was wounded.



WILLIAM B. HENDERSON
Creator of Tampa Heights Subdivision

-Photo from HAMPTON DUNN
COLLECTION

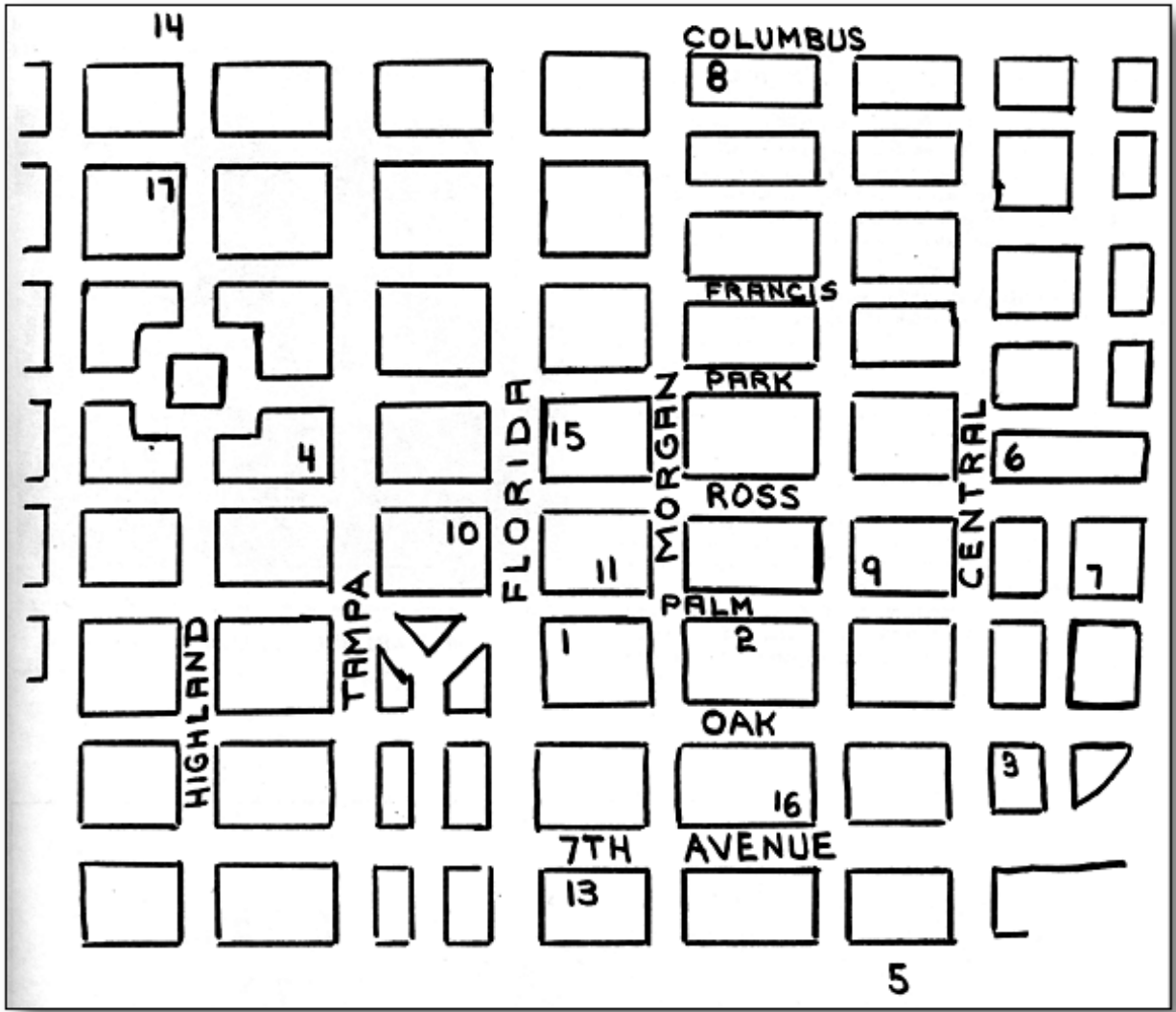


PALM AVENUE BAPTIST CHURCH

... Palm Avenue and Florida Avenue

Consolidated Newspapers

After the war, he joined Captain John Miller in a steamboat and mercantile business that dominated Tampa's commercial contact with the outside world. Henderson was a diversified and dynamic promoter: he introduced Durham bulls into the Florida cattle industry; he built Tampa's first telegraph line; he started the banana trade with Central America; and consolidated two local papers into the Tampa Times.



SELECTED SITES OF TAMPA HEIGHTS:

(1) Palm Avenue Baptist; (2) Rodeph Sholom Synagogue; (3) Schaarai Zedek; (4) Henry W. Brewster Vocation School; (5) W. B. Henderson School; (6) Tampa Hts. Methodist/Tyler Temple Methodist; (7) Tampa Hts. Presbyterian Faith Temple; (8) Robert E. Lee School; (9) Massari Arguelles House, 400 E. Palm; (10) Tampa Fire Station No. 5; (11) Stovall House, 212 Palm; (12) Tampa Free Library; (13) St. Joseph's Hospital; (14) Don's Service Station; (15) First Congregational Polish-American Club; (16) Guerra House, 312 7th Avenue; (17) Clewis-Mooke House, 2412 Highland.

His business ventures were so successful that he retired from active business, channeling his energies into financial investments and public service. This active involvement brought him even greater influence, as he served as: President of the Tampa Building and Loan Association, President of the West Tampa Land and Improvement Company, President

of the Tampa Publishing Company, President of Tampa's first Railway Company, City Councilman, Chairman of the County School Board, and Chairman of the Board of County Commissioners.

When he built a large house, complete with observation turret, on the bluff at Tampa Heights, he was soon surrounded by so many business and family associates that the two block section of Seventh Avenue East resembled a Henderson corporate center, which would heavily influence Tampa's economic growth for many years.

Two doors away, at 208 Seventh Avenue, lived his real estate partner William H. Beckwith, who laid out Clearwater's streets in 1887. Across the street was the home of son-in-law Dr. Leslie W. Weedon, founder of the Hillsborough County Medical Society.

Wedding Disrupted

At 302 Seventh Avenue resided another son-in-law George C. Warren, whose wedding to Cora Lee Henderson began under rather discordant circumstances. As the Colonel led his daughter down the aisle of the First Methodist Church, an old lady rushed into the - procession.

"Dr. Wall! Dr. Wall!" she screamed. "McKenzie's come down with the yellow fever!"

Dr. John P. Wall rushed to the painter who contracted the dreaded fever while repairing the cabin of a ship recently arrived from Cuba. Alexander B. McKenzie died in his Washington Street home, but the wedding was successfully completed.

In 1891, Warren joined the real estate firm of Beckwith & Henderson & Warren, one of the longest lasting firms in Tampa history. Other Seventh Avenue residents were Henry C. Giddens, a Henderson partner in a clothing business, and builder William H. Kendrick.



MASSARI HOUSE, PALM AVENUE

-Burgert Bros. Photo, Tampa Public Library

Ironically, the growth of downtown Tampa, an objective of the Colonel's contributions, was the major cause for the destruction of most of the homes in the subdivision. The construction of St. Joseph's Hospital in 1933 destroyed many other old houses.

While Tampa Heights was primarily an Anglo-Protestant neighborhood, its proximity to Ybor City attracted many Latins, particularly east of Mitchell Avenue and south of Palm Avenue. Still standing at 400 Seventh Avenue is the residence of Vicente Guerra, President of the Guerra V. Diaz Cigar Company and the Centrol Espanol.

Publisher's Home

Next to Seventh Avenue, tree-lined Palm Avenue was the favorite address in Tampa Heights. Wallace F. Stovall, publisher of the Tampa Tribune, lived at 212 East Palm Avenue from 1895 to 1909, when he purchased an estate on the lower Bayshore.

The Neo-colonial house at 400 East Palm has the distinction of being featured in two books. The structure was built in 1904 for cigar manufacturer Facundo P. Arguelles and was

the headquarters for visiting Cuban dignitary Juan Pumariega when he came in 1909 to commemorate the opening of the Centro Asturiano. In his *Impresiones de un viaje a Tampa*, he praises his hostess Isabel Arguelles and her lovely home. Later the house belonged to the Massari family and was noted by Angelo Massari in his excellent memoirs as an immigrant to Tampa.

While most of the north-south streets in Tampa Heights contained middle class cottages, Highland Avenue, between Palm and Columbus Avenues, contains many older wooden homes of the Munro and McIntosh subdivision. It is a hilly, tree-lined road of Victorian frame structures, such as the Edwin Blake house at 2302 North Highland and the home of Philip Mooke at 2412 North Highland, interrupted only by a small circular park. One of the most unique buildings is at the corner of Columbus and Highland: Don's Service Station, a functioning 1936 gas station, constructed out of the cottage of grocer James Clarke.

'Michigan Ave.' School

Since Tampa Heights was a residential area, it lacked a defined commercial center until the infusion of business arteries along Nebraska and Florida Avenues. Beautiful churches and attractive schools were the main non-residential buildings of the Heights.

Some of Tampa's oldest school buildings still function in the Heights for at the time of the area's development, most of the original downtown schools were overcrowded and expansion into the first "suburbs" was the educational need. The first separate high school in the county was constructed in 1895 at Jefferson and Estelle Streets and its replacement in 1911 was at Highland and Euclid at a cost of \$60,000.

The Michigan Avenue grammar school, today Robert E. Lee Elementary, opened in 1907, with its unique wooden belfry, while in 1915 George Washington Junior High on Columbus Avenue was one of the nation's first three year middle schools. (Michigan Avenue later was changed to Columbus Drive).

The last school built in the Heights was also unique: Brewster Technical School opened in 1925 as the "Opportunity School," Tampa's first comprehensive high school.

Exquisite Churches

Tampa Heights became a district of exquisite churches when it was a middle class community. The oldest church building is the massive Palm Avenue Baptist Church, the city's second Baptist church. Built in four stages between 1901 and 1912, under the leadership of Rev. Charles H. Nash, the church has survived its changing neighborhood by fostering the nearby 16-story retirement building and developing a bi-lingual chapel.

At 2201 Florida Avenue is the First Congregational Church, built in 1906 when the block contained only an orange grove. Organized in 1885 at the home of Mrs. Caroline Pettingill, the congregation moved from a frame church in downtown Tampa at the urging of pioneer Obadiah H. Platt, for whom the six-story pointed spire is dedicated.

By the 1930s, the church had 1,500 members and mission churches in Ybor City and West Tampa. When most of its membership left the Heights, the church was sold to the Polish--American Democratic Club.

At Palm and Lamar Streets is the 1923 two-story Tampa Heights Presbyterian Church, sold in 1964 to the Faith Temple Baptist Church. Rev. Dr. John G. Anderson of

the First Presbyterian Church started this mission church in 1905, and Benjamin Graham, then Superintendent of Schools, and Sidney Lenfestey led the drive to collect \$7,300 to build a frame church in 1908. It was the church of the Kendrick family and Henry S. Giddens, who started the first Sunday school.

Jewish Congregations

The domed Tampa Heights Methodist Church, on the corner of Ross and Central Avenue, was started in 1899 at the request of Colin M. Blake who contributed the money for a frame church for Rev. Henry Hice. The present structure was started in 1910 and by 1927, when the three-story educational building was completed, there were 1,600 members.

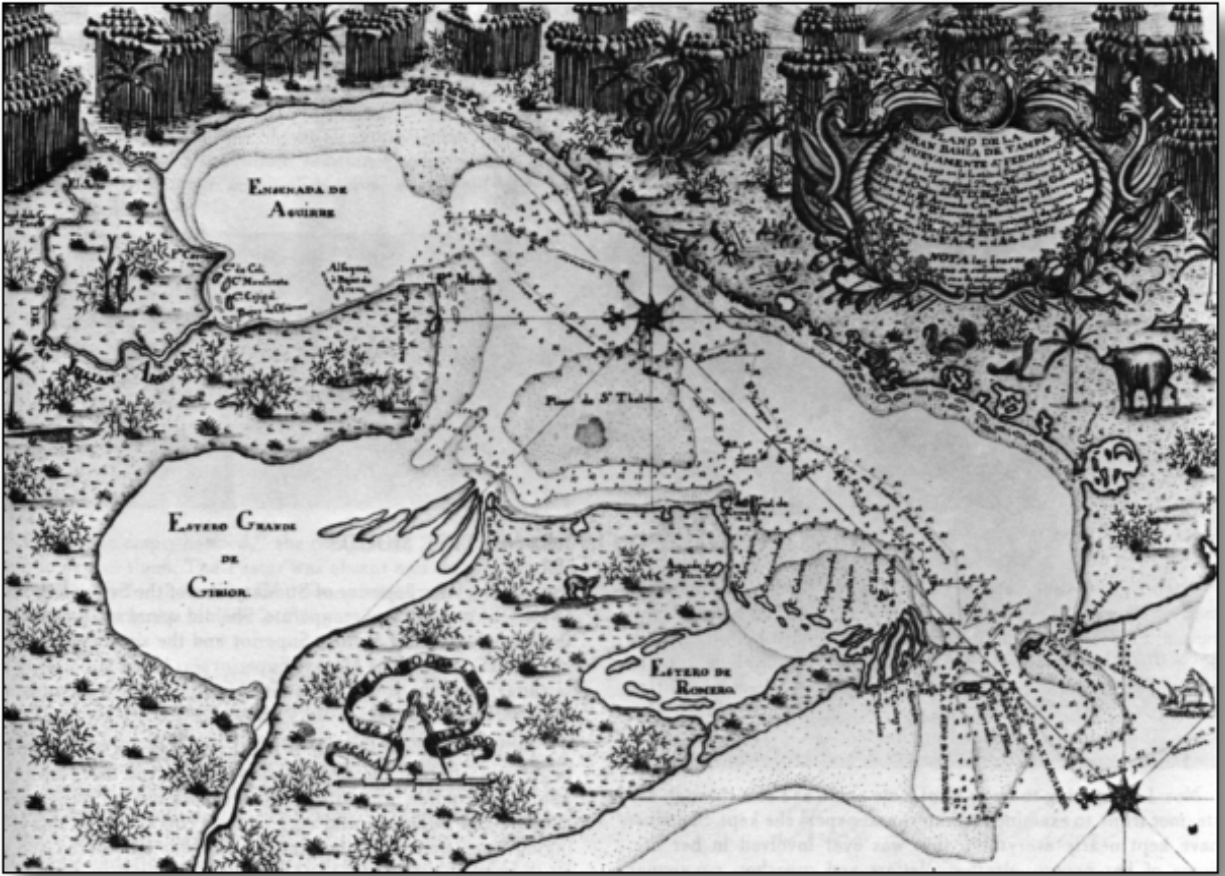
Tampa's two earliest Jewish congregations moved from downtown to the Heights in the early 1900s. The Orthodox Rodeph Sholom Temple opened under the leadership of Rabbi Adolph Burger in 1925 at 309 East Palm Avenue. The two-story masonry synagogue's distinctive Mediterranean style with a triple arch entranceway was an architectural attraction for many years. Schaarai Zedek, the liberal congregation, used the wooden temple at 1901 North Central in 1918 while their Delaware Street synagogue was being constructed and later converted into the Hebrew Free School.

