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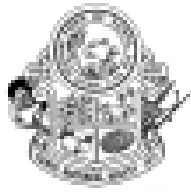
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THE  
**SUNLAND**  **TRIBUNE.**  
Journal of the Tampa Historical Society



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# THE SUNLAND TRIBUNE

Volume XVIII November, 1992

Journal of the  
**TAMPA HISTORICAL SOCIETY**  
Tampa, Florida

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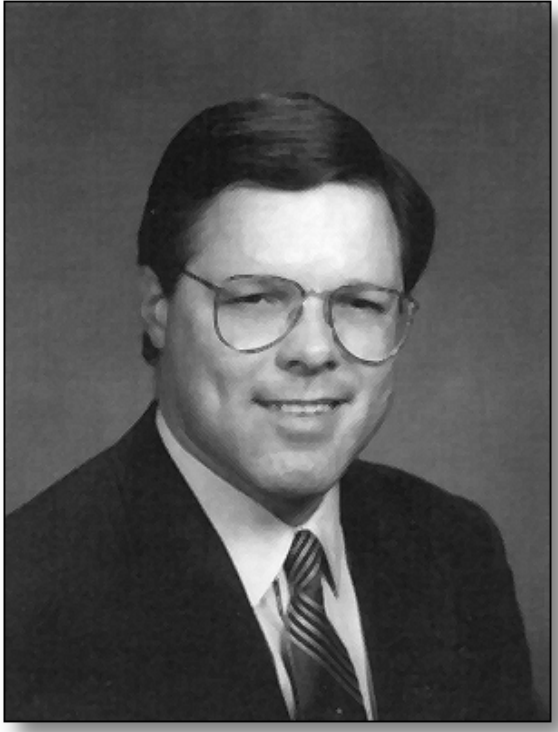
Cover photo. Replicas of the *Nina*, *Pinta*, and *Santa Maria* visited Tampa in the spring of 1992 to commemorate the 500th anniversary of Columbus' first voyage to the New World.

*Photo courtesy of Tampa Tribune*

The *Sunland Tribune* is the official annual publication of Tampa Historical Society, distributed to members each year. Non-members may receive limited edition issues by contacting the Society at 259-1111.

Individuals interested in contributing manuscripts for consideration should send them to the headquarters no later than August 1 of each calendar year. The *Sunland Tribune* Committee will review, accept or reject articles and will return all photographs and materials not selected for publication. All manuscripts should be no more than twelve double-spaced typed pages in length and should include footnotes, lists of sources as well as captions for all photographs submitted.

## The President's Report



**GEORGE B. HOWELL, III**  
President

If activity is a measure of success, then the Tampa Historical Society is about to conclude an exceptional year. Thanks to the efforts of our membership chairman, Tony Pizzo, your board of directors, interim executive director Eddie Wall and his executive assistant, Christine Lentz, we will bid farewell to 1992 with 125 new members which accounted for \$6,600.00 in new revenues.

I cannot recall a year in our community when the focus on local history has been more significant. Many of us will not likely forget the sight of the ship *Santa Maria* and the two caravels sailing up Hillsborough Bay, and the festivities associated with the 500th Anniversary of Columbus' epic

voyage. Hundreds passed through the doors of the Scarfone Gallery in July and were touched by the photographs and artifacts telling the story of Jewish history in Florida and Tampa. Over 300 members and their guests gathered one rainy evening in August at the University of Tampa to step back in time and enjoy films of Tampa in the 1920's. Citizens of Tampa and Hillsborough County were the beneficiaries of the City of Tampa's first Archives Awareness Week and seven days of historical programs documenting Tampa's rich history and cultural diversity. Most importantly, in an unprecedented show of support and recognition of an idea whose time has come, the City of Tampa and Hillsborough County have each budgeted \$50,000 towards the establishment of a history museum for Tampa and Hillsborough County in 1993.

In March of this year, we gained an important new asset and a new friend. J. Edgar Wall, III ("Eddie") was hired jointly by the Society and the History Museum of Tampa/Hillsborough County, Inc. to serve as interim executive director of both organizations. Eddie has implemented well the policies, goals and objectives of the board and delighted us with his enthusiasm and humor.

Through the generosity of the Falk, Saunders and Jenkins Foundations, Jones Intercable Trust and the Junior League of Tampa, students in Hillsborough County will learn more about local history in 1993. Our most ambitious endeavor this year included raising \$8,500 to produce three twenty minute videos on Tampa history. Dr. Gary Mormino, our 1991 D.B. McKay Award winner, prepared the script and pro-

vided photographs for this remarkable film. Sufficient copies will be produced and delivered to each public school in Hillsborough County and will become a part of their curriculum.

It has been a fulfilling and satisfying year for me in many respects -meeting new friends who have joined us, working with a dedicated board and executive director, and perhaps foremost seeing the community, public and private, come together and appreciate this wonderful community we live in today and the importance of preserving its past.

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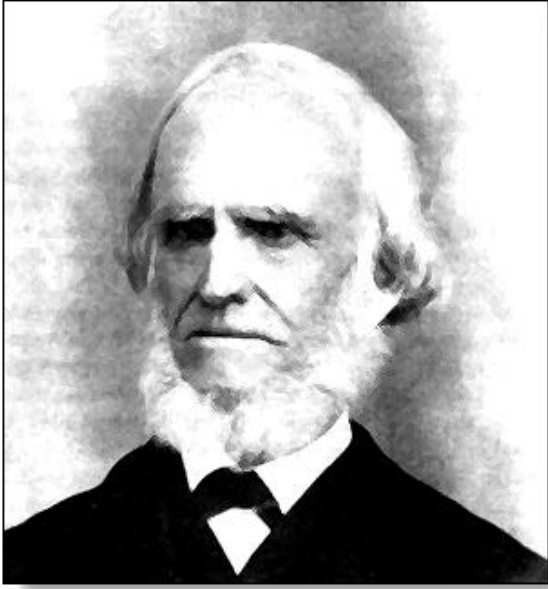
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# A SURVEYOR'S LIFE: JOHN JACKSON IN SOUTH FLORIDA

By **JOE KNETSCH**



**JOHN JACKSON**

John Jackson, pioneer surveyor, general store owner, mill owner and civic leader has had comparatively little attention paid to his remarkable career. Few pioneers can claim that they laid out the boundaries of a major metropolis, avoided Indian attacks in the wilds of the Everglades, owned and operated a general store and mill and took part in many civic affairs culminating in a term as mayor of the city whose boundary he helped to establish. Many of the early citizens of Tampa owed their property descriptions to this Irish immigrant and engineer. In a long and distinguished career as a professional surveyor and civil engineer, he often defended his work and advised others until well into advanced age and long after he had retired as an active surveyor. Such a memo-

rable person deserves more recognition in the eyes of history.

John Jackson was born in 1812 at Ballybag, County Monaghan, Ireland, the son of Hugh and Ann (Corcoran) Jackson. His early education appears, from the limited records, to have been obtained in the local schools of County Monaghan and rounded off, in the fashion of the day, in some form of apprenticeship to a local engineer.<sup>1</sup> By 1841, with the economy of Ireland fairly depressed and the beginnings of famine already appearing, John Jackson and his younger brother, Thomas, immigrated to the United States. The Ireland he left was heavily populated and arable land was too expensive for anyone but an English Lord. The population was so high that Benjamin Disraeli declared that the country was more densely populated, on its usable land, than China. Even some of the census takers of Ireland thought that the numbers used by the official record (over eight million) were far too low. Unemployment was widespread and the specter of people living in caves and sod-huts surely influenced many to leave the Emerald Isle.<sup>2</sup> The Jackson brothers soon found themselves in the bustling port city of New Orleans and John made his living as the assistant city engineer. It was during this period that John Jackson met Simon Turman. Turman, who was then heading a group of "colonists" migrating to Florida, persuaded Jackson to join the group and take an opportunity to receive 160 acres of free land, offered to settlers under the Armed Occupation Act of 1842. To the young Irish engineer, 160 acres of free land seemed too

good to be true, given his background. Jackson readily accepted the offer and came to Tampa Bay in early 1843.<sup>3</sup>

The Armed Occupation Act of 1842, authorized an individual to stake a claim on government land if he agreed to clear at least five acres of land, build a habitation suitable for human beings and be able to bear arms against any Indian aggression. The purpose was to create a line of armed settlements on the frontier between the Indians remaining in Florida and the main white establishments.<sup>4</sup> Jackson, Turman and many others eagerly sought out these lands on the frontiers of modern Hillsborough and Manatee Counties. Jackson's first permit, No. 917 Newnansville, requested the Southeast corner of Section 2, Township 34 South, Range 18 East. However, there was a conflict with a claim already filed by one William Mitchel and Jackson withdrew his request for this land and settled for the Southwest corner of Section 13, Township 34 South, Range 17 East.<sup>5</sup> This land was near Turman's on the Manatee River, but, by 1845, both men had moved to Tampa and had begun relatively successful careers in their new homes.<sup>6</sup>

While living on the Manatee River, Jackson met and was befriended by United State Deputy Surveyor Sam Reid. From this friendship bloomed a new and lucrative career for John Jackson, that of a U.S. Deputy Surveyor. It was Reid who introduced Jackson, through letters, to Surveyor General Robert Butler, a former acquaintance of Reid's from his days in Leon County and as his superior in the surveying business. By late 1846, Butler had contacted Jackson to survey on his own as an official U. S. Deputy Surveyor.

Jackson's friendship with Reid, the subject of some sharp criticism and charges of

fraudulent surveying in the Manatee region, lasted until the latter's death in 1847. But, another relationship grew directly out of the circumstances into which Reid had enticed Jackson. Because the Surveyor General's office was located in St. Augustine, Jackson, to file his Field Notes and returns, had to travel to the Ancient City. It was while on such a duty that Jackson met his bride to be, Ellen Maher, the daughter of Robert and Catherine Maher of County Tipperary, Ireland. The arrangements were quickly made between the two and they were married on July 22, 1847. This marriage lasted until John Jackson's death in 1887. She continued to live in her Tampa home until her passing in January of 1906.<sup>7</sup> Thus, by conducting the business of surveying for the government, Jackson's friend had introduced him, albeit indirectly, to the person destined to be his closest friend and companion, Ellen Maher Jackson.

Jackson's first major job as a surveyor in the new area was to lay out the town of Tampa. The town had allegedly been platted by Judge Augustus Steele in 1838, however it appears that this work was not actually completed except for Tampa and Water Streets. Jackson was given the job of completing the survey and extending it into the new areas of settlement. In the process, he named many of the early streets of Tampa, mostly after presidents and military leaders. The survey took just a little over two months to complete and the town plat was recorded officially on January 9, 1847<sup>8</sup>

Shortly after John Jackson finished his work in Tampa, Surveyor General Butler sent him to survey the private grant given to the late Dr. Henry Perrine on the southeast coast, near the city which presently bears his name. This survey introduced Jackson to a whole new terrain which was not very appealing to the surveyor. Jackson wrote to Colonel



Butler on June 12th, 1847: "This is a very Rocky country we can wear out 2 pairs of Shoes (each of us) every week notwithstanding all this there are some tracts of very fine rocky firm land."<sup>9</sup> He even had trouble finishing the contract on time because, "the Country is so rough and (in the latter part of the time) so wet; that I could not get done sooner."<sup>10</sup> While waiting for representatives of the heirs of Dr. Perrine to show him the approximate location they desired, Jackson surveyed some additional mainland property and marked off the three acres that were to become the rebuilt Key Biscayne Lighthouse.<sup>11</sup> Thus, John Jackson not only laid out the important Perrine Grant but also surveyed the sight for one of Southeastern Florida's major historical sites, the Key Biscayne/Cape Florida Lighthouse.

While on this survey, Jackson informed Butler of some technical difficulties he had with the variation used by the previous surveyor in the area, George Mackay. As he wrote his returns, he notified the Colonel that he would be in St. Augustine within three to four weeks to file his report and Field Notes. These two small isolated notices indicate the larger problems faced by the professional land surveyor of early Florida. In the first place, there was the technical competency needed to follow the directions of the Surveyor General and apply them in the field. Secondly, the surveyor, at his own expense, had to procure a survey team, outfit them, find transportation, file his bond, get provisions for the crew and get into the field and begin work. Upon finishing the field work, the surveyor would then have to pay the crew and other outstanding expenses, correct his field notes and sketches, get his accounts squared away (miles surveyed, and meanders run, etc. ) and then travel to St. Augustine to file the finished product with the Surveyor General. If the Surveyor General found any errors or

miscalculations, etc., he would return the work for personal corrections by the surveyor. Should the surveyor be fortunate enough to pass muster with the Surveyor General, he then ran the gauntlet of the General Land Office in Washington, which could accept or reject the work on any technicality. The Comptroller then had a review of his contract, bond and expenditures to make sure he met the standards of the day. Not until all of this was completed, was the surveyor compensated for his work by a draft drawn on a regional bank. As Florida's banking system was nearly non-existent in the 1840s, this meant the drafts were drawn on a regional bank, either a Savannah or Mobile based bank. The entire process could take as much as a year to complete and sometimes took even longer. By Implication, the surveyors had to be either men of some wealth or someone who had a good standing in the community who could be backed by citizens with the means to support the survey. The system was open to a variety of pressures which could lead to "insider trading", to use the modern term.<sup>12</sup>

In late 1848, John Jackson was again called upon to survey in the immediate Tampa area. The citizens of Tampa applied, through the State Legislature, to the Federal Government for 160 acres of land to be used as a county site for Hillsborough County. In this effort they were successful and Jackson was awarded the contract for the survey of this land. On October 30, 1848, he informed Butler that he had completed the field work of this important survey and would file the returns as soon as possible.<sup>13</sup> Thus, the two most important public surveys of early Tampa's history were conducted by one of her own citizens, John Jackson.

1849 saw a change of administrations in Washington and this also meant a change in

Surveyor General in Tallahassee. The new man on the job was Major Benjamin Putnam, one of the leading citizens in East Florida and a prominent Jacksonville attorney. Putnam immediately questioned the survey Jackson made of the county site. In a detailed letter of August 11, 1849, Jackson justified his work by quoting a letter by Major L. Whiting which was, by instructions from the previous Surveyor General, to guide him in the survey.<sup>14</sup> His explanation appears to have persuaded Putnam and he was soon in line for more survey work.

The year 1849 stands out in Jackson's life for two other reasons. The first involved a serious outbreak of Indian trouble (or apparent trouble). This trouble began with the attack on two men in the Indian River settlement and the murders of Captain Payne and Mr. Whidden at the Kennedy and Darling store on present day Payne's Creek, near Wauchula, Florida. As Jackson informed Putnam: "The Indians have set the whole country in an uproar -- people are gathering together in every neighborhood building Forts & Blockhouses in order to protect themselves this country never will be settled whilst the Indians are allowed to remain."<sup>15</sup> The second reason was the beginning of his general store on the corner of Tampa and Washington Streets. Jackson, if writer Karl Grismer is to be believed, was fortunate to be able to accomplish this goal. In the great hurricane of 1848, Jackson's home, like most others near the water in Tampa, was destroyed and the contents of two strong boxes, which he kept at the store of W. G. Ferris, were carried away by the action of the water. Luckily, "Jackson employed two trustworthy Negroes to search for the strong boxes in the debris along the riverbanks. Both boxes were found, near the foot of Washington Street, with the cash still in them."<sup>16</sup> Jackson's store proved to be a

life-long business but the Indians were an important source of anxiety until the end of the Third Seminole War.

The Indian Scare of 1849, which Jackson noted had caused such panic on the frontier, also found more troops being sent to the area and other problems being mentioned in his letters. It has long been known that there was fear of a slave rebellion if Indian troubles rose again in Florida. As a passing note to Surveyor General Putnam, Jackson observed in his August 11, 1849, letter: "T.S. Mr. Irwin was here a few days ago he was obliged to go to the Manatee again in order to muster a party to go with him to the Myacka where he left his Waggon & cos. &c when he was here he gave a pass to 2 Boys belonging to a Mr. Sanchez from St. Augustine to go home -- Major Morris the Commander at this place followed them and brought them back -- on suspicion of having inviadged a negroe of here away with them. He has them in the guard house instead of delivering them over to the civil authorities Mr. Irwin was gone before they were brought back he has not heard of it yet."<sup>17</sup> Major William W. Morris, then commander at Fort Brooke, with two companies of the Fourth Artillery as his sole support in the face of an Indian outbreak, was not taking any chances with Surveyor John Irwin's hirelings causing any disturbances or defecting to Billy Bowleg's camps. Having served in Florida during the Second Seminole War he was not about to allow the large scale defections witnessed in the first year of that conflict. Major Morris would not be responsible for allowing a slave/Indian rebellion while he was on watch duty.<sup>18</sup>

Indian tensions continued to build along the frontier. With the murder of one Daniel Hubbard, the situation became so tense that rather than risk another war, Billy Bowlegs,

who had been living near Lake Thonotosassa, decided to leave the vicinity of white society and retire to the relative safety of the Everglades. With the departure of the Bowlegs encampment, the last was seen of the Indians in Hillsborough County, until the outbreak of war in December 1855.<sup>19</sup>

The strong suspicion of a possible renewal of war against the remaining Seminoles was expressed frequently in John Jackson's letters of 1854-55. Writing the new Surveyor General, John Westcott, on July 1, 1854, Jackson quipped: "I cannot go to the field for some time yet until I get supply's which I sent for to N. Orleans. Unless the Indians get my scalp (which is the opinion of many in this part) you shall hear from me occasionally."<sup>20</sup> For the entire last quarter of 1854, while Jackson was in the field, Westcott did not hear from his old friend and fellow surveyor. Jackson opened his January 12, 1855, letter as follows: "I presume on account of my long silence that you begin to think by this time (with others of our neighbours) that King Billy has got hold of us but such is not the case as you will presently see on my reporting progress."<sup>21</sup> This somewhat playful attitude seems to have been necessary to survival facing the conditions of Florida's difficult frontier, Indians and all.

The 1854-55 surveying season was a very harsh one for John Jackson and his crew. It began with the admonition of Surveyor General Westcott: "It is my wish and *intention*, so far as I can control the matter, to have *all* surveys made under my supervision to be more perfect than they have been heretofore, and escuted strictly according to Law." The surveys of Florida, up to this time, had not been noted for accuracy, but for the "careless manner" in which many had been conducted.<sup>22</sup> By

starting in August, Jackson ran into Florida's rainy season which complicated a survey that was already in trouble by having incorrect measurements for the township corners. On August 14, he wrote Westcott: "I have ran west on the standard line as far as Peas Creek we had some swimming through the swamp before we got as far as the bank of the creek every Pond and Prairie swamp &c arc flowing over -- I have taken the Chills on saturday last I presume Its owing to my not being accustomed to wading waste deep in water for some years past."<sup>23</sup> By September 10, the rains had caused the entire area to be under water and forced Jackson to suspend operations. To complicate matters, one of his chainmen caused a number of errors which forced the surveyor to resurvey portions of the area again, in the same adverse conditions. He notified Westcott: "when I commence again (which I will as soon as the water falls) I hope to have better Chainmen."<sup>24</sup> To make sure the Surveyor General had a clear idea of the cause of this suspended operation, Jackson wrote: "I am very sory that I can not proceed with the work, as you seem to be in a hurry with--I will loose but as little time as possible untill I try it again--my men were very ill with the diarea &c & could not get them to continue."<sup>25</sup> By October 1, 1854, Jackson was writing that provisions were a problem: "I scarcely know what to do for provisions as there has not been a vessel here from New Orleans in 2 or 3 months and there is not one Barrel of Flower or Bread in the place; however I will be able to get some provisions in the country untill the steamboat arrives. She is expected about the 8th Inst."<sup>26</sup> Jackson and his crew(s) did not finish the work of his contract until February of 1855.

This same survey also brought another problem to the fore. The Seminoles were watching the progress of his survey party

and made some highly visible gestures to warn them not to enter the area. In one of the more telling letters written by the surveyor, he stated:

I had a great deal to contend with in having a rough country, bad weather, and what was worse than all in trying to dispell the fears of the men - The Indians were watching our movements, ever after our crossing Charlepopka Creek and perticularly about the Big Prairie and thence to Istockpoga Lake they set the woods on fire about us frequently; I presume they thought to frighten us from going further on their Boundariy, however I was determined to go on with the work unless they were to come up and explain themselves, they tryed to keep out of sight all they could - but in the end I caught one of them reconitering our camp it happened on Sunday near the S.E. corner of T. 34. R. 28 1 was out examining the country and on my return as I emerged out of a spruce pine scrub I saw an Indian travelling along our line from our Camp I called to him and motioned to him to come up to me, he signed to me and stood untill I went to him I shook hands with him and asked him to our Camp he appeared very much mortified at my seeing him he came to the camp and east and smoked the pipe with me and was to return the next day with a few dressed Buckskins, when the Foxey (Sun) would be about one hour high he did not return nor did they set fire near us after - They have been complaining to Capt Casey that we frequently crossed their lines.<sup>27</sup>

Jackson's candor indicates that he knew he was close to the twenty mile neutral area that was guaranteed by General Worth in 1842. It was the deliberate policy of the U. S. Government, with heavy pressure from the State's officials to violate the line with surveys, it being presumed that if the lands were surveyed, and the Seminoles knowing what that implied, they would see the fruitlessness of their resistance to emigration. It was a policy of "peaceful" pressure to get the Indians to remove and the U. S. Deputy Surveyors, like John Jackson, were the instruments of this policy. In December of 1855, when Lieutenant George Hartsuff and his command violated the infamous "banana patch" of Billy Bowlegs, they were not in the area as surveyors in the manner of Jackson, Irwin and others. They were on a scouting mission for the U. S. Army seeking to locate Indian settlements and fields. There was a marked difference between the activities of Jackson and those of Lt. Hartsuff, which explains why, of the three U. S. Deputy Surveyors in the field at the outbreak of hostillities, none of them were harmed in any way. The Indians knew the difference in the functions of the groups violating their boundary, even if historians have confused the issue.<sup>28</sup>

Jackson's experience with the Indians in the field, immediately prior to and during the Third Seminole War, illustrates the dangers which the surveyors were subject to on the volatile frontier. Yet, even at the end of the war, the tensions had not totally subsided. On February 20, 1858, Jackson reported to Surveyor General F. L. Dancy:

...on the 9th of this month near the station of Fish eating Creek between there and Fort Denaud 2 Indians met my waggon and made signs to my camp man to leave the prairie he was a negroe man and was so much

frightened that he put out for Fort Denaud the next morning he met another Indian who stopped him on the Road and inquired for his Master he told him I was coming after him he also held up two fingers and Struck the man on the breast and signed him to be off the negro was nearly frightened out of his wits - on Saying his master was coming after him the Indian got excited and struck himself on the breast at the same time pointing to the Hammock saying "a heap" I presume meaning there were a heap such as he was to meet the Master - he told the man to stop and put out for the Hammock but as soon as the Road was clear the negroe put whip to the mules and made himself scarce as fast as he could - [After going without food and fire, Jackson's crew continued and searched for their campman.] ... we pushed on after the waggon until after about 1 Ocl when we saw some Indians ahead of us on the Road going the same way that we were going they stopped on the Road where there were some Cabbage trees extending to a hammock on each side of the Road as we approached to about 3 or 4 hundred yards of them they squatted and we could see them extending toward the Hammock on each side and every one taking a tree. I did not like the movements of the Indians and did not deem it prudent to approach them in that position upon which we made a circuit round and came in on the Road out the other side of the Hammock my idea for so doing was that they thought we were armed with revolvers and altho' they must have been 3 or 4 times our number they would not wish to attack us openly...

Jackson's crew was, in fact, unarmed and could not have offered resistance to the Indians. The campman was found the next day "crying like a child" because of the fright. Jackson sent him to Fort Meade and continued his survey, but was continually watched and having the woods set on fire around him.<sup>29</sup>

During the 1855 surveying season, Jackson found himself involved in the surveying of lands around Tobacco Bluff and Terra Ceia, in particular, the permits of some of the Armed Occupation Act settlers. He had been contacted early in 1855 to prepare to survey Tobacco Bluff and had even discussed this with Westcott. However, it does not appear that Westcott was in a hurry to have the area surveyed.<sup>30</sup> On June 11, 1855, Jackson disclosed to Westcott that he needed to know about the survey because; "I have been indiscreet in mentioning the conversation that you and I had on the subject."<sup>31</sup> Jackson was probably correct in assuming that he had been indiscreet, he did not get the contract to survey this part of the area until 1858.<sup>32</sup>

Directly related to the surveys of this island area was the survey of the Joseph Atzeroth permit. This survey was very unique in that, though technically not difficult, it had a bureaucratic history which caused serious delays in Atzeroth finally obtaining his patent. In her fine article, "The Joseph Atzeroth Family: Manatee County Pioneers," Cathy Bayless Slusser made a special point of showing some of the difficulties faced by this early and important settler. She correctly notes that Atzeroth received Permit No. 949, dated October 29, 1844, for the land in U. S. Government Lot No. 1, in Section 34, Township 33 South, Range 17 East. He, indeed, did travel to Newnansville to finish the proceedings and file additional documents, a cumbersome

requirement of the law, until changed, at the request of David Levy Yulee, and probably assumed things were fine. According to Slusser's research, in January of 1849, the problem of mixed Permit numbers was allegedly solved by the testimony of Judge Simon Turman and Samuel Bishop. Why then, didn't Joseph Atzeroth get his patent to the land he had obviously settled, until April 14, 1870? Slusser assumed that the mix-up over the numbers and the intervening war years were the causes of delay.<sup>33</sup> This is true as far as it goes, and it goes much further.

What Jackson's letters to the Surveyor General and others show is that there were technical problems with the survey of the grant. As noted above, Jackson was hired to survey the Terra Ceia site in 1858. The survey was not accepted by the Commissioner of the General Land Office because the starting point of the survey was not sufficiently clear. In a letter to the Register and Receiver of the Tampa Land Office, dated October 24, 1859, Commissioner S. A. Smith wrote: "The testimony in question is not sufficiently clear upon the point at issue to justify this office in concurring in your joint opinion in the case." The letter also noted that, "a Stake or Blazed Tree bearing N.W." was not clear enough to establish a proper corner. Smith further questioned as to where this alleged point fell in relation to the official public surveys. All in all, Smith did not feel justified in approving the patent until, "competent testimony," was offered to properly establish the corner.<sup>34</sup> What happened next is of note in the history of Tampa Bay. The case was turned over to the Tampa Land Office for further work just as the War Between the States commenced. In a hand written note at the end of a letter from Acting Commissioner of the General Land Office, Joseph Wilson, dated May 24, 1859,

is the wording, - filed by John Darling in the Tampa Land Office on October 11, 1861, -- well after the start of the conflict.<sup>35</sup> As many of Darling's personal papers were burned during the war, it may be that the Atzeroth claim went up in these same flames.

However John Jackson was not a man to let a neighbor down. On June 29th, 1867, Jackson wrote to Hugh A. Corley, Register of State Lands, asking him to look into the granting of the patent to Atzeroth, "which he should have had years ago." He requested that Corley look - into the documents at hand in Tallahassee to see the justice of Atzeroth's claim. As Jackson pleaded: "He is one of our best Citizens and is very much injured by not having his Patent like other settlers under the Armed occupation." He also informed Corley that Atzeroth had written him to intervene as the surveyor of the land and one most knowledgeable about the boundary. Jackson followed up with another letter dated October 1, 1867, to Corley, asking that he intervene on behalf of Atzeroth with Dr. Stonelake, Register of Public Lands for the Reconstruction Government, pointing out to him the Justice of Atzeroth's claim. Jackson asked him to argue most strongly that the Atzeroths had totally complied with the provisions of the Armed Occupation Act and were living on the land.<sup>36</sup> Whether these entreaties on behalf of Atzeroth had the desired impact is difficult to judge, however, it should be noted that Jackson stressed their compliance with the law, their citizenship and the implication that unnamed "interested parties" were trying to oust them as arguments for the patent.<sup>37</sup> This last allegation was sure to set well with Stonelake and other Reconstruction bureaucrats in that it was almost universally assumed that these "interested parties" were

probably unreconstructed rebels and obstructionists.

Jackson continued to have an interest in his surveying career long after he had quit the fields and settled in as a full-time businessman. On April 27, 1861, shortly after the beginning of the Civil War, a "Military Company" known as "The Silver Grays," was organized in Tampa. These citizens were "not subject by law to militia duty" and were mustered for "home defense". John Jackson was a charter member and was listed as the company's 2nd Lieutenant".<sup>38</sup> He often wrote letters to the Surveyor General suggesting corrections to surveying problems that arose in his area and referred to his days as a United States Deputy Surveyor. His case was strong in asserting his position, as he was often employed by Surveyor General F. L. Dancy as an examiner of other surveyors, work. His widely recognized abilities as a surveyor, community leader and businessman assured him the continuing respect of his peers and the community as a whole. Jackson's life was full of adventure, daring, hard work and the true pioneering spirit that helped to settle the wilderness of Florida. It is now time to more fully recognize the accomplishments and life of this splendid pioneer.

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> *Florida Genealogical Journal*. 18(1982): 43; Karl H. Grismer, *Tampa. A History of the City of Tampa and the Tampa Bay Region of Florida*, St. Petersburg; St. Petersburg Printing Co., 1950; 351. Grismer gives Jackson's birthdate as 1819. Pauline Brown-Hazen, *The Blue Book and History of Pioneers, Tampa, Fla., 1914*. Tampa: Tribune Publishing Co., 1914, 11. This book gives Jackson's birthdate as 1809.

<sup>2</sup> Cecil Woodham-Smith. *The Great Hunger: Ireland 1845-1849*. New York: Harper & Row, Pub. 1962. 23-31.

<sup>3</sup> *Florida Genealogical Journal*; Grismer, 105-106.

<sup>4</sup> James Covington. "The Armed Occupation Act of 1842." *Florida Historical Quarterly*. 40 (1961). This article contains the best account of the provisions of the act.

<sup>5</sup> Armed Occupation Act Permit # 917. Newnansville Office. Undated letter found in: Drawer N-Z, Armed Occupation, File "Land Office Notices, Refusals, Acceptances, and Sundry Letters Land Records and Title Section, Florida Department of Natural Resources, Tallahassee, Florida.

<sup>6</sup> Grismcr. 106.

<sup>7</sup> *Florida Genealogical Journal*.

<sup>8</sup> Grismer. 106.

<sup>9</sup> Letter of April 5, 1847. Jackson to Butler. Letters and Reports to Surveyor General, Volume 1: 1825-1847. 819-20. Land Records and Title Section, Florida Department of Natural Resources, Tallahassee, Florida. The letters to the Surveyor General are bound into three volumes and are a fruitful source of primary information regarding the conditions of surveying the Florida Frontier. For the sake of brevity, they will be referred to only as Letters and Reports, volume number and page number, if given.

<sup>10</sup> Letter of June 12, 1847. Jackson to Butler. Ibid. 824.

<sup>11</sup> Letter of April 5, 1847. Jackson to Butler. Letters and Reports 1. 815-16.

<sup>12</sup> For Jackson's problems, see letters of July 17 and 29, 1848. Letters and Reports. 2. 107 and 111-12.

<sup>13</sup> Letter of October 30, 1848. Jackson to Butler. Letters and Reports. 2. 115.

<sup>14</sup> Letter of August 11, 1849. Jackson to Putnam. Letters and Reports. 2. 127-29.

<sup>15</sup> Letter of July 30, 1849. Jackson to Putnam. Letters and Reports. 2. 119-20.

<sup>16</sup> Grismer. 113-14

<sup>17</sup> Letter of August 11, 1849. Jackson to Putnam. Letters and Reports. 2. 127-29.

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<sup>18</sup> Donald L. Chamberlain. "Fort Brooke; A History." Unpublished Masters Thesis. Florida State University. June, 1968. 125.

<sup>19</sup> Grismcr. 123.

<sup>20</sup> Letter of July 1, 1854. Jackson to Westcott. Letters and Reports. 2. 139.

<sup>21</sup> Letter of January 12, 1855. Jackson to Westcott. Letters and Reports. 2. NP #.

<sup>22</sup> Letter of June 1854. Westcott to Jackson. Drawer: U. S. Surveyors H-N. File: U. S. Surveyor John Jackson. Land Records and Title Section, Florida Department of Natural Resources, Tallahassee, Florida. (Hereafter: "Jackson File.")

<sup>23</sup> Letter of August 14, 1854. Jackson to Westcott. Letters and Reports. 2. 143.

<sup>24</sup> Letter of September 10, 1854. Jackson to Westcott. Letters and Reports. 2. 147-48.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Letter of October 1, 1854. Jackson to Westcott. Letters and Reports. 2. 151.

<sup>27</sup> Letter of February 7, 1855. Jackson to Westcott. Letters and Reports. 2. NP #.

<sup>28</sup> Joe Knetsch. "John Westcott and the Coming of the Third Seminole War: Perspectives from Within." Paper presented to the Florida Historical Society's Annual Meeting. Tampa, Florida, May 12, 1990.

<sup>29</sup> Letter of February 20, 1858. Jackson to F. L. Dancy. Letters and Reports. 3. 3.

<sup>30</sup> Letters of March 30 and April 25, 1855. Jackson to Westcott. Letters and Reports. 2. 159-160. and Miscellaneous Letters to Surveyor General, Volume 2. 1849-56. 537.

<sup>31</sup> Letter of June 11, 1855. Jackson to Westcott. Letters and Reports. 2. 163.

<sup>32</sup> Letter of June 29, 1867. Jackson to Hugh Corley. Jackson File.

<sup>33</sup> Cathy B. Slusser. "The Joseph Atzeroth Family: Manatee County Pioneers. " *Tampa Bay History*. 4 (Fall/Winter 1982): 20-34.

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<sup>34</sup> Letter of October 24, 1859. Smith to the Register and Receiver. Tampa Comr's Letters, Volume 16. Unnumbered. P. K. Yonge Library of Florida History, University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida. Thanks to Elizabeth Alexander, the individual land office letters are preserved in good condition and are an invaluable source for anyone interested in local land conditions, sales, patents, etc. The individual land offices were: Tallahassee, Tampa, Newnansville, St. Augustine and Gainesville.

<sup>35</sup> Copy of a letter dated May 24, 1859. Wilson to Atzcroth. Jackson File.

<sup>36</sup> Letter of October 1, 1867. Jackson to Corley. Jackson File.

<sup>37</sup> Letter of June 29, 1867. Jackson to Corley. Jackson File.

<sup>38</sup> Tampa *Florida Peninsular*, May 4, 1861.