It was Tampa Heights' location near downtown Tampa, once considered so desirable, which led to its status today as a deteriorating inner core district. By the 1930s the area had lost its prestige as Florida and Nebraska Avenues developed as commercial arteries for traffic headed for the central business region, and the developments on the Interbay and Davis Islands offered newer homes with modern conveniences.

Urban Restoration

The predominantly elderly population of the Heights began to be replaced in the 1950s with younger, low-income families, many from the nearby housing projects or displaced by urban renewal in Ybor City. The large houses were often purchased by investors who converted them into apartment buildings. By the 1960s Lower Tampa Heights, once a residential showplace, had one of the lowest percentages of home ownership in the city and the buildings quickly deteriorated.

It is not likely that Tampa Heights will ever regain its original position as an area of beautiful homes, but urban restoration and historic preservation might rescue some of the Height's remaining residences and buildings of significance.



FAMOUS CART REDISCOVERED

The body of water known today as Tampa Bay has had a long and colorful history. The first discovery of the bay by the Spanish explorers probably occurred around 1513. Panfilo De Narvaez received the official credit for its discovery in 1528, but references in Spanish documents seem to indicate that the bay was known to the pilot Diego de Miruelo.

The famous explorer Hernando De Soto dubbed the bay "La Bahia del Espiritu Santo", and many famous explorers landed on these shores over the years. It was not until 1757 that the Spanish Royal Fleet sent an expedition to explore and chart the area, an enterprise that took about a month. The chart which resulted from this survey by Don

Francisco Maria Celi is a beautifully executed and detailed document of priceless value to historians.

The chart's actual whereabouts became shrouded in ambiguity over the intervening years, until Tony Pizzo, well known Tampa amateur historian, and Charles Arnade, University of South Florida professor, after diligent research and investigation, found it hanging in the archives of the Spanish Naval Museum in Madrid.

But locating the chart and obtaining an accurate reproduction are two different things. Ultimately, it was Pizzo who managed to have the reproduction made.

Through his connections with Spanish wine exporters, Pizzo expressed an interest in having the reproduction made. Several years ago, while entertaining a commercial attache to the Spanish Consulate in New Orleans, Pizzo recounted his desire to have a copy of the old document.

What Pizzo had in mind was a photograph of the chart. But months later a large package arrived from Madrid, bearing the seal of the Spanish Ministry of Naval Affairs. Inside, Pizzo found a hand-drawn, exact replica of the original chart of Tampa Bay.

To fulfill Pizzo's request, the admiral in charge of the archives had his son draft the reproduction of the original chart made by Don Francisco Maria Celi on his expedition from Havana to Tampa Bay in 1757.

Not only does the reproduction have the outline of the bay, the surrounding woodlands, Indians and wild animals from the Celi chart, it even includes tears and stains that subsequently damaged the chart over the last 200 years.

Pizzo says he was "shocked and surprised" not only to receive the chart, but also at the price he had to pay. But today, he says he would not part with the reproduction at any price.

Several years later, Pizzo found himself in Madrid and visited the Naval Museum. When he identified himself, there was a flurry of excitement in the cavernous old building.

"It's Mr. Pizzo from Tampa," several of the clerks called out. A small man appeared out of the darkened archives hallway and shook Pizzo's hand.

"Mr. Pizzo," he said, "we almost had a terrible accident when we sent you that chart. The

reproduction was so similar to the original we almost sent you the original Celi chart and hung the reproduction on our walls."

So by total accident Tampa almost obtained an historic treasure, but one that would have probably gone totally unnoticed.

I REMEMBER AUNT KATE

By Lula Joughin Dovi



AUNT KATE JACKSON IN REFLECTIVE MOODS

I never knew Aunt Kate very well. She was my great aunt, never married, and she seemed quite elderly to me when, as a junior high student at Wilson, I sometimes stopped off to visit her on my walk home. I was just getting to know her better, and also beginning to tower over her diminutive frame, when my school changed to Plant and took me in other directions, and the busyness of senior high school intervened. Just after I entered college in 1940 Aunt Kate died at the age of 83.

Now I am getting to know Aunt Kate again as I sort through her steamer trunk to examine the letters and papers she kept. She must have kept nearly everything that was ever involved in her life. Some of her papers-drafts of letters and speeches, newspaper clippings and notes-reveal very clearly the keen, generous, religious and civic-minded person she was. I can't help wondering how it would have been if she had been a man.

To return to the walks to her house, set on a beautifully landscaped block of grassy and flowering serenity on Rome Avenue not far from the Bayshore, I recall with awe the well-ordered and formal interior, obviously not meant for young children. There were tall, overwhelming marble statues, furniture with mother-of-pearl inlay, carpeting, many

religious artifacts, and an overall feeling of repose and somberness emanating from the rich, dark colors that were prevalent.

Eating supper with Aunt Kate was a somewhat uncomfortable experience as I had the feeling she was closely watching my table manners. There were some things on her formal table set for two with which I was not familiar. I was fascinated by the individual salt cellars with their own miniature spoons. The Catholic blessing before the meal also impressed me since I had been raised a Protestant. Adding to the formality of the occasion was the attentive service of her maid, Christine, who lived in the garage apartment. Later I was driven home by Felix, her gardener and chauffeur. His devotion to the gardens, paths and fish pools was lushly evident.

Good Business Woman

Aunt Kate must have managed her share of the family fortunes with providence and enterprise. My father always admiringly said she was a good business woman-considered the ultimate in praise. She was a woman of means and was generous with her religious donations which included personal effort as well as money. An address which she gave to the first graduating class of the Academy of

Holy Names in 1929 revealed her support in the establishment of the institution in 1881.

Her interest in the Sisters of the Holy Names went back to 1869, as she told the story of her bout with malaria and an invitation from Father Allard, pastor of St. Mary Star of the Sea at Key West, to visit the convent and recuperate. She did spend two months with the French-speaking Mother Superior and the sisters of Mary Immaculate Convent. The Mother Superior was being honored on her birthday when the young girl arrived in time to help celebrate the occasion with a picnic.

"I'll tell the world a picnic is a fine occasion for a new pupil to be introduced," she recalled, "and to prove to you that I am an apt pupil-I'll confide in you that I quickly mastered the art of making chewing gum out of the wild sappodillas. I conceived the idea of bringing some home with me but my plot was discovered and my treasure was confiscated."

After her return home Aunt Kate pleaded with her family to return to the convent for schooling. "I continued for four years and graduated on the 15th of May 1873, having received my Diploma from the hands of the saintly Bishop Verot. I was 16 years, four months and two days-up to that date the youngest graduate."

The Young Graduate

And what was expected of a young graduate at that time? Here is a clipping apparently from a newspaper in Key West:

"Mr. Editor: The obliging readiness with which you publish all that can enhance the beautiful and noble cause of education, induces me to hope that you will insert in your interesting columns a few lines more on the subject; a tribute of admiration paid to the



Kate V. Jackson

KATE JACKSON IN 1928

young Ladies, who last week, 15th inst., kept our hearts thrilling under an irresistible charm.

"Already, friends have given a just appreciation of their undisputed merit; they have told of their grace, skill in fine arts, easy and gentle deportment, flower of womanliness, and I would wish to add something to what has been said about the bright Pupil, who received, on the evening of the entertainment at the Convent of Mary Immaculate, the medal and diploma of Graduate.

"On the 13th of May, Miss Kate Jackson, after having undergone the test of three hours' rigid examination, on all the branches studied in the complete course, followed in the Institution, was pronounced worthy of the most flattering



AUNT KATE IN LATER YEARS



THE ACADEMY OF HOLY NAMES

certificates-this judgment coming from such competent judges as Rt. Rev. Bishop Verot, Rev. Father Allard, Rev. Father LaRocque, Rev. Father Beauchamp, Mr. Bethel, Mayor of our city, and Mr. Maloney.

The interesting Candidate terminated her examination by a brilliant execution on the piano, and by the delivery of a touching essay in poetry. Of this piece, full of sentiment and noble thoughts, (which was handed with grace to the examiners) we know not what to praise the most, the talented dictation, or the admirable penmanship. The plain writing leaves nothing to envy the best printer, and the most flourished styles are imitated with an artistic skill.

"She received, after the heartfelt congratulations of the honorable Mayor and the whole assistance, who wished her a bright future, which her accomplishments, completed with her modesty, promises her."

Aunt Kate's destiny was closely interwoven with the growth of Catholicism in Tampa, as her 1929 speech further revealed.

"Naturally," she said, "when the question of establishing a Catholic school in Tampa was discussed, I was strong for the Holy Names and in July 1881, two sisters arrived in Tampa-at midnight. A young Catholic man approached them and asked if he could be of service. They said they wanted to go to Kate Jackson's house. So we were aroused-after they had walked all the way from the dock through the deep sand. There were no taxis in those days and no sidewalks.

"They came empty-handed," she continued. "We did not know when to expect them. The Pastor was absent and no preparations had been made for them. The first money raised was from a collection made among the soldiers in the garrison."

Heroic Sacrifices

By September, according to Aunt Kate's talk, "school was opened in a little building standing on the corner of Twiggs and Marion Streets and the sisters lived in a little cottage on the same block. As years rolled by and means permitted, changes for the better were made-until at last, the Academy of the Holy Names is sheltered by a building which is a credit to the City and the cause of Catholic education and this is due to the heroic sacrifices of the sisters and the patronage of both Catholics and non-Catholics-who, recognizing the salutary influence of the sisters upon their pupils in the formation of their characters have been their staunch friends through the passing years."

Aunt Kate reminded that first graduating class of the "stately Academy of the Holy Names at Miramar on the Bayshore" that her family had three generations of graduates from the school. They included herself, her niece Mazie Jackson Carty, and in 1929, her great niece Catherine Carty Cunningham.

The large civic needs of Tampa also occupied much of Aunt Kate's energy. She was the first president of Tampa Civic Association, a group which met many challenges from its first day of organization in 1911. A whole catalog of "needs of Tampa" posed -a resounding challenge in what must have been the hand-written draft of a speech calling for "co-operation of her citizens (of Tampa)-and particularly of her women." In her exhortation she claimed that, "If the women of the City would only become convinced of how much the City's progress depends upon them-of how much they can do to make the City more sanitary-and more beautiful, I feel sure the City would advance by leaps and bounds."

A primary need, according to Aunt Kate's speech draft, was "the sewerage and the people of Tampa recognized this need when they voted to bond the City. . ." But she worried that paving might be done prematurely and therefore pipes and mains should be laid down before paving. Also, her concern touched on the purchase of public property at the best price, before values would increase with anticipated growth. She stated, "I hope our City Fathers will pardon me, if I make so bold, as to suggest that they deal direct with the owners of such property and not pay in addition to the cost, the commission the Real Estate Agent considers himself entitled to-I do not wish to deprive the Real Estate agents of their just dues-but I think that they might be a little more modest in their demands where the City is concerned -witness -the prices asked for a City Hall site." How familiar these problems of growth sound today.

The Library Fight

In less than two years, according to another speech draft, the TCA "took an active part in the fight for the Public Library lately won in Tampa." Other accomplishments were listed: "We have organized a branch association in Seminole Heights, a suburb of Tampa. We submitted plans for the beautifying of the Court House Square, which have materially changed the appearance of the same. We appealed to our congressman and Tampa's Federal Building is in better shape than ever before. We have protested against loafers on the Square, and have sought strenuously to have the Spitting ordinance enforced. We have been largely instrumental in having the merchants close on Thursday afternoons during the summer months thereby, giving the clerks a needed rest. We have now under way a project for the holding of a Flower and Plant Market during February and have appealed to all club women in Tampa for aid. . . ."

I was impressed by Aunt Kate's thoroughness when among her papers I found an envelope containing pamphlets from all over the country on organizing, supervising and equipping playgrounds. She must have collected that information to fortify herself and the ladies of the Tampa Civic Association for their persistent battle with the City Fathers for playgrounds and parks.

McKay's Recollections

Writing in a column in the Tampa Sunday Tribune, 1957, D. B. McKay reminisced: "I recall distinctly my first day in office as mayor in 1910. Among the early visitors was Miss Kate.

"She stated that among Tampa's great needs were playgrounds under trained directors. I tried to argue that the City had more material needs, but she would not be denied.

"As a result Tampa's first playground was purchased and equipped. Therefore Miss Jackson is entitled to credit for the acquisition of Tampa's first public playground. She contributed a considerable sum of money to its equipment."

The battle for playgrounds was subtly but forcefully fought by the ladies, according to an old clipping in Aunt Kate's trunk. The Tampa Civic Association was formed in March 1911, her notes show. The ladies' battle strategy was to attend City Council meetings regularly. The headlines of the old clipping read: "LADIES TO ATTEND COUNCIL MEETING-Civic Association Will Have Committee Wait On City Dads Again Tonight-Becoming Regular."

The article stated: "A committee of ladies from the Tampa Civic Association will attend tonight's Council meeting to present a resolution asking that body to purchase

playground sites selected by them. A meeting of the association was held yesterday and the resolution was drawn up and adopted.

"For the last several weeks the Council has been called to order at each meeting with a large attendance of Tampa's feminine citizens present and the presence of the committee from the Civic Association or some kindred organization, to push the playground plan has become a looked for event. The ladies state that they are going to continue to be present until some definite action is taken by the Council, if they have to put off their summer vacations."

Civic Club Success

Turning to Aunt Kate's notes on Civic Association history, one may discover that the City did purchase three playground sites in 1913. Then a playground opened and was equipped by TCA by 1914, the same year that story telling was initiated on the playground sites.

Her notes reveal success with the following: "The Civic Association, having prevailed upon the City to buy several sites for Playgrounds, now desires to see those Playgrounds equipped and made ready for the use of the children. Feeling that it is best to make haste slowly, we will attempt, at the present time, the equipment of only one place, the one situated between 10th and 11th Avenues in the Denis' subdivision... Knowing that unsupervised play is harmful to the children, we will make earnest endeavors to get the City Council to appropriate sufficient money to pay someone to be in charge... We hope, in this way, to demonstrate to our City Fathers and the people of Tampa, the great value of Playgrounds, well directed. . . ." Fittingly, the site of her house is now the site of the city-owned Kate Jackson Recreation Center.

A cleaner and more beautiful Tampa was also on the list of needs that the ladies, led by Aunt Kate, as president, promoted. TCA initiated a clean up week; promoted Arbor Day and a flower show in 1914; furnished refuse containers to the City in 1913; agitated for clean up of vacant lots; furnished equipment, including May poles, to the schools; advocated City planning by bringing in a lecturer on the subject, and instituted lawn contests.

World War I Days

As if that list were not long enough, the ladies tackled other projects, some of which reflect World War I days. Members worked with the Red Cross and the Liberty Loan Drive, gave money to the Near East Relief and \$1,100 to the "poor children at Evian, France, during the war."

Other officers listed on the letterhead of TCA during its second year of existence included Mrs. William S. Oppenheimer, vice president, Miss Elizabeth Askew, secretary, and Mrs. H. R. Gaines, treasurer.

For all of the accomplishments recounted above and many not mentioned, there is ample prophecy in Aunt Kate's grammar school penmanship booklet. She wrote with varying handwriting skill and complexity of ideas on different subjects. In the exercises she developed her own ideas about such topics as Rivers; Stoves; A place in the country; Try, Try Again; Bees; Books; I Can if I will; The Golden Rule; School; True Politeness; Kindness; Cleanliness and others.

"How to be good and useful," is one subject she must have taken to heart. "I think," she wrote, "it is a great thing to be good and useful. To be good and useful we must try and do everything that we can do for our parents, friends, and playmates. . ." And in writing on

"Youth," she said it "is called the 'spring time of life.' It is so called for we always sow the seed in spring. So we ought to sow the seeds of knowledge, purity, and goodness in youth, so when we reach the summer of life we can reap the harvest of goodness and purity." I think she did so abundantly.



HILLSBOROUGH BAY FROM THE VENETIAN APARTMENTS

-Photo from HAMPTON DUNN COLLECTION

***THE STORY OF DAVIS ISLANDS* 1924-1926**

By DR. JAMES W. COVINGTON

Professor of History
University of Tampa

To some inhabitants of Florida the Boom of the 1920s was an absolute disaster for they were forced to pay high taxes on unneeded improvements for many years and, in many cases, when they could not pay, lost their land and homes. Walter Fuller of St.

Petersburg who won and lost a million dollars in the Boom warned "if you see another boom coming, grab your pocketbook and run the other way."¹ Yet, there were some developments from the Boom which would prove to be excellent

assets for many years. Included among these would be Coral Gables, Boca Raton Club and other buildings designed by Addison Mizner, the Tamiami Trail, Davis Islands, Gandy Bridge, hotel buildings and real estate developments scattered throughout southern Florida.

Davis Islands located just off downtown Tampa near the juncture of Hillsborough River and Hillsborough Bay was one of the outstanding features of the Boom. As created by Mother Nature two mosquito infested islands covered with marsh grass, small sandy hills, mangroves and growth of trees and bushes lay at the mouth of Hillsborough Bay. The transformation of these two islands, one known as Little Grassy Island and the other as Big Grassy Island or Depot Key by David P. Davis into

a fine residential area christened Davis Islands was a virtual miracle created by dredging and filling operations.

David P. Davis was born in northeastern Florida at Green Cove Springs on November 29, 1885. When the father of Davis was employed as an engineman for the Tampa Bay riverboats, young Davis came along to Tampa and was educated in the local schools². During the late afternoons, he obtained spending money by selling newspapers and working in a confectionary. At the age of twentyseven he went to Panama where he was employed as a real estate salesman returning to the United States in 1914. During World War 1, Davis operated canteens and a boat line to Camp Joseph E. Johnston, Auxiliary Remount Depot 333, near Jacksonville on the St.



THIS MARSHY SCENE soon gave way to the bulldozers and carpenters as Davis Islands was dredged up. This view was made in 1924.

-Photo from HAMPTON DUNN COLLECTION



WHERE THE ACTION WAS
Drowdy's Corner, Franklin Street, 1925

-Photo from HAMPTON DUNN COLLECTION

John's River.

Miami Experience

At the conclusion of World War I, Davis moved to Miami where he learned the basic elements of real estate development and sales. Surely Davis must have seen Miami Beach, which Carl Fisher had developed with the aid of dredges from an unsightly coastal island to a most profitable real estate venture.³ On all sides he saw the Florida real estate Boom beginning its breakaway upward thrust. Noticing that a developer had

tried to sell some lots but had been turned down because the subdivision was two and one-half miles from Miami City Hall, (a distance too far, the real estate men decreed) Davis offered to advertise these lots at his own expense if he could raise the price from \$165 apiece to \$275 and keep the profits. The developer agreed to the proposition with Davis spending one thousand dollars on advertising in the daily newspapers and selling all lots within a short time.⁴

After this successful venture Davis moved into the development and sale of other



DAVIS ISLANDS IN 1929

- Photo from HAMPTON DUNN COLLECTION

subdivisions. Included among these subdivisions were Shadowlawn, Extention, Belleaire and Alta Vista. All were successful, proved to be very profitable to those who resold and Davis realized an estimated five million dollars or more from his Miami ventures.

The Miami technique of real estate sales in which Davis became most skilled was based in three essential principles. First, the planned subdivision was to be heavily advertised in the papers.⁵ Next, when the prospect was lured to the sales office he would see a large blueprint with all of the lots, roads and waterfront marked. Thus, the would be buyer could imagine how his waterfront lot would look. Finally he would be told that his lot could be very profitable and he would be making an excellent investment. All of this was done without a single lot being seen or

even developed and it worked not only in Miami but all over the state. M. A. Hortt of Fort Lauderdale recalled that people would come in and buy anything that could be resold at a profit. Some even woke him in phone calls in the middle of the night begging to be allowed to make a deposit.⁶ According to Walter Fuller at St. Petersburg, a lot was something to sell to an avid speculator and not something on which to build a house.⁷

Plus Four Knickers

Sometimes, the subdivision would be developed and available for would-be purchasers. In those cases, it would be provided with an imposing entranceway and paved streets. Buyers were provided with gratis bus service to the site, entertainment by outstanding speakers and singers, meals and a sales pitch by a salesman clad in



OLYMPIC STAR AND DAVIS

Helen Wainwright inks a \$10,000 contract with D. P. Davis in 1925 for a marathon swim around the islands for seven-mile course.

- Photo from HAMPTON DUNN COLLECTION

www.miami.a.com



DAVIS ISLANDS IN EARLY 1930s

-Photo from HAMPTON DUNN COLLECTION

plus-four knickerbockers who would tell the client that the lot would double in value in ninety days.⁸ Wilson Mizner of Boca Raton, one of the best salesmen in the state, claimed "Right up to January, 1926 it was only necessary to point carelessly to a mudhole and tell a prospect that there was his fortune."⁹

The thoughts of D. P. Davis turned to those two mosquito infested islands in Hillsborough Bay where he had hunted rabbits as a boy. It was Burks L. Hamner developer of Temple Terrace and organizer of B. L. Hamner Realty Company who brought the attention of Davis to the Tampa Bay Area where many opportunities were still available.¹⁰ With his Miami sales training Davis could transform these islands into profitable real estate ventures.

Obtaining title to the two islands was not an easy task. The City of Tampa had purchased the 16.3 acres of Little Grassy Island from Mrs. Mary Brown for \$25,000. Big Grassy Island or Depot Key which included 104.55 acres was owned by the estates of three Southwestern Florida pioneers: Micajay C. Brown, William B. Henderson and William Whitaker.¹¹ The first acquisition by Davis was of the Brown and Henderson lands for which he paid \$100,000 on a time payment basis. Next, \$50,000 was paid for the Whitaker portion of land. Giddings E. Mabry of the Tampa firm of Mabry, Carlton and Reaves, retained by Davis and Hamner, made an offer to purchase Little Grassy Island and the adjacent submerged lands.¹² The city officials at first were reluctant to take such a big step for they wanted to know the extent of the proposed dredged islands. Public pressure in support of the deal soon arose. The Tampa Board of Realtors

endorsed the contract for they knew it would bring many new residents to the area. In addition, a committee of the Board of Trade gave its approval to the plan.

Residents Oppose

A threat to the deal appeared when a group of Bayshore Drive residents opposed the project when it seemed that their view of Hillsborough Bay would be restricted.¹³ Dr. Louis Bize, head of Citizens American Bank and chairman of the group, was willing to allow five hundred feet extension of the islands but Davis would not settle for less than twelve hundred feet, and threatened to withdraw his offer. If Davis conceded this point to the opposition he could lose as many as six hundred acres of his proposed development. Finally flags were placed on stakes to mark the extent of the islands to be dredged on February 9, 1924 but city council officials delayed their decision for over a month. The residents of the Bayshore withdrew their protest on February 19, when

they were assured by Davis that the islands were to be placed at least seven hundred feet from the mainland. Finally after many conferences were held between Mabry and City Attorney H. S. Hampton on March 4, 1924, the City of Tampa accepted Davis' offer to purchase Little Grassy Island and adjacent submerged land for \$200,000.¹⁴

The essential features of the contract included the posting of a performance bond of \$200,000 by Davis, the completion of a dredging and development project costing not less than \$5,000,000, construction of a concrete bridge leading to the mainland and a park all within four years time and, when the seawall and fill were fifty percent completed, the city would accept title to the park and return \$100,000 to Davis. In an election held on April 22, the voters approved of the project 1128 to 59 against and, in the same election, bonds were approved for the construction of several bridges, wharves and a new hospital.¹⁵ Tampa had lost the status of a large town



CONSTRUCTION CONTINUES ON BOOM-TIME DAVIS ISLANDS

-Photo from HAMPTON DUNN COLLECTION



DAVIS ISLANDS TENNIS CLUB

- Photo from HAMPTON DUNN COLLECTION



DIXIE TENNIS TOURNAMENT, DAVIS ISLANDS, 1940

-Photo from HAMPTON DUNN COLLECTION

www.mafarqa.com

and was rapidly becoming a city.

Battle In Court

Next step in the development of Davis Islands was the initiation of a court case deemed necessary to determine the legality of the land contract between the City of Tampa and Davis. In the first hearing before County Court Judge Francis M. Robles, Attorney O. K. Reaves presented Davis as a witness who included in his testimony two landscape sketches by engineers showing what would be done to the islands and promising to spend at least one half million dollars by June of 1924.¹⁶

Although Summer usually brought a lull in Tampa business, Davis could not take advantage of such a lull for he had to prepare for the rush of events scheduled in the coming Fall. D. P. Davis Properties, Inc. was to be incorporated and \$3,500,000 worth of stock either sold or held by Davis and associates. In addition, he had to wait during the Summer months for the approval by the Army Corps of Engineers of his bridge project which was to be constructed over Federally controlled waters. Finally on August 7, 1924 Davis received approval of his project.¹⁷

Davis had learned in Miami that the most important place in which to make real estate sales was the office. It was there that the prospective buyer could visualize from blueprints and scale models his investment and possibilities. The Davis Properties, Inc. sales office site was selected at the northwest corner of Franklin and Madison Streets. It had been occupied by the Drawdy Grocery Store for thirty-seven years but, given a good price, Drawdy was pleased to move the grocery store to a new location at Swann and Delaware.¹⁸ Davis planned to spend nearly ten thousand dollars changing

the former grocery store into the finest real estate office in the South complete with large plate glass windows facing Franklin Street.¹⁹

Good News

OLYMPIC STAR AND DAVIS

Helen Wainwright inks a \$10,000 contract with D. P. Davis in 1925 for a marathon swim around the islands for seven-mile course-Photo from HAMPTON DUNN COLLECTION

Contracts for the island site development were negotiated during the Summer of 1924. On August 25, the contract for the dredging of nine million yards of cubic fill for \$2,000,000 was awarded to Northern Dredge and Dock Company of Minneapolis, Minnesota. Lucien Merritt, president of the dredging company had been in Tampa for several weeks negotiating with Davis. The Tampa Sand and Shell Company was awarded the \$5,000 contract for construction of a temporary bridge, twenty foot wide roadway and five foot sidewalk leading from De Leon Street to the first island.²⁰ Besides signing contracts Davis found time to visit his two children in California, to go to New York to secure the services of two large dredges and to sign two golf professionals Bobby Cruickshank and Johnny Farrell who would give golfing lessons in Tampa.²¹

Davis received good news from Tallahassee when the Florida Supreme Court sitting in the first special hearing in its history, ruled in a three to two decision that Tampa could give title to Davis of certain bay bottom lands lying near Big and Little Grassy Islands. A petition for rehearing of the case was denied on November 5, 1924.²² Following news of this decision, J. P. White of Chicago was hired to handle sales and F. W. Montayne of Connecticut to handle advertising for the Davis firm.²³ On



DAVIS ISLANDS COLISEUM

-Photo from HAMPTON DUNN COLLECTION



DR. E. F. CARTER BOUGHT COLISEUM BOND, 1925

-Photo from HAMPTON DUNN COLLECTION .com

September 24, 1924, Davis announced that the islands to be created would be known as Davis Islands and the fifty-five acre city park, Marjorie Park, would be named in honor of his wife who died in 1922.

The Buyers Appear

Now, it was time to start selling lots. J. P. White, in a sales session held at the Hillsboro Hotel, announced the sales procedure. First come, first served for sales of the first three hundred residential lots to be sold. There would be no favoritism and only two lots per purchaser would be allowed. In response to large newspaper advertisements and the grapevine, lines began to form at the sales office on Friday night and soon the crowd numbered thousands of people.²⁴ Rumors had it that the first in line had chained himself to the door.²⁵ After three hours of frantic activity on sales day Saturday, October 4 all three hundred lots were sold at a total selling price of \$1,683,000. It was a sales record that even Miami could not surpass for every lot was still under waters inhabited by mullet and catfish. Since most purchasers were buying only to make a profit, stories concerning such possible profits were quickly spread around. Penn Dawson of Dawson-Thornton Dry Goods, purchased his limit of two lots and, before he had left the office, sold them to E. W. Cloughton of Atlanta for a profit of one thousand dollars.²⁶

Davis had rushed his sales promotion for the sales office was not scheduled for official opening until Monday, October 6th and dredging of the project for October 10th. A second group of one thousand lots in the area known as Bay Circle were placed on sale October 13th. Once again large crowds formed lines to purchase the lots and by nightfall only forty-one were left unsold.