# COLD WARRIORS IN THE HOT SUNSHINE: USF AND THE JOHNS COMMITTEE

By JAMES A. SCHNUR

In early 1962, a state senator quietly dispatched two agents to a motel room on the northern outskirts of Tampa. Senator Charley E. Johns instructed Chief Investigator Remus J. Strickland and Attorney Mark Hawes to search for perceived communists and subversives congregating near Temple Terrace. Instead of investigating known spies or criminal deviants, this secret inquiry targeted students and faculty at the newly-opened University of South Florida (USF). As members of the Florida Legislative Investigation Committee (FLIC)-a body commonly referred to as the Johns Committee-Hawes and Strickland dutifully served lawmakers who sought to preserve long-standing customs and prejudices. Between 1956 and 1965, this state-funded committee attempted to evolve into a starchamber court that would act as final arbiter of civil liberties and racial etiquette in Florida. The FLIC's probe of student habits, teaching practices, and curricular materials inflicted greater damage at USF than it did in earlier inquests at the state's other public universities. This study of the egregious USF investigation assesses the political climate that created the Johns Committee and nurtured assaults on academic freedom in Florida.

State authorities scrutinized university activities long before they empowered the Johns Committee. When the legislature approved the Buckman Act in 1905, it consolidated Florida's seminaries into a state university system governed by a single Board of Control. By circumscribing the Board's authority, politicians known as

*porkchoppers* preserved their budgetary sovereignty and dictated an educational policy which suited their constituencies. Porkchoppers saw the public interest as merely an aggregate of special interests, and exuded a Jacksonian distrust of experts as well as a folkish dislike of intellectuals. Although the 1885 state constitution required decennial reapportionment of the legislature, porkchoppers offered few concessions to their *lambchopper* counterparts. The phrase "one man, one vote" meant little to most Floridians when small counties such as Jefferson, Bradford, and Wakulla had the same legislative representation as Duval (Jacksonville), Orange (Orlando), Pinellas (St. Petersburg), and Hillsborough (Tampa). In this malapportioned legislature, porkchoppers assumed a predominant role, and often worked in conjunction with governors to assure that higher education stressed pragmatic goals rather than esoteric pursuits. One state executive even threatened to burn any book in the University of Florida library that failed to meet his moral criteria.<sup>1</sup> While most governors expected schools to exercise paternalistic authority over their students, the Florida Supreme Court codified the doctrine of *in loco parentis* in its 1925 *Stetson University v. Hunt* ruling. This decision affirmed the right of schools to create any regulations that a parent could make to control the general welfare, mental training, and moral discipline of their children. The state asserted that it could seize this authority by default if school officials failed to maintain harmony on campus.<sup>2</sup>

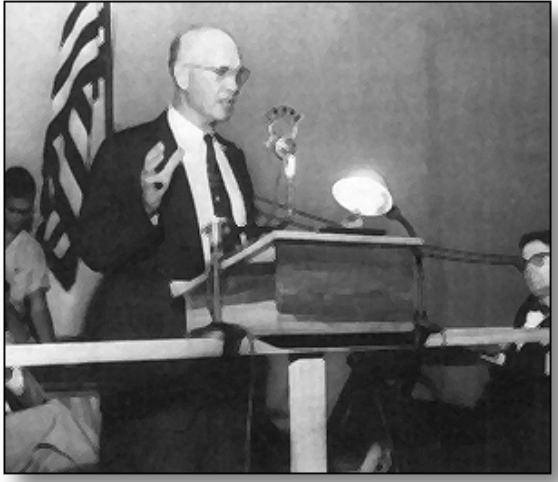
Under such conditions, neither the Board of Control nor the university protected individuals who violated Southern customs. Blatant violations of academic freedom occurred. For example, after Enoch M. Banks claimed the Confederacy had blundered by fighting the Civil War, University of Florida (UF) administrators promptly dismissed him from the faculty in 1911. Nine years later, Newell L. Sims became a victim of a Red Scare on the Gainesville campus.<sup>3</sup> In 1926 legislators and a former governor attacked a professor at the Florida State College for Women (FSCW) in Tallahassee because he posited the theory of evolution. Although the FSCW president prevented the instructor's dismissal, he yielded to outside pressures by removing certain books from the open stacks of the library. Even the mere discussion of political ideologies aroused suspicion. In 1937 a legislator from Lake County heard that some FSCW students had participated in a tag day to raise funds for a pacifist organization. Fearing that such an activity might expose the participants to the theories of communism, bolshevism, and fascism, he persuaded his colleagues to initiate a two-year study by a joint legislative committee into un-American influences at Florida schools and colleges.<sup>4</sup>

Demographic changes and the postwar struggle for civil rights goaded porkchoppers. As troops returned at the end of the Second World War, colleges and universities expanded to accommodate burgeoning enrollments. Government grants and loans offered many young adults and veterans an educational opportunity unknown to their forefathers. Lambchopper politicians in Florida's urban counties benefited from an ever-increasing constituency that expected substantive reform in Florida's obsolescent structure of

government and in its malapportioned system of representation. African Americans, disenfranchised and circumscribed by Jim Crow customs since Reconstruction, viewed World War II as Manichean battle between ideologies. After defending their country's democratic tenets overseas, many blacks demanded civil liberties, greater integration into the nation's social fabric, and the right to participate in the American polity. Groups such as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), while active prior to the war, became even more vocal by using the federal judiciary as their forum.

Lawsuits in many areas, but especially in the field of public education, soon filled tribunal dockets. In May 1954, the U.S. Supreme Court's unanimous *Brown vs. Board of Education of Topeka* decision forever redefined race relations. This landmark pronouncement asserted that segregated schools violated the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. While most Floridians viewed the judgment with a sense of moderation, porkchoppers considered this decision a blasphemous invasion of states' rights foisted upon Southerners by subversives or agitators. Porkchoppers and school administrators reacted to *Brown* by employing McCarthyite tactics and limiting the discussion of controversial ideas whenever and wherever possible.<sup>5</sup>

By the spring of 1956, porkchoppers and university officials responded to the emerging civil rights movement. They expressed concern about teaching methods, campus publications, and the issue of integration. The Board of Control's chairman demanded that universities expunge any books or curricula which he deemed socialist" or "immoral". At Florida State University (FSU)-formerly the State College for Women -- President Doak



**Right-wing Tampa politician Sumter Lowry, Jr., figured prominently in the Johns Committee investigation at USE In this picture Lowry is seen campaigning in his unsuccessful run for the governorship in 1956.**

Photo from **Tampa: A Pictorial History** by Hampton Dunn

Campbell exacted deference from the campus community, suppressed the liberal editorial policy of the semi-weekly *Florida Flambeau* newspaper, and refused to tolerate any breach of racial segregation. He forced the campus chapter of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) to cancel a regional conference at FSU when he learned that black faculty members from the neighboring Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University (FAMU) planned to attend. As a corollary to the emerging cold war climate, advocates of "massive resistance" sought to curtail the discussion of race relations and forestall federally mandated school integration. By questioning the loyalty of intellectuals and liberals in educational institutions, porkchoppers and their supporters attempted to convince Floridians that universities fostered subversion and required extensive supervision by state authorities.<sup>6</sup>

A senator from Starke soon offered his assistance. As governor of Florida from 1953 to 1955, Charley Johns had promised to dismiss any professor that supported the NAACP's activities in Florida. He also encouraged the legislature to create an investigative committee in earlier biennial sessions, but lawmakers never sanctioned his proposals. When Johns reassumed the senate presidency during the 1956 special session, he modified his previous demands for a body to study criminal activities when he introduced the Florida Legislative Investigation Committee Act. He envisaged this act as a means of circumventing the *Brown* decision, quelling the Tallahassee bus boycott, and halting demands for civil rights reform. Fellow legislators approved Johns's bill before the special session adjourned.<sup>7</sup>

Committee members promptly established organizational procedures and conducted investigations of civil rights activities. The Johns Committee met in executive session, permitted only the chairman to make public statements, and refused to release any information before completing an inquiry. The FLIC originally sought to dismantle Florida chapters of the NAACP by insinuating that their attorneys had coerced African Americans into desegregation lawsuits. While the Committee issued subpoenas and attempted to prove that NAACP members had committed barratry, protests at Tallahassee's two universities and a city-wide bus boycott coordinated by the integrationist Inter-Civic Council gained momentum. By early 1957, the FLIC probed for alleged communist affiliations at both FSU and FAMU. Concerns that integrationists had exacerbated racial unrest prompted Johns to claim that his Committee would purge "Red influences among the faculty (because) we don't want any Communist professors teaching in your

university." When a UF faculty council adamantly called for the immediate desegregation of facilities, Johns shifted the focus of his inquest from Tallahassee to Gainesville.<sup>8</sup>

The Johns Committee's inquiry took a different approach at the University of Florida. When lawmakers originally empowered the FLIC, they stipulated that this interim investigative body deliver a report of its activities at every biennial session of the legislature. Members of the state senate and house of representatives would then decide whether to continue the Committee's life or disband this organization. In late 1958 Johns faced the specter of informing fellow legislators that his Committee had failed to demonstrate communist complicity by either the NAACP or the academic community. He decided to shock his colleagues into extending the FLIC's enabling legislation for another two years by searching for homosexuals at the Gainesville campus. After Hawes and Strickland delivered their voluminous report at a closed senate session in April 1959, not only did the FLIC obtain permission to operate during the next biennium, it also received a mandate to "investigate any agitator who may appear in Florida." Although the Committee possessed no constitutional authority to search for homosexuals, its members forced UF administrators to expel more than fifty students and fire over twenty faculty and staff members. Ironically, while officials at UF accepted the FLIC's findings without question, some "subversives" and homosexuals escaped investigation. Political motives thus played a paramount role, as they would again when the Committee moved south to Tampa.<sup>9</sup>

Porkchoppers had opposed the creation of a state university in Tampa. Even before the Cabinet and Board of Education chartered

the University of South Florida in December 1956, Board of Control officials reassured politicians and alumni from FSU and UF that those schools would retain their primacy. In an August 1956 letter from Chairman Fred Kent to Executive Director J. Broward Culpepper, Kent wrote a side note on copies distributed to the FSU and UF presidents, promising that any new schools would become senior colleges rather than true four-year institutions. When John S. Allen resigned the vice presidency at UF in June 1957 to preside over the infant university, he saw matters differently. He envisioned USF as a place "not bound to the past by any traditions (with) no fences, no boundaries holding us and limiting our search for knowledge or our methods of teaching." In their desire to foster a true scholarly community, President Allen and his carefully chosen administrators vigorously pursued talented faculty, inaugurated an interdisciplinary program known as the All-University approach, and commissioned a think piece entitled *Intellectual Tone for a State University*. Contributors to this extended essay foresaw great potential at USF. They believed no idea fell beyond the schools purview of inquiry, and encouraged frank discussion of religious and political beliefs, even though the larger community believed that such subjects required detached neutrality.<sup>10</sup>

Comity fostered by the All-University approach disappeared by early 1962. Thomas Wenner, an instructor in a course entitled *The American Idea*, had castigated the John Birch Society in a lecture. Society members responded by calling Wenner a communist dupe and demanding his immediate dismissal. By February, Wenner changed his teaching practices and allied himself with members of the community who sought to discredit the academic stature of USE. When the chairman of Wenner's

department invited Jerome Davis as a guest speaker, Wenner befriended George Wickstrom-publisher of the conservative *Zephyrhills* News -- as well as groups such as the Tampa Bay Baptist Association and Sumter Lowry's Florida Coalition of Patriotic Societies. Collectively, they demanded that President Allen cancel Davis's appearance and refuse him entry to the campus. Davis, no stranger to controversy, served as an associate professor at Yale until that school's president and the House Un-American Activities Committee forced his dismissal.<sup>11</sup>

President Allen failed to appease either side. When he pronounced Davis unfit to speak due to his controversial past, members of the AAUP chapter at USF unanimously passed a resolution condemning the action. Students responded by claiming Allen's decision set a terrible precedent: They feared the administration would paternalistically censor any speaker whose message might challenge the porkchoppers' hegemony. Conversely, Lowry and a group of concerned parents faulted Allen for allowing the department chairman to solicit Davis in the first place. In his newspaper articles, Wickstrom portrayed Wenner as the only true patriot at USE. Soon Lowry joined Wickstrom, Wenner, and a group of parents in an effort to forbid liberal speakers from appearing at USE. In March 1962, Mrs. Jane Tarr Smith -- a concerned parent and mother of the student government vice president -- met with other parents and compiled grievances in a report. Smith believed teachers should not view academic freedom as a license to teach evolution as fact or expose students to "Stupid, boring, as well as immoral" literary works such as *Brave New World*. On April 9, nearly twenty parents and Tampa Mayor Julian Lane met with the Smiths. Instead of resolving their differences with the USF administration, the

parents considered Johns's FLIC the appropriate agency to handle their concerns.<sup>12</sup>

On April 10, 1962, the Johns Committee quietly initiated its investigation of USF from a Tampa motel room. Strickland and Hawes conducted a probe of alleged homosexual activities, subversive influences, and questionable reading materials. Similar to the University of Florida inquiry, police removed students and faculty from their classes for questioning. By mid-May, Wenner faulted Hawes and Strickland for acting too cautiously. Fashioning himself as the expert on communist infiltration at USF, Wenner decided to inform the *St. Petersburg Times* of the investigation with the hope that such publicity would force the campus community to acquiesce. Allen and his administrators remained unaware of the FLIC's activities until Wenner's story appeared in the May 18 edition of the *Times*. Startled by this news, Allen demanded that the Johns Committee immediately move its hearings from the motel room to the university. He also suspended Wenner, with the intention of firing the insubordinate lecturer. The FLIC attempted to distance itself from Wenner by claiming that it came to Tampa to defend USF from outside threats, not endanger the academic climate.<sup>13</sup>

Within a two week period, the FLIC collected approximately 2500 pages of testimony during its stay at the Tampa campus. Hawes and Strickland interrogated those who chose to give testimony in the presence of a tape recorder belonging to the university. This arrangement prevented Strickland from selectively editing FLIC accounts of the interviews taken by the Committee. After concluding their official investigation in mid June, the FLIC continued to take statements \* the motel

room. While Johns remarked on June 6 that the FLIC did not find "too much wrong with this beautiful university," he hinted that he would recommend disciplinary action to state authorities. In a letter to Allen, Wenner's supervisor expressed his fears that Johns either intended to seize USF from the Board of Control's jurisdiction or wanted to demoralize the faculty and dismantle the university.<sup>14</sup>

Another controversy erupted at USF in June 1962. A few months earlier, the school had courted a retired professor from Vanderbilt University, Denna Frank Fleming. As part of a long-range program to attract scholars of note, South Florida contacted Fleming about a part-time lectureship in the departments of political science and history. Fleming, who left Vanderbilt after thirty-four years of service due to a mandatory retirement age, considered overtures from USF officials as proof that administrators planned to appoint him, and he declined a position at another institution and purchased a home in Tampa. When he returned to Nashville after visiting USF, he found many letters in his mailbox that welcomed him to the faculty. Members of Smith's group of parents and Lowry's coalition did not extend similar cordialities. They considered Fleming a "pro-Soviet apologist" and his seminal work, *The Cold War and Its Origins*, a subversive text. Although Allen seemed less than enthusiastic about hiring Fleming after the FLIC's recent probe, he transmitted the contract to the Board of Control for its approval.<sup>15</sup>

Five days later, Allen abruptly rescinded Fleming's nomination. The president had received an unsolicited, anonymously-mailed letter from an Orlando member of Lowry's coalition. The envelope contained correspondence from Vanderbilt's chancellor, Harvie Branscomb, which

claimed that Fleming had soured and lost his perspective as a teacher. Although numerous letters of recommendation had supported Fleming's appointment, Allen withdrew his nomination solely on the basis of his communications with Branscomb. The Johns Committee also participated in this attack when it sought to discredit D. F. Fleming by implicating him with communist front affiliations that actually belonged to a Daniel J. Fleming. It sought to bolster its arguments by accepting false testimony from a former Vanderbilt student who claimed he had attended Fleming's class, even though the attendance rolls and registrar's records proved the student had never enrolled in any course taught by Fleming. While the university hired Fleming without the Board of Control's approval, it also terminated him without offering any semblance of due process. Fleming soon contacted the national AAUP office and asked for an investigation.<sup>16</sup>

After the 1962 summer session ended, the FLIC hoped once again to embarrass university administrators. Although Johns originally promised to transmit his summary of the USF investigation to campus authorities prior to its public release, he allowed a Tampa newspaper to publish a selective fifty-three page excerpt of the report while most USF administrators, including Allen, spent their vacations outside of Florida. In the text of this abbreviated report, members of the Johns Committee blamed school officials and faculty for immoral and subversive influences at USF. Professors, the FLIC argued, had cajoled naive students into questioning orthodox religious, moral, and sexual practices. In addition to the Fleming affair and the transcript in the newspaper, Allen soon confronted another violation in academic freedom as the fall semester began.<sup>17</sup>

Sheldon Grebstein joined the USF faculty during the 1962 fall term. An assistant professor of English who formerly taught at the University of Kentucky for nine years, Grebstein came to South Florida to experience the ambitious curriculum, advancement opportunities, and pioneer spirit that had attracted other instructors. Although he had heard of the Johns Committee before departing from Kentucky, he thought his past teaching record and impeccable academic credentials gave him little reason to worry. Grebstein introduced students in his advanced writing class to various essays and reviews, including a work by Norman Podhoretz that he had previously used while an instructor at Kentucky. Entitled "The Know-Nothing Bohemians," this article criticized beatnik authors by excerpting passages from their own writings. Though this article did contain mild profanity, it had appeared in a respectable scholarly journal and had served as a supplement to the curriculum in colleges and universities throughout the country. When Johns obtained copies of the Podhoretz essay, he met with the Board of Control and its members promptly summoned Allen to Gainesville and demanded Grebstein's dismissal.<sup>18</sup>

Allen and his advisors instead decided to suspend Grebstein. In September the Board had issued a policy statement which required all curricular materials to fall within the arbitrarily defined boundaries the Board has established for "good taste" and "common decency". Grebstein defended his selection of the essay, claiming that he decided to include it in his syllabus before the Board's directive took effect. In addition, Grebstein considered his students mature members of the university community, not children who should suffer from institutional censorship. He immediately called for Allen to appoint a

faculty committee to investigate the charges.<sup>19</sup>

In light of the Grebstein suspension, Florida's academic community rallied to preserve academic freedom. Faculty at FSU and UF no longer remained passive about the crisis at their sister institution in Tampa. Michael Kasha, FSU's professor of the year, told a homecoming crowd on November 6 that he and other top scholars would leave the state if threats to the intellectual climate persisted. Gordon W. Blackwell, who succeeded Doak Campbell as FSU president, joined with his faculty senate in condemning the Board's restrictive policies. AAUP chapters throughout the state passed resolutions of support, as did the Florida and Florida State alumni associations, the Tampa branch of the American Association of University Women, the Florida Library Association, and other organizations.<sup>20</sup>

Students, considering freedom to teach a necessary prerequisite for political democracy, demanded greater autonomy for educational institutions such as USE The fear that confronted students at FAMU, FSU, and UF a few years earlier gave way to a sense of anger. An anonymously-written song, set to the tune of "Santa Claus is Coming to Town", echoed the sentiments of many in the USF community:

You better watch out,  
You better not cry,  
You better be good, I'm telling you  
why, Charley Johns is coming to  
town.

He's making a list,  
Checking it twice,  
Gonna find out who's  
Naughty and nice,  
Charley J. is coming to town.

He knows where you've been  
sleeping,  
He knows when you're awake,  
He knows if you've been bad or  
good,  
So be good for USF's sake.

So, please look,  
Around every corner,  
If you don't  
You'll be a goner,  
Cause Charley J. is coming to town.

He's got a big mic,  
And he's got a big camera,  
You may find yourself in Vistarama,  
Good old Charley is coming to town.

So in conclusion,  
May I say,  
You'll get a call from him someday,  
No one else but good old Charley J.<sup>21</sup>

Outrage gripped the campus on November 17. Although Allen accepted the faculty committee's conclusions, he censured Grebstein for failing to use materials that promoted a proper moral tone. While Allen originally hoped to offer Grebstein a full reinstatement, he worried that neither the Board of Control nor the Johns Committee would accept anything less than immediate dismissal. His compromise, which rankled everyone at USF including himself, allowed Grebstein to continue his teaching duties, but with an administrative slap on the wrist for using "poor judgment". Though some faculty members soon asked for Allen's removal, Grebstein knew that such an action would not solve the university's problems. The FLIC represented a strong anti-intellectual current in Florida that would cherish any insubordination against Allen, and porkchoppers might consider discord at USF a valid excuse to replace Allen with a president more sympathetic to

their demands. Despite offers of promotion and tenure, Grebstein concluded that he could not teach at USF as long as the Johns Committee continued its witch hunt. Before the 1962- 1963 academic year ended, Grebstein had resigned from the University of South Florida to accept a position at Harpur College in New York.<sup>22</sup>

As the 1963 legislative session began, the Johns Committee hoped to extend its mandate for another biennium. Sumter Lowry even encouraged lawmakers to change the FLIC from an interim body to a permanent investigative committee. When Mark Hawes spoke before lawmakers on April 18, 1963, he claimed that activities at USF openly defied the state's taxpayers and endangered the well-being of Floridians. Hawes delivered his report verbally so no permanent transcript of his report would remain. Fortunately, a lambchopper from the Hillsborough County delegation obtained a recording of Hawes speech and gave it to Allen. In an unprecedented move, President Allen received permission to defend USF before the legislature. Six days after Hawes had lambasted his school, Allen refuted the FLIC's charges and reminded politicians that "a college is not engaged in making ideas safe for students, (but instead) it is engaged in making students safe for ideas." Although Allen garnered applause and moral support, Johns attained something greater: Legislators granted the FLIC a two-year extension and more that doubled its appropriation.<sup>23</sup>

By 1964, however, the Johns Committee's influence had waned. Throughout the South, segregationists' threats to academic freedom decreased after Congress passed the 1964 Civil Rights Act. In that same year, the national office of the American Association of University Professors released its report on the 1962 D. F. Fleming case. The AAUP



faulted Allen, the Board of Control, and the Johns Committee for USF's deteriorating intellectual climate. The University of South Florida became the first public university in the state placed under AAUP censure, in effect warning that the institution could not guarantee freedom to teach and learn to members of its community. The AAUP did not remove this opprobrium until Allen, members of the USF chapter of the AAUP, and officials from the national headquarters negotiated a suitable agreement for Fleming and modified university policies in the spring of 1968.<sup>24</sup> The FLIC alienated itself from its porkchopper supporters when it released a booklet entitled *Homosexuality and Citizenship in Florida*. Commonly known as the "purple pamphlet", this book contained a descriptive glossary and homoerotic photographs that shocked many Floridians. This work, devised as a way to inform residents of homosexual practices, actually became popular reading material in gay book stores outside of Florida. Committee members had little choice but to disband the FLIC when its enabling legislation expired on July 1, 1965, because they could no longer garner public confidence. To prevent Johns and his porkchopper allies from suffering further embarrassment, lawmakers sealed all records of this state-funded agency from inspection until December 2028. Even though the FLIC ended its McCarthyite investigations twenty-seven years ago, current exemptions in the state's otherwise liberal Public Records Law will prevent public scrutiny of the Johns Committee for nearly thirty-six more years.<sup>25</sup>

The struggle that threatened USF during its early years represented a clash between old and new Florida. When legislators awarded Hillsborough County the new university in 1956, some residents evinced porkchopper attitudes and distrusted the promise of

higher education. Other citizens viewed the new and integrateJ public university as a threat to the University of Tampa, a smaller and privately- operated school located along the west side of the Hillsborough River in downtown Tampa. The failure of Johns, Wenner, Lowry, Smith, and other combatants to unite under a single leader offered USF's academic community an opportunity to muster support and preserve the university.<sup>26</sup> Fortunately, many Tampans saw the promise of higher education along Florida's West Coast. A trip to the Special Collections Department of the Tampa Campus Library affords researchers an opportunity to gauge this support. While porkchoppers in the malapportioned legislature managed to postpone many of Governor LeRoy Collins's ambitious reform measures, they could not indefinitely battle Florida's changing demography. Residents of the Tampa Bay area would no longer tolerate a legislative process that often gave small towns such as Perry and Starke a representative advantage over their growing urban metropolis. To most citizens in west central Florida, Johns intervened at USF solely to preserve the antiquated system of patronage and personal politics that guaranteed his re-election.<sup>27</sup>

The University of South Florida acquired permanent scars from the Johns Committee investigation. Allen sacrificed his All-University approach and ambitious curriculum to prevent the Board of Control and Johns Committee from dismantling the university he loved. Although the school's phenomenal growth as a commuter school certainly changed its character, to a larger extent USF's fundamental intellectual principles became a casualty of the battle to preserve the institution. After sustaining attacks from legislators, parents, and porkchoppers, USF's Intellectual Tone for a State University seemed more like a pipe dream

than an attainable goal. Legacies of the Johns Committee continue to haunt USF to this day.<sup>28</sup>

Dr. Sheldon Grebstein currently serves as president of the State University of New York at Purchase. Although three decades have passed since he departed from USF, he retains vivid memories of the episode.

Before moving to Tampa, he regarded teaching as a noble profession. Scholarly life offered the unique opportunity to discuss, debate, and analyze ideas with others who enjoyed intellectual discourse. But his brief stay at USF transformed him: No longer did education take place in a secluded, impregnable ivory tower. He now saw the classroom as the battlefield and his colleagues as defenders of academic freedom. Indeed, he viewed the incident at South Florida as a salutary, even ennobling, experience. It alerted him to the precarious nature of the academy in American life. Most importantly, it demonstrated to him that the university community must forever remain vigilant.<sup>29</sup>

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> William C. Havard and Loren P. Beth, *The Politics of Mis-Representation: Rural-Urban Conflict In the Florida Legislature* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University, 1962), 33-34; Richard Hofstadter, *Anti-Intellectualism In American Life* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1970), 12-14; Parke B. Loren and Ira A. England, "Florida Education: Running a Political Obstacle Course," *PhiDelta Kappan* (September 1968): 28; Jack Wheat, "Who's Calling the Shots?: The Politics of Higher Education" Series (Gainesville: Gainesville Sun, 1988), 4; Wayne Flynt, *Cracker Messiah: Governor Sidney J. Catts of Florida* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University, 1977), 196-198.

<sup>2</sup> *Stetson University v. Hunt*, 88 Fla. 510, 102 So. 637 (1925).

<sup>3</sup> Howard K. Beale, *A History of Freedom of Teaching in American Schools* (New York: Octagon Books, 1966), 201; Flint, *Cracker Messiah*, 254.

<sup>4</sup> Francis R. Allen, *As I Saw It: History of the Sociology Department at Florida State University, 1948-1979* (Tallahassee: Florida State University, 1984), 8; St. Petersburg Times 22 May 1937, 11, 1 June 1937, 9. While Representative LeRoy Collins attempted to remove all references to pacifism from the legislation, other legislators countered by seeking to extend the investigation beyond alleged subversion in the schools into a broader state-wide inquest. Another measure considered during the 1937 biennial session advocated the creation of a five-member state board of censors to regulate the sale, distribution, and display of literature, pictures, and postcards. *Tallahassee Daily Democrat*, 19 May 1937, 1, 6.

<sup>5</sup> David R. Colburn and Richard K. Scher, "Aftermath of the Brown Decision: The Politics of Interposition In Florida," *Tequesta* 37 (1977): 62-63; Hofstadter, *Anti-Intellectualism*, 40-41.

<sup>6</sup> University of Florida *Alligator* 9 March 1956, 1, 16 March 1956, 1; Robert Folsom, "How Free Is College Journalism?" *New Republic*, 2 April 1956, 11. See also: Joseph A. Tomberlin, 'The Negro and Florida's System of Education: The Aftermath of the *Brown* Case' (Ph.D. Dissertation, Florida State University, 1967). Before assuming the presidency at Florida State, Doak S. Campbell became involved in an academic freedom controversy in Tennessee. For more information, see: "Academic Freedom and Tenure: State Teachers College, Murfreesboro, Tennessee," *AAUP Bulletin* 28 (December 1942): 662677.

<sup>7</sup> Bonnie S. Stark, "McCarthyism in Florida: Charley Johns and the Florida Legislative Investigation Committee, July, 1956 to July, 1965" (M.A. Thesis, University of South Florida, 1985), 2,6-9,16-18.

<sup>8</sup> Steven F. Lawson, "The Florida Legislative Investigation Committee and the Constitutional Adjustment of Race Relations, in *An Uncertain Tradition: Constitutionalism and the History of the South*, eds. Kermit W. Hall and James W. Ely (Athens: University of Georgia, 1989), 297-300; Stark, "McCarthyism in Florida," 17-18, 31, 92; Adam Fairclough, *To Redeem the Soul of America: The Southern Christian Leadership Conference and Martin Luther King, Jr.* (Athens, University of Georgia, 1987), 19; Jacksonville Florida Star 14 July 1956, 1, 22 November 1956, 1, 9 February 1957, 1;

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"Report of the Committee to Consider Admission of Negro Students to the University of Florida," 21 July 1958, Box 48, J. Wayne Reitz Papers, University of Florida Special Collections, Gainesville.

<sup>9</sup> Chapter 57-125, Laws of Florida; Stark, "McCarthyism in Florida," 31, 109-111; University of Florida *Alligator*, 11 February 1958, 1, 31 October 1958, 1, 20 February 1959, 1, 19 February 1960, 1; *Transcript of Testimony*, p. 54, Box 1, Florida Bar Association Papers, State Archives of Florida, Tallahassee; Chapter 59-207, Laws of Florida; Minutes of the Florida Legislative Investigation Committee (Jacksonville), Box 9, Clerk of the House of Representatives Papers, State Archives. For additional sources, consult the Herbert S. Phillips Papers and the Ruth Perry Collection, University of South Florida Special Collections, Tampa. The author has compiled a detailed finding aid for the Perry Collection.

<sup>10</sup> Fred H. Kent to J. Broward Culpepper, 2 August 1956, Box 22, Doak S. Campbell Files, State Archives; *St. Petersburg Times* 3 September 1957, IB; John Egerton, "The Controversy: One Man's View of Politics In the Making of a University" (Unpublished Manuscript, 1965), 40, 62-66, John Egerton File on the Johns Committee, University of South Florida Special Collections, Tampa. The author has compiled a finding aid for the Egerton File. See also: Lewis B. Mayhew, ed., *Intellectual Tone for a State University* (Tampa: University of South Florida, 1961), 1-6, 18-23, 28; Russell M. Cooper and Margaret B. Fisher, *The Vision of a Contemporary University: A Case Study of Expansion and Development in American Higher Education, 1950-1975* (Tampa: University of South Florida, 1982), 17-18.

<sup>11</sup> Egerton, "Controversy," 62-66, Egerton File; W.W. Webb (of John Birch Society) to Thomas Wenner, 20 January 1962, Box 4, John S. Allen Papers, University of South Florida Special Collections, Tampa; Stark, "McCarthyism in Florida," 128; Gara LaMarche "Champion of the Public Interest: Highlights of the 50-year Work of the Academic Freedom Committee of the ACLU," (Unpublished Manuscript, ACLU, 1976), 15, Box 10, American Civil Liberties Union of Florida Papers (1955-1981), University of Florida Special Collections, Gainesville; Tampa Bay Baptist Association Letter, 1962, Johns Committee Folders, USF General Files, University of South Florida Special Collections, Tampa; Tampa Times (USF Edition) 15 May 1961, 1. Ironically, years after

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George Wickstrom attacked USF from his Zephyrhills newspaper, his daughter served on the staff of the campus newspaper, the USF Oracle. Dr. Charles W. Arnade, Interview with Author, 29 November 1990.

<sup>12</sup> *Tampa Times (USF Edition)* 5 March 1962, 2, 12 March 1962, 1; *Report of the Florida Legislative Investigation Committee to the State Board of Control and the State Board of Education* (on USF). 6-7, Box 9, Clerk of the House of Representatives Papers, Series 517, State Archives, Tallahassee; Memo from USF-AAUP Chapter to John S. Allen, 2 March 1962, Box 4, Allen Papers; Egerton, "Controversy," 73-74, Egerton File; Stark, "McCarthyism in Florida," 131-136; "Academic Freedom and Tenure University of South Florida," *AAUP Bulletin* 50 (March 1964): 45; *Zephyrhills News* 25 May 1962, 4; *St. Petersburg Times* 18 May 1962, IB, 3B, 20 May 1962, 2D, 26 May 1962, 3B; Jane Tarr Smith, "Report on USF", 2d ed., 2-7, 18, Johns Committee Folders. USF General Files.

<sup>13</sup> Egerton, "Controversy," 79, 82, 85-88, 93, Egerton File; *Tampa Times (USF Edition)* 21 May 1962, 1; *St. Petersburg Times* 18 May 1962, 1B, 3B, 25 May 1962, IA; Murray G. Ross, ed., *New Universities In the Modern World* (New York: St. Martin's, 1966), 165.

<sup>14</sup> *FLIC Report*, 1-4, 30-32, 41-42, Box 9, Clerk of the House Papers, State Archives; *St. Petersburg Times* 24 May 1962, 1 B, 26 May 1962, 7A, 3B, 7 June 1962, 20B; Robert Warner to John S. Allen, 25 May 1962, Box 4, Allen Papers; Stark, "McCarthyism in Florida," 150-151.

<sup>15</sup> *Tampa Times (USF Edition)*, 30 April 1962, 1, 29 April 1963, 1; R. R. Purdy (Vice Chancellor of Vanderbilt University) to D. F. Fleming, 6 January 1961, Johns Committee Folders, USF General Files; "Academic Freedom and Tenure: USF," 44, 49; *FLIC Report*, 12-15, Clerk of the House Papers, State Archives; Florida Coalition of Patriotic Societies, *Bulletin #79*, 2 July 1962, Smith, "Report," 9, Johns Committee Folders, USF General Files.

<sup>16</sup> "Academic Freedom and Tenure USF," 44-51, 56; Allen to Fleming, 21 July 1962, Johns Committee Folders, USF General Files; Egerton, Controversy, 111- 113, 221. Egerton File.

<sup>17</sup> Egerton, "Controversy," 117, Egerton File; *FLIC Report*, 7-8, 11-12, 19-20, 26-27, 50-52, Box 9, Clerk Of the House Papers, State Archives.

<sup>18</sup> Dr. Sheldon N. Grebstein, Telephone Interview with Author, 15 November 1990; Stark; "McCarthyism in Florida," 178-180. To read the article in question, see Norman Podhoretz, "The Know-Nothing Bohemians," *Partisan Review* 25 (Spring 1958): 305-318.

<sup>19</sup> *St. Petersburg Times* 23 October 1962, 1B; "Report to the President of the University of South Florida by President's Faculty Advisory Committee on the Suspension of Dr. Sheldon Grebstein," 9 November 1962, Johns Committee Folders, USF General Files; Egerton, "Controversy," 155-159; Grebstein Interview, 15 November 1990.

<sup>20</sup> University of Florida *Alligator* 26 October 1962, 1, 1 November 1962, 1, 4 November 1962, 1, 3, 6 November 1962, 2, 11 November 1962, 7; "Academic Freedom and Tenure: USF," 54; *St. Petersburg Times* 3 November 1962, 1B, 9 December 1962, 12A; University of Florida Alumni Association, *Florida's Crisis In Higher Education* (Gainesville: n.p., 1961(?)), 9; AAUW Tampa Area Report and Resolution, 1962, Johns Committee Folders, USF General Files.

<sup>21</sup> Anonymous Verse, undated, Johns Committee Folders, USF General Files.

<sup>22</sup> "Report from the President on Sheldon N. Grebstein, Assistant Professor of English," 14 November 1962, Johns Committee Folders, USF General Files; Dr. Don Harkness Interview, USF Silver Anniversary Oral History Project, 7, University Archives, University of South Florida Special Collections, Tampa; *St. Petersburg Times* 18 November 1962, 1A; Egerton, "Controversy," 169, 172, Egerton File; Grebstein Interview, 15 November 1990; *Tampa Times* (USF Edition) 19 November 1962, 1, 11 March 1963, 1.

<sup>23</sup> *Tampa Times* (USF Edition) 29 April 1963, 1, 12; Ross, ed., *New Universities*, 165; John S. Allen, "Address to the State Legislature," 24 April 1963, Johns Committee Folders, USF General Files. Chapter 63545, *Laws of Florida*, appropriated \$155,000 for the FLIC during the 1963-1965 biennium. Two years earlier, the Committee received only \$75,000.

<sup>24</sup> William P. Fidler, "Academic Freedom In the South Today," *AAUP Bulletin* 51 (December 1965): 414; "Academic Freedom and Tenure: USF", 56-57; *AAUP Bulletin* 54 (June 1968): 178.

<sup>25</sup> *St. Petersburg Times* 19 March 1964, 1A; D. Stephen Kahn to Author, 17 June 1991.

<sup>26</sup> Arnade Interview, 29 November 1990; Grebstein Interview, 15 November 1990; Egerton, "Controversy," 93, 97-98, 134-135, Egerton File. An undercurrent of anti-Semitism seemed to appear among porkchoppers when professors (such as Grebstein and another faculty member, Sy Kahn) challenged students to reappraise their religious beliefs. This adds another dimension to the struggle for academic freedom.

<sup>27</sup> Papers In the John Egerton File on the Johns Committee demonstrate that a growing number of Tampans disapproved of the FLIC's tactics by the early 1960s. See finding aids by the author for the LeRoy Collins, John Egerton, and Ruth Perry papers at the University of South Florida Special Collections Department, Tampa Campus Library. Within these manuscript collections, researchers will discover newspaper clippings, editorials, and correspondence files which detail the progress of the Johns Committee Investigations.

<sup>28</sup> Egerton, "Controversy." 246-247, Egerton File; Dr. Frank H. Spain Interview, USF Silver Anniversary Oral History Project, 21.

<sup>29</sup> Grebstein Interview, 15 November 1990.

# "BINGO": THE BATTLE CRY OF THE FLORIDA SEMINOLE

By TERESA MCKENZIE GOOCH

The Florida Seminole Indians have declared that they were the only tribe that the United States army failed to conquer. This claim is made by the descendants of a remnant of Seminoles who resisted the government's attempt in the nineteenth century to have them forcibly removed to Oklahoma. In the twentieth century, the Florida Seminoles have once again refused to yield to those in government who would deny them the tribal sovereignty which was granted in 1957.<sup>1</sup> However, the issue renewing this debate is not removal but rather high-stakes bingo and gambling.

The idea of Seminole bingo emerged from the tribe's success with "smoke shops." These shops resulted from a loophole in the law which permits cigarette sales on Indian reservations free of state tax.<sup>2</sup> In 1979 after approval by the tribal council and the local Bureau of Indian Affairs,<sup>3</sup> the Seminoles became the first tribe to establish a bingo parlor by locating a hall on the Hollywood Reservation, which is situated about ten miles south of Fort Lauderdale.<sup>4</sup> Although the bingo hall was an economic opportunity, it created controversy among the Indians. Much of the resistance was directed towards the chief of the tribe, James Billie, who aggressively pursued the idea of bingo. Seminole businessmen who had always been afforded certain privileges were unhappy with the chief's "macho, impatient" style and older traditionalists, including several staunch Baptists, opposed the bingo operation as well.<sup>5</sup> One of the first problems in establishing the hall concerned financing the venture. The Bureau of Indian Affairs,

while approving of the tribe's bingo ordinance, refused to loan them money since the bingo idea had not been court tested.<sup>6</sup> Since tribes are immune from foreclosures, banks were also reluctant to help finance the hall. This policy made the use of outside managers imperative.<sup>7</sup> The Seminoles, therefore, signed a contract with a professional management company, Pan Am International, which entitled the Indians to a fifty percent share of the bingo profits.<sup>8</sup> With financial problems resolved, the tribe faced a greater challenge to the survival of Seminole bingo, a court test.

The Seminoles were opposed by Robert Butterworth, the Broward County sheriff who wanted to force the tribe to submit to Florida state bingo regulations. Florida law restricted bingo games to one night a week and limited jackpots to no more than one hundred dollars.<sup>9</sup> The Seminoles operated daily and offered jackpots of \$250 to \$10,000 in cash as well as prizes of cars and trips.<sup>10</sup> While Butterworth argued that his claim was based on the desire to keep organized crime out of Broward County, the Seminoles believed that the suit was motivated by the state's desire to limit their sovereignty on the reservation, which would effect not only bingo but cigarette sales as well.<sup>11</sup> The case of *The Seminole Tribe of Florida vs. Robert Butterworth* was heard in a U.S. district court and later by the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals. The Seminoles were victorious in both decisions. In the case, Butterworth argued that the tribe had violated state law by operating a high-stakes bingo hall on their reservation. The court's

decision in the case was dependent upon whether the Florida law was criminal/prohibitory or civil/regulatory. If the law was criminal, then the sheriff's claim was valid; however, if the status was civil, the Indian's sovereignty took precedent over state regulations on bingo. Since Florida law permitted and regulated the operation of bingo under certain circumstances, the court concurred that the state's intention was not to prohibit the game. Therefore, the law fell within the civil category making the tribe immune from state regulations.<sup>12</sup> The Supreme Court let stand the appeals court's decision by denying the case a review in 1982.<sup>13</sup>

The Butterworth case was not the only suit that the Seminoles encountered during the early 1980s. Another debate over their sovereignty occurred when the tribe set up smoke shops and later a bingo hall on Tampa land they had purchased. The opportunity to buy the heavily traveled strip of land arose when Indian artifacts were discovered on the site of a proposed city parking garage. Apparently, the area had been a point of departure for Florida Indians being sent to Oklahoma in the early 1840s.<sup>14</sup> Fearing delays due to the "find", the city readily agreed to a Seminole offer to remove the remains in exchange for the establishment of a reservation on nearby land. The Indians told state and federal officials that the land would be used for a museum to house the artifacts. Once the federal government had agreed to take the lands in trust, the Indians built not only a museum but also a cigarette shop and a fourteen hundred seat bingo hall. Claiming deceit had occurred, state and city authorities sued to have the reservation dissolved. A second federal court decision supported the Indians. While the City of Tampa may have been disillusioned by the whole situation, the tribal attorney said that Seminole Chief

James Billie "regarded the bones as a gift that his ancestors tossed in his lap."<sup>15</sup>

The opening of the largest bingo hall in the world on the Big Cypress Reservation confirmed the success of Seminole bingo. The Seminoles signed a contract with RKG Management Company in which they received fifty-one percent of the profits. This figure would increase each year until the final year of the agreement when the amount would be seventy percent<sup>16</sup> Located in the middle of the everglades, this hall attracted fifty-six hundred players who traveled from forty-two states and more than a dozen foreign countries on opening day in March 1987.<sup>17</sup> The hall guaranteed players a \$250,000 jackpot and numerous other prizes topping \$1,000,000.<sup>18</sup> Despite this initial success, the hall was plagued with bad debts and feuding partners to the point of cancelling some of its games. In April 1988, Richard Knowlton, an RKG partner, agreed to pay off the debts and was committed to ensuring that the hall remained open.<sup>19</sup> However, in the summer of that same year, a group known as Investment Resources purchased the management contract from Knowlton and is presently operating the hall.<sup>20</sup> While non-Indians profited from the bingo halls, Indians also experienced benefits from the operations.

Economic prosperity for the tribe has improved dramatically due to the bingo halls. According to James Billie, the budget on the Hollywood reservation "went from about zero income to a million and a half dollars" during the first year of the bingo operation.<sup>21</sup> Since that time the Seminoles' bingo income has increased at a rapid pace. By 1984, the tribe's annual budget was estimated to reach eight million dollars per year, and in 1986 the Seminoles took in 13.4 million dollars with two-thirds of this amount coming from bingo. The tribal

members received dividends which in 1986 totaled around eight hundred dollars per person.<sup>22</sup> Although the Seminoles increased their budget through bingo, federal aid cuts made them more dependent than ever on this lucrative enterprise. In the first budget after the institution of bingo, Indian aid was cut by \$113 million<sup>23</sup> and in 1983 federal money made up only twenty percent of the Seminoles' income.<sup>24</sup> The reductions are a result of former President Ronald Reagan's Indian policy and his attempts to curtail domestic spending. In a statement, Reagan encouraged tribes to lessen their dependence upon federal funds and increase their percentage of the cost of their own self government. As a result of this policy, the former administration expressed support for the bingo operations with proper federal regulations.<sup>25</sup> While the halls have provided more income, it has been difficult to offset the continuing federal cuts.<sup>26</sup>

Besides increasing the tribe's annual income, the halls helped to reduce unemployment among tribal members. Of the five hundred fifty employees at the Big Cypress Hall, sixty-five percent are Seminole<sup>27</sup> and, according to James Billie, the unemployment rate has been reduced by approximately fifty percent since bingo was introduced on the reservations.<sup>28</sup> However, some claim that the jobs were not evenly shared between the tribal members, and this was a source of friction among the Seminoles.<sup>29</sup> While some of the reduction in unemployment was the result of direct hiring of Indians by the bingo halls, much of the employment was brought about by the tribe's use of bingo proceeds.

The proceeds from bingo provided the Seminoles with a variety of services and capital for investment in other economic ventures. They subsidized programs on the reservation including educational agendas

and scholarships, improved medical care and facilities, rent of mortgage free homes for senior citizens, recreational facilities, a hot meals program for senior citizens, and a business development loan plan for individuals.<sup>30</sup> Other projects which were established included a police force, catfish farming, and cattle ranching. The tribe also built an \$11 million Sheraton in Tampa East.<sup>31</sup> Much of the investment resulted from Chairman Billie's conviction that the tribe might not be able to rely upon bingo as a source of revenue in the future.<sup>32</sup>

As a result of their new economic power, the tribe became a political force as well. The Seminoles are now the largest political contributors in the state and have made major political contributions on the national political scene as well.<sup>33</sup> In 1984, the tribe gave \$55,350 to state political candidates. Tribal lobbyists<sup>34</sup>, whose other clients include Miller Brewing and Honeywell, command a retainer of \$192,000! The Indians viewed their new political position as a necessity for protecting their interests.<sup>35</sup>

According to James Billie, the greatest tribal benefit of the Indian gaming industry has been the Seminole's newfound pride as a "nation within a nation."<sup>36</sup> The Chief describes the tribes previous state as "Hun Tashuk Teek," the Seminole word for apathy or lack of interest. Due to the success of bingo, the Seminoles were able to reach for and obtain new goals as a tribe.<sup>37</sup>

The success of Seminole bingo motivated at least fifty-nine other tribes to open bingo halls and many of these were run by the Florida Seminoles.<sup>38</sup> The Muckleshoot tribe of Washington State signed a contract with the Seminoles to have them build and manage a 1,450 seat bingo hall. According to the agreement the Muckleshoots were required to pay back a \$2.3 million loan at



**The Seminoles' 41-acre reservation at Hillsborough Avenue and Orient Road in Tampa includes a hotel, foreground, and bingo hall, rear.**

Photo courtesy of Tampa Tribune

prime interest rates and provide the Seminoles with forty-four percent of the hall's profits until 1995.<sup>39</sup> While this deal may seem lucrative, other Seminole bingo ventures did not pay off. The Otoe-Missouri tribe contracted the Seminoles to run their bingo hall in Oklahoma but the Seminoles departed suddenly leaving the Otoes to deal with unpaid debts. In 1986, James Billie admitted that the tribe lost about \$1 million in the year that they ran the hall and that animosity between the two groups is great. Ironically, the sovereign immunity that allows the tribes to conduct bingo games also prevented them from successfully suing one another in court. Therefore, the financial dispute between the Otoes and the Seminoles may never be resolved.<sup>40</sup>

As the bingo operations grew, the federal government came under pressure to resolve the issue of whether or not Indians should be allowed to operate the bingo halls on their reservations free of regulations. Both the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the justice Department favored federal regulations on gaming. Ross Swimmer, the former Assistant Secretary of the Interior, Bureau of

Indian Affairs, claimed that the BIA was forced to compromise when the justice Department pushed to eliminate Indian bingo altogether.<sup>41</sup> As a result, Swimmer began to reverse the BIA's hands-off policy towards Indian gaming. He immediately demanded the BIA review of all Indian contracts and stopped approving federal trust lands if gaming was involved. Swimmer rapidly became known as the "Indian most Indians love to hate."<sup>42</sup> The possibility of organized crime infiltrating Indian bingo appeared to be the motivating factor behind the justice Department's position. However, according to the deputy assistant attorney general of the U.S. Justice Department, there was no evidence to indicate that organized crime was involved in any Indian bingo operation as of 1985.<sup>43</sup> Despite this, the justice Department has continued to push for regulation and several proposals were introduced into Congress that would control gambling on the reservations. The best known of these was the Udall Bill introduced in 1983. The bill would have made the Interior Secretary responsible for approving bingo contracts and running background checks on investors and management, but it died in committee for several reasons. The Interior Department initially disliked the bill because it did not want to be a regulatory agency. Indians were against the bill because they believed that it was their responsibility to oversee gambling and because the bill held management to a salary rather than a cut of the proceeds. The justice Department opposed the bill because it did not provide an effective deterrent to organized crime.<sup>44</sup> In 1986 the House of Representatives passed a similar bill but it failed in the Senate because Indian Rights' supporters and states rights' advocates could not reach a compromise.<sup>45</sup> Interestingly, Chief James Billie advocated regulations before a select Senate subcommittee stating that Seminoles had nothing to fear from



laws designed to prevent incursions of organized crime into Indian gaming operations and that the law would put a "stamp of approval once and for all on Indian gaming." However, the Chief revealed his thoughts about the true source of federal government interference when he said, "We feel like people challenging us are the ones more likely to come from the mafla."<sup>46</sup>

When Congress failed to resolve the dispute in 1986 between the states and the Indians, the Supreme Court took a stand on the issue in 1987 when it heard *Cabazon Band of Mission Indians vs. California*. In this case, California argued that the Cabazon's bingo hall should be regulated by the state in an effort to prevent the infiltration of organized crime into the operation.<sup>47</sup> The suspicion of organized crime activity within the Cabazon bingo operation had appeared from time to time. In 1981 a Cabazon tribe member was murdered execution style after he publicly claimed that the non-Indian management company was skimming money off the top of the operation. The manager of the bingo hall was convicted of hiring two people to conduct contract murders over a disputed drug deal. While this may have occurred within the Cabazon tribe, it was certainly not typical of the majority of Indian bingo operations, and the Seminoles filed a brief with the court supporting the Cabazon's position.<sup>48</sup> The Supreme Court ruled in favor of the Cabazon tribe citing the reasoning in *Butterworth vs. the Seminoles* as well as other cases. Therefore, since California allowed some organizations to operate bingo games, the law was regulatory; consequently the state had no authority over games played on the Cabazon Reservation.<sup>49</sup> Furthermore, the court also stated that the legitimate concern of organized crime infiltration of bingo did not warrant the preemption of "federal and tribal

interests."<sup>50</sup> With this decision, the bills in Congress addressing Indian gaming regulations were put on hold and, in a new position of strength, Indians held meetings with congressional leaders to draft "more fair legislation of the Indians."<sup>51</sup> However, James Billie warned that this decision might be a "double-edged sword." If Indians used bad judgment and began opening dog and horse tracks, jai alai, or casinos, he feared the established groups who ran these operations might find a way to limit or end Indian gaming on reservations.<sup>52</sup>

Shortly after the chief's prediction, the federal government decided upon a bill that opened the door for Indian tribes to operate these types of games under the Federal Indian Gaming Act of 1988. This act clarified all types of gaming by separating them into classes. The law placed the Indians' bingo halls under Class II gaming while other types of gambling such as casinos, pari-mutuel wagering, and lotteries were categorized as Class III. Under the act, Class II gaming could be conducted on a reservation free of state interference; however, for the operation of Class III games, reservations had to exist in a state where the gaming was legalized and a "compact" between the state and the tribe had to be signed. This agreement between the two parties would set up regulations under which the games were to be conducted.<sup>53</sup>

While the federal government intended for the law to only allow Class III gaming on Indian reservations in states like Nevada where gambling is widely legalized, the Indians viewed the act differently. They interpreted the law as giving them the right to negotiate "compacts" with the state government if the state permitted Class III gaming anywhere including charity "Las Vegas" nights. Under the Indians' position,

many states found themselves being forced to choose between two options: banning charity nights, or negotiating Indian gambling "compacts" approving casinos on reservations.<sup>54</sup>

Finding both options undesirable, states attempted to stall the negotiating process when tribes asked for ""compacts." This stalling was largely the result of the states' resentment of the tribes' right to tax free gambling proceeds.<sup>55</sup> This resentment was understandable considering the combined 32 reservation states estimated revenue losses ranging from \$192 million to \$850 million due to Indian gaming.<sup>56</sup> It is the single issue of taxation that leads many in the gaming industry to predict that most states will rapidly begin to legalize all forms of gambling, especially if the Indian casinos make large profits and remain free of scandals.<sup>57</sup>

In Florida, voters on two occasions refused to expand gambling by rejecting referendums on casino gaming. Therefore, when the Seminoles approached the state about a Class III gaming "compact" in January 1991, they received an unenthusiastic response.<sup>58</sup> In the meetings with the state, the Indians argued that since Florida "allowed" cruise ship gambling and charity "Las Vegas" nights, it was legally bound to permit full-scale casinos on their reservations. Using the same arguments when it attempted to end the Indian's bingo venture, the state claimed that reservation casinos would bring in undesirable elements such as organized crime and prostitution.<sup>59</sup> While this position was once supported by the federal government, the Justice Department now claimed that numerous reports of organized crime infiltration within Indian bingo operations were greatly exaggerated.<sup>60</sup> Frustrated by the state's stance, the tribe lowered their expectations

and asked Florida governor, Lawton Chiles, to approve a "compact" permitting their reservations to operate only poker and slot machines. When the governor refused, James Billie informed him that the tribe intended to operate the very games that the chief had once considered bad judgment, which included "casino gaming, raffles, horse and dog racing, jai alai, pelota, simulcasting, and off-track betting."<sup>61</sup>

Having become aware of the existence of a slot machine room at the Seminoles' Tampa Bingo Hall, the Florida government took the chief's statement seriously and confronted the tribe about the legality of the machines. The Seminoles responded that the electronic gambling machines were "technological variations of bingo" and, under this theory, they would be classified as Class 11 gaming over which the state had no authority. Sensing that their negotiations with the state had come to a halt, the tribe withdrew from the talks and filed a federal lawsuit against Florida in September 1991. The purpose of this suit was to force the state into signing a "compact" with the tribe. Bruce Rogow, an attorney representing the Seminoles, expressed the Indians' feelings on the issue of slot machines when he said, "the tribe is fighting a 'state rife with hypocrisy' on the issue of gambling." Using the lottery as an example, Rogow continued by saying, "a hard line seems to be drawn at machines. But the lottery uses machines to pick numbers. The state is willing to sacrifice whatever morals it claims on the altar of its benefits -- namely, the lottery."<sup>62</sup>

Despite the tribe's allegations of hypocrisy, the state repeatedly asked federal authorities to investigate the legality of the "slot machines" at the Tampa Hall but each time the U.S. Attorney's office refused to get involved.<sup>63</sup> This perceived lack of action on the part of federal authorities caused many

to criticize the department's efforts to enforce the federal law on Indian gaming. In its defense, the Justice Department cited four cases brought against illegal tribal operations in the past 18 months, some of which involved ties to organized crime.<sup>64</sup>

Although the U.S. Attorney's office had been monitoring Indian gambling operations, different interpretations of the Federal Indian Gaming Act of 1988 made this a difficult job. Many law enforcement officials assumed that the ambiguities would be cleared up quickly after the law's passage by the National Indian Gaming Commission. Under the 1988 law, this commission was created to set up guidelines on Indian gaming. Unfortunately, the Bush Administration spent three years appointing three members to the commission<sup>65</sup> and the chairman of the panel, attorney Tony Hope, just recently issued the first set of guidelines regulating the explosive issue of casino gambling.<sup>66</sup>

In May 1992, Hope angered Indian tribes across the nation by banning electronic machines on reservations until state agreements were reached.<sup>67</sup> Hope had rejected the Indians' position that slot machines were simply technological extensions of bingo and, therefore, he claimed that any type of slot machine was categorized under Class III gaming which required a state "compact."<sup>68</sup> The Indians' response to the announcement was to accuse Hope, son of comedian Bob Hope, of protecting the interests of the established gambling industry. Hope strongly denied this accusation.<sup>69</sup> With the Commission's support, law enforcement officials in several states immediately seized slot machines on Indian reservations. One of the most tense situations involving a tribe occurred at the Fort McDowell Indian Reservation in Arizona. There tribal members surrounded

their casino and blocked in FBI agents who were attempting to remove their machines. This eight-hour standoff ended when Arizona promised to hold negotiations with the tribe about the use of the machines under the guidelines of the law.<sup>70</sup>

In Florida, the Seminoles threatened to "retaliate" if federal authorities attempted to seize their machines.<sup>71</sup> These threats became unnecessary one week after the commission's ruling when a judge in Miami found in favor of the Seminoles in their lawsuit against the state of Florida. In the case, the state argued a loophole in the law which has become a favorite position of most states in lawsuits involving Indian gaming. The Florida lawyers claimed that the 11th Amendment to the Constitution forbids the Indians, as a sovereign state, from suing Florida. The judge rejected this argument and, by doing so, opened the door for the Seminoles to attempt to force the state into negotiations on a "compact" for casino gambling on their reservations. Although the tribe had won this particular ruling, the state indicated that it was not ready to surrender the court fight over Indian gambling.<sup>72</sup> The legal battle continues.

For the moment, the Seminoles have been able to maintain their sovereignty rights over their bingo halls and are attempting to do so in the battle over Class III gaming. Their success with bingo did not come without challenges including the court tests in the Butterworth case and the Tampa reservation dispute but in both instances their sovereignty as a nation was reaffirmed. Income from their halls allowed them to subsidize needed services which were affected by federal budget cuts, and diversification into enterprises off the reservation helped to ensure the tribe's future economic survival. Along with their

newfound profits, the Indians became a new political power within the state of Florida which, now more than ever, they certainly need to use to their advantage. With the passage of the Federal Indian Gaming Act of 1988, the Seminoles had a new income opportunity and so far the courts have upheld the tribe's right to pursue the option of casino gambling on their reservations; however, as long as Seminole "smoke shops" and bingo halls deprive the state of taxes, the tribe will continue to encounter resentment from the state and from those with whom they compete. James Billie summed up the situation best when he said, "The Indians are just playing the white man's game"<sup>73</sup> and it appears that the battle over Indian gaming has just begun.

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> James Billie, "Fighting Hun Tashun Teek," *Southern Exposure* (1985):17.

<sup>2</sup> John Dorschner, "Burn My Heart On Custer Street," *Miami (Florida) Herald*, 8 April 1979, 20:F5 (Located in NewsBank [Microform], Social Relations, 1980, 20:F4-F10, fiche.) This article provides an interesting look at the Hollywood reservation and its residents in the late 1970's just as the tribe was discovering the profitability and problems connected with their new "smoke shops."

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 20:F9.

<sup>4</sup> "Bingo Fans Head for Big Fla. Gamble," *USA Today*, 20 March 1987, p. 3, sec. A.

<sup>5</sup> Allison Finn, "Chief Looks for Pot of Gold." *Miami Herald*, 2 Dec. 1979, sec. B. This brief article announcing the coming opening of the bingo hall gives no hint of any opposition to the new operation except within the tribe itself. Interestingly, no article could be found on the opening day of the bingo hall.

<sup>6</sup> Sheryl Fragin, "Indian Bingo Hall Showdown." *The Washington Monthly* 17 (1985): 36. Ironically, when money was available to loan, the federal government refused because Indian bingo had not been court

tested; however, now that it has passed inspection and the government would be willing to help finance the investment, the funds are unavailable due to budget cuts.

<sup>7</sup> "Profits Game Attracting Tribes to Bingo Business" *Miami Herald* 29 May 1983.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 29 May 1983. Pan Am International also manages bingo for the Mdewakanton Shakopee Sioux tribe in Minnesota and for the Pascua Pueblo Yaqui Indians in Arizona.

<sup>9</sup> Bert Samqua, "High Court Agrees with Seminoles: Bingo Lives!" *The Alligator Times*, October 1981, p. 1. In this article, Indian resentment towards the sheriff is expressed for his allowing of the open operation of illegal bingo games in Broward County.

<sup>10</sup> "Profits Game Attracting Tribes to Bingo Business," *Miami Herald*, 29 May 1983.

<sup>11</sup> Bert Samqua, "High Court Agrees with Seminoles: Bingo Lives," *The Alligator Times*, October 1981. The Broward County sheriff, Ed Stack, in 1977 challenged the cigarette shops in court claiming that the tribe cost the state of Florida \$275,000 a month in taxes. He lost the first court decision and his appeal. (See John Dorschner, "Bury My Heart on Custer Street," *Miami Herald*, B, April 1979 in Newsbank, Social Relations, 20:F4-10, 1980.)

<sup>12</sup> Dale L. McDonnell, "Federal and State Regulations of Gambling and Liquor Sales Within Indian Country," *Hamline Law Review*, 8 (1985):606. This article provides a good overview of Indian gaming cases up to 1985.

<sup>13</sup> Fragin, p. 35.

<sup>14</sup> Julie Cass, "Bingo Holds High Stakes for Indians," *Philadelphia (Penn.) Inquirer*, 19 Dec. 1983 (Located in Newsbank [Microform], Welfare and Social Problems, 1984, 62:B6-B7, fiche).

<sup>15</sup> John MacCormack, "Tribe Builds Shrine, then Bingo Hall, Leaving Taxman Holding Empty Bag," *Miami Herald*, 31 May 1983. Apparently, Billie had intended to build a bingo hall on the Tampa land for some time. The chief had signed a development contract with Pan American associates two months before the tribe bought the land and some eight months before the land was put in trust. A contract clause stated that Pan Am had the right to pursue

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business activities that included the sale of cigarettes and bingo on the property.

<sup>16</sup> Eva Parzaiale, "Seminole Bingo Opens," *The Tampa Tribune*, 22 March 1987, p. 8, sec. B.

<sup>17</sup> Colleen Gallagher, "Seminoles' New Hall Hits the jackpot," *Miami Herald* 22 March 1987, p. 1, sec. A.

<sup>18</sup> Parzaiale, p. 8, sec. B.

<sup>19</sup> "World's Largest Bingo Hall on Financial Losing Streak," *The Tampa Tribune*, 2 April 1988, p. 3, sec. B.

<sup>20</sup> The Seminole Tribal Office, Tampa, Florida.

<sup>21</sup> Julia Cass, "Bingo Holds High Stakes for Indians", *Philadelphia* (Penn.) *Inquirer*, 19 Dec. 1983, 62:117, (Located in NewsBank [Microform], Welfare and Social Problems, 1984, 73:111, fiche). The Omaha Indians have not had much success with bingo. In their first year, they were forced to close the bingo hall after an outside management group terminated their contract. Apparently the Omahas were not ready to make a large investment.

<sup>22</sup> A. J. Dickerson, "New Bingo Means Big Bucks for Tribe, Players," *The Tampa Tribune*, 16 March 1987, p.5, sec. B. Exact profit figures for their bingo halls are unavailable because the tribes are not required to disclose income.

<sup>23</sup> Sheryl Fragin, "Indian Bingo Hall Showdown," *Washington Monthly*, 17 (1985): 35.

<sup>24</sup> Fred Strasser, and John MacCormack, "Indian's Profits Go Politicking," *Miami Herald*, 30 May 1983.

<sup>25</sup> Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, "Report Together with Supplemental and Dissenting Views," To accompany H.R. 1920, 99th Congress, 2 session (1986): 10.

<sup>26</sup> Bert Samqua, "High Court Agrees with Seminole: Bingo Lives," *The Alligator Times*, October 1981. Apparently the first Indian Aid cuts were being felt by the Seminole around the same time that they received the news of their victory over Butterworth. According to the Seminole newspaper, the plans to use the bingo profits for capital investments had been stopped due to the heavy federal cuts.

<sup>27</sup> Eva Parzaiale, "Seminole Bingo Opens," *The Tampa Tribune*, 22 March 1987, p. 8, sec. B.

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<sup>28</sup> Select Committee on Indian Affairs, "Gambling on Indian Reservations and Land," S. 902, 99th Congress, 1st sess. (1985): 598.

<sup>29</sup> Barry Bearak, "Super Bingo joins the Empire of the Seminole," Los Angeles (California) Times, 20 March 1987 (Located in NewsBank [Microform], Law, 1987,36:B6-B8).

<sup>30</sup> Select Committee on Indian Affairs, "Gaming Activities on Indian Reservations and Land," S. 555 and S.1303, 100th Congress, 1st sess. (1987): 298. The Seminole have also donated one day's bingo proceeds to the Muscular Dystrophy Telethon and money has been given to a state museum for research and development and a cultural development program.

<sup>31</sup> A. J. Dickerson, "New Bingo Means Big Bucks for Tribes, Players," *The Tampa Tribune*, 16 March 1987, p. 5, sec. B.

<sup>32</sup> Barry Klein, "Seminole to Keep Tax-Exempt Status," *St. Petersburg Times*, 25 February 1986.

<sup>33</sup> Fragin, p. 37.

<sup>34</sup> Klein, *St. Petersburg Times*, 25 February 1986.

<sup>35</sup> Fred Strasser and John MacCormack, "Indians Profits go Politicking," *Miami Herald*, 30 May 1983.

<sup>36</sup> Select Committee on Indian Affairs, "Gaming Activities on Indian Reservations and Lands," S. 902, 99th Congress, 1st sess. (1987): 598.

<sup>37</sup> James Billie, "Fighting Hun Tashuk Teek," Southern Exposure 13 (1985):18. This article is the written version of James Billie's speech to the Florida State Senate Finance, Taxation, and Claims Committee. The hearing was in consideration of Governor Bob Graham's demand that tribes charge the state's sales tax to non-Indians buying cigarettes on the reservation. The committee voted down the proposal.

<sup>38</sup> "Profits Game Attracting Tribes to Bingo Business," *Miami Herald*, 29 May 1983.

<sup>39</sup> Warren Richey, "Unregulated High-Stakes Gambling Grows on American Indian Reservations," *Christian Science Monitor*, 25 March 1985, p. 1.

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<sup>40</sup> Colleen Gallagher, "Tribe's Bingo Draws Fire as Hall Opens," *Miami Herald*, 21 March 1987, p. 1.

<sup>41</sup> "An Interview with Ross Swimmer, Assistant Secretary of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs," *The Seminole Tribune*, 28 July, 1986, p. 1. The Ross Swimmer interview gives a clear picture of the BIA's stance on Indian gaming. In the article, Swimmer uses an analogy of the Indians building a nuclear power plant in comparison to Indian bingo insinuating that they are both dangerous to the public.

<sup>42</sup> Peter Gallagher, "Why Indians Score 'Bingo' in High Court," *The Seminole Tribune*, Spring/Summer, special edition, 1987, p. 4.

<sup>43</sup> "No Evidence of Organized Crime in Bingo," *The Seminole Tribune* 7 October 1985, p. 3.

<sup>44</sup> Fragin, p. 37.

<sup>45</sup> David Koenig, "Supreme Court Hears Indian Gaming Debate," *Nevada Appeal*, 10 Dec. 1986 (Located in NewsBank [Microform], Welfare and Social Problems, 1987, 85:1) D1-D2, fiche).

<sup>46</sup> "Congress Considers New Bingo Regulations," *The Seminole Tribune* 1 July 1985.

<sup>47</sup> Frank Wagner, Reporter of Decisions, *Official Reports of the Supreme Court*, 480 (1987): 202. This report gives a thorough overview of the case given before the Supreme Court. It also includes the dissenting opinion of the court.

<sup>48</sup> Koenig, "Supreme Court Hears Indian Gaming Debates," *Nevada Appeal*, 10 Dec. 1986 (Located in NewsBank, Welfare and Social Problems, 1987, 85:1) D1-D2, fiche).

<sup>49</sup> Wagner, p. 210.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 202.

<sup>51</sup> Peter Gallagher, "Why Indians Score Bingo in High Court," *The Seminole Tribune*, Spring/Summer, special edition, 1987, p.9.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 2.

<sup>53</sup> John F. Sugg and Nell King, Jr., "Indian Wagering Pits State, Federal Officials," *The Tampa Tribune*, 3 November 1991, p. 1.

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<sup>54</sup> Maura Casey, "Indians Bet on Gambling," *The Christian Science Monitor*, 12 August 1991, p. 19.

<sup>55</sup> Paul Lieberman, "Indians See Battle Ahead Over Future of Gambling," *The Los Angeles Times*, 10 October 1991, p. 1. This is one in a series of five articles that appeared in the *Los Angeles Times* about Indian gaming in California.

<sup>56</sup> Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs House of Representatives, "Indian Gaming Regulatory Act," S.100-70, 100th Congress, 1st sess. (1987):119.

<sup>57</sup> Pauline Yoshihashi, "Indian Tribes Put Their Bets on Casinos," *The Wall Street Journal*, 5 August 1991, p. 1, sec. B.

<sup>58</sup> "Seminoles Claim Right to Offer Casino Gambling on Tribal Lands," *The Tampa Tribune*, 21 September 1991, p. 3, sec. Metro.

<sup>59</sup> Michael Sznajderman, "Seminoles Expect OK on Casinos," *The Tampa Tribune*, 17 December 1991, p. 1.

<sup>60</sup> "Lujan's Statement on Gaming Causes Furor in Nevada," *The Seminole Tribune*, 22 April 1992, p. 7. In this article, Interior Secretary Manuel Lujan hinted that he might overrule state governors who object to tribes' attempts to annex land near major cities for the purpose of establishing gambling facilities.