Lots selling for a total of \$1,028,200 were sold on the first day of activity.

Those who had waited in line had stories to tell. Sam Hearn had waited for forty-two hours from Saturday afternoon to Monday morning. Some unemployed persons waited in line and sold their spots to others. R. M. McNeill of Miami and Marietta, Georgia, believing that he had an opportunity to invest in a potential Miami Beach purchased twelve lots at a cost of \$75,000.²⁷

Day and Night

Operations by five dredges began on October 10th and proceeded night and day piling sand on the mud flats. Since the road had not been completed, construction of buildings could not take place. Nevertheless construction materials were being stockpiled in the Hyde Park section and contracts awarded. In October negotiations were completed and contracts signed with Wynne-Claughton Realty Company of Atlanta, Georgia, for the construction of a million dollar apartment hotel on the islands. On December 4th, a contract was awarded to G. H. Cooper to build six homes of Spanish and Italian design at a cost of \$10,000 apiece. An advertisement appeared in the Tampa papers telling about a business section being planned on Davis Islands with a sketch showing an Old Spanish Restaurant, a florist and a candy store.

First in the changes on the islands came the construction of Davis Boulevard and the building of the temporary bridge leading from De Leon Street. By the end of October, 1924, the Davis Boulevard roadbed was almost finished but the bridge was not ready. The road and bridge were top priority in all plans for construction materials could not be taken on the island without their readiness. A contract was signed in the City of Tampa

for the supplying of water to the islands with the Davis firm paying the cost of extending the mains but water rates would be the same as for other Tampa residents.

Finally on November 8th, the temporary bridge was finished and automobiles could be driven to the first island. A. Y. Millam, who had been the representative from Duval County in the Florida legislature and current secretary-treasurer of the Davis Company, was the first one to drive on the island.²⁸ Now that they could cross to the island, hundreds of motorists and pedestrians travelled to the island. Still, all they could do was watch for twenty teams of horses and a virtual army of white and black men employed by Davis, Miller and Cobb, were busy surfacing Davis Boulevard. In the neighborhood the dredge Burlington was busy pumping sand through seventeen hundred feet of twenty inch pipe to a level of seven feet above low tide and held in position by concrete bulkheads placed by A. M. Grain Company.

'Nothing Like It'

During this dredging stage Davis kept the public's attention on his development by various devices in newspaper advertisements and spot announcements. In the middle of November, a picture of the swimming pool designed by Martin L. Hampton was shown.²⁹ The caption claimed that there would be nothing like it in the rest of the United States.³⁰ An advertisement in the November 30th, paper pointed out the profits to be made in real estate (i.e., a corner lot on Grand Central, now Kennedy Boulevard, sold at a profit of \$20,000).³¹ Following this lead line the advertisement stated that Davis planned to spend \$30,000,000 on the island, that 15,000 people could live there and there would be eleven miles of waterfront.

A subsequent notice told about four planned apartment houses, twelve homes and the Davis Island Tennis Club.

The sales office at Franklin and Madison was the center of much activity. It was here that Davis maintained his office and where the public were able to see what Davis had planned. Mounted on a wall was a large blueprint of the entire project showing residential lots, hotel and apartment sites, a commercial area, canals, lagoons, parks and all thoroughfares. Available by November was a scale model reproduction twenty-two feet long and seventeen and onehalf feet wide which had been made in sixty days by Harry Bierce a local artist.³² Thus, the prospective buyer could visualize his lot in two dimensions.

Design of Davis Islands which embraced sixty streets making twenty miles of broad and winding streets and boulevards and several miles of winding canals was good. With the exception of Davis Boulevard, streets were named for islands, bodies of water straits, and points along the coast. Since plans called for residential lots not to be more than five hundred yards from water, the islands provided eleven miles of waterfront locations. After fifty years of trial, some errors in the design have appeared. Such errors include the narrowness of the canals which caused them to silt and the winding streets which made it difficult for a stranger to find the home of a friend but nevertheless Davis Islands won the First Prize, American Association of City Planners in 1927.

The Highpoint

By December, Davis had reached a highpoint in his sales campaign. A branch sales office was opened at 305 East Main

Street, Lakeland, featuring corsages for the ladies, an orchestra in the office and a bus trip to the island. Hundreds of people visited the office purchasing over one hundred thousand dollars worth of lots. Advertisements appeared in the papers telling about construction of the tennis clubhouse, administration building and auditorium.

Temporary dining rooms were erected on the island to serve noon meals to the hundreds of visitors daily arriving by bus from downtown Tampa and Lakeland.

Soon sales offices were opened in St. Petersburg and Clearwater. Free buses carried would-be buyers to the island from the Davis offices in those cities for a brief tour and free lunch. The Indiana Society of St. Petersburg assembled at the City Hall in St. Petersburg where Davis Company buses carried them to the docks and a waiting boat, The Pokanoket, for a voyage to Davis Islands. There, they received a free lunch, lecture given by Jimmie Gheen, a noted speaker, tour and return by boat. Plans were made to open branch offices in Tallahassee, Pensacola, Orlando, Jacksonville and Sarasota.

Sales in the Yacht Club Section which was placed on the market for two weeks totaled \$1,250,000 or a total of 264 lots sold. An advertisement placed in February, 1925 paper by the Davis Properties told about one purchaser who received a profit of three thousand dollars in four days and another one, eighteen hundred dollars in one hour. Further on it mentioned the fact that the island was one half mile from Tampa's Court House and five million dollars in construction was planned for 1925. the message continued to say that Davis Company motor coaches called at all major hotels for prospective buyers but, if the

reader desired, a private car would call for him at his home: "Just call 4534 and ask for the sales director." ³³

There were some smaller pots on the Davis stove. Since a purchaser of waterfront property would be interested in sailing, a Davis Island Yacht Club was organized and held its first meeting at the Hillsboro Hotel. Plans were made for races, dances and dinners-all plans made prior to the construction of docks or clubhouse. A class in real estate salesmanship with Charles Davis, brother of D. P., and O. Sam Cummings as instructors was offered by Davis Properties on Tuesday and Friday nights 7-9 p.m. at Eagle Cafeteria Banquet Hall. In addition, Davis donated the sum of several thousand dollars to the City of Tampa for advertising in the Saturday Evening Post.

The Coliseum

After disposing of most of the residential lots, Davis turned to the lucrative commercial ventures. First planned was the Davis Island Coliseum Corporation to finance the building of a coliseum, scheduled to be one of the largest in the South, and designed by T. H. Eslick, architect of ballrooms in Melbourne, Australia and Bombay, India. Four hundred and fifty thousand dollars in stock was to be issued and sold at one hundred dollars a share. Judging from the profits of the St. Petersburg Coliseum which paid 8% dividend after forty days of operation, the Davis Island building would be a profitable operation. Later, under the direction of C. F. Cullen, the sales offices for the Coliseum were opened at 102 Lafayette Street and many persons reserved shares of stock by making long distance calls which resulted in sales of one-third of the stock on the first day of sales³⁴. W. L. McNevin, one of Florida's leading real estate operators,

purchased a substantial block of stock saying "It is a good thing."³⁵ Colonel Wallace Fisher Stovall, owner of the Tampa Tribune, tried to buy fifty-one percent of the stock but Davis refused the offer.

When city councilmen decided not to enlarge the outmoded thirty-two bed Gordon Keller Hospital, located on North Boulevard opposite the Florida State Fairgrounds, they decided to place approval of bonds for construction of a new facility called Tampa Municipal Hospital on the ballot in a general bond issue in April, 1924. After approval by the voters the councilmen, after some study, decided to site the hospital in Marjorie Park. Still, by May, 1925 the park had not been yet dredged from the bay but Davis promised the fifty-five acres would be available in three months. A committee of the Tampa Federation of Civic Clubs protested the location saying it was too remote and exposed to hurricanes.³⁶ Actually the site with access by only one low bridge for many years was very vulnerable and early residents fled to the mainland whenever a hurricane approached. Dr. Sumter Lowry did his best to have the University of Florida Medical School established in conjunction with the hospital but failed. construction of the hospital was started in March, 1926 by Stevens and Lee, a hospital construction firm from Boston.

Tennis Club Opens

On February 24, 1925 there appeared an advertisement in the Tampa paper telling about the last section of land to be sold at development prices. The advertisement stated that once this section was sold, the developer would devote full-time to the building and development of commercial areas, paving of streets and planting of flowers and trees. The reader was advised to make his immediate selection from four

hundred to five hundred lots and sixty apartment house sites.³⁷ Such an appeal worked for an average of \$250,000 worth of lots were sold each day.

By March 1, 1925 there was evidence of several complete structures in Davis Island. The fifty thousand dollar Administration Building was already in operation and the Tennis Club Building would be open on March 2nd to accommodate the Dixie Cup Championship Matches starring Francis T. Hunter, Bob Kinsey and other leading players.³⁸ Construction work had begun on several apartment houses and homes.

One of the best salesmen for Davis was Fred Dalton. He sold one half million dollars of lots in six months. Fred had come to Tampa in 1898 as a cigar salesman for Garcia and Vega then transferred to Eli Witt but finally entered real estate sales for Davis. Soon Dalton would leave on a three month vacation which he richly deserved. Residence sales on the first island increased when it became known that Charles Freed of Miami purchased four houses for \$54,000. Freed, a successful real estate dealer in Miami, had known Davis in Miami and had seen how profitable his ventures had been.³⁹ Lots that Davis had sold in Miami for \$3,000 were now worth \$25,000 to \$30,000 apiece. The Apartment Trust planned to erect five story apartments in the Country Club section on Columbia Drive. Sales of the apartments would be in the cooperative or condominium fashion by which the purchaser would pay \$1,000 down and sixty-five dollars a month for a total price of \$6,500. Included with the apartments were elevator service, modern kitchens and vacuum cleaner outlets.⁴⁰

All home and apartment construction and design plans had to be approved by the Davis Island Properties.

Offers From Sky

On May 28, 1925 advertisements in the Tampa paper announced the start of another drive for purchasers of lots to Davis Island and told about offers dropped from a plane flying over Florida to a waiting real estate salesman would make a profit on any offer but the best deal in the whole state was Davis Islands. It was the best development within the city limits of any Florida city.

In comparison to prices for Star, Hibiscus and Palm Islands in Biscayne Bay, prices at the Davis development were 100% less. Most people could make a quick profit on a resale.⁴¹

Since virtually all of the vegetation native to the site had been displaced by the dredging operations it was necessary to operate a nursery to provide trees and bushes for the development. A twenty acre nursery was started on Lincoln Avenue near Macfarlane Park with Frank Button, a landscape architect and director of landscaping at Coral Gables and Miami Beach who was placed in charge of the entire operation and D. D. Horvels, the superintendent.⁴² Thousands of palms, scrubs and flowers were grown for the project. Coconut palms were planted at the tennis club, oleander bushes near the roadways, Australian pines near the water as windbreaks and palms in the center of road dividers and along sidewalks. In the beautification program, palms were placed every fifty feet and scrubs every ten feet. However, for many years when the wind blew, the whole place resembled a desert with the wide areas of sand and no grass to anchor the shifting sand. Finally in order to have a suitable lawn the home owner found it necessary to carry in soil from the mainland.

During June, 1925 Davis went to Europe to get some ideas concerning construction of hotels and city planning at Deauville, Nice, Naples, and other places. During his absence, sales and construction moved ahead. Installation of sewers, sidewalks, street lighting and all utilities were completed in the developed hotel area and construction started on the seawalls. Westinghouse had received the street lighting contract for installing fifteen hundred standards and fifty-five miles of cable for \$250,000.⁴³ Eleven and one-half miles of seawall enclosing 825 acres of land were to be constructed and installed under the direction of William M. McDonald foremost seawall authority in the country.

More Buildings

Buildings which Davis pushed for completion first and help sell the project were those grouped about the entranceway to Davis Islands. Included in these prime targets were the Administration Building (now Sea Born School), Davis Islands Tennis Club, Utility Building, Marjorie Park Gatehouse, Shopping Arcade, several apartment buildings including Mirasol Apartments, Venetian Apartments, Ponce de Leon Apartments and the Palmarin Hotel. Some residences were completed during the first year of the island's existence. Even before the dredges had completed their work, C. O. Carson was able to live in his newly constructed home. Among the sixty homes constructed usually in the Mediterranean Style, were those erected by Davis, Millam and others at a cost ranging from \$10,000 to \$50,000.

One of the features of the man-made islands was the Davis Island Country Club erected at a cost of \$150,000. Designated as one of the best in the South, the Country Club was designed by Martin Hampton of Miami with

a large dance floor, dining rooms and a sliding roof over the dance floor to permit dancing under the stars. It had a prominent position on the islands sited beyond a long winding driveway in the midst of a beautiful golf course.

Since Martin Hampton had designed so many of the Davis Island structures, he moved his offices from Miami to Tampa. Temporary offices were established in the Administration Building. Other buildings designed by Hampton and his co-worker Franklin O. Adams, included the Tennis Clubhouse, Spanish Apartments, Venetian Apartments and the Mirasol Apartment Hotel. Tampa architect M. Leo Elliott designed a \$300,000 office building at Biscayne and East Davis which would house ten shops on the ground floor and three hundred offices on the upper floors. One reason there were so many apartments scheduled for Davis Island was that there were restrictions upon building along Bayshore. Gasparilla Apartments had been planned for the Bayshore but due to restrictions, the \$1,750,000 building was to be built by Apartment Building Trust on Biscayne Boulevard.

Many of the apartment sites began moving up in price. Two lots were sold by Frank Mulford of Van Nuys, California and W. R. Gignilliant to M. A. McLoughlin, a retired banker from Denver for \$50,000. Daily resales of Davis Island property showed a 100% profit at this time.