<sup>61</sup> Sugg, p. 14

<sup>62</sup> "Seminoles Claim Right to Offer Casino Gambling," *The Tampa Tribune*, 21 September 1991, p. 3, sec. Metro.

<sup>63</sup> Sugg, p. 14.

<sup>64</sup> Glenn F. Bunting, "Absences Mar Hearing on Indian Casinos," *The Los Angeles Times*, 10 January 1992, p. 3, sec. A.

<sup>65</sup> Paul Lieberman, "Casinos Coming to Tribal Land Amid Tax Regulation," 9 October 1991, p. 1, sec. A.

<sup>66</sup> Neil King, Jr., "Gaming Machines Outlawed by Panel," *The Tampa Tribune*, 12 May 1992.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>68</sup> "Peter Gallagher, "Q and A with Tony Hope," *The Seminole Tribune*, 26 February 1992, p. 9. In this article, Tony Hope believes that the federal law will

be changed to allow the Secretary of the Interior the power to give Indian tribes the right to open Class III gaming halls.

<sup>69</sup> James N. Baker, "Gambling on the Reservation," *Newsweek*, 17 February 1992, p. 29.

<sup>70</sup> Darci McConnell, "Tribe Wins Casino Standoff," *USA Today*, 13 May 1992, sec. A.

<sup>71</sup> King, *The Tampa Tribune*, 12 May 1992.

<sup>72</sup> Louis LaVelle, "Judge Says Seminoles Can Sue for Right to Casino Gambling," *The Tampa Tribune*, 21 May 1992.

<sup>73</sup> Fred Strasser and John MacCormack, "Indians' Profits Go Politicking," *Miami Herald*, 30 May 1983.

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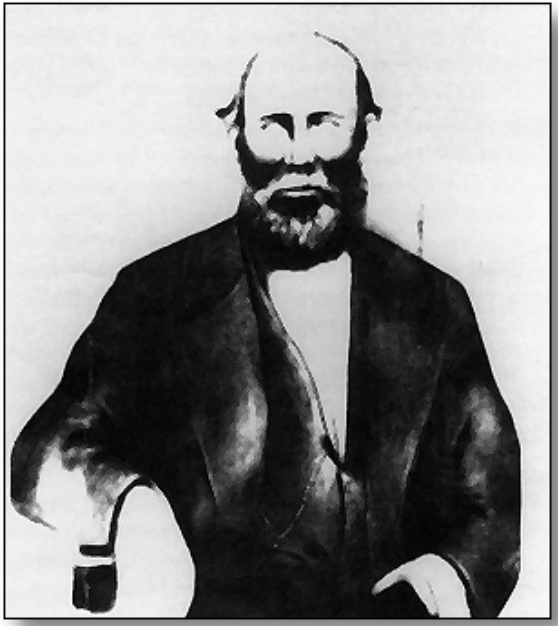
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# CAPT. JAMES D. GREEN SOUTH FLORIDA UNIONIST

By SPESSARD STONE



**Captain James D. Green**  
Photo from Florida's Peace River  
Frontier by Canter Brown, Jr.

Capt. James D. Green, a pioneer settler of Hillsborough and Manatee counties, was a controversial figure in the Civil War and Reconstruction era in South Florida.

James Dopson Green was born October 6, 1823 in Anderson County, South Carolina and migrated in March 1837 to Florida.<sup>1</sup> During the Second Seminole War, he served from April 11, 1839 to April 11, 1840 in the company of Capt. R.D. Bradley and was mustered out as a corporal at Fort Jackson, Middle Florida.<sup>2</sup>

By December 1841 Green was living in Hillsborough County, Fla.<sup>3</sup> At Fort Brooke

on January 30, 1843, under the Armed Occupation Act, he applied for 160 acres "on the north bank of the Manatee (sic) River about nine miles from its mouth..." which was granted,<sup>4</sup> and there he homesteaded. In the first statewide election on May 26, 1845, James D. Green voted at precinct #2, Manatee.<sup>5</sup>

On July 11, 1849 he married Eliza Whidden,<sup>6</sup> born June 4, 1827, daughter of Willoughby and Eliza (Pennington) Whidden.<sup>7</sup> The Greens were living in the Simmons Hammock (Seffner) settlement in 1850.<sup>8</sup>

Green early expressed an interest in politics. On May 24, 1851 he was selected as a Justice of the peace, qualified June 20, 1851, but resigned on September 3, 1852.<sup>9</sup> In April 1854, he was appointed postmaster of Itchepukesassa (Plant City).<sup>10</sup>

An opportunity to found a town had earlier been lost when the Readding Blount family moved to near (now) Bartow in October 1851. Green sold to Riley Blount 160 acres he had owned since 1850, the land of which constituted a part of the site of the future Bartow.<sup>11</sup>

Resettling in the northwestern portion of present-day Hardee County in the area which in 1855 became Manatee County, Green's home site in 1856 became known as Fort Green when twenty families "forted-up" there for protection during the Third Seminole War.<sup>12</sup> Green served from January 3 to August 20, 1856 in Capt.

William B. Hooker's Company, and was mustered out as 1st sergeant at Fort Meade. He also served in Capt. John Parker's Co. in late 1856.<sup>13</sup>

Green and Matthew P. Lyons, also of Fort Green, in a series of letters privately, to military officials, and publicly, via the Tampa newspaper the Florida Peninsular, requested protection and provisions for the families at Fort Green. When aid received was deemed inadequate, the two pressed their case. In June 1856, Lyons charged Capt. William B. Hooker of Tampa, commander of militia forces in the area, with using a detachment to gather his cattle and drive them to sale. In a July investigation, which failed to sustain Lyons, Green, a witness for Lyons, took an ambiguous stand, but leaned towards Lyons.<sup>14</sup>

On December 27, 1856, Green wrote: "I have been informed that, not long since, a gentleman, with a lot of negroes, was passing through Manatee, and that an efficient guard was sent for their protection. This kind of management proves to me that the officials must consider that there is a danger ... The people have asked, begged, demanded-in fact, they have done everything that has suggested itself to their minds to get protection for their women and children, and all to no effect ... We are still at Ft. Green, and hope to be able to hold our position."<sup>15</sup>

On January 31, 1857, Francis A. Page, Assistant Adjutant General based at Ft. Brooke, wrote to Capt. Pleasanton at Fort Myers: "I am sorry however that the General has concluded to establish detachments at Fort Green and Manatee-for several reasons. Last year a detachment was placed at Ft. Green and it gave more trouble to supply of than any other post on the frontier. It was

broken up by Col. Monroe and the people have abandoned the place but I suppose wish now to occupy it in order to attend their cattle interest and have a guard to brand and mark them ... There is only a few individuals interested in the place and the principal man who wants a guard there is Green himself, formerly a sergeant in Hooker's Company of volunteers, who is a good for nothing trifling disorganizer among the volunteers."<sup>16</sup>

Green became the spokesman for his fellow Cracker farmers. He was elected as one of three county justices of the peace for a two-year term on June 16, 1855 and qualified on July 27, 1855.<sup>17</sup> On October 5, 1857, he was elected for a two-year term as sheriff of Manatee County. His actions drew strong opposition from the coastal slave-holding sugar planters, merchants and large cattle ranchers who used their incumbency to largely invalidate the fall of 1859 election, by denying Green and his allies, Fabricus Reynolds, and John W. Whidden (his brother-in-law), from assuming their posts, respectively, as county commissioner, probate judge, and sheriff.<sup>18</sup> On November 9, 1863, Green was elected as a justice of the peace and qualified February 1, 1864.<sup>19</sup>

On March 7, 1864, Green, his draft exemption repealed, left his Fort Green home and went to Fort Myers where he volunteered for the Second Florida Cavalry, United States Army.<sup>20</sup>

Union Capt. Henry A. Crane, formerly of Tampa, on April 2, 1864 in recommending a commission for him, described James D. Green as having: "the dash & daring necessary for a leader in this peculiar kind of warfare which is different from almost any other-nothing but skulking Guerrillas to encounter."<sup>21</sup>

On April 15, 1865, Green recalled: "On arriving at Fort Myers Florida-I found a party of 48 men commanded by Captain Crane that had been enlisted under the name of the 2nd Florida Cavalry... I offered my service to assist in recruiting the Regiment which was accepted by Capt. Crane-he furnished me 20 men and without delay I proceeded to the interior and in 10 days I returned with 30 recruits (sic) to Fort Myers-this was reported to General Woodbury and he recommended me for the position of 1st Lieut. and a Commission was issued."<sup>22</sup>

"My recruits (sic) was (sic) enlisted and armed and I immediately made an other (sic) raid with 50 men. I met engaged and repulsed a force of 150 Rebels-Captured quite a number of horses and recruited 34 men and returned to Fort Myers on the 13th day after my departure. Capt. Crane advised me to go to Head Qtrs., Key West and report in person to General Woodbury which I did, whereupon the Genl. recommended that a Captains Commission be issued which was complied with."<sup>23</sup>

On March 21, 1864, Lt. Green and Lt. William McCullough of Co. A, 2nd Florida Cavalry, formerly of Fort Meade, had led their men to seize supplies at the Tillis' homestead and a neighboring farm where Confederate Thomas Underhill was slain. A second raid on April 7, 1864 had resulted in a skirmish at Bowlegs Creek, with two casualties, Henry A. Prine and James Lanier. Next came Lts. Green and McCullough's participation in the May 6-7, 1864 Union occupation of Tampa. A third raid to Fort Meade resulted in the burning of the fort's buildings on the night of May 18, 1864.<sup>24</sup> On May 26, 1864, Lt. Green received a provisional commission as Capt. of the 2nd Florida.<sup>25</sup>

In late 1864 Capt. Green's military service abruptly ended with arrest and confinement after he and Lt. McCullough made charges against officers, including, Capt. J.W. Childs, during whose command Green charged occurred "gross corruption and immorality ... mock marriages were celebrated, gambling encouraged, beef cattle (sic) driven in and sold for the benefit of the officers, the Refugees deprived of their rations, and supplied with unwholesome flour"; the quartermaster of the post Capt. Ames "kept a harlot in the commissary, sold hides for his own benefit and shared in the fraud of the Ration Department;" the surgeon of the post Dr. Carroll "neglected the Refugee families in their sickness nor would allow other doctors to attend them."<sup>26</sup>

Capt. Green and Lt. McCullough were placed under arrest; the former for fifty days, the latter forty days. After agreeing to a compromise, Lt. McCullough was released and returned to command. After a board hearing failed to resolve Green's case, General Newton (who had succeeded General Woodbury), after he learned that Green had only a provisional commission and had never been mustered, ordered the revocation of Green's commission, which was done. General Newton further ordered that Capt. Doyle of the 110th New York Regt. relieve Capt. Childs of the command of Fort Myers and gave him instructions to arrange a compromise between Green and Childs, but Green, wanting an official investigation, refused.<sup>27</sup>

At Cedar Keys on April 15, 1865, he appealed to the President and the Secretary of War. In June 1865, statements were secured from five officers in answer to Capt. Green's appeal for redress of grievances. Capt. Henry A. Crane, one of the five and the man who had recommended Green for

his commission charged that Green was a disloyal man and a traitor, with all representing Green to be a man of bad character. Nevertheless, Capt. Green was successful for on March 27, 1866 and March 13, 1872 the War Department approved his service as 1st Lieutenant, Company B, 2nd Florida Cavalry to date May 1 to 26, 1864, and as Captain, Company B, May 26, 1864 to February 3, 1865 and March 26, 1865 to April 12, 1865.<sup>28</sup>

Following the Civil War, Capt. Green, now a member of the Republican Party, became a powerful political leader in Manatee County, with his influence reaching into surrounding counties, Tallahassee, and even Washington, D. C.

James D. Green represented Manatee County in the October 1865 state constitutional convention and in the State Assembly (House of Representatives) in the sessions of 1865 (he resigned in the summer of 1866 and was succeeded in October by his brother-in-law John W. Whidden, a former Confederate officer), 1868, 1869, and 1870.<sup>29</sup> From Pine Level, to which he had moved and in 1866 had helped to make the county seat, the Unionist Green exercised a powerful sway in South Florida by recommending county office holders to the governor, who, under the constitution, held the power of appointment. He was further an agent of the Freedmen's Bureau.<sup>30</sup>

On November 3, 1868, the Legislature met in convention at Tallahassee to appoint the presidential electors, which were given to Ulysses S. Grant. Representative Green was named as the messenger to carry the results to Washington, D. C.<sup>31</sup>

Green's most radical act while serving as Manatee's Representative was his efforts to impeach Governor Harrison Reed. In the

special legislative session in November 1868, H.S. Harmon (black), James D. Green, and Marcellus L. Stearns were appointed a committee to prepare and report articles of impeachment against the governor. The ensuing resolution was reported to the Senate as though the governor had been impeached, and Lt. Governor William H. Gleason, an opponent of the governor, opportunistically interpreted it to mean he was governor. Governor Reed, however, outmaneuvered his enemies and successfully had Gleason removed from office as he had not been a citizen of the state for two years as required by the Constitution.<sup>32</sup>

On January 21, 1870, Representative Green introduced a resolution authorizing a committee of five to be appointed to inquire into the acts and doings of Governor Reed. The resolution was adopted and Green, George P. Raney, John Simpson, H.H. Forward, and William B. White were appointed the committee by Marcellus L. Stearns, Speaker of the Assembly. On February 4, 1870, with White dissenting, the committee, of which Green was chairman, recommended Governor Reed be impeached, the charges mainly being allegations of personal and public financial irregularities.<sup>33</sup>

The Assembly, however, rejected Green's report by a 29-21 vote and adopted the minority report against impeachment by a vote of 27-22. After the investigation closed, Green called at the executive office and informed the governor of the report in his favor. Governor Reed and Green, afterwards, reached a mutually advantageous political truce.<sup>34</sup>

On July 11, 1870 at Pine Level, Green was nominated as an Independent candidate for state senator to succeed Henry A. Crane, his former commander. After he in August

supported the candidacy of black state senator Josiah Walls of Alachua County for Congress, the conservative backlash doomed Green at the polls in November. Via appointment, he served in other offices, i.e., as a federal deputy marshal, county commissioner, county sheriff, and postmaster of Pine Level.<sup>35</sup>

When John F. Bartholf, the Republican clerk of court of Manatee County, submitted his resignation in late August 1876, Capt. Green in his swan song proposed to his friend, Republican Governor Marcellus L. Stearns, also the party's nominee for governor, that his 24-year-old son Andrew Green be appointed clerk. Named clerk in October, Andrew, acting in accord with his father's directives, refused to post bond for the issuance of his commission, leaving no legal clerk for elections in November, which the Democrats were favored to win handily.<sup>36</sup>

Manatee Democratic leaders proceeded anyway with the November 7 election, sweeping the county with 289 votes for Samuel J. Tilden for president and 288 votes for George F. Drew for governor. Green, seeing the handwriting on the wall, had urged Republicans to boycott the election, and only 26 voted for Republican presidential candidate Rutherford B. Hayes and Florida gubernatorial nominee Marcellus L. Stearns. Initially, Governor Stearns, by a 400-majority that excluded Manatee as the election was invalidated, was declared to have carried Florida, as well as, Hayes by more than 900. Democrats, however, appealed, and, after much legal maneuvering, the Manatee votes (with other contested) were counted for Drew, but were excluded for Tilden, which gave Florida a split ticket of Republican Hayes for president and Democratic Drew for governor. Drew's margin of victory was only 195 votes.<sup>37</sup> The brokered election of

1876 ended, not only Capt. Green and the Republicans' state influence, but more significantly, Reconstruction and the civil rights movement for nearly a century.

Green continued to live in Pine Level where he farmed and continued to dabble in local affairs. In 1878 he startled the complacent Democrats when he attempted unsuccessfully to reclaim his old House seat. In his last hurrah in February 1880, he tried to revive the Republican Party with a mass meeting at Pine Level.<sup>38</sup> In 1882, still arousing contention, signing himself as "Torpedo" and "Ex-Church Member," Green in articles to the Fort Ogden Herald alienated his fundamentalist neighbors when he, among other things, criticized a local minister, Rev. I.J. Sparkman.<sup>39</sup> In 1885 he had a modest farm consisting of 70 acres, 1 horse, 2 oxen, and 615 cattle.<sup>40</sup>

Capt. James Dopson Green died April 8, 1886 and was buried in Pine Level Campground Cemetery.<sup>41</sup> Eliza W. Green died August 8, 1903.<sup>42</sup>

Capt. and Mrs. Green had the following children:

1. George Green, born ca. 1850; died in 1860's.
2. Andrew Green, born March 25, 1852; died July 11, 1925, Miami Fla.; married on May 22, 1877; Martha E. Mizell.
3. Hugh Green, born ca. 1855; died in 1870's.
4. Mary Elizabeth Green, born ca. 1857.
5. Helen Jane Green, born ca. 1859.
6. Leroy Green, born ca. 1860; died in 1870's.

7. Karon Green, born ca. 1866; married on June 28, 1887, John W. Myers.

8. John Green, born ca. 1869; adopted.

9. Ada S. Green, born ca. 1870; married on April 10, 1888, W.H. Jenkins.  
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10. Kate Green, born ca. 1873.<sup>43</sup>

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> *Savannah Morning News*, April 22, 1886; Canter Brown, Jr., letter to author, March 12, 1989; Armed Occupation Act permit # 312, Department of Natural Resources (Tallahassee).

<sup>2</sup> Bounty land warrant application of James D. Green, National Archives (Washington, D.C.).

<sup>3</sup> Record Book of *Hillsborough County, Territory of Florida*, Vol. III (Jacksonville, 1938).

<sup>4</sup> Armed Occupation Act permit, op. cit.

<sup>5</sup> Brian E. Michaels, *Florida Voters In Their First Statewide Election May 26, 1845* (Tallahassee, 1987), p. 52.

<sup>6</sup> Affidavit of L.G. Lesley, pension application of Eliza Whidden, National Archives (Washington, D.C.).

<sup>7</sup> Richard Livingston, "Willoughby Whidden 1799-1861," *South Florida Pioneers*, 11 (January 1977), pp. 8-11.

<sup>8</sup> U.S. Original Census Schedules, 7th Census 1850, Hillsborough County, Florida.

<sup>9</sup> *Roster Of State And County Officers Commissioned By The Governor of Florida 1845-1868* (Jacksonville, Fla., 1941), p. 145.

<sup>10</sup> Quintilla Bruton and David E. Bailey, *Plant City: Its Origins and History*, (St. Petersburg, 1977), p. 42.

<sup>11</sup> M.F. Hetherington, *History of Polk County*, (Chuluota, 1971), p. 14.

<sup>12</sup> Jean Plowden, *History of Hardee County* (Wauchula, 1929), p. 7, and, Canter Brown, Jr., *Florida's Peace River Frontier* (Orlando, 1991), pp. 103, 108, 110.

<sup>13</sup> Pension application of Eliza Green, op. Cit.; *Soldiers of Florida*, pp. 28-29.

<sup>14</sup> Brown, op. cit., pp. 110, 112, 389.

<sup>15</sup> *Florida Peninsular*, p. 3, col. 1, January 24, 1857.

<sup>16</sup> Page to Pleasanton, January 31, 1857, U.S. Dept. of War, M-1084, roll #7, National Archives.

<sup>17</sup> *Roster*, op. cit., p. 213.

<sup>18</sup> Brown, op. cit., p. 130-132.

<sup>19</sup> *Roster*, op. cit., p. 214.

<sup>20</sup> Brown, op. cit., p. 162; Co. B records of James D. Green, National Archives.

<sup>21</sup> Co. B records, op. cit.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Brown, op. cit., pp. 163-169.

<sup>25</sup> Co. B records, op. cit.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid; Lt. A.C. Prety to Capt. S. Conant, July 31, 1865, "Military Dispatches, Head Quarters, District of Middle Florida; August 10, 1865 - Sept. 25, 1865," Copy prepared by Statewide Rare Books Project from Manuscript found in Florida State Library, WPA, (Tallahassee, 1940) p. 59.

<sup>29</sup> Brown, op. cit., pp. 182, 183, 404; Allen Morris, *People of Lawmaking in Florida 1845-1975* (Tallahassee, 1975).

<sup>30</sup> Brown, op. cit., pp. 185, 187, 189, 190.

<sup>31</sup> John Wallace, *Carpetbag Rule in Florida* (Jacksonville, Fla. 1888, reprinted 1964), p. 88.

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<sup>32</sup> Wallace, op. cit., pp. 88-89; Jerrell H. Shofner, *Nor Is It Over Yet: Florida in the Era of Reconstruction* (Gainesville, 1974), p. 205.

<sup>33</sup> Wallace, op. cit., p. 89-91; Brown, op. cit., p. 201; Shofner, op. Cit., p. 211-212.

<sup>34</sup> Wallace, op. cit., pp. 116-124; Brown, op. cit., p. 201.

<sup>35</sup> Brown, op. cit., p. 203, 209, 210; Albert and Park *DeVane, De Vane's Early Florida History*, Volume 11 (Sebring, 1978).

<sup>36</sup> Brown, op. cit., pp. 210-211; Shofner, op. cit., p. 307.

<sup>37</sup> Brown, op. cit., pp. 211-213; Shofner, op. cit., pp. 324-325; Charlton Tebeau, *A History of Florida* (Coral Gables, 1971), pp. 253-254; Allen Morris, *Florida Handbook 1977-1978* (Tallahassee, 1977), pp. 488,492.

<sup>38</sup> Brown, op. cit., pp. 293-294; Brown, "Notes on Andrew Green," in author's collection.

<sup>39</sup> *Bartow Informant*, October 7,1882, November 11, 1882.

<sup>40</sup> 1885 Agricultural Schedule of Manatee County.

<sup>41</sup> Pension application of Eliza Green, op. cit.; Savannah Morning News, April 22,1886.

<sup>42</sup> Pension application of Eliza Green, op. cit.

<sup>43</sup> Censuses of 1860, 1870, 1880 Manatee County; Manatee and DeSoto counties marriage books; Canter Brown, Jr., letter to author, March 12,1989.

# CITY IN TURMOIL: TAMPA AND THE STRIKE OF 1910

By JOE SCAGLIONE

## STORM SURGE

As sixty mile an hour winds pounded sheets of rain across the Tampa area on 18 October 1910, the storm's ferocity cut the city's ties to the outside world. The heavy winds forced telegraph wires down. Two trains that connected Tampa with other parts of Florida could not be located. Officials thought them lost. But as this storm began to subside, allowing Tampanians to begin surveying the damage in the early morning hours, a more dangerous whirlwind stirred the muddy rainswept streets of Ybor City and West Tampa.<sup>1</sup> Three hundred "special police" armed with weapons patrolled the streets and avenues of the cigar manufacturing districts. This mobilized force, riding four men to an automobile, represented Tampa's response to assassination, assault and arson. The *Tampa Morning Tribune* proclaimed that "No violence or disorder will be allowed within city limits-police to disperse mobs," and thus the armed patrols, including members of Tampa's most prominent families, acted to enforce Tampa Mayor D. B. McKay's edict in the Latin districts of Ybor City and West Tampa.<sup>2</sup>

The growing city of Tampa, Florida, with a population of 38,524 and West Tampa, with 8,258 citizens, entered the year 1910 riding high on a crest of prosperity and confidence.<sup>3</sup> As the *Tribune* reported, Tampa had just completed the most prosperous fiscal year in its history, indicating a strong financial foundation.<sup>4</sup> By October 1910, that foundation, the clear Havana cigar industry, was crumbling.

This industry, the lifeblood of Tampa's economy, was paralyzed. Manufacturers had closed all factories in both Tampa and West Tampa, while opening branch factories in other Florida cities and in New York. Cigar workers had left the area in droves, some migrating to work in the new factory branches, while others returned to Havana or Key West. Those who stayed filled their idle time with meetings, marches, confrontations and violence. Tampa's armed citizens' patrols ruled the city streets.

Within this environment occurred one of the longest and most violent cigar industry strikes. The 1910 strike lasted seven months. One man was assassinated, two men were lynched, others were shot and assaulted.<sup>5</sup> Three members of the Joint Advisory Board of the Cigarmakers International Union (CMIU) were convicted of "conspiring to prevent cigarmakers from working in Tampa's cigar factories," and the welfare of both the cigar industry and the community suffered.<sup>6</sup> The strike action of 1910 displayed a set of dynamics which belong exclusively to that event. However, this violent confrontation had its antecedents in the history of the cigar industry labor movement in Tampa and in the nature of the cigar worker himself.

## A NEW INDUSTRY ARRIVES

The Tampa cigar trade owes its very birth to labor strife in other areas such as Key West and New York where union



movements had precipitated relocation. The decision to move the factories of Don Vicente Martinez Ybor and Ignacio Haya to Tampa in 1885 was based on a fear of continued labor strife.<sup>7</sup> But labor troubles did not wait long to manifest themselves in this new location as a labor dispute delayed the opening of Ybor's El Principe de Gales factory. Ybor had hired a Spanish bookkeeper, and Cuban cigarmakers would not work until the Spaniard was removed. Ybor acceded to his employees demands. However, because of this delay, Haya's Factory No. 1 rolled the first production cigar in Tampa.<sup>8</sup>

This incident illustrates the role that labor assumed in Tampa. Ybor and Haya had not shed themselves of labor dissent by their move. In the period from 1887 to 1894, the Tampa cigar factories witnessed 23 "walkouts."<sup>9</sup> Major strikes occurred in 1899 (the weight strike), 1901 (La Resistencia), 1910, 1920 and 1931.<sup>10</sup> The character of the cigar worker played a significant role in the nature and frequency of these strikes and walkouts.

The status of immigrant workers in the cigar factory was an important factor. John Bodnar contends, "Skilled workers could overcome ethnic differences in the formation of narrow craft unions."<sup>11</sup> The interaction of Cuban, Spanish and Italian laborers in the Tampa factories produced such a blend. Aided by the educational exposure received from the "lector" or "reader", the craftsmen that tolled within the "galeria", the cavernous workroom, became well-versed in the classics, as well as the political themes of the day. Many workers flocked to the powerful siren call of anarchism and socialism.<sup>12</sup>

The education and philosophy, which these immigrant workers absorbed, wove their

way into the community. Each night the stories and the latest news reached eager ears at the family dinner table. In this manner, the social and political issues of the day spread through the community, nurturing the socialization and politicalization of these new Americans in the process.

The nature of the factory work, inside the galeria where hundreds of workers sat side by side, helped develop the labor temperament of cigarmakers. Mere proximity to quickly developing labor-management confrontations created an immediate and threatening response. Because a production-based industry must maintain operation in order to compete, the manufacturers normally met their employees' demands quickly for fear of losing productive capability over a trivial matter. In this sense, the character of the cigar factory laborer may have been slightly spoiled, as it was not until the 1901 strike, La Resistencia, that workers met with any substantial labor defeat.

The dissolution of the labor union called La Resistencia fueled the growth of the CMIU, which in 1910 claimed a membership of 6,000 in Tampa.<sup>13</sup> In June 1910, the Clear Havana Manufacturers Association members in Tampa began dismissing local selectors and importing selectors from Cuba. This discharge ignited the feud that erupted into a full shutdown of Tampa's cigar trade over the manufacturers' refusal to recognize the union. On 25 July 1910, at the Vega Cigar factory eighty-five workers walked out at two P. M., because Vega, the owner, had refused to recognize the local union of the CMIU.<sup>14</sup> The walkout would spread as other owners followed Vega's lead, and the strike would not officially end until 25 January 1911, when the CMIU's Joint

Advisory Board (JAB) declared the strike over.<sup>15</sup>

### **RECOGNITION IS SERIOUS BUSINESS**

Union recognition is an important question which separates the employer and the employed. Recognition is an issue over the control of labor. Until a union is officially acknowledged as the representative agent of the employed, the employer may restrict his responsibilities to his employees to those mandated by law. Recognition creates a parallel power structure and a modus operandi by which both parties must contractually abide. This question transformed a grievance over the use of foreign selectors into a general strike that crippled Tampa in 1910.

The CMIU publicly announced its move for recognition during a mass meeting at The Labor Temple, 29 June 1910. Angelo Leto, a member of CMIU local No. 400, ignited the crowd declaring it was the manufacturers who were forcing the victimized cigarmakers to strike by not recognizing their union.<sup>16</sup>

Six days later on July 5th at the Bustillo Brothers and Diaz factory, the union organizing committee confronted the firm's bookkeeper, J. F. Easterling. Angered by their impertinence, Easterling pulled a gun and fired at one committee member, barely missing.<sup>17</sup> This action made the bookkeeper a main target of union radicals.

The CMIU held another mass meeting on July 13th. The union excoriated the manufacturers' position as revealed in a newspaper article, which blamed the selectors for the labor strife. One union orator charged that within the last twenty days four to five thousand men had lost their jobs and

up to two thousand had already left Tampa with more sure to follow.<sup>18</sup> The *United States Tobacco Journal* backed the union's contention that the sole motive in the conflict was the manufacturers' refusal to recognize the union.<sup>19</sup> Due to the violent dynamics of this struggle, issues of race, ethnicity and class also surfaced. But the central driving force was the pursuit for union recognition.

### **THE LINE IS DRAWN**

Neither side would back away easily. The line was drawn in the leaves of tobacco left rotting on factory floors, and each dared the other to cross. The owners began using police to protect their factories against union subversion.<sup>20</sup> The use of "special police" to augment the regular force reached immense proportions before the strike ended. Tampa recruited many of these special police from other towns and cities in Florida.<sup>21</sup> During Tampa's mayoral campaign in April 1910, D. B. McKay, the White Municipal Party candidate, bragged about his part in the 1901 strike and the use of "citizens' committee" to destroy La Resistencia. He declared there had been "a demand for the action of determined men."<sup>22</sup>

The use of special police and citizens' committees was nothing new. In 1886, when Tampa secured the fledgling cigar industry, the city's Board of Trade, the antecedent to today's Chamber of Commerce, guaranteed Ybor and Haya protection against agitators who might interrupt business-as usual.<sup>23</sup> With the recent memory of the Haymarket Riot in May 1886, the union's power to disrupt remained a very real fear. In later years, the 1892 confrontation between Pinkerton detectives and steel workers at Andrew Carnegie's Mills and the 1894

Pullman Company conflict served to revive the fearful images of union violence.<sup>24</sup>

The citizens' committees discouraged this behavior. They consisted of the community's leading businessmen and acted as vigilante groups, though many times sanctioned by local law. These committees used whatever means, legal or not, to cleanse their communities of undesirable elements.<sup>25</sup> In 1901, a citizens' committee in Tampa had severed the strength of La Resistencia by forcibly placing thirteen union leaders on a steamship bound for the Honduras coast where they were left and warned "never to return to Tampa on pain of death."<sup>26</sup> McKay's reminder of that action during his 1910 mayoral campaign had stirred bitter memories.<sup>27</sup>

The citizens' committees played an important role in the labor disruption of 1910 as well. As representatives of the business interests and power structure, these committees mirrored Tampa's prevailing racial and ethnic biases. Two contemporary editorial statements serve as example. The *Wauchula Advocate* exhorted, "If Tampa would import a few hundred Irishmen with stout blackthorns, it would have less trouble with its 'eyetalians'".<sup>28</sup> The *Bradentown Journal* followed the *Advocate's* lead by claiming that the Italian workers were the chief perpetrators of the violence, stating, "Tampa is not the only place where Italians have proven themselves undesirable citizens."<sup>29</sup> A 1909 editorial in the *Tampa Morning Tribune*, referring to the number of assassinations in Tampa's Italian community, provides a glimpse into the attitude toward that ethnic group:

"...not one Italian has been punished for any degree of homicide. The spectacle of two or three Italians hanging from the gallows would be

very edifying and effective about now."<sup>30</sup>

Terms such as "undesirable element", "anarchist" and radical were labels used to describe any and all components of society which did not conform to the predominant white-Anglo view of society. Those within the Tampa immigrant community owned a different view. In 1980, Joe Maniscalco reminisced about the strike and the nature of the Italian community:

"The people didn't know we had a strike! The way the people, they take care of each other. All you can thank the Italian people that had the businesses, the grocery stores, the wholesale house. They used to give food to the people."<sup>31</sup>

These two contrasting views are both valid: one of condemnation of the Italian community inflamed by the rhetoric of the newspapers and the power elite; the other, the nostalgic memories of an old man, who as a boy found comfort and trust among his fellow Italians.<sup>32</sup> The *Tribune* provided another more poignant side of the dilemma, that of the afflicted immigrant families:

"There came to The Tribune office yesterday a woman of middle age, scantily dressed, bearing in her hand wrapped in a bit of greasy paper, a half pound of the fattest of fat bacon. She is the wife of a cigarmaker who has been out of work, on account of the strike, for fifteen weeks. At a hovel which serves as a home in West Tampa, this woman has six children ... the wife and mother worked as a stripper (of tobacco stems) in a cigar factory while her husband made cigars in another. (Since the strike) they have been sus-

tained by the dole given out by the well-paid leaders of the cigarmakers-they have been the beneficiaries of the joint Advisory Board. The woman spoke with the earnestness and the pathos of distress and hopelessness in her voice and the tragedy of want upon her face ... The piece of bacon ... was the piece de resistance of the dole of sustenance given her by the order of the joint Advisory Board. A dog would not have eaten it. This was meat for man, woman and six hungry children. In addition, she got ten cents worth of stale beans, ten cents worth of wormy grits, and few ounces of cooking necessities."<sup>33</sup>

Rhetoric or truth, the image is heart-wrenching. The *Tribune* offered to release the name of the woman to those wishing to be of help to her family.

### THE HEAD OF THE DRAGON

The joint Advisory Board (JAB) was the central committee which represented the CMIU membership in negotiations with the manufacturers. As the strike expanded, the JAB assumed more control over the striking workers. The leaders of this committee were staunch union men. Jose de la Campa, Brit Russell, J. F. Bartlum and others took the lead in the movement.<sup>34</sup>

Manufacturers began to use the special police to protect their factories and their remaining workers against union agitators.<sup>35</sup> Agents of the United States Immigration Department began to deport alien selectors.<sup>36</sup> Tensions mounted. The Tampa Board of Trade decided to intervene and set up a committee of ten citizens to help settle the strike. However, in a three hour meeting

in which the committee mediated between the manufacturers and the JAB, the issue of union recognition once more divided the groups. The proceedings adjourned, as the Board of Trade, frustrated at the impasse, admitted defeat in late August.<sup>37</sup>

Tampa's economic welfare deteriorated quickly. The Balbin Brothers factory of West Tampa had relocated to St. Augustine. They utilized many workers in this "branch factory" who had previously worked in Tampa.<sup>38</sup> Tampa manufacturers discharged ninety percent of the remaining laborers in late August, leaving only an average of fifteen workers at some factories.<sup>39</sup>

Other Florida cities such as Jacksonville, St. Augustine, Miami and Palatka benefited from the strike, as owners established more branch factories.<sup>40</sup> These and other southern cities, Mobile, Alabama for one, offered enticements to manufacturers to permanently relocate.<sup>41</sup> The *Pensacola Journal* observed, "Tampa cigars are now made in Key West and Miami."<sup>42</sup>

The strike, now one of massive proportions, was affecting all segments of society, especially the citizens of Tampa and West Tampa. Family squabbles increased. Several ended up in police court.<sup>43</sup> The conflict ruined the business of the traveling cigar salesman, who, after many years of building profitable routes, now had no product to sell and was losing clients.<sup>44</sup> Even boarding houses reflected the bad times. In some boarding houses with a majority of union laborers as tenants, non-union residents were forced to find other lodging. Upon doing so and establishing a non-union majority in their new home, they forced the union men already living there to move. This created segregated living arrangements.<sup>45</sup> The *Tribune* agitated to rid Tampa of undesirable elements, prompting police who began

arresting "vagrants, panhandlers and human parasites who thrive on the illicit earnings of women."<sup>46</sup> Arbitrary arrests, based on mere insinuation and innuendo, threatened civil rights in Tampa.

The atmosphere, more tense each day, turned Tampa into a city on the brink of chaos. Manufacturers insisted on opening their factories. Sheriff Jackson pleaded with the citizenry not to react with violence.<sup>47</sup> But no one listened.

### BY THE MIGHTY SWORD

As August ended, and two factories began to open in West Tampa, a crowd converged on the Santaella factory. Mayor Brady of West Tampa (a separate municipality from Tampa at that time) ordered police to disperse the crowd. Searching men as they went through the crowd, they found three with concealed weapons and arrested them. The mob, now more agitated, refused to scatter. Mayor Brady then summoned the Fire Department and ordered them to open fire with high pressure water hoses, which finally dispersed the angry throng.<sup>48</sup>

Several unionists tried to persuade non-union laborers not to return to the opened factories and gunfire erupted. A saloon owner in West Tampa, ambushed at Pine Street and Cleveland, died of two shotgun blasts. No witnesses came forward.<sup>49</sup> As violence mounted, manufacturers locked factory doors and "hung up the 'Nothing Doing' sign," signifying the industry was shut down indefinitely.<sup>50</sup>

In the midst of these events, Labor Day 1910 was celebrated with picnics and the grandest of parades, which wound its way through streets of Ybor City, as if mocking

the violence of recent days.<sup>51</sup> The *Tribune* called this day the "greatest Labor Day festival in history."<sup>52</sup> Several days later on 11 September 1910, a benefit picnic with all proceeds given to the union was held at Sulphur Springs.<sup>53</sup> But the violence resumed when a mob severely beat an old Italian cigarmaker. Gunmen fired at the foreman of Valle and Company. A gunbattle ensued in which police apprehended one of the assailants.<sup>54</sup> A Large number of police at the train station cleared the platform of loiterers. Other groups of police wandered through a large crowd in Ybor City searching people. They arrested two for concealed weapons. By mid-September, the civil condition bordered on anarchy."<sup>55</sup>

### EASTERLING AND THE TWO ITALIANS

The event which ignited the powder keg occurred on 14 September 1910. A mob met J. F. Easterling in front of the Bustillo Brothers' and Diaz factory at 1:30 in the afternoon. As he attempted to enter the factory, gunfire erupted, and the bookkeeper fell wounded. The forty-nine year old Easterling had worked for Bustillo Brothers' for four years. The *Tribune* quickly incited the public now that "the first American" had been attacked "as an outgrowth of the present differences."<sup>56</sup>

The *Tribune* then published what the Anglo-white population was thinking, "Easterling is and must be the very last American to be attacked in this bold, blood-thirsty manner."<sup>57</sup> Mayor McKay followed suit by promising a renewed commitment to the protection of life and property.<sup>58</sup>

The Police Department had clues concerning three men involved in the shooting but were not releasing information.<sup>59</sup> Finally, at six

o'clock P. M. on September 20th, authorities arrested Castenge Ficarrotta, a forty-five year old unemployed Italian, and Angelo Albano, a twenty-five year old Italian insurance salesman. Both men were from West Tampa. At nine o'clock, while being transported to the county jail by two officers in a horse pulled "hack", a mob overtook the group and aimed guns at the officers' heads. The two Italians were abducted.

The following morning both men hung from a huge oak tree at the corner of Grand Central (now Kennedy Boulevard) and Howard Avenue. A sign pinned to Albano's trousers warned,

"Others take notice or go the same way. We know seven more. We are watching. If any more citizens are molested, look out.

Edwin Lambright remembered that morning and how people coming down Grand Central Avenue found the bodies of the two men hanging from the tree along the side of the road. Lambright noted that Ficarrotta and Albano had been among the crowd from which the shots were fired at Easterling.<sup>61</sup> A *Tribune* editorial discussed the lynching of the two Italians and argued that this action delivered "the verdict that the people of this city will not tolerate the 'business' of assassination for hire."<sup>62</sup> A coroner's jury investigating the lynching adjourned after one week without determining who was responsible.<sup>63</sup>

Threatening letters promising the same fate awaited them were sent to de la Campa and other members of the JAB. Florida Governor Gilchrist inquired into the nature of the threats.<sup>64</sup>

But the status of the strike remained the same.

On September 28th Easterling, thought to be recovering nicely, died suddenly of a stomach ulceration, possibly complicated by the bullet damage.<sup>65</sup>

As September gave way to October, arson became another tool against the manufacturers and their business allies. On October 1st fire completely destroyed the Balbin Brothers factory in three-quarters of an hour.<sup>66</sup> That same night a quick response by the Fire Department saved the *Tribune* building from the same fate.<sup>67</sup> The following day three hundred cigar workers exited the city by steamship en route to Key West.<sup>68</sup> The citizens of Tampa determined to stop these incendiary acts, incited by the *Tribune* against the "anarchistic, lawdefying element" in the community.<sup>69</sup>

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## THE CITIZENS TAKE CONTROL

Enraged by assassination, arson and assault, and stirred by the burning words of the *Tribune*, the citizens of Tampa seized control. On October 4th a group of professional and business men representing the economic interests of the city assembled at the courthouse.<sup>70</sup> During this mass meeting, the convocation appointed Colonel Hugh C. McFarlane as Chairman of the newly formed Citizens' Committee. Mayor McKay also took part. A strong sense of purpose and a rallying cry to the patriotic duty of each citizen characterized this meeting.<sup>71</sup> The assembly adopted resolutions guaranteeing the protection of the manufacturers and the workers who wished to return to work and called for all those who had left Tampa, workers and owners, to return. The Citizens' Committee resolutions also held the JAB responsible for any further "acts of lawlessness."<sup>72</sup>

The Manufacturers' Association responded by meeting with the Citizens' Committee on October 10th and by accepting the Committee's guarantee of protection if the owners reopened their factories.<sup>73</sup> In reaction to this move, the Building Trade Council, a group of seven trade unions, vowed to morally and financially support the striking cigarmakers.<sup>74</sup> Now with new found support, the JAB acted defiantly, threatening to ship the cigarmakers out from Tampa if the Citizens' Committee exerted control. Tension in Tampa was now at a fever pitch.<sup>75</sup>

The owners decided to reopen the thirty-six factories they had closed and to offer work to all who applied.<sup>76</sup> The Citizens' Committee had two hundred armed men ready to respond to any trouble.<sup>77</sup>

On 17 October 1910, in a blitzkrieg of activity, the Citizens' Committee arrested Jose de la Campa, Brit Russell, J. F. Bartlum and two others, setting their bail at \$3,000 each. The original charges included "the premeditated intent of causing the death of J. F. Easterling," as well as several counts of "conspiracy to prevent workmen from returning to work."<sup>78</sup> Though the charge concerning Easterling was later dropped, a jury found the trio, de la Campa, Russell and Bartlum, guilty of the charges pertaining to their interference with the rights of workers to work.<sup>79</sup>

With this massive show of force, the Citizens' Committee now controlled Tampa. The purpose of their patrols was two-fold: first to liberate the cigarmakers from the influence of their despotic leadership and secondly to allow them to return to the factories without the threat of any harm.<sup>80</sup> The Committee succeeded in both these goals. The *Tribune* praised the citizens of

Tampa for boldly seizing control of the conflict in spite of great personal risk.<sup>81</sup>

Samuel Gompers, President of the American Federation of Labor (of which the CMIU was a member), complained to Florida Governor Gilchrist about the tactics and the treatment of the jailed strike leaders.<sup>82</sup> The Governor visited Tampa himself and investigated, finding the Citizens' Committee and all local officials innocent of Gompers' charges and justified in their actions.<sup>83</sup> By November 1st workers were slowly returning and factories were reopening in response to their return.<sup>84</sup> Radical strikers circulated a manifesto which advocated the use of violence and proclaimed, "Let all strike breakers be damned for now and forever." But these threats had little effect as cigar workers tired of the strife. Workers were returning in larger numbers, confident of Tampa's future.<sup>85</sup>

Val Antuono, an Italian immigrant entrepreneur, placed an advertisement in the *Tribune*, asking for "one hundred boys or girls to learn cigarmaker's trade-can earn wages of \$15 to \$20 a week within less than six months."<sup>86</sup>

Through the month of December, workers trickled back to the work benches. By 23 January 1911, twenty-three hundred and sixty cigarmakers, selectors, packers and stuffers had returned to Association factories.<sup>87</sup> Italians, many of whom remembered being called "strike breakers" during the 1901 strike, stubbornly held out until the last. The owners considered the Italian workers to be the key to the lingering clash. The owners also believed once the Italians returned others would follow.<sup>88</sup>

Finally, on 25 January 1911, the joint Advisory Board and the local cigar union

executive boards declared the cigar strike ended by a unanimous vote. The vote of the individual members was overwhelmingly in favor of ending the strike, although some diehard radicals objected.<sup>89</sup>

On January 29th, the manufacturers announced the closing of the branch factories. Hundreds of workers, who had been working in Key West and Havana, applied for Jobs in Tampa. The P. and O. Steamship Lines and two Atlantic Coastline railway trains were full carting returning cigar craftsmen to Tampa.<sup>90</sup>

### **THE COSTS OF THE STRIKE**

The strike of 1910 exacted many high costs. The most dramatic were, of course, the lives of Easterling, Ficarrota, Albano and Martino (the West Tampa saloon keeper). Other human costs, such as the dislocation of masses of people, starvation of children, the breakup of families, merely give testimony to the vastness of human suffering incurred by many of the participants. These sacrifices overshadow and outweigh any economic losses that occurred.

Economically, the cigar output of 1910 dropped off over sixty-five million cigars from 1909. One quarter of a million dollars per week was lost in payrolls. General business losses in Tampa amounted to \$350,000 per week, and the cigar industry itself sacrificed fifteen million dollars in orders.<sup>91</sup>

### **TAMPA, THE NEXT GREAT CITY?**

In spite of the setbacks, Tampa also registered many impressive gains during this volatile year. An election annexed East Tampa to the city of Tampa and the port

area as well.<sup>92</sup> The Port of Tampa, in terms of tonnage and valuation of gross business, outperformed all previous years with a 34 percent increase in tonnage over 1909, reaching a total of 1,105,751 gross tons.<sup>93</sup> The Tribune reported that the banking industry had experienced its most lucrative year in history.<sup>94</sup> Tampa Electric recorded its biggest gain in history as well.<sup>95</sup> The Customs House, a barometer of the cigar industry's import and export activity, experienced the biggest day since the beginning of the strike on 30 January 1911.<sup>96</sup> Building permits increased \$135,000 to \$1,685,586, while the phosphate industry increased tonnage by 428,000 tons to 1,469,317 tons. Post office receipts also increased \$3 1,000 to \$169,106. One area to show a loss was the internal revenue, with a loss of \$163 000.<sup>97</sup>

Though 1910 did not reach the zenith that business leaders had predicted, the year did manage some successes as reflected by these statistics.

### **EPILOGUE**

Tampa's labor movement received a deafening blow from the events of 1910, but just as it had rebounded from the destruction of La Resistencia in 1901, labor survived. The strike of 1910 stands important because it mirrored many attitudes and values held across America during that day. Attitudes toward immigrant populations, primarily arriving from southern and eastern Europe, as well as the Orient, challenged the security of the Anglo-Saxon traditions of the power elite. In Tampa a cacophony of foreign languages blended into a harmonious mix in the galeria, as, side by side, Italian, Cuban, Spanish and American craftsmen created art, and the black or white colors of the artisans' skin could not be detected in the laughter,



the sweat, the toll and the solidarity of the workplace. Outside the workplace, there existed a different reality.

The existence of a white power structure in one-industry towns such as Tampa underscored the realities of immigrant communities. Many improprieties of the immigrant laboring class were overlooked as long as the status quo was maintained, and production was not threatened. But if threats to prosperity did occur, as in Tampa, the ruling class possessed several tools with which to assert control. These tools were utilized in the 1910 strike once the struggle had spread beyond the immigrant enclaves to menace the lives of American citizens, as did the assassination of Easterling and arson at the Tribune building.

Among the most potent of the tools available to the power structure were lynching, police action and citizens' committees. In Tampa the citizenry employed all three means to terrorize the immigrant workers in order to reassert control over the means of production, the labor force. Lynching was commonly used in 1910 against blacks and foreign elements deemed "undesirable." Within this context, the lynching of Ficarrota and Albano gains more sociological significance as a phenomenon of the mentality of that era.

The use of "special police", local country ruffians itching to prove the superiority of red-blooded Americans over any foreign element, suspended the basic civil rights of all citizens and placed the city in the hands of legalized thugs.

Of the three tools, the Citizens' Committee proved the most powerful, as this method validated the use of lynching and special police as arms of Justice as determined by the city's white ruling class. In 1901 and

again in 1910, a Citizens' Committee had stripped the union and its members of due process of law in a conspiratorial manner covered up by the legal infrastructure. The importance of these committees can not be overemphasized, as they meted out justice born of economic necessity to preserve the industry on which Tampa's fortunes rested.

In labor's defense, it fell victim to the dynamics of the time, a period when things foreign fell suspect to microscopic inspection and rejection. Among those foreign "things" were the philosophies, the customs and the languages which tended to make acculturation difficult for the immigrant laboring class. In general this difficulty facilitated an additional form of control by which the ruling power elite could manipulate immigrant labor. However, the nature of the cigar worker as an artisan and the environment of the galeria with the lector acting as an educational tool all worked to create an anomaly: skilled craftsmen who were receiving education while on the job in an atmosphere conducive to social and intellectual growth. Perhaps this condition within the factory was the element which cemented the strikers' resolve in the cigar industry.

The strike of 1910, along with its other incarnations already noted, left a legacy of labor-management conflict which influenced the long range attitude toward labor in the city of Tampa and the state of Florida. The battle over union recognition continues today, and the fight over closed shops in Florida is one which remains an enigma to contemporary labor leaders. They may do well to search for the seeds of this dilemma in the early labor movement among the cigar workers and in the strike of 1910, in particular.

## ENDNOTES

Abbreviations to be used:

TMT- *The Tampa Morning Tribune*

USTJ- *United States Tobacco Journal*

<sup>1</sup> "Tampa Isolated From Other Cities," TMT, 19 Oct 1910: 1.

<sup>2</sup> "Labor Agitators Placed Under Arrest," TMT, 18 Oct 1910: 1; "Proclamation By Mayor," TMT, 18 Oct 1910: 1; "Labor Agitators Placed Under Arrest," TMT, 18 Oct 1910: 1.

<sup>3</sup> "Official Census Report Gains Tampa A Population of 38,524," TMT, 12 Oct 1910: 1; "West Tampa Leads All Florida Cities In Population Gains," TMT, 13 Jan 1911: 1.

<sup>4</sup> "Tampa Completes Her Greatest Fiscal Year," TMT, 1 Jul 1910: 2.

<sup>5</sup> "Easterling Dies At City Hospital," TMT, 29 Sept 1910: 12; "Two Men Taken," TMT, 21 Sept 1910: 1; "Excitement Is Caused In Ybor City," TMT, 5 Aug 1910: 12.

<sup>6</sup> "Labor Agitators Are Found Guilty," TMT, 24 Nov 1910: 1; "The Cost Of The Strike," TMT, 1 Sept 1910: 6.

<sup>7</sup> L. Glenn Westfall, *Research Study for the Development of the Ybor City Museum* (Bureau of Historic Sites and Properties, ) 165.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Gary Mormino and George Pozzetta, *The Immigrant World of Ybor City* (University of Illinois Press, Urbana and Chicago, 1987) 114.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 111.

<sup>11</sup> John Bodnar, *The Transplanted* (Indiana University Press, 1985) 94.

<sup>12</sup> Mormino and Pozzetta, *Immigrant World*, 112.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 118.

<sup>14</sup> "Men Leave Employment At The Vega Factory," TMT, 26 Jul 1910: 3.

<sup>15</sup> "Advisory Board Brings Strike Of Cigar Workers To Final End," TMT, 26 Jan 1911: 1.

<sup>16</sup> "Mass Meeting Of Labor Men," TMT, 30 Jun 1910: 6.

<sup>17</sup> "Members Of Committee Get Warm Reception," TMT, 6 Jul 1910: 12.

<sup>18</sup> "Give Their Side Of Controversy," TMT, 14 Jul 1910: 12.

<sup>19</sup> "Unknown Title", USTJ, 24 Aug 1910: page unknown.

<sup>20</sup> "West Tampa Factory Is Guarded By Police," TMT, 17 Jul 1910: 7.

<sup>21</sup> "100 Policemen Assigned Duty," TMT, 18 Sept 1910: 3.

<sup>22</sup> "D. B. McKay-Political Campaign," TMT, 25 Mar 1910: 12.

<sup>23</sup> Westfall, *Research Study*, 165

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 159-160.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 160.

<sup>26</sup> Mormino and Pozzetta, *Immigrant World*, 117.

<sup>27</sup> "D. B. McKay-Political Campaign," TMT, 25 Mar 1910: 12.

<sup>28</sup> Editorial, *The Wauchula Advocate*, reprinted in TMT, 6 Jan 1911: 6.

<sup>29</sup> Editorial, *The Bradentown Journal*, reprinted in TMT, 12 Jan 1911: 6.

<sup>30</sup> "A Few Hangings Would Be Appropriate," TMT, 14 Apr 1909: 6.

<sup>31</sup> Joe Maniscalco, Mormino/Pozzetta interview, 3 Apr 1980.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 7 Apr 1980.

<sup>33</sup> "A Human Document on the Strike," TMT, 11 Oct 1910: 6.

<sup>34</sup> "Labor Agitators Are Found Guilty," 24 Nov 1910? 1.

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<sup>35</sup> "West Tampa Factory Is Guarded By Police," 17 Jul 1910: 7.

<sup>36</sup> "Four Selectors Held," TMT, 19 Jul 1910: 12.

<sup>37</sup> "Board of Trade Will Take Hand," TMT, 13 Aug 1910: 4; "Manufacturers Advise Public," TMT, 14 Aug 1910: 1; "Open the Factories," TMT, 23 Aug 1910: 6.

<sup>38</sup> "Balbin Bro's. Have a Factory in St. Augustine," TMT, 13 Aug 1910: 5.

<sup>39</sup> "Cigar Factory Forces Reduced," TMT, 15 Aug 1910: 12.

<sup>40</sup> "Covetous Cities," TMT, 19 Aug 1910: 6.

<sup>41</sup> "Mobile Shows an Unfair Spirit," TMT, 23 Sept 1910: 10.

<sup>42</sup> "Just Helping Them Out Temporarily," *The Pensacola Journal*, reprinted in TMT, 16 Sept 1910: 6.

<sup>43</sup> "Cigar Trouble Causes Family Fights," TMT, 19 Aug 1910: 4.

<sup>44</sup> "The Cigar Salesman," *The Tobacco Leaf*, reprinted in TMT, 4 Aug 1910: 4.

<sup>45</sup> "Boarders Are Either Union or Non-Union," TMT, 16 Aug 1910: 12.

<sup>46</sup> "Police Crusade to Dust Loafers," TMT, 15 Aug 1910: 12.

<sup>47</sup> "No Violence Is Plea of Sheriff," TMT, 28 Aug 1910: 4.

<sup>48</sup> "Four Arrests Made When Factories Open," TMT, 30 Aug 1910: 2.

<sup>49</sup> "No Violence Is Plea of Sheriff," TMT, 28 Aug 1910: 4; "Assassins Work In Tampa," TMT, 30 Aug 1910: 12; "Officers Up Against It," TMT, 1 Sept 1910: 7.

<sup>50</sup> "Closed," TMT, 4 Aug 1910: 6.

<sup>51</sup> "Tampa Labor to Celebrate Today," TMT, 5 Sept 1910: 8.

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<sup>52</sup> "Tampa Celebrates Greatest Labor Day In History," TMT, 6 Sept 1910: 12.

<sup>53</sup> "Benefit Picnic To Be Given The Cigarmakers," TMT, Sept 1910: 4.

<sup>54</sup> "No Inquest Held Over Live Man," TMT 13 Sept 1910: 5; "Violence Crops Out In Strike," TMT, 13 Sept 1910: 12.

<sup>55</sup> "Guarding Night Trains Police Get Three Men," TMT, 14 Sept 1910: 5.

<sup>56</sup> "Cowardly Attack on Bookkeeper," TMT, 15 Sept 1910: 12.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> "Mayor Issues A Proclamation," TMT, 15 Sept 1910: 12.

<sup>59</sup> "Searching For Seven Who Fired," TMT, 17 Sept 1910: 3.

<sup>61</sup> "Reminiscences of Edwin Lambright," *The Tampa Tribune*, 6 Jul 1952: 12C.

<sup>62</sup> "A Lynching And A Lesson," TMT, 22 Sept 1910: 6.

<sup>63</sup> "Coroner's Jury Again Adjourns," TMT, 22 Sept 1910: 9.

<sup>64</sup> "Governor Asks About Letters," TMT, 22 Sept 1910: 12.

<sup>65</sup> "Title Unknown," TMT, 29 Sept 1910: 2.

<sup>66</sup> "Balbin Bro's, Factory Totally Destroyed," TMT, 2 Oct 1910: 5.

<sup>67</sup> "Incendiary Fire Menaces Tribune," TMT, 2 Oct 1910: 8.

<sup>68</sup> "300 Hundred Cigarmakers From Tampa," TMT, 3 Oct 1910: 8.

<sup>69</sup> "The Torch Succeeds The Bullet," TMT, 4 Oct 1910: 6.

<sup>70</sup> "Citizens Unite To Curb Strike," TMT, 5 Oct 1910: 1; "Tampa's Strike Is Nearly Over," *St. Petersburg Times*, 21 Oct 1910: no page.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

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<sup>72</sup> "Hundreds Of New Names To Strike Resolutions," TMT, 8 Oct 19 10:4.

<sup>73</sup> "Manufacturers Meet In Tampa," TMT, 11 Oct 1910: 12.

<sup>74</sup> "Labor Committee Named," TMT, 11 Oct 1910: 12.

<sup>75</sup> "Advisory Board Becomes Defiant," TMT, 12 Oct 1910: 3.

<sup>76</sup> "Thirty-Six Factories Will Open Today," TMT, 17 Oct 1910: 4.

<sup>77</sup> "Cigar Workers Will Be Given Chance To Return To Work," TMT, 17 Oct 1910: 1.

<sup>78</sup> "Inciting Murder Laid To Leaders," TMT, 19 Oct 1910: 10.

<sup>79</sup> "Labor Agitators Are Found Guilty," TMT, 24 Nov 1910:1.

<sup>80</sup> "Making It Easy For Workers," TMT, 22 Oct 1910: 4.

<sup>81</sup> "Tampa Will Remember These Citizens," TMT, 22 Oct 1910: 4.

<sup>82</sup> "Mr. Gompers Obtrudes," TMT, 29 Oct 1910: 4; also *American Federationist* 17 (November 1910), 1071.

<sup>83</sup> "Governor Gilchrist Exonerates Citizens," *St. Petersburg Times*, 9 Dec 1910: 5; "The Governor's Verdict On Tampa Citizens," TMT, 8 Dec 1910: 6.

<sup>84</sup> "Cigar Factories Add To Workers," TMT, 1 Nov 1910: 10.

<sup>85</sup> "Murder Favored By Mob Leaders," TMT, 2 Nov 1910: 12; "Cigar Workers Resuming Work," TMT 10 Nov 1910: 12; "100 Cigarmakers Arrive In Tampa," TMT, 14 Nov 1910: 8.

<sup>86</sup> "Wanted!" TMT, 19 Nov 1910: 9.

<sup>87</sup> "Again Going Up," USTJ, 23 Jan 1911: 10.

<sup>88</sup> Mormino and Pozzetta, *Immigrant World*, pgs. 117-127.

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<sup>89</sup> "Advisory Board Brings Strike Of Cigar Workers To Final End," TMT, 26 Jan 1911: 1; "The Strike Is Over; Let Us Have Peace," TMT, 26 Jan 1911: 6.

<sup>90</sup> "Closing Branch Factories," TMT, 30 Jan 1911:12.

<sup>91</sup> "The Cost Of The Tampa Strike," USTJ, 4 Feb 1911: page unknown.

<sup>92</sup> "Greater Tampa," TMT, 8 Sept 1910: 6.

<sup>93</sup> "By Increase In Tonnage Of Port," TMT, 22 Dec 1910: 12.

<sup>94</sup> "Banks Make Fine Showing For 1910," TMT, 12 Jan 1911: 11.

<sup>95</sup> "Tampa Electric Has A Big Year," TMT, 12 Jan 1911: 8.

<sup>96</sup> "Customs Collections Returning To Normal," TMT, 8 Jan 191 20; "Biggest Customs Day In Six Months," TMT, 31 Jan 1911: 12.

<sup>97</sup> "Big Gains For The Year 1910," TMT, 8 Jan 1911:6.

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# HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY SCHOOL DESEGREGATION BUSING AND BLACK HIGH SCHOOLS IN TAMPA, FLORIDA

## April 1971- September 1971

By ELINOR KIMMEL

### INTRODUCTION

In the fall of 1971, Hillsborough County implemented a county-wide school desegregation plan which called for "massive" busing of thousands of children. The planning process had begun in the spring, following a United States Supreme Court decision authorizing court ordered busing to achieve desegregation. During the summer, as county officials and community leaders developed a busing plan, opposition to "forced" busing gradually mounted. White parents protested vocally, and in relatively large numbers. As the busing plan emerged, however, it became apparent that blacks, not whites, would bear the brunt of busing. Some black opposition also surfaced, not in response to the concept of "forced" busing, but rather to the plan Hillsborough County chose to adopt. This plan, designed in appearance to placate whites, placed the "burden" of busing almost entirely on black students. The dilemma for the black community, then, concerned the price it was willing to pay for "equal education."

Busing became a national issue in April of 1971 when the United States Supreme Court upheld a court-ordered "busing for integration" plan in Charlotte, North Carolina (Swann).<sup>1</sup> Communities all over the South shuddered as they realized their vulnerability to a similar ruling. Soon thereafter, the Tampa branch of the National

Association for the Advancement of Colored People<sup>2</sup> Legal Defense Fund petitioned in local federal court for a re-interpretation of Hillsborough County's existing plan, which had been in effect for only one year (*Mannings*).<sup>3</sup> Tampa's plan, based on a suit originally filed in 1958 and last decided in 1970, had failed to eliminate all-white and all-black schools.<sup>4</sup>

*Mannings* was quickly revised to comply with *Swann*, and the Hillsborough County School Board immediately began planning for full integration in August by forming committees to develop proposals. Black and white community members, selected by school officials, joined in the planning process. The final proposal, accepted by both the school board and the federal court, contained features specifically designed to minimize "white flight", and thus lessened the burdens placed on the white community. As a result, the black community shouldered the "cost" of busing. Black students attended "local" schools in only two grades (sixth and seventh); for the remaining ten school years, they were bused into white neighborhoods. The heaviest price, however, involved the two, inner-city "black" high schools: Blake and Middleton Senior High Schools. Under the Hillsborough County plan, both of these schools converted to junior high schools; students and faculty, some of whom had been with the same school for decades, were reassigned to white suburban schools.

The Middleton-Blake closing became something of a flash point in the black community; NAACP officials for instance were divided on the issue. Andrew Mannings, plaintiff in the original Hillsborough County integration lawsuit, publicly opposed busing and the closing of black schools.<sup>5</sup> The white community displayed little interest in the situation as it concerned blacks: white anti-busing activists focused rather on the standard anti-busing rhetoric and tried to avoid the appearance of racism. The black high schools were of great importance only to the black community; black protest therefore coalesced on that point.<sup>6</sup>

### **HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY SCHOOL DESEGREGATION**

The Florida school desegregation story begins, not with the 1954 *Brown vs The Board of Education* decision striking down "separate but equal,"<sup>7</sup> but rather in 1949. In April of that year, five black students attempted without success to apply for admission to the University of Florida Law School. The students took recourse to Florida state courts, and from 1949 to 1957 the case (*Hawkins*)<sup>8</sup> revolved through the Florida State and United States Supreme Courts. Finally, in an opinion issued in October 1957, the United States Supreme Court instructed the plaintiff to utilize the federal court system by filing a class action suit, thus avoiding the obstructionist Florida Supreme Court. *Hawkins* (by 1957, the only remaining plaintiff) eventually "won" the right to admission on June 18, 1958, but then failed to qualify academically. Based on the *Hawkins* decision, a black student entered the University of Florida Law School in September of 1958 and thus integrated the Florida public university system.<sup>9</sup>

The Florida response to the 1954 *Brown* decision was decidedly sedate. Local papers expressed regret at the decision:

The decision is deplorable to the extent that it is disruptive and destructive of law, custom, and social order in those states which have maintained segregation since the slaves were freed by Lincoln's proclamation.<sup>10</sup>

but also, in the case of the *Tampa Tribune*, conceded that the ruling was inescapable based on the 14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Florida's acting governor, Charley Johns, announced his intention to avoid desegregation if possible, and most political and community leaders held a similar position. Because the Supreme Court decision did not impose a deadline for implementation, Florida's leaders hoped to delay desegregation indefinitely.

Integration activities in Hillsborough County began in 1955 following the *Brown II* decision of May 31, 1955. The parents of seventeen black students petitioned the school board requesting:

immediate steps to reorganize the public schools under your jurisdiction on a non-discriminatory basis.<sup>11</sup>

Shortly after this petition was filed, the Tinker Elementary School, affiliated with MacDill Air Force Base, announced that black students were free to enroll;<sup>12</sup> within a few months, the first black pupil, daughter of Sergeant Joseph T. Elliot, USAF, was admitted. Tinker's willingness to enroll black students was compelled by federal regulations which Air Force operated facilities were required to obey.<sup>13</sup>

Although other Florida counties were involved in integration activities from 1955 to 1958, (most notably Dade County<sup>14</sup>), Hillsborough County remained relatively quiet. In December of 1958, however, suit filed on behalf of elementary school student Andrew Mannings began a twelve year journey through state and federal courts.<sup>15</sup> While *Mannings* languished in litigation, Hillsborough County quietly integrated in 1961 by admitting 8-year-old Benjamin Lowry into formerly all-white Bayside School for Handicapped Children.<sup>16</sup> Little reaction occurred at this time, or in December, 1961, when Robert W. Saunders, Jr. transferred to all-white MacFarlane Park Elementary School.<sup>17</sup>

The first *Mannings* order, implemented in 1963, mandated integration at a pace of one grade a year, starting in the first grade.<sup>18</sup> This ineffective arrangement permitted "freedom of choice," which consequently allowed white students to avoid attending black-majority schools. Hillsborough County continued to operate various "choice" and zoning plans which failed to eliminate fully segregated black schools from 1963 through the 1970-1971 school year.<sup>19</sup> A reduction in segregation did occur in 1970 in response to a Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals decision in *Mannings*.<sup>20</sup> This order, based on existing desegregation case law, resulted in decreased segregation to some degree, however, by October 1970, fifteen all-black schools remained in operation, and a majority of white students (sixty-nine percent) attended all-white or nearly all-white schools.<sup>21</sup> In the opinion of the NAACP, Hillsborough County continued to maintain a "dual system."<sup>22</sup>

As the school year 1970-1971 neared its end, the United States Supreme Court in the *Swann* ruling) opened way for further

integration efforts by the black Tampa community.<sup>23</sup> The *Swann* decision, applicable in Charlotte-Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, in essence, approved race-balancing ratios in attendance plans, and sanctioned inter-zone busing to achieve this end.<sup>24</sup> The "specter" of "massive forced busing was quickly becoming a reality for Hillsborough County.

The Tampa Branch NAACP Legal Defense Fund, in response to *Swann*, immediately filed a motion in Florida Middle District Court.<sup>25</sup> Federal Judge Ben Krentzman heard the petition, and on May 11, 1971, issued a 45-page statement mandating a complete makeover of the August 1970 plan within the expanded guidelines of *Swann*. Krentzman specifically ordered the use of race balanced ratios in pupil assignment, stating:

A desegregation plan will be unsuccessful and entail resegregation where a few whites are added to formerly blacks schools which otherwise remain intact.... There is an old, equitable maxim that equity delights to do justice, and not by halves. It never had greater application than here.<sup>26</sup>

The Hillsborough County School Board, having anticipated the *Swann* and *Mannings* decisions, swung into action.<sup>27</sup>

Raymond O. Shelton, Hillsborough County Superintendent of Schools, appointed E.L. Bing to form a committee responsible for planning in response to judge Krentzman's ruling.<sup>28</sup> Bing, a County School Board official, came to his appointment with experience, having participated in the development of integration plans in prior years.<sup>29</sup> He also had personal experience, of



a sort, with busing for the purpose of "race balancing:"

And busing, I know about that too. When I graduated from Florida A&M, the legislature paid my tuition to Columbia University to keep me out of the University of Florida -and they bought me a bus ticket, to make sure I got there. Yeah, I know about busing. I was bused all the way to New York City.<sup>30</sup>

Bing's initial task, to form a committee representative of the community, progressed rapidly; by May 17, 1971, the committee numbered eighty-two members, twenty-five percent of which were black.<sup>31</sup> In its final form, the School Desegregation Committee (SDQ) consisted of one hundred-fifty members including business and community leaders, as well as students.<sup>32</sup> Upon formation, the Committee assumed responsibility for reviewing and approving desegregation options developed by an appointive School Board staff committee.

Planning discussions proceeded as scheduled, and input was requested from both the CharlotteMecklenburg County School Board (defendant in the *Swann* case) and the Desegregation Consulting Center of the University of Miami.<sup>33</sup> Subcommittee's formed to focus on specific grade groupings in order to insure that the needs of students (especially at the elementary school level) were met. "White flight" (to private schools) was a concern of the SDC and county officials from the beginning; closing black schools therefore quickly became an option. The Biracial Committee of the Tampa school system was the first organization to express concern over desegregation plans which proposed closings. As discussions progressed, however, it became apparent that favored proposals would involve school

closings.<sup>34</sup> Finally, on June 8, 1971, the School Desegregation Committee announced its recommendations.