A list of some of the buying and selling prices of lots went this way:

Lot	Block	Orig. Price	Selling Price
12	13	\$10,500	\$24,000
10-17	1	11,500	40,000
15	1	5,75	18,000
4	1	6,000	25,000

14-15	110	10,900	20,000
13	10	6,500	12,000 ⁴⁴

Palace of Florence

Elaborate plans were made for the Palace of Florence (Palazzo Firenze) Apartments. Designed by Athos Menebun, a native Italian on request by Philip Licata, Tampa Investment Company, the building was covered with old Italian white stucco in the 14th Century style. A coat of arms in terracotta, wrought iron fixtures in the Florentine style, a high square tower grand stairway and embattlement roof lines, were features of the design adapted from the Palazzo Vecchio in Florence.⁴⁵

In October, 1925 orders were taken for the last section of lots on Davis Islands and again a record sale took place. All units were sold out in thirty-one hours of sale by mail. \$26,000,000 in checks were received and it became necessary to return \$8,000,000 because all lots were sold.⁴⁶

Now, that all lots were sold, it was time to tool up the resale division. Advertisements in the paper told about a steady growth of profits and how each change of hands brought profits. One advertisement claimed "John Farrell made \$1,000 driving a golf ball from the Bayshore to Davis Island but one owner made \$36,000."⁴⁷ Since the buses were not needed for prospective new buyers, Davis ordered the buses to be used to take children from the Children's Home on a tour of Tampa and, after that task was completed, to carry about the city senior citizens from the Old Folks Home.

At this time everything seemed in excellent shape with a complete sale of all lots, construction going full speed on many buildings and brisk resales but soon some dark clouds were seen. There were so much

a demand upon building materials for the construction boom that transportation services broke under the heavy pressure.⁴⁸ First enforced in Miami, a statewide embargo upon carload shipments of everything except fuel, petroleum, livestock and perishable materials was proclaimed on October 29, 1925.⁴⁹ It was possible to move the perishable fruit and vegetables from the groves and fields to the North but as many as 7,000 freight cars were backed up at Jacksonville and could go no place at all. The embargo cost Tampa merchants thousands of dollars for few Christmas gifts got through to the stores.⁵⁰ Few bricks, bags of cement, plaster of lathes were to be seen in Tampa and construction suffered a blow from which it never fully recovered.

'Blue Sky' Laws

Banks in other states, stressing real estate frauds in Florida, would not transfer funds to Florida accounts for real estate sales. When the Massachusetts Savings Bank League noted huge withdrawals, it cautioned depositors against withdrawals for speculative purposes. The State of Ohio passed "blue sky" laws that forbade certain firms to sell Florida real estate in Ohio. Walter J. Greenbaum, Chicago investment banker, said that other states should follow Ohio's lead for "this Southern land boom is a fertile field for pirates of promotion."⁵¹ Oscar H. Smith, Commissioner of Immigration in Ohio, predicted that the Florida Boom would burst with a bang.⁵²

Adding to the dismay, several fraudulent schemes began to surface at this time. A scheme by the British-American Improvement Association to sell 2,000 lots at \$2,000 apiece in Broward county went into bankruptcy. Officials of the Arcadia Gardens Projects of Arcadia, Florida which used a sales device of "fabulous profits in

real estate" for the sale of \$2,500,000 in land to Northerners were indicted on charges of using the United States mails to defraud investors.

Despite these storm warnings, Davis was ready to move to new fields. In October, 1925 he announced the acquisition of St. Augustine Beach or soon to be named Davis Shores on Anatasia Island just across from St. Augustine. It would be a fifty million dollar project with dredge and fill of swamp land creating 1,500 acres of prime waterfront property, building of fifty miles of streets, a Yacht Clubhouse, two golf-courses, casino, swimming pool and hotels.⁵³ Branch sales offices were established in northern, 1935 cities and most of the successful Davis Islands sales force including J. A. Ductey, from Bridgeport, Connecticut and V. A. Sweeney of Savannah, Georgia, were assigned to these offices. J. A. Gross of Savannah, Georgia, the general auditor for Davis Shores, had formerly been associated with Nash Packard Company,⁵⁴ Sales on Davis Shores opened on November 14, 1925 and, within a few hours, all \$16,268,000 in lots were sold.⁵⁵ Dredges started to fill in the marshes bordering the Matanzas River on October 31.

More Profits

Once again first purchasers made good profits. Lot 1, Block 51, was purchased for \$11,000 and sold two hours later for \$14,000. Thomas Palmer, an attorney of 504 Franklin Street, Tampa bought lots 41-44, Block 25 for \$33,000 and sold for \$37,000. Mrs. Maylene S. Turtle, wife of a St. Augustine jeweler, bought Lot 18, Block 50 for \$7,600 and sold it for \$12,750.⁵⁶ Davis pleased with the opening sale and forecasting that the value of Davis Shores would double by the end of the winter,

established a loan fund for the construction of homes on Davis Shores.

The Spring of 1926 was a period of slow sales for Davis. Towards the beginning of Summer, people who should have made their second payments on Davis Islands lots did not show. Instead of an expected \$4,000,000, Davis received less than \$30,000. He was in deep trouble for his available cash had been invested at Davis Shores. First sign of trouble came when Davis labelled a story in the Tampa Telegram as irresponsible which told about a sale of Davis Islands.⁵⁷ He did, however, admit that Stone and Webster, a Boston financial concern, might lend financial support. Being one of the largest corporations in the United States, Stone and Webster controlled seventy public utilities including Tampa Electric Company. On a preliminary survey for Stone and Webster, Robert S. Raine, a CPA from Stagg, Mather and Co. of New York conducted a thorough investigation of the Davis organization and found the Davis organization to be sound.⁵⁸

On August 2, 1926 an announcement was made that Stone and Webster of Boston and other Eastern cities had formed a syndicate, the Island Investment Company, \$2,500,000 subscribed, for the purchase of stock and the syndicate would join with Davis for the financing and development of Davis Islands. Before sailing for Europe, Peter O. Knight, President of Tampa Electric Company and general counsel for Stone and Webster in the Southeast, made the acquisition announcement at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel in New York.⁵⁹ As settlement for his share, Davis received forty-nine percent of the stock in the Island Investment Company which he posted as collateral for a loan of \$250,000 to be expended on Davis Shores.

Stone and Webster

The front office operations at Davis Islands underwent a radical change. Howard G. Philbrook of Stone and Webster became President of Island Investment Company and soon made a complete revision in the real estate division.⁶⁰ Many people having a high regard for Stone and Webster refused to list their Davis Island property for sale but those who did so found sales profitable. Still by September, 1926 M. A. Glott of Chicago, Illinois advertised in the Tampa Tribune that he was willing to sell lots 5 and 6, Block 66 at a loss of \$3,000 and, in addition, would allow the buyer to set his terms.

Davis en route for a vacation in Europe set sail from New York on the Cunard Liner Majestic. On October 13, 1926 news appeared in the Tampa papers that he had accidently fallen overboard from a porthole at five o'clock in the morning.⁶¹ Cunard Line steward testified that he had been outside the door of Davis when one occupant rushed out saying Davis "had gone overboard." The steward could not find Davis in the cabin and although a search was made in the area, he could not be found in the water. When the news reached Tampa all construction was stopped on Davis Islands to pay respects to the deceased promoter. Plans were announced that Davis Shores would be completed as scheduled but drawings of the beautiful buildings planned there constitute the highpoint of the project.⁶²

Would Davis commit suicide? His background may indicate some clue. He had loved his first wife Marjorie who died in 1922 and named the Davis Island Park in honor of her. While drinking champagne he boasted that he would marry the next Queen of Gasparilla.⁶³ Davis courted and married Gasparilla Queen Elizabeth Nelson, one of the most popular girls in Tampa but it was a

stormy marriage. She was twenty-two, he was forty-one. They separated and were remarried in a Presbyterian ceremony held at a private home, in December 1925. According to one report, Davis was going to Europe to join his wife who was on a tour but another rumor has it that he was friendly with one female passenger aboard the *Majestic*. Since Davis held an insurance policy valued at \$300,000 issued by Sumter L. Lowry, Jr., President of Victory National Life Insurance Company of Tampa, there was an investigation of the details of the death but the policy was paid to the estate.⁶⁴ In his will drawn before the marriage, Davis left no money to his wife, Elizabeth Davis and it became necessary for her to sue for her portion of the estate and she won the

case.⁶⁵ Judging from both his personal life and the desperate financial condition he was in, Davis may have lost his "cool," and invited death.

Davis had left Stone and Webster holding a somewhat empty bag. Some construction continued on the island but few persons wanted to purchase more lots or even hold on to those already held. Davis Islands went into a long dormant period which began to ebb with the opening of the Peter O. Knight Airport in 1936 and completely ended with the cessation of World War II. Had there not been a David P. Davis, Big and Little Grassy Islands would probably look like Seddon Island today-excellent location but lacking a promoter with a dream and money.

¹ Walter P. Fuller, *This Was Florida's Boom*, (St. Petersburg, 1954), Walter P. Fuller, *This Was Florida's Boom*, (St. Petersburg, 1954), 64.

² D. P. (David) Davis," in Karl H. Grismer, *Tampa: A History of the City of Tampa and the Tampa Bay Region of Florida*. (St. Petersburg, 1950). 360; Interview with Emilio Pons, May 11, 1978.

³ See John Lummus, *The Miracle of Miami Beach*, (Miami, 1940); Polly Redford, *Billion Dollar Sandbar, A Biography of Miami Beach*, (New York, 1970) and Jane Fisher, *Fabulous Hossier*, (New York, 1947).

⁴ *Tampa Tribune*, November 22, 1925

⁵ Walter Fuller compared newspaper advertising of 1925 with that of 1953. In 1925 the St. Petersburg Times had 89 pages of advertising – 74% of it for real estate and most of the real estate advertising was for vacant lots. In 1953, the St. Petersburg Times had fifty-four pages of advertising – 81/2% for real estate and 71% of the real estate advertising was for houses for sale, Fuller, *This was Florida's Boom*, 25.

⁶ M. A. Hortt, *Gold Coast Pioneer*, (New York, 1953), 167.

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⁸ Virtually all of the salesmen, binder boys and real estate executives dressed in knickers for with such dress a coat was not required and thus suitable for the Florida temperature.

⁹ Kenneth Ballinger, *Miami Millions: The Dance of the Dollars in the Great Florida Land Boom of 1925*, (Miami, 1936), 94.

¹⁰ Besides Hamner, others had seen the possibilities of the islands. In 1923 Bill Blocks had taken the Tampa Kiwanis Club on a barge to the big island where the group ate fish chowder and Cuban sandwiches. Consequently, the members of the club did their best to influence others in development of the islands. Evanell Klintworth Powell, *Tampa That Was: History and Chronology Through 1946*, (Boynton Beach, 1973), 101.

¹¹ Grismer, *Tampa*, 256.

¹² Giddings Mabry was an excellent choice for he had practiced law in Tampa since 1901 and had been City Attorney when the land had been secured for estuary development. James W. Covington, "History of Carlton, Fields, Ward, Emmanuel, Smith and Cutler, P.A.," manuscript in possession of author; *Tampa Times*, February 2, 1924.

¹³ These residents did not realize that a greater danger would arise when the natural flushing of the bay would be ended by the dredging and terrible odors and peeling of house paint would develop to plague the home owners for many years.

¹⁴ *Tampa Tribune*, March 4, 1924.

¹⁵ *Tampa Tribune*, April 23, 1924.

¹⁶ *Tampa Tribune*, May 4, 1924; O. K. Reaves was a partner in the same firm as Giddings Mabry

¹⁷ *Tampa Tribune*, August 7, 1924.

¹⁸ *Tampa Tribune*, June 13, June 29, and July 27, 1924: Davis claimed to have peered through a window at the "goodies" in Drawdy's store when he was young, poor and hungry and because of that unfulfilled desire for the good life had selected the grocery as his real estate office site.

¹⁹ *Tampa Tribune*, August 26, 1924.

²⁰ Mrs. Thomas Dyer recalled that one houseowner would not sell his property and consequently this temporary road ran on either side of his house. Interview with Mrs. Thomas Dyer, May 22, 1978.

²¹ *Tampa Tribune*, September 3, 1924.

²² 88 *Florida Reports*, 196-211; *Tampa Times*, September 10, 1924.

²³ *Tampa Tribune*, September 19, 1924.

²⁴ *Tampa Tribune*, October 5, 1924. Sales personnel has prepared themselves for the deluge by numbering the lots and asking each prospect for the number he desired as soon as he entered the office. Telephone interview with Mrs. Pearl Culbreath Brewer, July 23, 1978.

²⁵ Rex Beach, *Miracle of Coral Gables*, (Coral Gables, 1926) 45.

²⁶ *Tampa Tribune*, October 5, 1924. Tampa

²⁷ *Tampa Tribune*, October 14, 1924

²⁸ *Tampa Tribune*, November 9, 1924.

²⁹ *Tampa Tribune*, November 16, 1924; Davis had learned of Martin L. Hampton's work in Miami and used him for the Davis Islands project.

³⁰ Advertisements began to appear in newspapers and magazines advising the readers to close their eyes and visualize wide boulevards, golf course, large hotels, a yacht basin on Davis Islands in the Tampa to-morrow. Suniland: *The Magazine of Florida*, 1, (October, 1924), 42.

³¹ *Tampa Tribune*, November 30, 1924. Olympic champion Helen Wainwright was hired by Davis to swim around the islands. Several Boy Scouts including the future radio and television sports announcer Sol Fleischman accompanied her on the swim. Hampton Dunn, "Old Tampa," *The Hub of the Tampa Rotary Club*, June 8, 1975.

³² *Tampa Tribune*, November 2, 1924. Wall murals by Bierce may be seen in the Valencia Garden Restaurant on Kennedy Blvd.

³³ *Tampa Tribune*, February 4, 1925.

³⁴ *Tampa Tribune*, February 8 and 13, 1925.

³⁵ *Tampa Tribune*, February 16, 1925

³⁶ *Tampa Tribune*, April 25, 1925. The original hospital was established in 1905 on Kennedy Blvd. but was moved to North Boulevard in 1910.

³⁷ *Tampa Tribune*, February 24, 1925.

³⁸ Robert Kinsey from California won the First Dixie Cup Matches beating Douglas Waters of Florida 6-4, 7-5, 6-2. *Tampa Tribune*, March 9, 1925.

³⁹ *Tampa Tribune*, April 12, 1925.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ *Tampa Tribune*, May 28, 1925.

⁴² *Tampa Tribune*, November 3, 1924.

⁴³ Original lamp posts were concrete with eight sided opaque globes with wrought iron detailing. Davis Island Plan: Tampa Urban Case Study: Hillsborough County Planning Commission, (Tampa, no date); hereafter cited as Davis Island Plan, 20.

⁴⁴ *Tampa Tribune*, October 2, 1925.

⁴⁵ *Tampa Tribune*, September 20, 1925.

⁴⁶ *Tampa Tribune*, October 3, 1925.

⁴⁷ *Tampa Tribune*, October 14, 1925.

⁴⁸ Kenneth Ballinger estimated that the Boom reached its peak in August, 1925 and then began to lose ground. Ballinger, *Miami Millions*, (Miami, 1936), 114

⁴⁹ Chariton W. Tebeau, *History of Florida*, (Coral Gables, 1971), 385-386

⁵⁰ *Tampa Tribune*, January 1, 1926.

⁵¹ Tebeau, *History of Florida*, 386.

⁵² Frank B. Sessa "Anti-Florida Propaganda and Counter Measures during the 1920's. *Tequesta*, XXI, (1961), 44.

⁵³ *Tampa Tribune*, October 21, 1925

⁵⁴ *Tampa Tribune*, October 25, 1925

⁵⁵ *Tampa Tribune*, November 15, 1925.

⁵⁶ *Tampa Tribune*, November 22, 1925

⁵⁷ *Tampa Tribune*, July 4, 1926.

⁵⁸ *Tampa Tribune*, August 3, 1926.

⁵⁹ *Tampa Tribune*, August 3, 1926.

⁶⁰ *Tampa Tribune*, August 4, 1926

⁶¹ *Tampa Tribune*, October 13, 1926.

⁶² These sketches are available in the Hillsborough County Historical Commission Library, Hillsborough County Courthouse.

⁶³ Evanell K. Powell, *Tampa That Was*, 105.

⁶⁴ Sumter L. Lowry, *Ole 93*, (Tampa, 1970). 23-24.

⁶⁵ *97 Florida Reports*, 915

KNIGHT COTTAGE GETS NEW ROLE



PETER O. KNIGHT COTTAGE AT 245 HYDE PARK AVE. WAS CONSTRUCTED IN 1890.

Reprinted from *THE TAMPA TRIBUNE*

On August 3, 1978, the Tampa Historical Society held a "groundbreaking ceremony" at its new headquarters in the Peter O. Knight cottage at 245 Hyde Park Ave.

No ground actually was "broken" at the building, which was constructed in 1890 as the first Tampa home of a family which has played a prominent role in the city's business, social and philanthropic life.

But the ceremony signaled the conversion of the house into an office, board room and work area for the research collection of Tampa memorabilia maintained by the Historical Society. A Victorian parlor will also be re-created there.

The Knight cottage was acquired in 1977 by the Historical Society "due to the generosity of the Knight family and other members of the community,"

according to Dr. Glenn Westfall, president of the society.

Peter O. Knight and his wife, the former Lillie Frierson, came to Tampa in 1899 and after the construction of the Hyde Park Avenue cottage resided there for 11 years.

It was during this period that Knight helped to organize the Tampa Suburban Railway Co., a predecessor of a firm acquired by Tampa Electric Co. in 1899. He later served as president of Tampa Electric for more than 20 years.

One incident recalled in the family is the entertaining at the home of Teddy Roosevelt's Rough Riders' regimental band during its training period in Tampa during the Spanish-American War.

An attorney, Knight was Hillsborough County Solicitor from 1893 through 1899, then State Attorney for three years. In 1894 he was an organizer of the Exchange National Bank and in 1895 one of the incorporators of the Tampa Gas Co.

In the mid-1930s Peter O. Knight helped the City of Tampa to acquire the land for the Davis Islands airport which was subsequently named in his honor.

Mrs. Knight died in 1941, Knight in 1946. A surviving son, Peter O. Knight, Jr., is a practicing attorney in Tampa today.

The Junior League of Tampa has voted to apportion \$14,000 to the Knight house project over a two-year period. Of that amount, \$7,000 will go to the immediate needs of the house. League volunteers

will aid in the project as well, under the chairmanship of Harrison Giddens.

The Tampa Historical Society was organized in 1971 with Tony Pizzo as its first president. It confers an award annually, named in honor of former Mayor and historian D. B. McKay, to a Floridian contributing to the cause of state history. It has presented lectures, films and historical displays, and has placed several historical plaques designating spots of significance in Tampa's history.

DR. HOWELL TYSON LYKES FOUNDER OF AN EMPIRE

By James M. Ingram, M.D.

Reprinted from
The Journal of the Florida Medical Association
55:742-748 (August) 1968

Among the physicians of pioneer Florida were several whose greatest and most lasting achievements lay far outside the field of medicine. Dr. John Gorrie of Apalachicola invented the ice-making machine. His fellow townsman, Dr. Alvan Wentworth Chapman, wrote the classic textbook in botany, *Flora of the Southern United States*. Dr. John P. Wall planned Florida's present major highway system, served as mayor of Tampa and excelled as a meteorologist. Dr. Henry Perrine imported to southern Florida from Yucatan many of the plants now considered to be "native" to this state. Dr. Abel S. Baldwin designed Jacksonville's harbor and was elected president of the first railroad connecting Jacksonville and Pensacola. Of these talented Floridians, the physician who practiced the shortest length of time and left the most enduring material accomplishments was Dr. Howell Tyson Lykes of Brooksville and Tampa.

Dr. Lykes was born in Columbia, S.C. on Aug. 25, 1846, the son of Frederick and Margaret Howell (Tyson) Lykes. Frederick's family had immigrated from the German-speaking cantons of Switzerland in the mid-18th Century. Their family estate "Lykesland" in Congaree Township, S.C., was a portion of the land they obtained by royal Bounty Grant from King George II in 1750. The family name was spelled as Liks, Lix, Lyks and in other forms.¹

In the belief that Margaret Lykes had tuberculosis, the family moved to Florida in 1851, purchasing 500 acres of land at "Spring Hill" west of Pierceville, now called Brooksville. Frederick Lykes, already educated as a teacher, established and built the first school in Hernando County. With foresight, he had brought along orange seeds



DR. HOWELL TYSON LYKES



Fig. 2 -Franklin Street, looking north at Washington Street, about 1890. Dr. Lykes' Almeria Hotel, (right) named for his wife, was Tampa's first three-story brick structure. Sand streets and wooden sidewalks served the center of town.

imported from China, and planted the early seedling orange groves in that area.²

Howell Tyson, the third of four children, was five years old when the family moved to Florida. He studied first at home, then in the school at Piereeville. He was an "energetic, quiet and somber" lad who was by far the best student in his father's school. At an early age he took interest in his father's activities in cotton, timber and cattle.

Barely old enough to serve in the Civil war, he joined the Confederate company commanded by his brother-in-law, Judge Wall. He was captured by Union forces and released in 1865 at Bay Port, Fla.³ After the war, by unknown impetus, he decided to study medicine. He was graduated from

Charleston Medical College in the late 1860s.⁴

Returning to Brooksville, he engaged in an arduous country practice, traveling by horseback over the sparsely settled country to visit patients. Money was not plentiful and bills were more often paid in oranges, potatoes and corn. There was no hospital. Surgery was limited and crude. Few specific drugs were known. As few physicians in that era were willing to do, Dr. Lykes faced honestly the limitations of available therapy and shared the same question as his kinsman, Dr. John P. Wall: "Is there any evidence that the average duration of life has been lengthened by our superior skill in the treatment of disease? On the other hand, is there not considerable ground for the belief that thousands of lives have been sacrificed by the exhibition of our remedies?"⁵

After two years of practice, he turned his patients over to another kinsman-by-marriage, Dr. Sheldon Stringer, Sr., and channeled his energy and ambition into other pursuits. He first turned to the cedar logging industry, as cedar was much in demand for pencils in America and Europe. Huge cedar logs were cut from the swamps and Indian mounds of coastal Hernando and Citrus counties, and were floated down the Chassahowitzka and Weekiwachee Rivers to the head of Crystal River for milling. Additional tracts of land were acquired along the coast and were converted to pasture after logging was completed.

In 1874, Dr. Lykes, then age 28, married Almeria Belle McKay, daughter of Tampa shipmaster and exporter, Captain James McKay. Two years later, in 1876, on the death of his father, Dr. Lykes inherited Spring Hill and other property. All of the

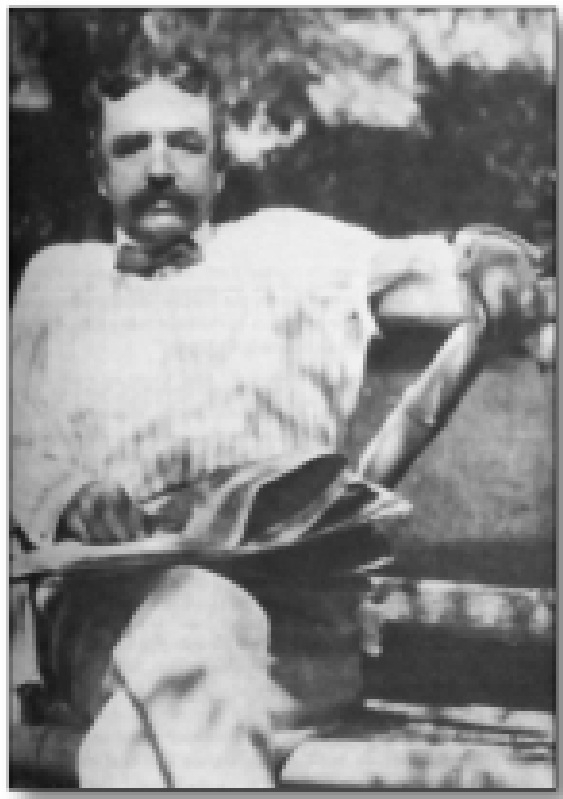


Fig. 4. -Dr. Howell Tyson Lykes on the lawn of his home about 1894

Cattle Notice.

ALL PERSONS ARE HEREBY forbidden to use, purchase, selling, driving or shipping any cattle of the following marks and brands except by permission from me or my authorized agent.

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GEORGE GILLET and A. D. POMPEN are my Agents in Hernando county, JAMES M. THURNE in Manatee county, and THOMAS BIRNBAUM, in Levy county.

The above named persons are hereby authorized to catch and brand, pen, drive or ship the cattle in their respective ranges. All the above marks and brands run into the above list in this list.

H. T. LYKES.
Brooksville, Fla., Oct. 24, 1879.

Fig. 3-Newspapers often carried Cattle Notices, displaying the owners' ear croppings and flank brands. Violators usually responded to reason, but were occasionally shot.

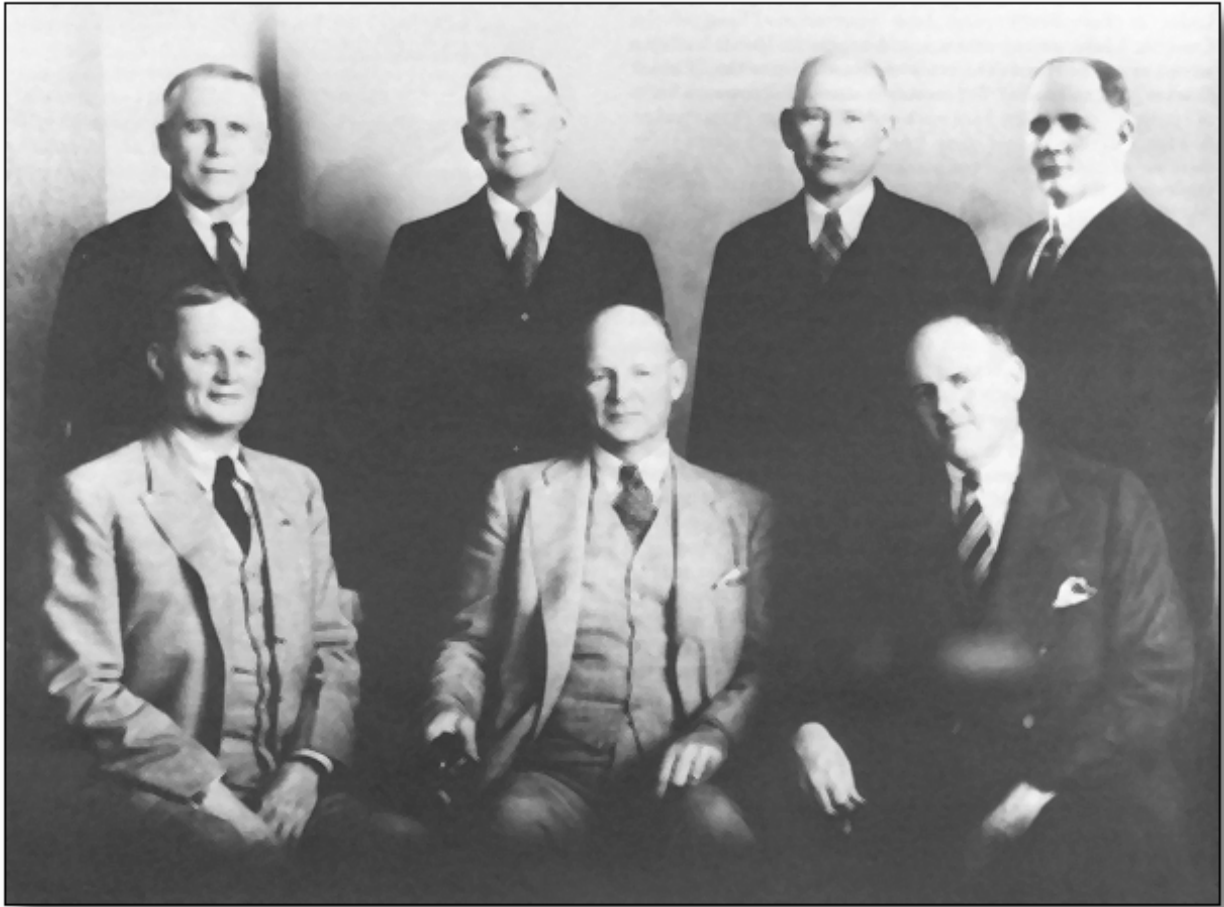


Fig. 5.-A rare portrait of the seven Lykes brothers made in 1940. Standing (from left) are James McKay, John Wall, Frederick Eugene and Lipscomb Goodwin (Dick). Seated are Howell Tyson Jr., Thompson Mayo and Joseph Taliaferro. Dick's picture was skillfully added from another portrait by photographer Carl Blakeslee. The last surviving brother, Joseph, died in 1967

eight Lykes children, a daughter and seven sons, were born at Spring Hill between 1877 and 1888. Their names, in order of birth, were: Matilda McKay; Frederick Eugene; Howell Tyson Jr.; James McKay; Lipscomb Goodwin (Dick); Thompson Mayo; John Wall, and Joseph Taliaferro.