The elementary school proposal involved "clustering" which created sixth-grade centers out of previously majority-black schools, and grade-schools for first through fifth grades in predominantly white schools. For junior high schools, the plan remained in flux, with suggestions for zoning adjustments or grade grouping in the seventh or eighth grades. (The plan, as eventually approved, created seventh grade centers out of inner-city schools.) The senior high school proposal recommended pupil swapping and conversion of Blake Senior High School to a junior high school. The alternative plan called for the conversion of both Middleton Senior High School and Blake, to junior level facilities. All proposals, primary and alternative, clearly impacted black students much more than white.<sup>35</sup>

The Hillsborough County School Board approved the SDC desegregation plan on June 11, 1971, accepting the primary recommendations for elementary schools, and the alternative plans for Junior and senior high schools. In the case of senior high schools, Middleton joined Blake as facilities to be converted to other uses.<sup>36</sup> Judge Krentzman, on July 2, 1971, approved the plan, and the School Board turned its attention to logistical planning and to soliciting cooperation from the community.<sup>37</sup> Already, it was obvious that "selling" the plan, especially to white parents, would involve serious efforts, and some amount of luck.

Meanwhile, as the SDC proposals were made public, community opposition to busing plans mounted, especially among white parents. Blacks, on the other hand, in

general, supported the plan and regretted the school closings. The coverage by the *Tampa Tribune* fully discussed the various proposals and, furthermore, made quite clear the fact that black children faced busing for ten of twelve years, while white students would ride for only two years. Nevertheless, the white community, reacting in many more numbers, and with much more emotion than black parents, rallied around the "neighborhood schools" banner. White Tampa parents focused their arguments on safety issues, and the convenience of living in proximity to their children's schools, while more sophisticated protesters stressed the expenses associated with increased busing.<sup>38</sup>

In response to SDC proposals suggesting conversion of Blake and/or Middleton, the initial "save" Middleton-Blake demonstration occurred on June 14, 1971 at the Hillsborough County Courthouse. Approximately one hundred-fifty blacks, students and adults, marched in downtown Tampa, and met with school system representative G.V. Stewart. During the ensuing discussion, Stewart disclosed that plans had existed "for years" to convert Middleton to a junior high school. Following this confrontation, the Biracial Advisory Committee petitioned Judge Krentzman to delay approval of the plan. Stating that the proposed plan, by closing Middleton and Blake, delivered "a punitive blow" to the black community, the Committee requested revision of the plan. Three days later, the Tampa Tribune published a lengthy interview with Andrew Mannings (plaintiff in Tampa's 1958 case) in which Mannings expressed his opposition to "forced busing."<sup>39</sup>

The chief justifications offered in favor of closing black, inner-city schools generally mention "white flight". Desegregation

discussions in Hillsborough County followed this trend. White, moderate parents accepted "one-way" busing only: in other words they were not prepared to allow their children to be bused into black neighborhoods, although they were willing to accept black children in white schools.<sup>40</sup> The issue of white flight also influenced black parents, who were often forced to subordinate concerns about neighborhood schools and busing to the desire for access to white (and higher quality) schools.<sup>41</sup> In the case of Middleton and Blake, a second consideration determined the conversion decision. Both schools failed to meet state facility standards for senior high schools. (Middleton, in fact, following a fire in 1968, had been rebuilt to junior high school specifications.)<sup>42</sup> In light of the renovation costs, and given that the schools did meet requirements for junior high schools, the decision to convert the facilities appealed strongly to both the SDC and the School Board.<sup>43</sup>

Throughout the South, communities provided all-black schools for one reason only: to maintain a segregated system. In Tampa, Blake and Middleton were relatively small facilities, reflecting in capacity the proportion of black students in Tampa. Hillsborough County was hardly the only community to face the end of high schools which had served the black community for years. Nashville, for instance, in similar circumstances, experienced intense opposition to proposals to close its only black high school:

The focal point of black frustrations was the proposed closing of Pearl High School. Pearl was the last high school in the black community and had tremendous symbolic value. It had been designed by a black architect and built by black

contractors during the "separate but equal" period. Black leaders argued that closing Pearl would rip the heart out of the North Nashville community.<sup>44</sup>

Pearl High School, after a struggle, survived in Nashville. In Tampa, Middleton Senior High School became a "Pearl-like" symbol.

Middleton High School had served the East Tampa black community for 35 years. Constructed by the WPA with donated materials, it opened in 1935 as the first senior high school for black students in Hillsborough County. Prior to 1935, students attended all-black Booker T. Washington, which housed grades six through twelve. The force behind the founding of Middleton was black insurance executive and mail carrier George Middleton.<sup>45</sup> Blake High School, named in honor of Booker T. Washington principal Howard W. Blake, opened in 1956. Both schools had strong athletic programs, and provided a wide range of educational programs. Blake, in addition to academic studies, offered vocational training in a number of areas including carpentry, masonry, and auto repair.<sup>46</sup>

Blake and Middleton both played a vital role for black students and the black community. The all-black schools provided pupils with the opportunity to excel and achieve, to become class president or prom queen. Virtually every graduating senior in the Blake class of 1960, for instance, was a member of at least one social, academic, or vocational club. Both schools were "neighborhood schools" with deep ties to the community. Teachers tended to live in the same neighborhood, and therefore were able to interact with parents often. Middleton students especially, were often second generation students, and in some cases, entire families had attended the same school.

School pride was an important factor for all associated with Blake and Middleton.<sup>47</sup> Students, teachers, and alumni, especially recent graduates, would not accept the closings easily.

Expenses associated with busing were undoubtedly a factor which influenced the actions of the SDC and the School Board. While not publicly acknowledged at the time, county officials clearly preferred to limit resources allocated for busing efforts. For this reason, busing fewer students on a yearly basis was obviously preferable, and the black students, twenty percent of the student population, and concentrated in the inner-city, became logical targets. Well after implementation, the financial motivation became clear:

The plain truth is that it is cheaper to bus most of the blacks to outlying schools than it is to bus most of the whites to the inner-city, simply because there are so many more whites.<sup>48</sup>

The school board did take into account need of the students impacted by the plan. As a means to minimize resentment and conflict, pupils retained school positions such as class officer or cheerleader when they transferred to newly assigned schools (becoming, for example, "co-Presidents")<sup>49</sup> Students participated in biracial advisory boards at each school, and the county placed two specially trained community relations specialists in each junior and senior high school<sup>50</sup> To encourage participation in extra-curricular activities, the school board agreed to provide alternative transportation for students involved in after-school activities.<sup>51</sup> Black protests continued throughout the summer and into the beginning of the 1971-1972 school year. The majority of those opposed to black school closings were

persons associated with Blake or Middleton, and most of the protesters were in their teens or early twenties. The leader of the youthful activists was Otha Favors, a former Middleton student, and University of South Florida activist.<sup>52</sup> The protesters' strategy consisted of picketing, marching, and forcing confrontations with various county officials and Federal Judge Krentzman. Their numbers were small, and due to lack of support in the black community, (as well as their youth), they received little attention. The demonstrations were generally peaceful, however, a march on August 17 resulted in a small riot when participants, led by Favors, were denied admission to a school board meeting. The two hundred to three hundred teenaged marchers threw rocks, slashed tires, and broke windows before Tampa police officers were able to disperse them. While the disturbance raged in the streets, inside the courthouse, blacks spoke in opposition to the school closings and whites protested "forced busing".<sup>53</sup>

Andrew Mannings, eighteen years old in 1971, expressed the feeling of many of the young protesters when he said:

There is ethnic consciousness. The revolutionary movement is coming in ... Most of the older black leaders in Tampa have copped out. The NAACP certainly doesn't speak for young people. It's the revolutionary voices that are coming out clear.<sup>54</sup>

Youthful activists threatened various radical actions which never materialized, including school boycotts and "race riots."<sup>55</sup> Otha Favors, leader of the protesters, referred to the plan in the following terms:

It's a disintegration plan when it attempts to break up the black community just when we're finally

getting to the point where blacks are becoming proud of black identity.<sup>56</sup>

For many younger blacks, then, identification with a historically black high school was more important than the opportunity to attend a formerly white school.

Among traditional black-advocacy organizations, both the Biracial Committee and the NAACP opposed the integration plan because of the burden it placed on black students. The NAACP advised Judge Krentzman of its opposition to the plan, specifically school closings, but did not submit an alternative proposal.<sup>57</sup> Key NAACP members, at the outset, felt strongly that the plan was "not acceptable," and discussions ensued as members attempted to arrive at a consensus.<sup>58</sup> After weeks of internal debate, one week prior to the start of classes, the NAACP finally endorsed the plan, stating:

A non-racially segregated education is looked upon by the NAACP as an investment in the future of the community.<sup>59</sup>

In the end, the NAACP had focused on its primary goal of equalizing educational opportunity, and accepted school closings as well as extensive busing of black children.<sup>60</sup> Most of the black community agreed with this position.<sup>61</sup> NAACP approval notwithstanding, grassroots groups, including Favors' Black Caucus continued to oppose the plan.

Adult opposition in the black community, like the youthful opposition, involved mainly Middleton-Blake parents, teachers, and alumni. Former students lobbied in Tallahassee and Washington without success for relief.<sup>62</sup> Teachers, especially, anticipated

major upheavals in their lives with the passing of Blake and Middleton High Schools. These fears were not unfounded: teachers experienced significant effects when most faculty members transferred to formerly all-white schools. Teachers often expressed a feeling of being "out-numbered," and faculty with decades of experience sensed the need to "prove" themselves to students and new associates. Long-term professional, and personal relationships were severely altered as colleagues no longer interacted on a daily basis.<sup>63</sup>

Hillsborough County schools opened on August 31, 1971 with few problems. County officials anticipated a reduced attendance, and in fact, enrollment was eleven thousand short of projections. "White flight" to private schools, however, did not occur to any substantive degree. Five new private schools opened in Tampa (three offering grades six and seven only), and nine existing private schools added grades. Public school attendance on opening day was 92,939, with Middleton Junior High reporting the lowest attendance rate (sixty-four percent). Fifty-seven thousand students rode buses, an increase over the previous year of twenty-five thousand.<sup>64</sup> Enrollment continued to climb throughout the first week of school, reaching 98,921 by September 4.<sup>65</sup> Students returned to the public school system throughout the fall, and the following years; by 1976 less than four thousand students were enrolled in private schools.<sup>66</sup>

Although opening day problems were few, the first week of school did see minor disturbances, especially at Middleton Junior High School. Black youths heckled white students and teachers in the halls of Middleton throughout the first week of classes. Officials placed police officers on

duty in a number of schools, including Middleton.<sup>67</sup> Harassment died down eventually as students settled into the school year. Well after the opening of school, a racially motivated incident provoked by white students resulted in a rampage at a formerly all-white high school which involved around fifty students; this and other such episodes were isolated and involved little more than fist-fighting.<sup>68</sup>

Reported incidents also included a school bus burning, student extortion attempts, and a small riot in the inner-city College Hill area of Tampa. The College Hill riot, which occurred the day before school opened, was not connected with school integration, but rather involved a black driver stopped by Tampa police officers. Bus scheduling problems also occurred; groups of students on a number of occasions missed school entirely when school buses failed to arrive. Most seriously, the Jackson Heights Elementary School suffered a firebombing during the night of August 31-September 1. White parents continued to picket various schools; however, as the school year went on, the picketers faded away. Overall, Hillsborough County's busing plan went into effect with less trouble than expected.<sup>69</sup>

In the aftermath of August and September 1971, the Tampa community pondered what had been lost, as well as what had been won. For blacks, the price for racially balanced integration was clear: neighborhood schools in the black community at the Junior and senior high school levels ceased to exist. Two high schools, with a combined history and tradition of fifty years, had been sacrificed, and the benefits, if any, would not be known for years.<sup>70</sup> Unlike the black community, white Hillsborough County school officials were fully satisfied with their efforts. But, in endorsing the closing of Blake and Middleton, Hillsborough County

officials didn't adequately acknowledge the importance of these schools to the black community. Local black citizens had deep and long-standing ties to both Middleton (1935) and Blake (1956). Although the facilities were not up to standards, each school provided the expected extra-curricular activities and opportunities for student and parent participation. As is the case at any high school, a support system of parents, teachers, and students had formed through the years each of these schools operated. Closing the schools shattered that network, and left both students and teachers bereft.

### AFTERWARD

The Hillsborough County desegregation plan was generally considered successful. Implementation occurred with a minimum of violence, and opposition rapidly faded away. Community objections notwithstanding, within a few short months, school officials and community leaders had successfully transformed a substantially segregated system into a fully integrated, unitary structure.

Those who objected in the years immediately following 1971 were mainly concerned black citizens. Segregation continued in the class room, and black students were substantially over-represented in special classes for the mentally retarded. The primary concern however, involved discipline. From less than five thousand suspensions in 1970-1971, the total grew to over ten thousand by 1973-1974. Half these suspensions went to blacks, who constituted only about twenty percent of the student population. Following the filing of a complaint with the HEW Office for Civil Rights, school officials were informed that discipline policies had created a

"discriminatory impact on minority students." The school board responded aggressively, and suspensions began to drop by 1974-1975.<sup>71</sup>

Both Middleton and Blake Senior High Schools continue to boast active alumni associations. Middleton alumni formed a new association in February, 1991, and, in August, held a reunion of all classes (1935 through 1971). This Middleton group is currently engaged in a number of projects, including a lobbying effort to re-open a new Middleton High School in East Tampa. The association is also committed to involvement with Middleton Junior High School as well as other community-based projects. Blake's alumni association, formed in 1989 has been actively involved for two years in efforts to re-establish Blake.<sup>72</sup> Hillsborough County is currently considering a proposal to construct a new high school in downtown Tampa; Blake activists have already petitioned to name the facility Blake Senior High School.<sup>73</sup>

In October of 1991, Hillsborough County officials completely re-wrote the Tampa desegregation plan in an effort to reduce busing. The revised plan proposes the replacement of single grade centers with four-year high schools and three-year middle schools. Because this plan calls for some busing of white, suburban students, white parents have filed a suit which is currently pending.<sup>74</sup>

### ENDNOTES

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<sup>1</sup> Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education, 402 U.S. 1 (1971). Hereinafter referred to as Swann.

<sup>2</sup> Hereinafter referred to as NAACP.

<sup>3</sup> Mannings v. Board of Public Instruction of Hillsborough County, 427 F.2d 874 (5th Cir. 1970). Hereinafter referred to as *Mannings*.

<sup>4</sup> There are any number of studies on the primary Supreme and Circuit Court decisions regarding segregation, the most useful being J. Harvie Wilkinson's *From Brown to Bakke: The Supreme Court and School Integration: 1954-1978*. Wilkinson covers the main cases (*Brown*, *Brown II*, and *Swann*) in detail, and also addresses social issues to some degree. His approach is national, ranging from North Carolina to California to Denver to Boston. Wilkinson is less useful as far as black communities are concerned; as is the case in the majority of books on court-ordered busing, his central focus is on white response. The *Swann* decision is covered extensively by Bernard Schwartz in *Swann's Way: The School Busing Case and the Supreme Court*. Although Schwartz focuses entirely on the Supreme Court deliberations and negotiations, he, ironically, reports that the *Swann* suit was originally filed in an effort to prevent Charlotte Mecklenburg County from closing black schools to avoid the appearance of segregation. The final source for general historical information is Robert Howard Akerman's *The Triumph of Moderation in Florida Thought and Politics: A Study of the Race Issue from 1954 to 1960*. This thesis is of interest due to the Florida focus, and the general historical information Akerman provides on the early Florida school desegregation cases.

<sup>5</sup> *Tampa Tribune*, 20 June 1971.

<sup>6</sup> Secondary sources focusing on the black community and busing are sparse. By far the best treatment of the black community is presented by Richard A. Pride and J. David Woodard in *The Burden of Busing: The Politics of Desegregation in Nashville, Tennessee*. Pride and Woodard specifically address the concerns of the black community, and provide a very effective analysis of the struggle to "save" a local black high school. All of the major issues (white flight, neighborhood schools, black opposition and separatism, etc.) are covered in detail. *Burden's* discussion extends into the eighties, and therefore presents significant issues regarding the success (or failure) of busing.

<sup>7</sup> *Brown v. Board of Education*, 347 U.S. 483 (1954). Hereinafter referred to as *Brown*.

<sup>8</sup> *Hawkins v. Board of Control of Florida*. Hereinafter referred to as *Hawkins*.

<sup>9</sup> Robert H. Akerman, "The Triumph of Moderation in Florida Thought and Politics" (Ph.D. diss., American University, 1967), 404, 125-127. See also *Southern School News*, November 1955 through October 1958 for progress reports on both the *Hawkins* case and the black students who eventually entered the University of Florida Law School.

<sup>10</sup> *Tampa Tribune*, 19 May 1954.

<sup>11</sup> *Southern School News*, August 1955.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid*, October 1955.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid*, March 1956.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid*, 1955-1958.

<sup>15</sup> *St. Petersburg Times*, 11 December 1958.

<sup>16</sup> *Southern School News*, November 1961. Benjamin Lowry is the son of Rev. Leon Lowry, 1961 President of the Florida NAACP.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid*, January 1962. Robert Saunders, Jr. is the son of Robert W. Saunders, Sr., 1962 Field Secretary for the Florida NAACP.

<sup>18</sup> Parental Notification, 1963, Robert Saunders Special Collection, University of South Florida, Tampa.

<sup>19</sup> United States Commission on Civil Rights, *Five Communities: Their Search for Equal Education* (Washington, D.C.: 1972), 9.

<sup>20</sup> *Tampa Tribune*, 12 May 1970.

<sup>21</sup> United States Commission on Civil Rights, *Five Communities: Their Search for Equal Education* (Washington, D.C.: 1972), 9.

<sup>22</sup> National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Legal Defense Fund, *It Ain't the Distance. It's the Niggers* (New York: National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, 1972), 11.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid*, ii. See also *Tampa Tribune*, 12 May 1971, regarding the "new mix plan."

<sup>24</sup> J. Harvie Wilkinson, *From Brown to Bakke* (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), 147. For a complete discussion of *Swann*, see Bernard

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Schwartz, *Swann's Way* (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986).

<sup>25</sup> National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Legal Defense Fund, *It Ain't the Distance. It's the Niggers* (New York: National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, 1972), ii.

<sup>26</sup> *Tampa Tribune*, 12 May 1971.

<sup>27</sup> Robert O. Shelton, *Making Desegregation Work. Tampa, Florida*, by the American Association of School Administrators (Atlantic City, NJ: February 20 1976), 2.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid*, 2.

<sup>29</sup> John Egerton, *School Desegregation: A Report Card From the South*, by the Southern Regional Council (Atlanta: Southern Regional Council, April 1976), 33.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid*, 37.

<sup>31</sup> *Tampa Tribune*, 18 May 1971.

<sup>32</sup> Robert O. Shelton, *Making Desegregation Work. Tampa, Florida*, by the American Association of School Administrators (Atlantic City, NJ: February 20 1976), 2.

<sup>33</sup> *Tampa Tribune*, 27 May 1971.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid*, 3 June 1971.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid*, 5 - 10 June 1971.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid*, 12 June 1971.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid*, 3 July 1971.

<sup>38</sup> For an opinionated rebuttal to white concerns regarding busing, see National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Legal Defense Fund, *It Ain't the Distance. It's the Niggers* (New York: National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, 1972).

<sup>39</sup> *Tampa Tribune*, 15, 18, 29 June 1971.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid*, 3 June 1971.

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<sup>41</sup> Rev. Leon Lowry Interview by author, Notes, Tampa, Florida, 26 November 1991. Rev. Lowry has been active in the Florida NAACP for decades.

<sup>42</sup> *Tampa Tribune*, 18 August 1971. The fact that neither black high school met state standards is certainly interesting in light of the oft repeated "separate but equal" argument.

<sup>43</sup> Fred Hearn's interview by author, Notes, Tampa, Florida, 5 December 1991. Mr. Hearn is a 1966 graduate of Middleton High School, and an active member of the Middleton Alumni Association.

<sup>44</sup> Richard A. Pride and J. David Woodard, *The Burden of Busing: The Politics of Desegregation in Nashville, Tennessee* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1985), 173-174.

<sup>45</sup> Hearn's interview by author, 5 December 1991.

<sup>46</sup> Johnnye Mai Williams interview by author, Notes, Tampa, Florida, 9 December 1991. Mrs. Williams attended Middleton High School, and was on the Blake faculty from 1956 to 1971.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>48</sup> John Egerton, *School Desegregation: A Report Card From the South*, by the Southern Regional Council (Atlanta: Southern Regional Council, April 1976), 34.

<sup>49</sup> *Tampa Tribune*, 21 August 1971.

<sup>50</sup> United States Commission on Civil Rights, *Five Communities: Their Search for Equal Education* (Washington, D.C.: 1972), 12.

<sup>51</sup> National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Legal Defense Fund, *It Ain't the Distance. It's the Niggers* (New York: National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, 1972), vii.

<sup>52</sup> *St. Petersburg Times*, 7 September 1975. Favors continued to work actively in the area of equal education for blacks for years after 1971.

<sup>53</sup> *Tampa Tribune*, 18 August 1971.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid*, 20 June 1971.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid*, 15 June 1971.



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<sup>56</sup> Ibid, 25 June 1971.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid, 3 July 1971.

<sup>58</sup> Lowry interview by author, 26 November 1991.

<sup>59</sup> *Tampa Tribune*, 23 August 1971.

<sup>60</sup> Lowry interview by author, 26 November 1991.

<sup>61</sup> United States Commission on Civil Rights, *Five Communities: Their Search for Equal Education* (Washington, D.C.: 1972),15.

<sup>62</sup> *Tampa Tribune*, 8 July 1971.

<sup>63</sup> Williams interview by author, 9 December 1991.

<sup>64</sup> *Tampa Tribune*, 30-31 August 1971.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid, 4 September 1971.

<sup>66</sup> John Egerton, *School Desegregation: A Report Card From the South*, by the Southern Regional Council (Atlanta: Southern Regional Council, April 1976), 34.

<sup>67</sup> *Tampa Tribune*, 31 August - 4 September 1971.

<sup>68</sup> United States Commission on Civil Rights, *Five Communities: Their Search for Equal Education* (Washington, D.C.: 1972),14.

<sup>69</sup> *Tampa Tribune*, 31 August - 4,September 1971.

<sup>70</sup> Rev. Lowry supported the Hillsborough County busing plan in 1971, and today believes that desegregation was worth the loss of Blake and Middleton. Mr. Hearn, Mrs. Williams, and Mrs. Reddick, all of whom are associated with one of the closed high schools, have never supported the plan.

<sup>71</sup> John Egerton, *School Desegregation: A Report Card From the South*, by the Southern Regional Council (Atlanta: Southern Regional Council, April 1976), 36 See also Southern Regional Council, *The South and Her Children: School Desegregation 1970-1971* (Atlanta: Southern Regional Council, March 1971), 41.

<sup>72</sup> Hearn interview by author, 5 December 1991.

<sup>73</sup> *St. Petersburg Times*, 1 December 1991.

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Of 1992 throws into question Hillsborough County's legal obligation to continued court-ordered busing in any form.

Editor's Note: This paper was the winner of the Caroline Mays Brevard Historical Prize awarded by the Florida Historical Society in 1992 for best essay by an undergraduate student.

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Author's Note: This paper was completed in December 1991. Since that time, plans for a new high school in downtown Tampa have been put on hold. In addition, a U.S. Supreme Court decision the Spring

# DAVIS ISLANDS: THE BOOMING TWO MONTH TRANSFORMATION OF TAMPA'S MUDFLATS INTO TAMPA'S DREAMSCAPE

By THOMAS H. MEYER

By 1924 the Florida Boom was on. It started and centered around Miami, which had attracted swarms of tourists, speculators and investors. The tourists came looking for the good life in the Florida sunshine; speculators came seeking quick profits in property sales; and the investors came hoping to make large fortunes in real estate. The resulting effects upon Miami were explosive: record setting building and real estate activities, a frenzied storm of buying and selling of land, that was accompanied by widespread land speculation, followed by surging prices and values in property. Miami had boomed into a real estate crazed metropolis.

Greeting and then spurring on the throngs of tourists, speculators, and investors, along Miami's Flagler Street were big developers who sought to satisfy their visitors' individual wishes by building the world's most glamorous communities.<sup>1</sup> These big developers, remembered Nixon Smiley, were "men of vision": "they had "imagination, drive, belief in themselves; they possessed a flair for gaining attention, and they could sell their ideas."<sup>2</sup> These men represented Florida's "Big Promoters". "Their common trait was a consuming desire to get things done. They wanted to see ... dredges making islands, plowing through swamps and deepening rivers; to see land seekers mobbing their sales offices; to build hotels and to see houses and office buildings rising."<sup>3</sup> And these men got these things done. Men like George Merrick who "transformed his father's farm, Coral Gables,

into a fabulous Mediterranean-like city";<sup>4</sup> and of course, men like Carl Fisher who "transformed the mangroves and swamps of a forlorn island" into the magnificent island resort of Miami Beach. Accounts of the tremendous building exploits of these "big promoters" and of the real estate mania of Miami began to spread like wildfire throughout the state -- the Boom was growing.

The Boom quickly engulfed Tampa Bay, and then catapulted the city of Tampa into its own high-flying boom. After a highly prosperous year in 1923, along with a flourishing winter in 1923-1924, accounts of Tampa's extraordinary prospects began circulating throughout the North. By the spring of 1924, the *Tampa Tribune* was reporting that northerners were acclaiming Tampa as "a young city which had leaped from the mediocre to a position which demanded world-wide attention; of a Utopia whose assets were an ideal good year-round climate, tropical skies and beautiful waterways; of a future without obstacles, of unlimited space in which the city could grow and prosper for years to come."<sup>5</sup> Tampa became the subject of increasing and widespread interest from all parts of the country. "This manifestation of newly aroused interest was hailed by Tampa's alert and watchful realtors", noted the *Tribune* adding, "they quickly took advantage of it to spread the gospel of Tampa and the Gulf Coast of Florida."<sup>6</sup>



**D.P. Davis**

A prime example whereby Tampa's realtors witnessed and promoted the blossoming of Tampa's fame occurred in June 1924 at the annual convention of the National Association of Real Estate Boards in Washington. The Tribune observed, "Tampa received more first class and desirable publicity than any other city represented at the gathering", noting further that the "benefits of the publicity and advertising Tampa received at that convention have been increasingly manifested ever since."<sup>7</sup> For people throughout the nation -- who a few years ago knew only Miami and thought "Miami was synonymous to Florida" -- were now not only growing more aware of Florida as never before, but in particular they were acquiring an awakening to the prospects of Tampa. In fact, instead of focusing on Miami and the East Coast as in previous years, the great trend in 1924 was talking about Tampa and the West Coast.<sup>8</sup> By September 1924, Tampa was being touted as "better known to the people of the

whole United States than almost any other southern city."<sup>9</sup>

Bolstering Tampa's fame was its booming economy. After its "most successful winter" 1923-1924, Tampa ushered in the "biggest and busiest six months" in its entire history.<sup>10</sup> For the first nine months of 1924, Tampa bank clearings amounted to \$138,558,238.12; whereas, the clearings for the whole year of 1922 amounted to only \$118,325,307.80. Bank clearings for the third quarter of 1924 were 33 ½ % greater than for the same quarter of 1923, or a gain of more than \$10,000,000.; and September alone showed a 51% increase over September of 1923, the difference being nearly \$5,000,000.<sup>11</sup> These gains were "unprecedented and illustrated that Tampa business was "increasing at a rapid rate".<sup>12</sup> Likewise, Tampa building and construction costs for 1924 kept the record pace. In the first nine months of 1924 building and construction costs amounted to \$3,631,575 which exceeded the total costs for all of 1923. Building costs for the third quarter of 1924 were 43% greater than for the same quarter of 1923, a gain of more than \$694,801; and in August alone there was a 56% increase over August of 1923, a difference of \$498,984.<sup>13</sup> So great was the activity in realty, development and construction circles that in many cases they had been actually unable to keep up with their work.<sup>14</sup> Real estate dealers, for example, declared "that volume of sales during the summer has exceeded that of any similar periods in the city's history".<sup>15</sup> At the end of the 1924 summer season, a reporter offered a glimpse of Tampa's prosperity:

"A stroll along Franklin Street, or any of the downtown streets any afternoon or evening, and observation of the daily increasing



**Dredging Work on Davis Islands. Note dredge to right of connecting bridge**

Photo from Charles Ward, Jr. Collection, Tampa Historical Society

number of pedestrians and automobiles on these thoroughfare is an indication. Where a year or two ago one had little or no difficulty in finding parking space for an automobile, now one must drive for block after block before finding an opening in the closely ranked cars. Pedestrians crowd the sidewalks; street cars pass slowly along the streets in the congested traffic loaded to capacity; hotels of the city report that day after day and night after night they are practically filled up; cafes and restaurants have doubled their staffs in the effort to keep pace with increasing patronage. Where a year or two ago at this time of year, one noted with interest the fact that three or four autos bearing licence tags of other states might be seen on the streets, today every state in the Union is represented in Tampa by motorists who have come here far in advance even of the beginning of the tourist season."<sup>16</sup>

The skyrocketing results and wild activities of Tampa's boom were predicted by many to become much more apparent and prevalent during the city's upcoming tourist season. For example, realtors returning to Tampa in September 1924 from northern trips augured great prospects for the upcoming winter. They forecasted "an unprecedented tourist travel to Florida during the coming season 11 with much of it heading toward Tampa."<sup>17</sup> The later travel, ticketed as "the drive for Tampa",<sup>18</sup> was considerably sparked by an escalating interest by travelers and investors from across the country in Tampa Bay real estate. According to returning realtors, "scores of men declared they intended to come to Tampa next winter to invest in property."<sup>19</sup> Similarly, Tampa's realty concerns were reporting in mid-September,

"there going to be an influx here of wealthy persons from Chicago and the Middle West this season. All these men are planning to add in the growth of Tampa. Many have communicated with realtors in regard to suitable places for building and investment."<sup>20</sup> Consequently, it was predicted by Tampa's realtors that when this "Middle West wave" begins rolling into Tampa in October 1924 "it will be one of the largest and most sweeping in the real estate ocean."<sup>21</sup>

Many of the ensuing waves of tourists and investors who were attracted to Tampa Bay's real estate had heard of the area's low-priced developments. In September 1924 it was reported, "the most surprising thing about Tampa is the low price of real estate here compared with other cities ... the average price here is from 25 to 50 per cent under what might be expected. You could ... buy any piece of property in Tampa for sale at that price and be sure of making a fortune out of it."<sup>22</sup> In September there were more than two hundred subdivisions actually platted and in progress of development and sale in and adjacent to Tampa.<sup>23</sup> Announcements trumpeted the new suburban order "Temple Terrace is too well known here and abroad to require comment"... Oldsmar "is known all over the United States... "everybody in Tampa and hundreds of thousands of persons living in other parts of the country, have learned in the last year or so of Beach Park, Sunset Park, Virginia Park, New Suburb Beautiful and other superb residential developments within a few minutes drive of the city's heart."<sup>24</sup>

But of all of Tampa's boomtime developments, the "most stupendous development" was planned within the heart of the city -- actually it was in the bay, still underwater.<sup>25</sup> D.P. "Dave" Davis planned to

## Wide Boulevards winding through the Islands

**C**URVING about like lissome nymphs in classic freedom are twenty-seven miles of boulevards, winding in and out by parks and streams—past homes like precious jewels in a setting of rich, warm beauty—broad, paved thoroughfares with ample space they are, and each adorned with tropic trees and plants and shrubs and flowers. Motoring over DAVIS ISLANDS roadways, or strolling along her many crystal-studded walks, will be an exhilarating means of enjoyment to those who reside on, or frequent the Islands.



convert the mudflats and the three small islands in Hillsborough Bay near the mouth of Hillsborough River into "one of the brightest gems in Florida's royal diadem."<sup>26</sup> He first encountered these muddy islands as an adventurous boy growing up in Tampa. He used to play and dream of finding pirate's gold, never realizing then however, that this boyhood dream of finding an island fortune in the Hillsborough Bay would turn into reality. He first left Tampa at the age of 20 in search of making a fortune, and he actually wound up making and losing several of them. Finally he landed in Miami around 1919 where he made a huge fortune in real estate by developing several successful subdivisions. But most importantly, it was in Miami where he became inspired by men like Carl Fisher who created high-priced island developments from the bottom of Biscayne Bay. Sensing, however, that Miami's real estate market was over-flooded with big developers, Davis headed back to his boyhood city in 1923 with the belief that Tampa was destined to be Florida's business boom city.<sup>27</sup> Greeted with full-fledged fanfare and hailed as a hero, he arrived in Tampa driven by an island making dream. Remembering those muddy islands in Hillsborough Bay, he sought to transform them into a 900-acre development by implementing the island building techniques of Carl Fisher. "Davis, observed David Nolan, "meant to top the master and become Florida's premier "Maker of Islands."<sup>28</sup>

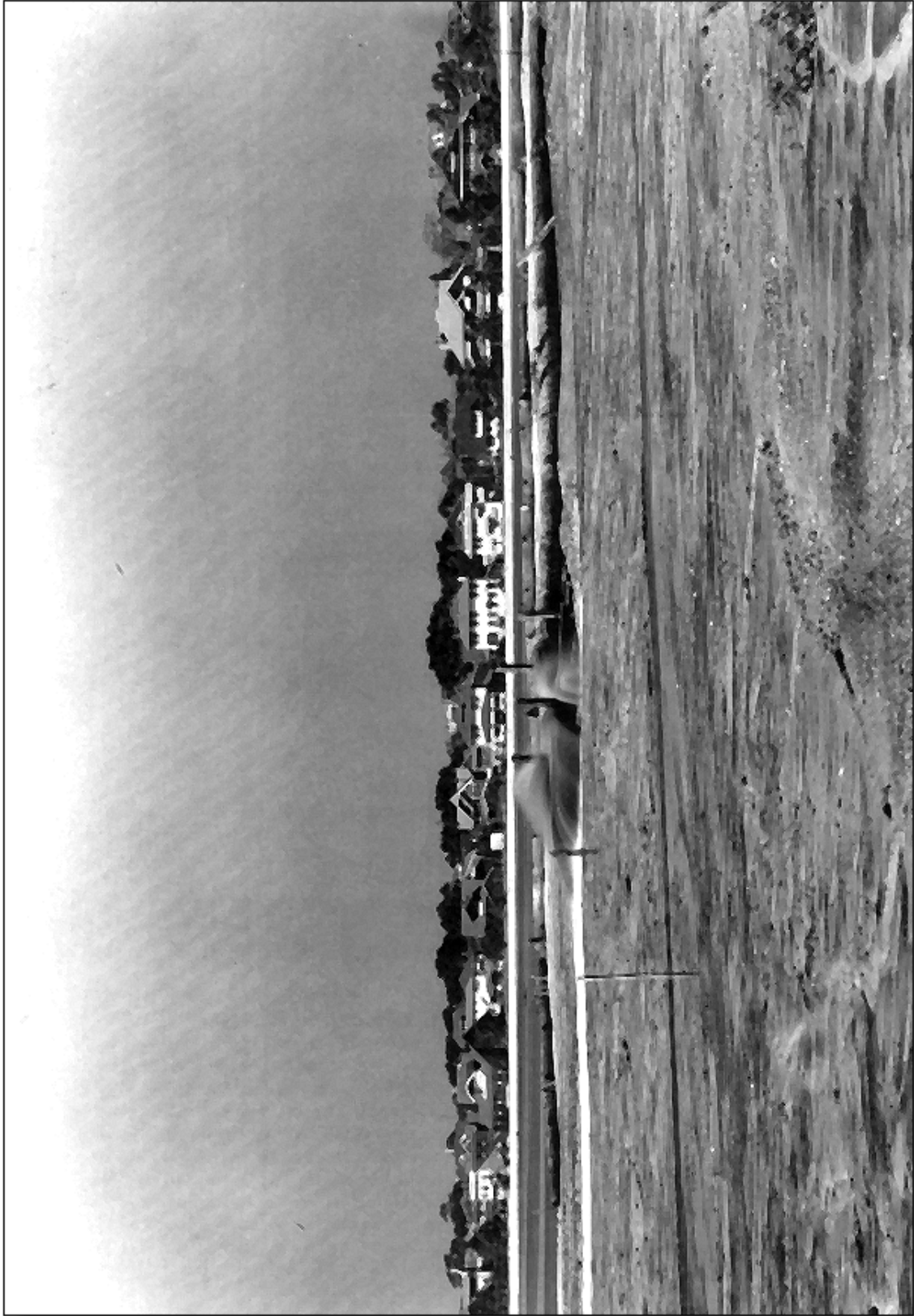
To begin his island making dream Davis had to overcome several formidable hurdles. First he had to acquire ownership of the property. Two of the small islands were privately owned by the estates of early settlers. The other island and the surrounding submerged bottom lands were owned by the city. But remarkably by February 1924, he had managed to buy the

privately owned land for \$150,000, and the city commissioners had sold him their portion for \$200,000. However, the sale by the commissioners had to be ratified in a special election by the city's electorate. Davis, nevertheless, won the election almost unanimously. Yet he had to clear one more hurdle. Many of the wealthy residents on Bayshore Boulevard were adamantly opposed to Davis' plan for a massive island development and consequently set out to squelch it. They filed a lawsuit claiming the city had no right to sell the submerged bottom lands to Davis. After a Hillsborough County Circuit judge upheld the city's right to sell the lands, the case went to the Florida Supreme Court on appeal -- but the court was on its summer recess, and so a decision would not be rendered until the fall of 1924.

Even though Davis' island dream was perilously entangled in a judicial nightmare and an unfavorable decision would inflict a sure deathblow to it, Davis nevertheless proceeded undauntedly near the end of August to turn his development into a reality. Emboldened by Tampa's unprecedented boom, and encouraged by the prospectful waves of tourists and investors rolling into Tampa, Davis boldly launched a phenomenal advertising and building campaign for his island development, the likes of which Tampa had never seen. The goal of this frenzied campaign was to establish before the winter a credible showing of what the development was to become. As stated by Davis in August, "The visitors in Tampa this winter will find the Island Development well under way and they will be able to gain an excellent idea of what it will mean to the city and the investor when completed."<sup>29</sup>

Davis' advertising and building drive took off on 26 August, 1924, heralded by full blown, front page<sup>30</sup> headlines in the *Tampa*





Bayshore Boulevard in rear. Pumping from dredge *Burlington* near present site of Tampa General Hospital.

Photo from Charles Ward, Jr. Collection, Tampa Historical Society

*Tribune*: "DAVIS AWARDS DREDGING CONTRACT", "FINE HOTEL TO BE ERECTED ON ISLAND"; and "Tampa Firm Gets Contract to Build Temporary Bridge from DeLeon Street to Island Development Site." The hoopla had earnestly begun.

The two million dollar dredging contract entailed the dredging of approximately nine million cubic yards of bay bottom and sand by two immense dredges, acclaimed to be the largest ever used, which were to begin work as soon as possible followed later by two additional dredges. This work would not only increase the acreage in the island development from approximately 300 to nearly 11000 acres, but the dredging work also planned for the cutting of canals and the constructing of a number of lagoons and yacht basins "to enhance the scenic value of the property". Furthermore, the bridge contract called for a \$25,000 temporary structure, 693 feet long, with a 28-foot roadway for vehicles and a five foot sidewalk, constructed of wood on crosotted piling which was already enroute to Tampa. The dredging and bridge contracts were reported by the *Tribune* as "the first formal contracts in connection with the development of the bay island project and their award was taken as definite assurance that work on the immense project will be started without delay".<sup>31</sup>

Davis not only promised to dredge up an immense and scenic island from the bottom of the bay with a vehicular bridge leading to it but amazingly enough on the same day he further aroused the public's attention by planning not one but three magnificent hotels on the island. At this time Davis' efforts would concentrate on the erection of the island's first hostelry, which was to be built and operated by a group of men from New York. Plans called for "an immense

tourist and year-round hotel" "of magnificent proportions": a front of 400 feet facing the Bayshore sect I on of Tampa at a cost of \$1,500,000. "Early start on the construction of this tourist hotel was indicated when it was pointed out that the first dredging and filling will be on the hotel site"; furthermore the *Tribune* related "evidencing his faith in the growth of Tampa, Mr. Davis has planned two additional hotels for the island" to be arranged at a later date.<sup>32</sup>

The first step of Davis' publicizing and constructing drive was an unimaginable success. By September 7, it was already being reported that Davis' Island development "has been made known wherever the printed word reaches."<sup>33</sup> It was the epitome of sensationalism:

Conversion of the three islands in the bay near the river's mouth into a single great island, surrounded by an enduring seawall and a deep water channel and containing palatial hotels, parks, golf links, club houses and homes of a millionaire colony, has created interest from the Atlantic to the Pacific and from Duluth to New Orleans. Involving as it does the dredging of more than nine million cubic yards of material from the bottom of the bay to aid in the creation of a single immense island. "Dave" Davis' project possesses spectacular features not inherent in the other big development projects under way or planned for Tampa and vicinity, involving the ultimate expenditure of any where from \$20,000,000 to \$30,000,000 – surely sums sufficiently imposing to arrest the attention of even the most blase.<sup>34</sup>



## *Alluring Waterways* — of Rare Venetian Charm

**F**ASCINATING pools and streams —soft white-capped waves from Tampa Bay—waterways that speak of Venice and Old Italy—for speeding motorcraft, canoes that idly drift along, sailboats and yachts to cruise about the Gulf sea shores—eleven and one-half miles of water frontage with endless space beyond for DAVIS ISLANDS residents to enjoy.



So, the advertising and building marvels of Davis' island development had a symbiotic relationship – each fueling the other, booming incessantly upwards to a pinnacle demanding and receiving wide acclaim.

In this same Sunday paper that was lauding the wide spread national interest of Davis' island development and Tampa's boom, Davis himself took out his first – of what would be many - full page advertisements. His message was brief. "We congratulate Tampa on its wonderful progress as shown in this issue", and he assuredly declared, "Our development will be a vital factor in Tampa's future"-<sup>35</sup> eventhough he had not yet cleared his final Judicial hurdle.

But Davis' premature assurance was grandly vindicated on September 10th with an "Important Announcement" on the *Tampa Tribune* front page: "DAVIS ISLE GRANT UPHELD". "First Time in History Supreme Court has Convened in Special Session During Summer Recess. Davis Elated Over Favorable Outcome. Things Will Move Fast, He Says, City's Right to Convey Bottom Lands Legal and Far-Reaching Precedent is Thereby Established." How Davis acquired previous knowledge of this "Important Announcement" is unknown and highly conjectural, but what is known is it triumphantly cleared the path for "the Rapid Development" of Davis' "Great Residential Project". "From now on", Davis exclaimed, "the people of Tampa may expect to see activities increasing swiftly. We shall endeavor to go forward at a pace which will perhaps enable us to make up for some of the time lost due to clearing up of the legal phases of the development"; and that was precisely what Davis set out to do.<sup>36</sup>

Accompanying the Supreme Court's announcement on the front page of the paper was another important announcement which

also bolstered Davis' confidence -- the commencement of construction for his island development. The work had actually started the day before, curiously foretelling of the Court's favorable decision which made such development worthwhile. Davis himself gave the signal which set the machinery in motion to erect the bridge which would connect the mainland to what Davis claimed "to be one of the greatest development projects in the history of Florida".<sup>37</sup>

Also, in the centerpiece of the front page were the first photographs used so effectively to promote the development. Titled, "Scenes at Commencement of Island Work", the action photos show the dramatic figure of D.P. Davis confidently signaling the pile driver into action.<sup>38</sup> Davis' gesture also signaled the new accelerating pace of his advertising and construction drive. At such a pace, Davis was almost assured of achieving his campaign's goal of erecting a believable conception of his island development.

At the same time, Davis quickly erected a company for his island development: the D.P. Davis Properties. Along with his close associate A.Y. Milan, he recruited the most talented people for his rocketing campaign. The arrival of F.W. Montayne, "one of the best known advertising men in New England",<sup>39</sup> summoned the build-up of Davis' promotional team. Next came one of Chicago's biggest realty men, J.P. White. He joined the Davis team as its sales director with the belief that, "Tampa is the place to make money ... within two years Tampa will be built up with hotels and other accommodations enough to take care of 100,000 visitors here at the same time."<sup>40</sup> But White also stressed, "I am certain the D.P. Davis Properties will have the highest class sales force in the South" for "only men of

irreproachable character can be members".<sup>41</sup> In the coming days Davis hired other first-rate, high-profile types. Assisting Montayne and taking charge of the art work in the advertising department was Athos Menaboni "an artist of considerable reputation" from Italy.<sup>42</sup> In addition Frank M. Button, the "nationally known landscape artist," climbed aboard to oversee the beautification of the island development. Credited to his name were such projects as the Vermont State Capitol, Lincoln Park in Chicago, and probably his finest works were in Miami at the Charles Deering Estate and the George Merrick project at Coral Gables.<sup>43</sup> Summing up the talent of his highly promoted team Davis said, "the bay island development is of such importance to Tampa and the entire state of Florida that should I attempt to develop it with anything short of the best brains and ability obtainable I would be failing in the trust that has been placed in me by the whole community to make this Florida's greatest subdivision, the supreme setting for distinguished Tampa homes."<sup>44</sup>

Having recruited a new promotional team of the "best brains and ability," Davis now considered a suitable site to promote his dream. Constructed at Madison and Franklin streets, known as Drawdy's corner, the building was chosen purely for promotional purposes - to enhance the goals of Davis' development campaign. As he put it, "going to offices in the center of the city will be a great advantage to my organization. Having headquarters on Franklin street will enable me to come in contact with influential Tampans and persons visiting here, without any trouble. I want Tampa and Florida to know those who are behind my development as well as of the development itself."<sup>45</sup> Inside the building, the "main office was fitted up to represent the lounging room of a millionaire's club", and it featured a realistic

reproduction of the proposed island development, enclosed in a glass cabinet. When completed by the "high-priced experts", the detailed reproduction of the Davis Islands development would be between 35 and 40 feet long at a "cost of many thousands of dollars" - "It would be the largest realty development model in the country, if not in the world."<sup>46</sup> The world-class model and office building ultimately undergirded Davis' development campaign.

The erecting of his new office building also provided Davis with a golden opportunity to ballyhoo it as another Davis achievement, and as with all the other promotional opportunities during his development campaign he did not allow any of them nor this one to slip by unnoticed. Case in point: the *Tampa Tribune* reported in September that "during the last few weeks the work on the Davis offices has attracted much attention. High boardings have hidden the establishment from the public and those who do not know of the design of the new building are anticipating its opening with much interest."<sup>47</sup> When the new headquarters for the Davis enterprises formally opened they were verified by authorities who had traveled extensively throughout the United States as "among the most imposing of their kind in the country."<sup>48</sup>

So the island development had a new team, a new office, and now needed a new name. "Hundreds of names have been submitted by friends and acquaintances of Mr. Davis as well as many others personally unknown" for "Florida's greatest subdivision". Ever since his first step toward acquisition of the islands, it had been his plan to "name the islands in a fitting manner to perpetuate the memory of Mrs. Davis, who died two years ago." Yet, he hesitated, "thinking his motive



in using the name Davis might be misconstrued as an effort to seek personal aggrandizement." Finally on September 24th, D.P. Davis announced that "the official name of his bay island project will be 'Davis Islands' and the fifty acre park which he will deed to the city subsequent to its development will be named Marjorie Park. The combined names represent that of his late wife, Marjorie Davis, in memory of whom the development is respectfully dedicated."<sup>49</sup>

While Davis was developing his promotional team, erecting his influential office building, and naming his island development-- that is, tending to the promotional side of his campaign -- he was also vigorously administering to the building aspect of his development campaign. For practically the whole month of September a drag dredge had been in operation mounting the foundational work for a larger dredge. It was near time for the 20-inch hydraulic dredge, the largest of its kind ever used in the South to begin work. With a capacity of 12,000 cubic yards a day, the hydraulic dredge was scheduled to do the work of filling the bay, the most important preliminary work on the islands. Furthermore, this dredge was reported to be accompanied by two other dredges, one arriving on October 15, and another on November 20. "The dredge work", pointed Davis, "will start on the north end of the island which will consist of the park area for the city, along with that portion of the island nearest Hyde Park, which will first be offered for sale".<sup>50</sup> Davis touted, "we are ready for real work, we are going to get results which will surprise the entire country".<sup>51</sup> This bold announcement concluded the first booming month of activity in Davis' promotion and construction campaign for his Davis Islands development.

The success of the campaign's first month had now positioned Davis to enter into the biggest and busiest stage of his development campaign. If the first month was a "boom" then the second month was an explosion. For starters, Davis launched his campaign into orbit when he announced that the first section of Davis Islands property, the Hyde Park section would soon be placed on the market. Casting this announcement into Tampa's sea of realty caused a feeding frenzy among Tampa's realty sharks. J.P. White, director of sales for the island development accounted, "we are receiving scores of telephone calls from Tampan's wanting to know when the first section will be placed on the market,"<sup>52</sup> along with a "rush of prospective purchasers".<sup>53</sup>

Such wild activity inspired White to predict that at the start of the opening day of sales "the first section will soon be sold out."<sup>54</sup>

Yet, before this section went on sale in the first week of October, D.P. Davis propelled the hype of his development even higher by announcing on October 1 the creation of another section to his island development. Davis was in the process of formulating a business zone to include a palatial restaurant and apartment house and sundry public establishments. He was currently negotiating with several capitalists, prominent hotel and restaurant owners who were planning to erect buildings in this particular section. Additionally, Davis promoted that "plans are underway also for erection of an apartment house in the Hyde Park section, the portion of the property which will be opened for sale next week".<sup>55</sup>

Davis inaugurated the "Official Opening" of the "Great Sale" for the Hyde Park section's 300 "highly restricted" lots and "several tracts suitable for the location of high class apartment houses and costly residencies"

with Menaboni's first eye-catching full page advertisement in the *Tampa Tribune* on Saturday October 4. The lots were to be ready for sale at 10 o'clock that morning at the new headquarters of the Davis Properties organization. The grand spread emphasized the panic-driven atmosphere surrounding this sale: "You must fully realize that there will be a tremendous rush for this property. If you want to be assured of your choice it behooves you to secure plats, prices and terms at once and to make your selections immediately" for we have been "literally swept off our feet by the virtual stampede of prospective buyers."<sup>56</sup>

But more importantly, the advertisement openly stressed for the first time the overriding theme in Davis' advertising and building campaign: profit and fortune making. The advertisement aired that the "Hyde Park Section is but half a mile from the central business section of Tampa and faces Bay Shore Drive only a few hundred feet away. 'Tis needless to say it will be a quickly and highly developed section featuring magnetic values of thrilling opportunities." In appreciation for the public's aid in his acquisition of Davis Islands, the ad emphasized that the properties of the Hyde Park section would be "offered to the people of Tampa and vicinity at special Pre-Development Prices. Property which is so eagerly and universally sought as this is, would sell today-quickly-at much higher prices". But "the more money the people can make on this property, the more pleased Mr. Davis will be-the greater the return on their investment at Davis Islands, the greater his satisfaction!" And to insure more money-making, "We have decided to limit the purchase of two lots to one person. This will give a greater number of people the chance to share in this attractive proposition."<sup>57</sup>

Unbelievably, the sensational expectations became true that day; and in fact, those expectations turned out to be quite humble in comparison to what actually occurred. Prospective buyers lined up the day before in front of Davis' offices to choose from the best selection of lots. The streets around the building were jammed with traffic. When the doors opened, the *Tampa Tribune* reported that a "veritable rush and crush ensued. It was a scene such as is described in fiction of the boom days of the West." In three hours, the entire Hyde Park Section, all 306 lots were sold. "The sale would have been done in much less time if it had been physically possible for the office force to handle the transactions with greater speed. Mr. Davis was literally showered with checks." Total sales amounted to \$1,683,582 -- "a world's record for the sale of subdivision lots."<sup>58</sup>

Although the mad demand for Davis' Island property had left many prospective purchasers disappointed over being unable to get in on the first sale, those lucky few who had were now eager to reap the immediate rewards of their conquest -- instant profits. As promised by Davis earlier, this "universally sought property would sell today - quickly - at much higher prices," and it did. The *Tampa Tribune* observed that "a feature of the record-breaking sale was the number of re-sales made by initial purchasers to those who were too late to get in on the first list, all of these being made at substantial profits to the first purchasers".<sup>59</sup> For example, "Penn Dawson, of the Dawson-Thornton Dry Goods Company, had obtained two lots and, before he could leave the offices was persuaded by E.W. Cloughton, of Atlanta, one of those who was 'too late', to transfer his two lots to him for a bonus of \$1,000. Mr. Cloughton is the owner of the Bayshore Apartments now being built on Howard Avenue, and he was



delighted at being able to get two lots even at the large advance over the sale price.”<sup>60</sup>

The next day, Davis not known for his humility in advertising, triumphantly made his phenomenal success of Saturday known to all with a full page advertisement in the *Tribune's* Sunday edition. Proclaiming in large type, "To Tampa Goes the World Real Estate Sales Record", followed in much larger type by, "\$1,683,582 In 3 Hours", and the ad goes on worshipping the sale as "thrills almost beyond human conception".

While Davis' first sale was a smashing success his development was, nevertheless, still a dream -- submerged under water. Therefore, still lingering in front of Davis was his most formidable challenge: transforming his dream into reality. He quickly assumed this challenge by engaging in an intensive island-building assault. On October 6, the immense hydraulic dredge began sculpturing the bottom silt of Hillsborough Bay into Davis Islands. Several days later, the second of "the largest" dredges began operation. Then on October 9th, in order to complete the physical development of Davis Islands in the shortest possible time, Davis augmented his island-making capability by contracting two more dredges at an additional cost of a quarter of a million dollars. The next day, Davis turned his island-making into a 24-hour a day assault. To demonstrate the boom in his island building capabilities, and at the same time receiving a well publicized photograph on the front page of the *Tribune*, Davis boated a party of prominent Tampanans out to witness what he called, "the amazing activity at Davis Island". On board were Col. W.F. Stovall, Mayor Perry G. Wall, City Commissioners W.A. Adams and W.J. Barritt, Frank D. Jackson, president of the Board of Trade, Col. D.B. McKay, and the master promoter himself, D.P. Davis.<sup>61</sup>

But this "amazing activity" was just the beginning of his building blitz. In three frenzied days -- October 8th, 9th, and 10th -- Davis rapidly ventured into his most massive building promotion of his entire campaign. To make his dream of an island development more credible to prospective buyers and investors he enlivened it, through effective advertising, with realistic forms: apartments, hotels, and homes. First, Davis clamorously publicized that Davis Islands will present to Tampa's and Florida's "visitors and home lovers the world's most beautiful apartments", and with an artist's rendition, he showed one of these "great towering structures."<sup>62</sup>

Along with this claim he announced in a full page spread in the *Tribune* the building of a \$750,000 apartment hotel set to begin within the next 60 to 90 days. This "first palatial apartment house" was to be erected between the Hyde Park section and the section of properties to be opened next. As a result, and of great importance to investors, "real estate values in both these sections will enhance rapidly and substantially".<sup>63</sup> The next day Davis advertised that his development will also present to Tampa's "home folk and millions of visitors the world's most palatial hotels". A picture illuminating one of these "luxurious palaces" accompanied the claim.<sup>64</sup> On the third day, he took out another full page announcement, "Plans Under Way for 300 Homes". Building and financing of at least thirty of these "distinguished homes" would be started in the Hyde Park section within the short period of ninety days. "These 300 Davis Island homes", the ad strikingly claimed, "will range in price from \$10,000 to \$50,000 and will be the surpassing creations of American architectural genius. Included In this most impressive building program are Mr. Davis' own plans for the

erection of a \$100,000 home on Davis Islands.”<sup>65</sup> Another attractive ad pictured one of the "world's most beautiful homes" to be built on “picturesque, water-kissed Davis Islands.”<sup>66</sup> Overall, Davis ballyhooed that "the reaction" to his building blitz, that is "to progress and development of such intensive character will be immediately obvious in the increasing value at Davis Islands”.<sup>67</sup>

And once again, in the midst of his building blitz, Davis' seemingly exaggerated boasting was to be matched and out done by actual events. Before anyone could catch their breath from Davis' first sales "thrills" he was prepared to launch off on another thrilling ride. With the announcement that the second section of Davis Islands would be opened for sales on October 13th, Tampa braced itself for another booming week of history making and record smashing. The *Tribune* reported that "the announcement by Mr. Davis of the opening of the second unit comes at the close of one of the most eventful weeks in the history of real estate concerns in Florida.”<sup>68</sup> The Bay Circle properties, the second unit of Davis' Islands, takes its name from the picturesque winding drives which circle two bay inlets forming yacht basins and providing a long length of water frontage. Having fewer lots than the Hyde Park section, the sale of the Bay Circle section was expected to cause "a second stampede". It did.

Spurred on by three consecutive days of full page advertisements by Davis, prospective buyers began forming a line in front of Davis' headquarters on Franklin Street forty-three hours before the start of the sale. "Many of the men had made arrangements with their wives or others to bring hot coffee and food to them at frequent intervals," observed the *Tribune*. "They were determined to stay regardless of inclement weather or personal comfort.”<sup>69</sup> Joseph J.

DeCotey of Bridgeport, Connecticut, a prominent New England real estate developer, exulted, "In all my experience I have never seen anything like it. I have conducted many big development sales but this sort of thing is almost beyond belief, and I fear that if I had not seen it with my own eyes, I might have doubted it.”<sup>70</sup> But little doubt remained. On October 13th, the *Tribune* reported that all previously established records for subdivision sales were broken again: \$1,028,200 worth of Bay Circle lots were sold, bringing the total amount sold in the record time of ten hours required for the two sales to \$2,711,782. Further proof were the photographs of the frenzied crowd of purchasers and their mad rush which were splashed across the pages of the *Tribune*. "One of the largest purchasers of Davis Islands property at the sale of Bay Circle section Monday was R. M. McNeel, Miami capitalist and owner of the McNeel Marble Works, of Marietta, Georgia. Mr. McNeel bought twelve lots, approximating \$75,000 in value. 'From my experience I can only see Davis Islands as another Miami Beach if it does not exceed that development.' Mr. McNeel stated. 'It takes the view of an outsider to fully appreciate what this great development means.’”<sup>71</sup>

Starting the day after the record sale, the unrelentless Davis campaign propelled yet another advertising bombardment of wondrous construction marvels planned for Davis Islands. From mid-October to the end of the month, Davis' daily ads effectively transferred his conception of what the development was to be into the minds of the people of Tampa and the city's arriving winter guests. Each 1/2 page ad was topped with an alluring artist's rendition, which was entitled in large type, followed by a glamorous promotion of the ad's topic. Davis pictured "pools of Roman Grandeur"

and sensationalized that his development will present "the worlds most enchanting pools".<sup>72</sup> Another advertisement lauded the Islands "modern Venetian canals" beckoning "I soft white waves and gondoliers" and bordered by "palms, bright green shrubs and flowers a-bloom all year".<sup>73</sup> Later ads touted that Davis Islands would have many "luxuriant parks"<sup>74</sup> "more parks than any land development in America",<sup>75</sup> including a golf course "created by real masters".<sup>76</sup> Finally, a "magnificent \$200,000 concrete bridge, brilliant in illuminating effects, and rich in architectural design", was unveiled.<sup>77</sup>

Besides promoting future building marvels, Davis also sensationalized his current building feats. Toward the end of his phenomenal two month campaign the physical development of Davis Islands was occurring as rapidly as Davis had boasted it would. For example, "determined to make the development program of Davis' Islands keep abreast of the record-breaking sales activity", Davis announced the building up of the roadbed of the main artery of Davis Islands, "after the roadbed is finished it will be paved 100 feet wide through the Hyde Park section and toward Bay Circle. Next... street lamps of unique beauty will dot this kingly thoroughfare in all its stately length and breadth."<sup>78</sup> By the end of October, weekly full page advertisements victoriously claimed that the road construction on Davis Boulevard "was completed in the Hyde Park section of the Islands from the bridge to the site of the Apartment Hotel and paving operations on this magnificent thoroughfare are now underway", with a promise of street lighting in thirty days.<sup>79</sup>

Other building achievements were similarly well publicized. The Engineers' program was completed to bring the lowest point on Davis Islands to an elevation two and one-half feet above the Bayshore

Boulevard.<sup>80</sup> Dredges, working night and day have "fringed great stretches of the Islands with a massive levee. Thousands of yards of earth have risen to impressive heights where once the land was low" or underwater.<sup>81</sup> "The temporary bridge completed with exception of the east approach on the Island. All work will be finished within a few days", whereupon, "automobiles will be rolling along the first sections of Davis Islands."<sup>82</sup> In his final full page "Physical Development" promotion in October, Davis proclaimed that "construction on the palatial ten story Apartment and a score of homes will be started. The hum of building industry on Davis Islands is in reality a matter of only a few days and in the wake of this activity will speedily follow greatly increased values for property owners. Hyde Park and Bay Circle sections are scenes of the most vigorous action with an assured result of quick increases for investors."<sup>83</sup>

Once again, Davis' wild claims -- that Davis Islands is "WHERE FORTUNES WILL BE MADE IN REAL ESTATE" - came true.<sup>84</sup> First, his prediction that owners of the Hyde Park and Bay Circle properties would enjoy "greatly increased values" most assuredly occurred. An examination of the city's tax rolls reveals that from their inception into the tax rolls in 1924 to the following year, the real estate values of all the Hyde Park and Bay Circle properties, at the minimum, doubled and in many cases recorded explosive increases. For example, the first time that lots 21 to 30 of Block 2 in the Hyde Park section appeared in the rolls in 1924 they were clustered together with a total real estate value of \$3,000 or \$300 a piece. The next year, lots 21, 22, 23, 27 and 30 were each valued at \$600 a piece, and therefore had doubled in value. Lot 25 was valued at \$2,600, which was a jump of nearly 9 times greater in value. Lots 26 and

29 each leaped to a value of \$3,800, a breathtaking increase of nearly 13 times in value. But most amazingly, lot 24 had skyrocketed to a property value of \$4,600 which was over 15 times greater than just the year before! In total, these ten lots had jumped in value from \$3,000 to \$18,400 or an increase in property value of more than six times in only one year. The greatest real estate value increase was recorded in the Hyde Park section by lots 27 and 28 of Block 5 which incredibly surged from a total property value of \$600 in 1924 to \$29,200 a year later - an explosion in value of over 48 times!<sup>85</sup> Therefore, Davis' advertising assertion, that "Davis Islands enjoys rank with great real estate values of Florida"<sup>86</sup> was not only truthful but in hindsight most humble.

Likewise, Davis' claims that investors of Hyde Park and Bay Circle properties were "assured quick increases", and that their purchases "meant extraordinary profits - not in a long term of years, but within a period of time which practically reduces itself to months" most definitely took place. In fact, many of the "quick increases" and profits actually occurred within a period of weeks, days, and even hours of the purchase. Examples of the quick increases of property and the profits made were plentiful. "Two hours after the contract was signed, the purchaser of Lots 22 and 23 in Block I took a profit of \$1,000. Lot 65 in Block 6 was quickly sold by the purchaser at a profit of \$1,800. The owner of Lot 70 in Block 6 has refused several offers of a \$2,500 profit. \$1,500 was the profit taken by the owner of Lot 8 in Block 6. The purchaser of Lots 83 and 84 in Block 6 decided to hold his property rather than take a profit of \$3,000. The purchaser of lot 71 in Block 6 refused a profit of \$3,000 two days after he bought. In four days the owner of Lots 3, 4 and 5 in Block 2 took a profit of \$3,000."<sup>87</sup> So just

as Davis had advertised many times, Davis Islands did indeed mean profits and once again, his seemingly wild promises were not only fulfilled but actually were surpassed.

At the same time that his underlying goal of profit-making for purchasers and investors -- and ultimately for himself -- was being realized. the primary goal of his campaign reached fruition in the extraordinary short span of two months. On October 28, 1924, the centerpiece of the front page of the *Tampa Tribune* presented for the first time a complete and detailed visualization of D.P. Davis' island development dream to the world. In addition, the Island Development was not only "well under way", but as evidenced by the *Tampa Tribune* it was already acquiring "an excellent idea of what it will mean to the city when completed". The importance of Davis Islands to Tampa was probably put in perspective best by Charles A. Faircloth, one of Tampa's leading bankers and president of the National City Bank. He contrasted the importance of Davis Islands with the opening of the Gandy Bridge. "Without question," he extolled, "the opening of the Gandy Bridge is second in importance only to the Davis Island Development as a forward step for Tampa."<sup>88</sup> Moreover and perhaps more far telling of the importance of Davis Islands to the city of Tampa were the comments of Miami capitalist and developer R.M. McNeel. On the final day of Davis' phenomenal two month campaign, McNeel stated, "Davis Islands is of such commanding beauty, and its value to Tampa and vicinity so great, that it even overshadows the far-famed Miami Beach. D.P. Davis, owner and developer of Davis Islands, has visualized even a greater project than did Carl Fisher when he began work on Miami Beach."<sup>89</sup> And ultimately, Davis had by the end of October clearly demonstrated what Davis Island meant to the investor:

profits -- big, ever-increasing profits to the investors.<sup>90</sup> So Davis, therefore, overwhelmingly fulfilled the goal of his island development campaign.

In sum, 1924 was acclaimed "the greatest year in Tampa Real Estate"<sup>91</sup> It was a Boom -- which marked the "awakening" of Tampa. For D.P. Davis, 1924 marked the awakening of his island development dream. While his amazing exploits for Davis Islands continued through October 1925 - when the entire development was sold out -- it would never reach the heights nor intensities that it had exhibited in his frenzied two-month-long campaign from the end of August to the end of October 1924. In that phenomenal two month blitz, D. P. Davis transformed Tampa's mudflats into Tampa's moneymakers; and of all the successful activities recorded in Tampa's boom in 1924, Davis' promoting and building marvel out-boomed them all.

## ENDNOTES

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<sup>1</sup> The introductory material was retrieved from three sources. Federal Writers' Project, *Florida, A Guide to the Southernmost State* (New York, Oxford University Press, 1939), 61; Charlton W. Tebeau, *A History of Florida* ( Coral Gables, University of Miami Press, 1971), 377-385; Paul S.

George "Brokers, Binders, and Builders: Greater Miami's Boom of the Mid-1920s", *Florida Historical Quarterly* 64 (July 1986), 27-35.

<sup>2</sup> Nixon Smiley, *Yesterday's Miami* (Miami, E.A. Seemann Publishing, 1973), 60.

<sup>3</sup> Charles E. Harrier, *Florida's Promoters, The Men Who Made It Big* (Tampa, Trend House, 1973), 11

<sup>4</sup> Smiley, *Miami*, 59.

<sup>5</sup> *Tampa Tribune*, September 21, 1924,1C.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, September 7,1924,2D.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, August 30, 1924, 2

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<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, September 7, 1924, 2D.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, October 1, 1924, 5A.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, January 1, 1925, IB.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, September 7, 1924, 2D.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, August 30, 1924, 2.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, September 21, 1924, 1 C.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, September 6, 1924,4.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, September 21 , 1924, 1C.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, September 19, 1924, 1B.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, September 7, 1924, 2D.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>25</sup> Ernest L. Robinson, *History of Hillsborough County Florida* (St. Augustine, The Record Company, 1928),153.

<sup>26</sup> *Tribune*, September 7, 1924, 2D.

<sup>27</sup> Harner, *Promoters*, 50.

<sup>28</sup> David Nolan, *Fifty Feet In Paradise the Booming of Florida* (New York, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1984), 194.

<sup>29</sup> *Tribune*, August 14, 1924, 5B.

<sup>30</sup> The "first page" of the *Tribune* as referred to here and throughout the rest of this paper is in actuality the first page of the "Second Section". The *Tribune*'s first section at this time was reserved exclusively for National and World news. Even though Davis and many others probably felt that news concerning his development was worthy of the paper's "first section", nevertheless, it was relegated along with

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other news originating from Tampa and Florida to the paper's "second section".

<sup>31</sup> *Tribune* August 26, 1924, IB.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., September 7, 1924, 2D.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., September 7, 1923, 16D.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., September 10, 1924, IB.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., September 19, 1924, IB.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., October 4, 1924, 2.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., September 24, 1924, 3A.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., September 26, 1924, 3B.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., September 24, 1924, 3A.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., September 30, 1924, 10.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., November 2, 1924, 6C.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., September 30, 1924, 10.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., October 5, 1924, 1B.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., September 25, 1924, 1B.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., September 28, 1924, IC.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., October 1, 1924, 5A

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., October 4, 1924, 2.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., October 1, 1924, 5A

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., October 4, 1924, 10.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., October 5, 1924, 4F.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., October 9, 1924, 12A.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., October 9, 1924, 5A.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., October 8, 1924, 12A.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., October 10, 1924, 3A.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid., October 10, 1924, 12A

<sup>66</sup> Ibid., October 7, 1924, 10A.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid., October 10, 1924, 12A.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., October 12, 1924, 1D.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid., October 12, 1924, 13F.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., October 13, 1924, 2.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., October 14, 1924, 10A.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid., October 13, 1924, 4.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid., October 14, 1924, 3A.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid., October 15, 1924, 3A.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid., November 6, 1924, 3A.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid., October 16, 1924, 12A.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., October 22, 1924, 3A.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid., October 15, 1924, 11A.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid., October 29, 1924, 5A.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid., October 19, 1924, 12E

<sup>81</sup> Ibid., October 31, 1924, 4A.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid., October 19, 1924, 12E; October 31, 1924, 4A.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid., October 29, 1924, 5A.