During the decade between 1868-1878, the Cuban insurrection against Spain was setting the stage for a boom of the cattle industry in South Florida, and for the good fortune of Dr. Lykes and other cattlemen. Most of the cattle in Cuba were destroyed in the fighting and there was constant demand for restocking of the herds. Dr. Lykes' interests in cattle and land grew. His cattle soon ranged in an area from present Citrus

County, over the western part of Hernando, Pasco, Hillsborough and Pinellas counties and as far south as Largo.

It is of incidental interest that the birth of Florida's only set of quintuplets occurred on Lykes property, the "Lykes Lemon Grove," just north of Bay Port in 1860. The mother, Mrs. Joe Goethe, described as "less than average size, and not very robust," was attended by Dr. Sheldon Stringer Sr. The quintuplets, all boys, were perfectly formed at birth, but all died in infancy."⁶

Beginning in 1874, Dr. Lykes served two terms in the Florida legislature as senator representing Hernando, Citrus and Pasco counties. Legislative process was evidently

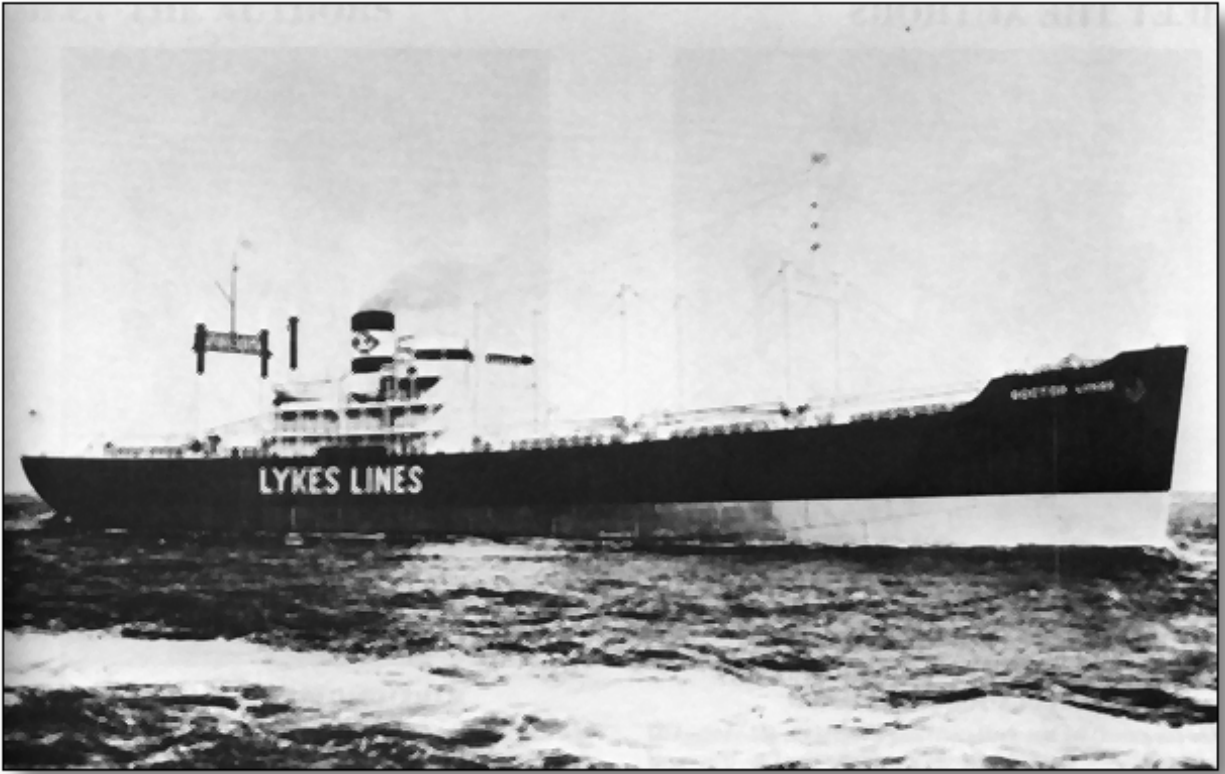


Fig. 6-The present S.S. Doctor Lykes, a C-3 cargo-passenger liner, could easily carry the original schooner Dr. Lykes on her foredeck.

more leisurely in that day. The Sunland Tribune of March 1, 1879 reported that the legislature adjourned for three days in order that the members could attend the State Fair at Gainesville. Dr. Lykes was listed as having won three "diplomas" and cash prizes for his "Brahmin cattle" at the fair, proving the presence of Brahma cattle in Florida at that early date.

Until 1880, Dr. Lykes was largely a producer of cattle, which he sold at Tampa or Punta Rassa. Later, in partnership with Captain W. H. Towles of Punta Rassa, he began to export cattle to Havana for sale. Their first two boats were the 109 foot motor schooner, Dr. Lykes (Fig. 1) and the little steamer Fanita. The Fanita had been built by the Vanderbilt family as a private yacht. The bones of her hull can still be

found rusting on a sandspit east of Tampa's Seddon Island.⁷ In addition to the Lykes cattle, other herds were purchased as far south as Lee County and the Kissimmee River for export.

In 1886 Dr. Lykes built Tampa's first three-story brick building, the Almeria Hotel. It was built on his wife's birthplace and was named for her. This building, on the northeast corner of Franklin and Washington Streets, is now remodeled and serves as the modern office of Lykes Bros., Inc.

Dr. Lykes was 40 years old at this time, of medium height, slender of build, restlessly energetic, solemn, taciturn and sometimes stern. His eldest son, Fred, recalls, "My father, if anything, was an efficient disciplinarian. Each of us from the time we were five years old had our regular duties to

perform that no one else was permitted to do for us. As we grew older our responsibility was increased. He taught us early to act on our own judgement and initiative. If we erred in our judgement there was no fuss or criticism from him. When he was in the house, peace, quiet and harmony reigned." He describes his mother as having "personal charm, sympathetic understanding, patience and spiritual beauty.

This home life, inspiration, and business training that we got from our parents at this age has been invaluable to us."⁸

After the disastrous freeze of 1894-1895, which killed most of the citrus groves in the state, the Lykes family acquired an entire section of land and built a new home at Ballast Point, overlooking Hillsborough Bay just south of Tampa. This home now is occupied by a granddaughter, Mrs. Chester H. Ferguson, and her family. Just north of the house, where Tampa Yacht and Country Club now stands, Dr. Lykes built a long dock "three steers wide" for the loading of cattle upon ships. Thus he became the only cattle exporter who shipped virtually from his front yard.

The Tampa Interbay Peninsula in those days was still much in its primitive state. Nature had not been gentle to this land. The entire peninsula, up to present-day Kennedy Boulevard, had been inundated by bay water during Tampa's worst hurricane, Sept. 25, 1848.⁹ The devastating drought of 1860 so parched the area that only 3,500 of the 8,000 cattle in pasture there survived.¹⁰ Later a hand-hewn rail fence was built across the peninsula from Hillsborough Bay to Old Tampa Bay, to contain the cattle. The present Bay-to-Bay Boulevard follows the route of this fence."¹¹ By the time the Lykes family moved to Ballast Point in 1895, H. B. Plant had built his rickety railroad spur to an

embryo Port Tampa. There was little else on the Interbay Peninsula except a few cracker shacks, varying numbers of range cows and astronomical numbers of rattlesnakes.

Cattle business was the big business on the West Coast. The Savannah News of Oct. 25, 1879 listed the following shipments of cattle to Cuba: "Ziba King, 6,000 head; Jake Summerlin, 7,000 head; Dr. Lykes, 10,000 head." This trade had a profound effect on the money in use in the area. Both Cubans and Floridians distrusted Spanish bank notes, and had little more respect for the American dollar. They dealt primarily in gold Spanish doubloons, worth \$16.80 each. These bright, soft coins were always measured by weighing because they wore easily. McKay and Grismer, respected Tampa historians, each state that for about 20 years "gold Spanish doubloons became more common in Tampa and the cattle country than American dollars."^{12,13}

D. B. McKay relates how Dr. Lykes and his inseparable Negro companion-servant, Charlie Johnson, handled this heavy loot.

"A consignment of cattle was loaded on a ship at the Ballast Point docks. The Cuban buyer paid Dr. Lykes the agreed price-enough gold coins to fill an Octagon soap box. Dr. Lykes slept in his nearby camp that night using the box of money with a saddle blanket over it for a pillow.

"Cowboys slept all around him, but he felt no uneasiness-his faithful servant, Charlie Johnson, was-on guard duty day and night ready to do battle with man or beast ... Charlie was a peculiar figure, much over six feet tall and so knock-kneed that he walked with difficulty. He always rode a frisky little mule and his feet almost dragged the ground.'¹⁴ The son of the freed slaves of Dr. Lykes' father, Charlie was an important

force in the rearing and training of Dr. Lykes' own sons.

The stockmen, often termed "cattle kings," were the dominant figures of west Florida's most colorful era. The law of the open range prevailed from Palatka to Lake Okeechobee throughout the 19th Century. The Western Plains provided no more thrilling stories of cattle drives, open-range feuds and shootouts than did Florida. Newspapers carried "Cattle Warnings" displaying the owners' brands and ear croppings. These warnings usually could be enforced with labor and reasoning, but, when not, with revolvers.

The names of the famous cattlemen were equally picturesque-names like Ziba King of Fort Ogden, Captain John T. Lesley of Fort Brooke and Jake Summerlin, "King of the Crackers." Jake, among others, could handle an 18-foot bullwhip as well as any cowhand (The crack of this whip gave the "Florida Cracker" his nickname). Big stockmen shared the common traits of extreme individuality, hard work and high living. The unbroken flow from Havana of gold coins, fine goods and aged spirits made their way of life profitable and pleasurable. Dr. Lykes fitted well in this company.

Such a full life was not allowed to interfere with the training, education and discipline of the seven sons. As each achieved his early teens, he was sent during the summers to learn the family business as a cowboy, hotel clerk or deckhand. Their activities were kept under the stern eye of the doctor. His counsel was readily available, pertinent and succinct. It usually ended with the same phrase, "Stick together whatever you do, and take care of your sister." The maturing and molding together of this strong family were greater achievements for Dr. Lykes than were any of his economic successes.

In time, the seven sons and daughter "Tillie" were graduated from various colleges of their own choosing. Each of the boys returned and entered the family cattle and shipping business. After the close of the Spanish-American War in 1900 the two eldest sons, Fred and H. T., then aged 22 and 21, respectively, were sent to Havana, adequately financed, to open an office. There they chartered the parent company, Lykes Bros., Inc. Both survived yellow fever under the care of the famous Cuban, Dr. Carlos Finlay. That same year, Walter Reed proved Finlay's 19-year-old theory that the Aedes mosquito was the vector of yellow fever.

The older sons were soon joined by brothers James and Lipscomb. They bought and consolidated Cuban ranches, built Cuba's first meat packing plant, chartered ships and imported a steady stream of cattle from Florida, Texas, Central and South America.

In early 1906 the sons were notified that Dr. Lyke's health was failing rapidly. They were called home after his death, of unknown cause at Ballast Point on May 14, 1906. The Tampa Times of May 16, 1906 records that the family, accompanied by "a large concourse of friends," traveled to Spring Hill by special train for the funeral. Almeria McKay Lykes was to survive her husband for 20 years, providing wise and gentle guidance for her family.

The firm of Lykes Bros. was incorporated in Florida in 1910, with the seven brothers and F. A. Morris, who had been with them from the start, as owners. The third brother, James, who had opened an office in Galveston in 1903, was joined by the youngest brother Joseph. Brothers Howell, Thompson and John managed the Florida interests. More ships were bought or

chartered, mostly by James and Joe in Texas, for shipment of cattle and general cargo.

Though quite dissimilar in personality, the brothers were bound together by genuine affection, mutual toleration and intense family loyalty. A friend or enemy of one brother held the same role with the others. When the entire family convened in Tampa each February, the brothers invariably met each other with an embrace, the traditional Spanish "abrazo."

Gradually the shipping activity overshadowed that of cattle. World War I caused great expansion in the steamship line. In 1922, Lykes Bros. Steamship Co., with James as president, was created and set apart from the other interests. Smaller steamship companies were purchased and worldwide service established. All ships of the Lykes line were named for members of the family or of the company. Far greater growth occurred during and after World War 11, even though 21 Lykes ships were sunk. One of the great mysteries of the War was the disappearance of the S. S. Tillie Lykes in the West Indies, without a message or trace."¹⁵

Today, with 54 ships, Lykes Bros. Steamship Co., is the largest American-flag shipping line. Lykes Bros., Inc. is the biggest producer of cattle and is the largest meat packer in Florida. It is also a volume producer of cattle in Texas. Recently the company has become one of Florida's major growers and processors of citrus. Other interests include banking, insurance and real estate.

These various and widespread organizations are still closely held by the equally varied members of the Lykes family, now 84 in number. The sons, grandsons, nephews and sons-in-law who guide the family businesses are as dissimilar in inclination, temperament and physical appearance as were the original seven brothers. Yet few have ever chosen to leave. Fortune Magazine.¹⁶ aptly describes the Lykes as "an engaging lot. They have mutual respect and individual independence. They seem to have an honest liking for each other." With rare accomplishment, they have indeed been able to "stick together," the one great desire of Dr. Lykes -founder of their empire.

Grateful acknowledgment for aid in the preparation of this manuscript is made to Mrs. Genevieve Parkhill Lykes, Mrs. Louise Lykes Ferguson, Mr. Charles Parkhill Lykes and Tampa historian Mr. Theodore Lesley.

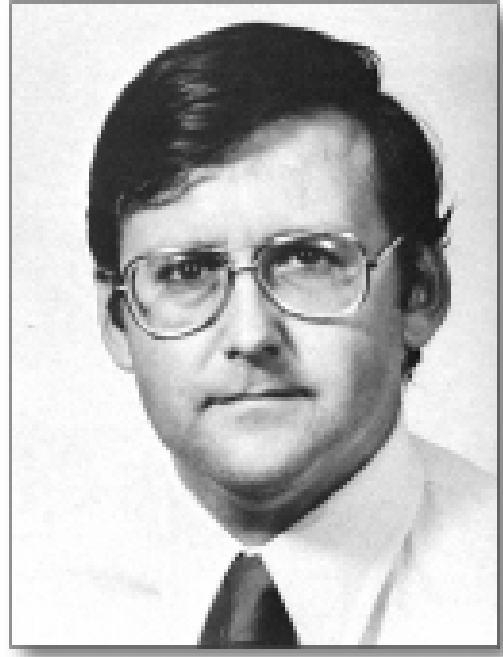
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- ¹² Grismer, K. H.: Book of Tampa, 1951, p. 306
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- ¹⁵ Lykes Fleet Flashes, October 1950, p. 5
- ¹⁶ Lincoln, Freeman: Fortune Magazine, February 1954, pp. 108-114, 202-212 (by permission).

MEET THE AUTHORS



LULA JOUGHIN DOVI

Lula Joughin Dovi is a native of Tampa and great granddaughter of John Jackson, surveyor of downtown Tampa and many areas of Florida. A graduate of Plant High School in 1940, she received her A.B. degree from Florida State University and her M.A. degree from University of South Florida. She has been an educator for 17 years and at present is a coordinator for social studies in the Adult Education and Community Schools program in Hillsborough County. For the last six years she has been editor of *The Lamplighter*, a tabloid newspaper published by the Vocational, Technical and Adult program of the county. She is a member of Phi Delta Kappa, educational honorary, and presently serves on the Hillsborough County Democratic



MARSTON C. (BOB) LEONARD

Marston C. (Bob) Leonard is an Associate Professor of History at the Ybor Campus of Hillsborough Community College and member of the Board of the Tampa Historical Society. As historical consultant to the Bureau of Archives, State of Florida, he helped establish the Ybor City Historical District and the Historic Tampa/Hillsborough Preservation Board. A former newspaper editor and syndicated illustrator, Mr. Leonard's articles on Florida history and other topics have appeared in many national publications while he is a frequent guest lecturer on Tampa Bay television and radio programs.



HAMPTON DUNN

Native Floridian Hampton Dunn is a former managing editor of *The Tampa Daily Times* and commentator on Miami Television Station WCKT, and presently is vice president of the Pennington Motor Club (AAA). He was a charter Trustee of both the Historic Pensacola and Tallahassee Preservation Boards and now serves as a Trustee on the Historic Tampa/Hillsborough County Preservation Board. He is past president of the Tampa Historical Society. His writings have won numerous awards, including a top award from the Florida Historical Society. The University of Tampa bestowed upon him the Distinguished Public Service Award in 1975, invited him to be commencement speaker and gave him the Outstanding Alumnus Award in 1976. This year the University bestowed its University of Tampa Medal on him.



DR. JAMES M. INGRAM

James Mayhew Ingram is a native of Tampa and was graduated from Hillsborough High School in 1937. He attended the University of Tampa and Duke University. He was graduated from Duke University Medical Center in 1943 and interned at Johns Hopkins Hospital in 1944. He served in the Army, had a private practice, served on the faculty at the University of Florida, 1962-70, and since has been professor and chairman of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at the College of Medicine, University of South Florida. His hobby is medical history and he is a frequent contributor to the *Journal of the Florida Medical Association*.



DR. JAMES W. COVINGTON

Dr. James W. Covington is Dana Professor of History at the University of Tampa, author of four books and 50 articles. He is former president of the Florida Anthropological Society and of the Tampa Historical Society, and former member of the Barrio Latino Commission and of the Hillsborough County Historical Commission. Dr. Covington was awarded the D. B. McKay Award by the Tampa Historical Society in 1977.

TAMPA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

1977-78 ANNUAL REPORT

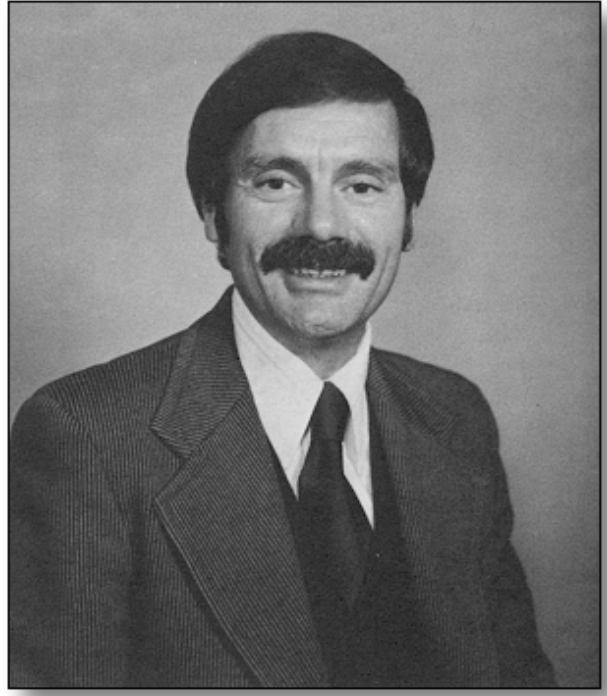
Throughout the year, Tampa Historical Society has successfully achieved its goal to increase its activities and service to the community.

Our major project, the purchase and renovation of the Peter O. Knight Headquarters, is presently underway. Through the generosity of the Peter O. Knight family, The Junior League of Tampa, and other contributors, our dream of having a headquarters is fast becoming a reality. Leslie McClain and Past President Bettie Nelson set the stage for the purchase of the headquarters.

Through the efforts of House Chairperson Mrs. Tom (Harrison) Giddens and her staff of volunteers, work is rapidly progressing. Electrical wiring, air conditioning and a new roof were the first priorities, with interior and exterior painting and renovation to follow. The headquarters will contain an office, board rooms, a Victorian period room and a research collection of materials pertaining to both Tampa and Florida History. Our "Groundbreaking" ceremony in September allowed members to see the "before" phase of renovation so that they will appreciate the final product when it is completed.

Our service to the community included both a display on Ybor City at Burdine's, and several lecture presentations. Hampton Dunn shared his recent slides of Cuba in his "Cuba Revisited" lecture, while a four-part Series entitled "A Tampa Tribute" included "To Tampa With Love" by Hampton Dunn, "The History of Ybor City" by Tony Pizzo, "The History of Davis Islands" by Dr. James Covington, and "Sulphur Springs, Tampa Heights and Port Tampa" by Robert Leonard. We had an excellent turnout for these informative presentations and hope to continue such series on our annual calendar of events.

Another first for Tampa Historical Society was the in-state trip to Key West. "The Key West Adventure", held in May, was an exciting experience for the 18 members who participated. We toured Key West in the Conch Train and attended a lecture presentation at the historic San Carlos Club where Dr. Glenn Westfall read a paper entitled "The Development of the Tobacco Industry



DR. L. GLENN WESTFALL
President 1977-78

in Key West", followed by a dinner, dance and parade. An in-state tour will also become an annual event for the Society in the future. Wright Langley, Director of the Key West Preservation Board, visited Tampa prior to the tour and gave an informative presentation on "The History of Key West".

It was a terrific year for our participation in the Florida State Fair. Lois Latimer and her committee manned the display of the turn-of-the century tools, and over 20,000 persons signed our guest registry. Future plans for a return to the Old MacDonald Theme of the fair are presently underway, including the placement of several historic buildings on the fairground. This will again participate in the fair next year, with a display of our activities in a portable display board which may be used in other places throughout the community.

Several historic markers bearing the name of Tampa Historical Society were dedicated during the year. A plaque was dedicated at Picnic Island, another at the corner of Franklin and Washington Streets commemorating the approaching seventieth anniversary of the 1909 Tampa-Jacksonville endurance race.

The *Sunland Tribune*, edited by Hampton Dunn, was another excellent contribution to the recording of historical information on Florida history. Throughout the year, members were made aware of events of the Historical Society through Bettie Nelson, editor of the "Tampa Historical Horizons" newsletter.

Society members active in historical research in Florida history include Hampton Dunn, Dr. James W. Covington, Tony Pizzo, Robert Leonard, Dr. L. Glenn Westfall, and University of South Florida affiliated members Jay Dobkins, Dr. Louis Perez, Dr. Steve Lawton, Dr. Robert Ingalls, and Dr. Gary Mormino. Through their invaluable research, Florida history is continually being recorded for posterity of our past in the present.

The Society also initiated the first annual calendar of events for the coming year so that members may plan to attend our numerous and diverse events.

The Oaklawn Cemetery Ramble was successful, due to the efforts of Mrs. Carmen Toney and her committee. This year, the City of Tampa Parks and Recreation Department replastered the Ybor mausoleum and assisted in the clean up of the grounds, prior to the social event which was held in the veranda of the cemetery property. Many members came to pay tribute to their deceased family and friends.

Katheryn Parrish restructured the mailing committee so that members would receive their newsletters and special events notices, and Lois Latimer attended classes at Hillsborough Community College in Office procedures to train the Junior League volunteers for the organization of our office and archival collection.

Thanks to the efforts of the Board of Directors and Board of Advisors, this has been a great year for Tampa Historical Society, and we hope to expand activities throughout the community under the capable presidency of Mrs. David (Leslie) McClain in the exciting year before us. We

look forward to more active participation of our members in 1979, as we build the basis for our role as keeper of the History of the Tampa Bay area.

Tampa Historical Society

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1977-1978

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Jones, Sister Rosanne, O.S.F.
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Linebaugh, Mr. and Mrs. Isbon G.
Lowry, Mrs. Loper B.
Lowry, Lt. Gen. and Mrs. Sumter L.
Lucas, Mrs. E. B.
Lykes, Mr. and Mrs. Charles

Major, Mrs. Marie Winton
Martin, Mr. and Mrs. Fred R., III
Marvil, Mr. and Mrs. Sirman D.
Mayfield, Mr. and Mrs. Murray E.
Medina, Mr. and Mrs. Cesar
Merchant, Ms. Sara Lesley
Midulla, Mr. and Mrs. Joseph D., Sr.
Millam, Mr. Frank A., Jr.
Miller, Mr. and Mrs. Kent S.
Mixson, Col. and Mrs. M. C.
Moak, Mrs. D. L., Sr.
Moody, Mr. and Mrs. Ashby M.
Moreno, Dr. Ruben
Mormino, Dr. and Mrs. Gary R.
Moseley, Miss Dorothy M.
Mulder, Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth W.
Mullen, Mr. and Mrs. Harris H.
Morphey, Mr. and Mrs. David R. III
Murphy, Mr. and Mrs. Pat
MacBryde, Mr. and Mrs. E. P.
McCarty, Miss Margaret
McClain, Sen. and Mrs. David
McCloskey, Dr. and Mrs. Paul
McDowell, Ms. Ann ,
McKay, Mr. and Mrs. Herbert G.
Mckay, Mr. and Mrs. Howell A.
McKay, Mrs. Richard S.
McKell, Dr. and Mrs. Thomas E.
McWhirter, Mr. and Mrs. John W.
Napoli, Miss Elia
Nelson, Mr. and Mrs. Thomas B.
Newman, Mr. Millard W.
Newton, Mrs. V. M., Jr.
Ogden, Mr. Richard C., Jr.
Olson, Mrs. John K.
Olson, Mr. and Mrs. Lester K.
Rubio, Dr. and Mrs. Mauricio
Salomonson, Miss Frieda
Salzer, Mrs. W. W.
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Schiestt, Marinette
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HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY'S HISTORIAN THEODORE LESLEY DIES



THEODORE LESLEY

-TAMPA TRIBUNE Photo

Reprinted from THE TAMPA TRIBUNE

Theodore Lesley, 68, Hillsborough County historian, died June 25, 1978 at Tampa General Hospital after a month-long hospital stay. A native of Tampa, his family has been here since 1848.

Lesley had been an active member of the Hillsborough County Historical Commission

since 1949 when it was organized by an act of the Legislature. He was the second County Historian, appointed to the post in 1966 in recognition of his work with the historical commission.

Lesley had an excellent collection of Florida historical writings and publications, many of which were passed on to him by his

grandfather and great-grandfather, both early Tampa public officials.

As County Historian, Lesley served as curator of the commission museum. He also selected items for display in the museum cases and on walls and shelves.

In addition to his job as County Historian, Lesley was a member of the Barrio Latino, which is responsible for preserving the Latin flavor of the Ybor City Historic District, he had served as a director of the Florida Historical Society and as president of the Society of the Territory of Florida and the Florida Genealogical Society.

His great-grandfather, Leroy G. Lesley was a Methodist minister and a soldier who served in the Seminole Wars of 1835-42 and 1856-58, and in the civil War as the captain of an independent company.

His son and Theodore's grandfather, John T. Lesley served as sheriff of Hillsborough County for two years, was one of the original directors of the First National Bank, was a member of both houses of the state Legislature, and held other public posts in Tampa.



HISTORICAL MARKER PROGRAM CONTINUES

During the current year, the Tampa Historical Society continued its program of marking historical sites and events in the city. One such historical marker commemorating the stationing of troops at Picnic Island near Port Tampa was erected on April 16. The Society researched and prepared the citation and the plaque was purchased by the Tampa Board of Realtors. Hampton Dunn, past president of the Society, was master of ceremonies and is shown in this photo with Joe Wegman, president of the Realtors. On hand for the dedication was Dr. L. Glenn Westfall, president of the Society.

Other markers erected this year included one to the Rough Riders of Teddy Roosevelt's command at Fort Homer Hesterly and one to the ferry boat operators who ran ferries across the Hillsborough River for nearly 100 years. Another marker will be dedicated on Thanksgiving morning at Franklin and Washington Streets, in front of the building of the old Tampa Daily Times. It marks the site of the start of the 1909 auto endurance run from Tampa to Jacksonville and back.

-TAMPA TIMES Photo by Eric Mencher

TAMPA PASTIMES



WDAE BROADCAST OPENING NIGHT CROWD
Frosty Morning Shop, 1301 Grand Central Ave., June 20, 1931.

- Photo from HAMPTON DUNN COLLECTION

RECIPIENTS OF THE D. B. McKAY AWARD

Presented Annually by the Tampa Historical Society

1972-Frank Laumer

1973-State Senator David McClain

1974-Circuit Judge James R. Knott

1975-Gloria Jahoda

1976-Harris H. Mullen

1977-Dr. James W. Covington