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<sup>84</sup> Ibid., October 24, 1924, 3A.

<sup>85</sup> Hillsborough County Tax Rolls, 1925, 1101-1103; 1926, 1466-1478.

<sup>86</sup> Tribune, October 17, 1924, 3A.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid., November 27, 1924, 3AQ.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., November 16, 1924, 1D.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid., October 28, 1924, 1B.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid., November 25, 1924, 5A.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid., January 4, 1925, 1 C.

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The photo of D.P. Davis and the three promotional pages are from a booklet: *Life on Davis Islands, Tampa in the Bay*, by D.P. Davis Properties, 1925.

# THE TAMPA FLORIDA BREWERY, INC. FLORIDA'S FIRST BREWERY

By **CLIFFORD C. (KIP) SHARPE**

The Florida Brewing Company, organized in 1896, was the natural outgrowth of an industrial boom in the Tampa area. Prior to that time Tampa was "a sleepy little settlement and life was in strict accord with the waves of the... bay."<sup>1</sup> The population in 1890 was a mere 5,532. Part of the boom came with the establishment of the first railroad to Tampa in 1883 and the erection in 1891 of Henry B. Plant's ultra-luxurious Tampa Bay Hotel. During this period Florida was becoming the winter playground of the wealthy. The real impetus for growth was the migration of the tobacco industry to the area in 1885. The move was led by Vicente Martinez Ybor, a pioneer cigar manufacturer initially operating plants in Havana, Cuba and later in Key West. Civil unrest in Cuba in the 1870's caused an increase in the already heavy concentration of the cigar factories in Key West. When half of Key West was destroyed by fire in 1886 and labor disputes arose thereafter, the industry quickly followed Mr. Ybor to his namesake, Ybor City (now a suburb of Tampa).<sup>2</sup> This Latin flavored community,

only two miles square and located east of Tampa, soon became "one of the leading cigar manufacturing cities of the world".<sup>3</sup> The need for a major brewery became evident.<sup>4</sup>

In 1896 several cigar industrialists incorporated the Florida Brewing Company with stated capital stock of \$200,000.<sup>5</sup> The two acre site chosen, at 5th Avenue and 13th Street in Ybor City, was adjacent to Government Spring. It was so named because it supplied water to government forces as far back as 1824. At this site, Indians had performed sacred rituals, generals had planned strategies for the Seminole Indian War, men were hanged and it even served as a swimming and health resort one year.<sup>6</sup> The pure spring water was a major influence in the purported excellent taste of the brewery's product. The site was also important in that it was next to the railroad which provided excellent shipping capabilities.

The organizers were Edward Manrara,







Ad from 1916

president; E.W. Codington, vice-president; Hugo Schwab, secretary and treasurer; and Adam C. Moore, general manager. Mr. Manrara, a partner of Mr. Ybor's, was the president of the local gas works and had extensive holdings in real estate and the cigar industry.<sup>7</sup>

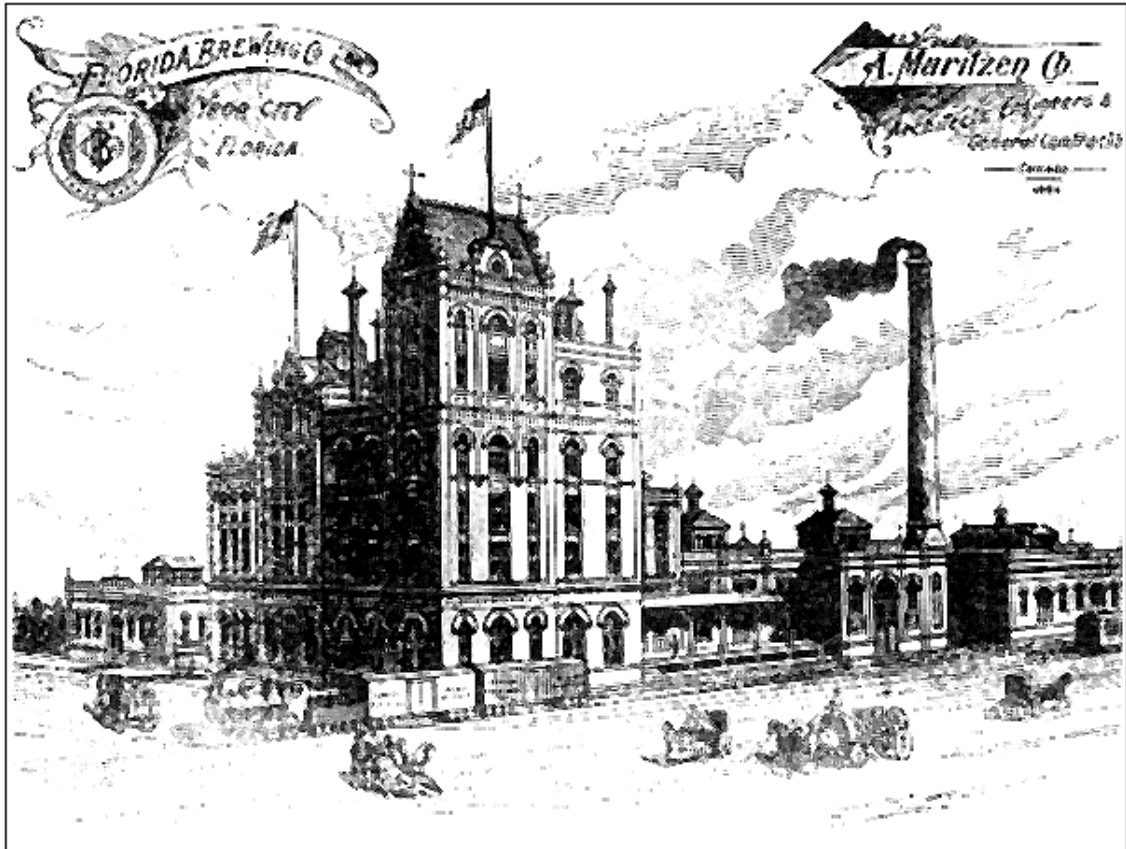
The construction of Florida's first brewery was no easy task. The extreme summer temperatures were conquered by the use of then relatively new inventions, De La Verne refrigerating machines. These devices maintained the cellars at a constant thirty-two degrees. Climate control was vital to brewing lager beer, America's favorite malt beverage. Also of new design, the Pfauder Vacuum fermentation system filtered the air to insure that bacteria did not have access to the fermenting brew. The brewery was designed after the Castle Brewery in Johannesburg, South Africa. It was said that "the latest and most successful machinery for beer-making and refrigerating has been placed in operation, regardless of expense" so as to make the product "second to none in the United States, or probably in the world;" "It is a model of comfort, convenience, and attractiveness."<sup>8</sup> As can be seen from the drawing herein, the towering six floor brick and steel structure was deserving of this high praise. Typical of the period, the brewery employed a gravity

system. The brewing process begins on the top floor and as the mixture passes to each lower level it is weighed, cleaned, refined, and cooked before finally reaching the bottom floor to be aged. The capacity of the brewery was 25,000 barrels (31 gallons each) a year although it only produced between 10 to 12 thousand barrels those first few years.<sup>9</sup> In addition to the brewery, the plant contained stables, an elegant office across the street, a bottling works for its beer, soda and mineral waters, and an ice factory. The latter facility, probably a remnant of Tampa's first ice plant constructed at the springs in 1886, was destroyed by a fire during the first year of the brewery's existence. It was replaced with a modern fireproof plant capable of producing 40 tons of ice per day.

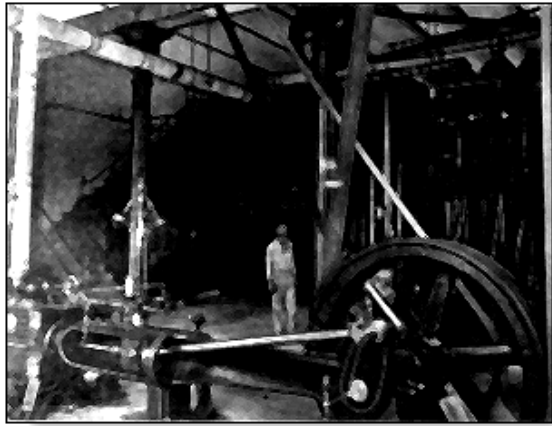
"Come and Celebrate" the brewery's grand opening to be held February 15, 1897 was an invitation carried on the front page of the local newspaper. "White or black, rich or poor" were encouraged to enjoy a "day of merry making" with food, music, and home brewed beer.<sup>10</sup> A large "cosmopolitan" crowd of "many different nationalities and stations in life" gathered for the festivities.<sup>11</sup> Music, speeches, 20 carcasses of barbequed beef, barrels of pickles, tropical weather and an estimated 400 barrels of lager beer insured a good time. On the large eating tables were placed "two large huge alligators ... set upright holding in their paws a platter of pure Bavarian hops and the best mault [sic]. Each had a bottle stuck in his mouth ... [and one table contained] a life size Seminole Indian chief with a crown of Florida moss on his head and the trade mark of the company in his hand."<sup>12</sup> Although the beer was hearty, the brewmaster, Anton Blrhbaum, said "it will not make a man drunk."<sup>13</sup> Despite this claim, the celebration was marred when a Cuban cigar worker and an ice plant employee reached for the same



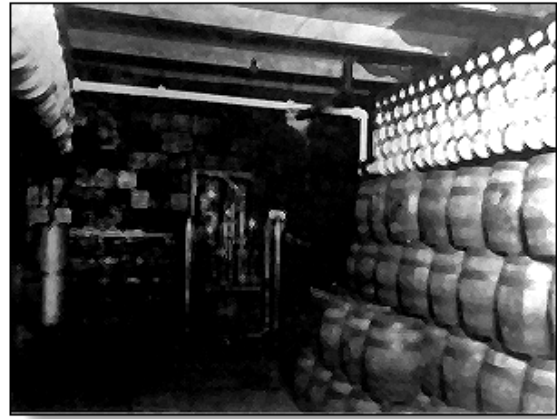
LABELS: (1) pre-pro gold and black on white (2) pre-pro "Export" 3.35% alcohol (3) 2% alcohol, probably an early prohibition type beer (4) "copyright 1936", rumor says there may be a label for "ALA" (5) "copyright 1936", neck label says "FLA 6", primarily red in color; there is a foil variation with some differences in appearance (6) permit number F-U-502 dates it to between 1933-36, "4% alcohol by volume", notice "Taste Tells" slogan (7) permit number, "Muenchener Type" (?), all of the "La Tropical" labels refer to the "1933 copyright" date (8) variation (9) note that this "ale" label corresponds to the "beer" label but does not have a permit number (10) variation (11) IRTP, brewery dropped the "La"; one source says "La Tropical" was for the Cuban market while "Tropical" was for the U.S. market (12) ale (13) non-IRTP; there is also a La Tropical Bock IRTP (14) "All Grain Golden Premium Beer" (15) "Lager Premium Beer" (16) "Extra Fine Ale".



CANS (references are to The Class Book of U.S. Beer Cans (Class), 1982 Jeffrey C. Cameron, and Beer Cans Unlimited (BCU), 1980, Art and Pete Russell) (1) BCU 35/32, there is an IRTP and a non-IRTP, "Internal Revenue Tax Paid" was required to be printed on all cans and labels prior to 1950 (2) BCU 36/1 is the matching "beer" also in IRTP and non-IRTP (3) BCU 35/30 with "Ale" written in red; BCU 35/31 (not shown) has a gold "Ale" (4) Class 24/3 (5) BCU 123/22 "ale" (6) Class 45/6 (7) BCU 123/23 "ale" in gold, it came in a flat, soft, and zip top (8) BCU 123/26 "Premium Lager Beer" flat top (9) BCU 123/27 "All Grain Golden Beer" flat top - the "beer" cans were generally red and the "ale" cans green.



Engine Room c.1897



Racking Room c.1897

glass of beer. Cursing and shoving led the ice plant employee to strike the head of the other gentleman with a beer mug causing his death.<sup>14</sup> This notwithstanding, the celebration was a huge success.

Testimonials from scientific journals declared "physicians must agree that [the beer] is eminently wholesome, nutritious and invigorating ... The most searching chemical tests fall to discover the slightest trace of adulteration."<sup>15</sup> Laymen declared it "a perfect article of the very finest flavor."<sup>16</sup>

The mysterious sinking of the battleship "Maine" in Cuba brought America into the 1898 war with Spain over Cuba's independence. Production at the brewery increased to supply the demands of the 30,000 troops that departed Cuba from the large port of Tampa. During this period Teddy Roosevelt's Rough Riders reportedly "rode through the brewery on their horses, helping themselves to liquid refreshment."<sup>17</sup> It was also during the war that soldiers attempted to crack the safe at the brewery. A brewery worker confronted the would-be robbers who dropped their guns and tools before fleeing. This was fortunate since the



brewery had failed to make bank deposits for the preceding week and the vault was overloaded with silver dollars.<sup>18</sup> The war was over the same year it started. This escalated the brewery's expanding export business to Cuba. By 1900 it was estimated that the Florida Brewing Company was shipping more beer to Cuba than any other American brewery.<sup>19</sup> This is no wonder



Factory scene mug

considering the excellent port facilities in Tampa and the Cuban tobacco roots of the brewery's founders. A vast railroad export business had already been established throughout Florida and southern Georgia. Due to the tripling of Tampa's population in ten years (16,000 by 1900) and the expansion of its export business, the brewery made extensive improvements to keep pace. To show its appreciation, the brewery entered a large barrel-shaped float (holding over 3,000 gallons of beer) in the Labor Day Parade of 1900. The horse drawn float rambled down the street dispensing free beer to thirsty spectators. "By the time the parade was over there wasn't enough lager left in the barrel to intoxicate a mosquito."<sup>20</sup>

1902 saw management changes: A.S. Arias,<sup>21</sup> president, had replaced Mr. Manrara in 1900; E.W. Codington and A.C. Moore



**BOTTLES:** (1) 6 1/2" aqua Hutchinson style bottle, "F.B.Co." on bottom; for soda or mineral water; variation is dark green with embossed alligator in middle (2) 9" (exclusive of top) etched selzer; Not shown; clear embossed crown top.

retired. They were succeeded by General Garcia Velez, president and general manager; S.V.M. Ybor, Jr. (son of the founder of Ybor City), vice-president and secretary; and Hugo Schwab, treasurer<sup>22</sup>; The brewmasters also changed, i.e. Frank Scofield (1898), E.A. Engler (1901), J.G. Broomfield (1904), Fred Momburg (1906) and George Schwemmer (1911). In 1905 the capital stock was increased to \$250,000 and once again the corporate officers were reorganized. Ignacio P. Castaneda became president; Enrique Pendas, vice-president and treasurer; and B.M. Balbonith, general manager. Mr. Ybor remained with the company. Mr. Balbonith, a large wholesale liquor dealer was enlisted to expand the small liquor business associated with the

brewery.<sup>23</sup> The addition of The Tampa Wholesale Liquor & Wine Company (including mail order service), along with the brewery's wholesale ice business (Ybor City Ice Works with a then capacity of 80 tons daily), and the mineral water manufacturing facility, made this a most complete and diversified operation. Forty men were employed to maintain these businesses along with the then 30,000 annual barrel capacity brewery.

A fire causing \$1,000 in damages in 1906 turned out to be a blessing in disguise. Later that year the Florida Supreme Court affirmed a \$25,000 judgment against the Tampa Water Works Company when it was proved that the damage to the plant resulted from lack of water pressure.<sup>24</sup> With the management structure stabilized (the officers remained relatively the same until Prohibition), the brewery prospered. Despite a fire in 1909 destroying 20% of the plant (\$155,000 paid by insurance), the brewery added a distilling system (for liquor), spent another 30,000 on various improvements, rebuilt its bottling works and doubled its brewing capacity. An article in the April 1914 edition of the "Pan American Review" paints a glowing picture of the business: 26,000 barrels of beer were made in 1913, 200 barrels were produced per day<sup>25</sup> (100 of which were bottled), there was a wholesale liquor business "where Whiskeys are mixed, fine cordials and gins are made," the ice factory had daily capacity of 110 tons and "of the 110 bars in the territory, this factory dominates 80% of the market, many of which are owned by the company."

Indeed the future looked bright. But effective October 1, 1915, with the passage of the Davis Package Bill, no draft beer could be sold in Florida. Only bottled beer and liquor by the whole bottle could be purchased. Tampa answered by passing a

special ordinance permitting clubs paying a special license to disregard the law.<sup>26</sup> This was of little help for effective November 27, 1918, total Prohibition gripped the state. The brewery president, Mr. Castaneda, returned to Havana leaving Mr. Ybor to run the ice works and an alleged soft drink and cereal beverage line of drinks. Despite Prohibition and a 1921 hurricane causing in excess of \$2,000,000 in damage to the city, the brewery clandestinely continued to brew beer during the dizzying real estate boom years of the 1920's.

In 1927 the brewery was raided by federal agents who seized 12,600 gallons of beer ranging from .041 to .035% of alcohol (a little stronger than your average lite beer of today).<sup>27</sup> Although the federal judge acknowledged that Mr. Ybor had "been made the "goat" in transactions between the brewery and the federal agents," he was fined \$100 and sentenced to six months in jail.<sup>28</sup> The brewery was closed. The appellate court in New Orleans reversed the decision.

With the end of the "noble experiment" in 1933, the "Tampa Florida Brewery, Inc.," successor to the Florida Brewing Company, readied itself for business. At the same time other breweries in Tampa were opening: DeSoto Brewing Co. (1202 N. Howard Ave., 1934-35), Fette Brewing Co. (1013 32nd Ave. - no federal permit was issued so it probably never brewed beer), and the Southern Brewing Co. (Zack and Pierce Sts., 1934-1957, later part of International Breweries, Inc., 1957-1963). Sixty thousand dollars was poured into the old brewery to modernize it by Henderson Warren, president; W.D. Busch, vice-president and Thomas D. Delaney, secretary and treasurer. The pre-Prohibition officers had no more involvement. The following men guided the

brewery through the remainder of its history: Curren E. Webb, Jr., president (1937-1944); Wilbur W. Leavine (manager 1937, chairman of the board 1937-1961); Robert W. Leavine (bottling superintendent 1937-1961); Albert M. Morris (vice-president and general manager 1938-1943; president and general manager 1944-1956); and Karl Schweiberger (brewmaster 1936-1955; vice-president and general manager 1956-1960). Mr. Schweiberger was a fourth generation brewer having gained his experience at his family brewery (in operation for over 200 years) in Landshut, Bavaria.<sup>29</sup>

From the early 1930's until 1941, annual sales averaged about 24,000 barrels per year. Ninety percent of the product was packaged in bottles; this steadily increased until the brewery almost phased out of the draft beer business. In 1942 sales jumped to 48,000 barrels. For reasons unclear to the author, sales soared between 1944 and 1947 (averaging 80,000 barrels per year). Sales slowly declined thereafter until the brewery went out of business in 1961. The brewery attempted to hold lagging sales in the late 1940's with the addition of a cone top canning line. In 1953 flat top cans appeared. The brewery's flagship brand until about 1949 was "La Tropical" (ale, beer, and bock) although it also used, for a short time, "Fla". (later "Fla.6" to advertise its alcoholic content) and for an even shorter time, "GA." After 1949, the "Tropical" brand (ale, beer, and bock) was used exclusively.<sup>30</sup>

In 1961 Wilbur Leavine sold the brewery to Samuel Greenberg, owner of Brewers and Bottlers Equipment Company. Mr. Greenberg in turn sold the "Tropical" trademark to International Breweries, Inc. which had purchased all of the assets of the Southern Brewing Company (Tampa) in 1957.<sup>31</sup> International hoped that the

acquisition of Southern's brewery and the combination of its "Silver Bar" brand with the Tropical name, in addition to its breweries in Detroit, Buffalo and Covington, would help it gain a major share of the national market. The effort failed and the southern division of International closed in 1963.

When Mr. Greenberg acquired the brewery, it still had thousands of barrels of beer in the storage tanks. Being a frugal man he hired some of the brewery's crew, bottled it and sold the same. The brewing equipment was reconditioned and then sold. The advertising, having no apparent value, was discarded. He still retains the old bottling and ice plant. In an ironic twist, the cypress storage tanks were dismantled and used to panel the VIP room at the Anheuser-Busch facility in Tampa.<sup>32</sup> The opening of the latter modern plant in 1959 was a major force in the closing of "Florida's first brewery". Another probable factor was the closing of all U.S. businesses in Cuba in 1959 when Castro came to power.

The building, in a state of disrepair, still stands. The art of brewing in Tampa is faithfully carried on by a new breed, the Tampa Bay Brewing Company, a combination restaurant and brewery.

*I wish to thank the following people for their help with this article: Ernie Oest, Bob Kay, Randy Carlson, Bob Anderson, Bob Stowe, Don Morrow, Kurt E. Jasielonis, Carolyn Silva, and Charlie Vick; a special thanks to Dave King, Tony Pizzo, and Paul E. Camp - Special Collections- USF Library.*

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Anthony P. Pizzo, Tampa Town 1824-1886: The Cracker Village With a Latin Accent (Tampa, 1968), p.12

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<sup>2</sup> Karl H. Grismer, *Tampa: A History of the City of Tampa and the Tampa Bay Region of Florida* (St. Petersburg, 1950) pp. 174, 182, 189, 205-206, 342. *Florida: A Guide to the Southernmost State*, comp. and written by Federal Writers Project of the Works Projects Administration for the State of Florida (New York, 1939) p. 198.

<sup>3</sup> Grismer, *Tampa*, p. 205. To back up this claim the author cites that between 1886 and 1896, 11 Key West factories moved to Tampa, 13 came from New York, 5 from Chicago and 2 from Havana. By 1894, almost 3,000 workers were employed by the local industry which had an annual payroll of nearly \$2,000,000. Sales of 88,000,000 cigars grossed in excess of \$5,000,000.

<sup>4</sup> Mr. Pizzo, in the book referenced in note 1, states that Alfonso DeLauney, Tampa's second mayor, brewed the first beer in the area -- Spruce Beer "a delicious and healthful drink." p. 76.

<sup>5</sup> *Tampa Florida: Its Industries And Advantages*, 1905, compiled under the endorsement of the Board of Trade.

<sup>6</sup> "Government Spring - Tampa's Remaining Link to Fort Brooke," *The Tampa Tribune*, October 21, 1977, Section D, part IV; "Owner Seeks Help To Renovate Spring," *The Tampa Tribune*, April 8, 1987. The swimming pool, operating in 1895, was called the Natatorium.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.* *The Brewers Journal*, Vol. 20, p. 323, May 1896. The brewery was incorporated as the Ybor City Brewing Company but the name was changed prior to opening.

<sup>8</sup> "Plant and Business of the Florida Brewing Company", *Times Union and Citizen*, Dec. 1897.

<sup>9</sup> *The Brewers Handbook for 1898*.

<sup>10</sup> "Come and Celebrate, Is the Invitation Issued by the Brewing Company", *Tampa Tribune*, February 13, 1897.

<sup>11</sup> "Barbeque And Beer" *Tampa Tribune*, February 16, 1897.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

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<sup>14</sup> "The Florida Brewing Company" by George Carrasco, Jr. A 1983 college paper maintained at FSU.

<sup>15</sup> "Tampa's Pride - The Only Brewery in Florida", *Tampa Tribune*, Midwinter Edition, 1900. The author of the article quotes two physicians who published articles; one in the "American Journal of Health".

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> "Owner Seeks Help To Renovate Spring," *Tampa Tribune*, April 8, 1987.

<sup>18</sup> "Story of Old Florida Senate Contest Brings Lively Repercussions Here," *Tampa Tribune*, June 15, 1947.

<sup>19</sup> See footnote 15.

<sup>20</sup> "Beer Debacle Recalls Wet Days in Tampa," *Tampa Tribune*, March 31, 1927.

<sup>21</sup> Dan Arias, a relative(?), was the president of the De Soto Brewing Co. (1934-1935) in Tampa.

<sup>22</sup> *One Hundred Years of Brewing*, 1903, H.S. Rich & Co. The 1903 City directory says that Mr. Ybor was the general manager.

<sup>23</sup> See footnote 5.

<sup>24</sup> *Brewers Journal*, Vol. 30 p. 483, August 1906.

<sup>25</sup> The arithmetic does not seem to work. If the brewery was producing 20,000 barrels annually and making 200 barrels a day, it would only be brewing 10 days a year. The article is written in Spanish and directed at soliciting tin export buyers. It appears that the author added a little embellishment.

<sup>26</sup> *The 1915 Year Book of the U.S. Brewers' Association*.

<sup>27</sup> See footnote 20.

<sup>28</sup> "Tampa Ilustrado," March 1928, a Spanish publication. Noted historian Tony Pizzo says that the jail time was reversed on appeal.

<sup>29</sup> *American Brewer*, November 1952, p. 80.

<sup>30</sup> These dates conflict with the 1978 book, *Who's Who in Brew*. The dates used herein are from various years of "The Brewers Digest" which lists brands used for each year.



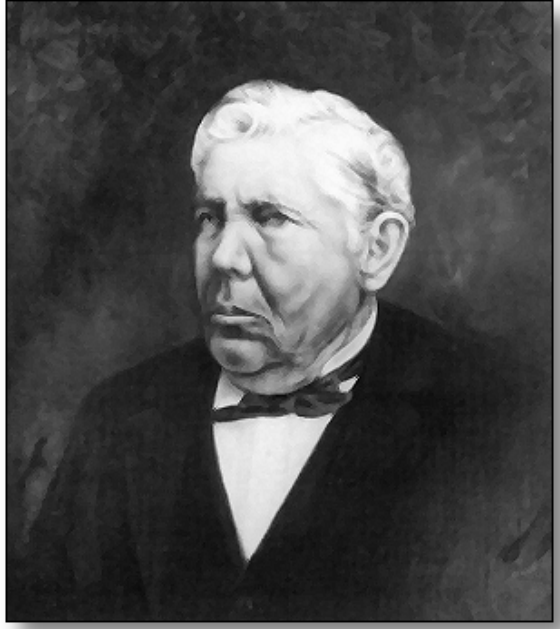
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<sup>31</sup> "The Brewers Digest," March 1961, p. 87.

<sup>32</sup> See note 14. Mr. Carrasco interviewed Mr. Greenberg and Ted Schoenlein, a former brewmaster at the subject brewery.

# THREE FLORIDA GOVERNORS FROM TAMPA

By ARSENIO M. SANCHEZ



**Henry Laurens Mitchell**

Three Tampanans have served as governor of Florida, Henry Laurens Mitchell (1893-97), Doyle Elam Carlton (1929-33), and Bob Martinez (1987-91). Of the three only one, Bob Martinez, was born in Tampa.

Henry Laurens Mitchell, sixteenth Governor of Florida and first elected from Tampa, was born on a farm in Jefferson County, Alabama on September 3, 1831 son of Thomas and Elizabeth (Sterns) Mitchell.

His parents came to Florida in 1846, homesteading in the Seffner area. There were nine children, seven sons and two daughters.

Mitchell received his early education from his mother and from an itinerant Methodist minister who occasionally served as his tutor.

Having completed his early education, Henry, by the time he was seventeen, was in Tampa reading law in the office of Judge James A. Gettis, a well-known local attorney.<sup>1</sup>

Admitted to the bar at 18, Mitchell was well-liked, and by 1857, at the age of 26, he was elected State Attorney for the Sixth judicial Circuit. This position he held until the beginning of the Civil War in 1861, when he resigned and enlisted in the Confederate Army, serving as Lieutenant and Captain, in the Fourth Florida Infantry Regiment. At the close of the Vicksburg Campaign, he resigned to become a member of the Florida House of Representatives, from Hillsborough County, to which he had been elected in his absence.



**Florida freeze of 1894-95**



**Doyle Elam Carlton**

After returning from his duty as a soldier and beginning his career as a politician, Mitchell began courting Mary Eugenia Spencer, and they were married April 11, 1866. His wife's brother, Thomas K. Spencer, published the *Florida Peninsular*, a weekly newspaper. He named Mitchell editor in September 1867.<sup>2</sup>

By 1870 Mitchell had been named chairman of the county Democratic Committee, and he was elected to another term in the State Legislature in 1873. By then he had relinquished his editorial quill.

In 1877 when the Democrats succeeded in ousting the corrupt Republican "carpetbag" government from power, Gov. George Drew appointed Henry Mitchell judge of the Circuit Court for the Sixth Judicial Circuit and he served in this position until 1888.

While traveling his circuit which included Cedar Keys and all the way down to Key West, Mitchell had to break quarantine lines during the yellow fever epidemic of 1887.

In 1888 Mitchell was elected to serve as a justice on the State Supreme Court. But he and his wife seemed unhappy with the regimen in Tallahassee and he made it known he would welcome a return to a circuit court vacancy back in Tampa. Gov. Francis P. Fleming obliged with an appointment.

Why Supreme Court justice Mitchell was unhappy with his new position can only be surmised. The *Florida Times-Union* speculated that he did not like the political atmosphere in the State Capital.

In 1892 there was considerable dissension in the Democratic party, particularly on the matter of selecting a candidate for governor. The state convention was held in Tampa, and of the seven or eight candidates none seemed to have the qualifications to restore harmony. When the name of Judge Mitchell was proposed he was nominated. He was inaugurated January 3, 1893 and served a four-year term through January 5, 1897.

At the nominating convention in Tampa June 1, 1892 of Henry Mitchell for Governor, Sydney L. Carter of Alachua County made the nomination, and just as he did the electric lights, flickered and went out. This was a common occurrence in those days and did not cause a great surprise or alarm.<sup>3</sup> One of Mitchell's first official acts in 1893, was to appoint Hugh C. Macfarlane to the position of State Attorney for the Sixth Judicial Circuit. Macfarlane was in the process of developing West Tampa.

Mitchell's term as governor was plagued by several natural disasters. The first was the



**Ex Governor Doyle E. Carlton assumed that his well-known name would give him an easy win.**

big freeze of 1894-95. On Dec. 29, 1894, the temperature dropped to fourteen degrees damaging the fruit and leaves on the orange and lemon trees. An intervening warm spell brought new leaves and buds and then a second wave of frigid air swept the state, on February 7-10, 1895. In one night \$50,000,000 worth of property disappeared. There was very little marketable crop left in 1895.

To recoup their losses, many farmers turned to truck farming, which became a major factor in Florida's economy.

The cigar manufacturing industry that began in 1886 in Tampa was also contributing to Florida's economy. In 1896 the cigar industry in Tampa produced 86,000,000 cigars.

Another disaster, a hurricane, ripped across the state at 135 miles an hour on September 28, 1896, destroying Cedar Key.



**Charles O. Andrews' vigorous campaign won him the Senate nomination.**

During his last year in office, Governor Mitchell was concerned about the problem of the revolution in Cuba against Spain. Repressive measures by Spanish forces caused an increase in the Cuban population of Florida, many of whom carried on activities to aid the insurgents.

These expeditions increased during 1896, aided by Floridians like Captain Napoleon Bonaparte Broward of the steamer "Three Friends."

At the end of his term as Governor, Mitchell placed his name on the ballot in Hillsborough County as a Candidate for Clerk of the Circuit Court. He signed his own Commission as Hillsborough County Clerk.

When his term as clerk ended in 1901 he was elected county treasurer, which office he held until his death October 14, 1903. He was buried in the Oaklawn Cemetery.



**Bob Martinez**

The Mitchells had no children.

Doyle Elam Carlton, twenty-fifth Governor of Florida and second elected from Tampa, was the youngest to hold this office (age 41). He was born in Wauchula, Florida July 6, 1887 son of Albert and Martha (McEwen) Carlton, who had eight sons and one daughter.<sup>4</sup>

His great-grandfather, Lieutenant Alderman Carlton, was killed by Indians when serving as an officer in the Seminole War. His grandfather, Daniel Carlton, also fought in the Indian Wars.

Carlton received his early education in the public schools of DeSoto County. He graduated from Stetson University and received an A.B. degree from the University of Chicago in 1910 and an L.I.B. degree



**Bob Martinez, accompanied by his wife, Mary Jane, raises the "V" for victory sign at his celebration after being elected Governor of Florida. He was sworn in as governor on January 6, 1987.**

Photo courtesy of Tampa Tribune

from Columbia University in 1912. He began his law practice in Tampa in 1912.

He married Nell Ray August 30, 1912. They had three children: Martha, wife of David E. Ward, a lawyer; Mary, wife of Dr. W.J. Ott of Tallahassee, and Doyle Jr. who nearly made the governor's mansion himself in a hot run-off with Gov. Farris Bryant in 1960.

Doyle Carlton chose the field of politics and was elected to the State Senate representing the District of Hillsborough and Pinellas Counties in 1917 to 1919. He was city attorney of Tampa from 1925 to 1927.

He served as governor of Florida from Jan. 8, 1929 to 1933, during one of the most critical peace time periods of Florida's history, as a result of four major disasters:

the Mediterranean fruit fly pest, collapse of the state's real-estate boom, a violent hurricane killing 1,836 persons, and the national depression. While Carlton was governor his administration legislated state support of county roads and bridge bonds with gasoline tax revenue and legalization of Pari-Mutuel wagering on horse and dog racing.

After serving as governor, he returned to Tampa in 1933, to practice law.

Announcement of his candidacy for the U.S. Senate in the summer of 1936 brought a series of commendatory newspaper endorsements. The papers agreed that, with his wide name-recognition, he should have little trouble winning the race.

Carlton's only opponent, Charles O. Andrews of Orlando, was a Spanish-American veteran who had been a schoolteacher, lawyer, state representative and supreme court commissioner.

Four Florida newspapers urged Andrews to withdraw, to save the cost of the primary and to make it a sweep for Carlton. Andrews felt that he had announced his candidacy first, and he wasn't about to bow out.

Carlton wrongly assumed the race would be an easy one and made no plans to campaign. But Andrews cultivated a well-organized group making its first major impact upon the American political scene the -- elderly.<sup>5</sup>

What jolted the Carlton camp in late July was word that the Florida Townsend club had come out strongly for Andrews.

A light statewide vote gave Andrews a winning margin of about 5,000. His major strength came from Townsendites and north

Floridians who favored a cross-state ship canal.

Carlton was defeated in 1936 for the Democratic nomination for the U.S. Senate. He did not run for elective office again, concentrating instead on his law practice, church and civic interests.

Carlton was special attorney for the State in the 1947 settlement which brought state ownership of the Ringling Museum and home at Sarasota. Former Gov. Doyle E. Carlton was appointed on December 23, 1957 by President Eisenhower to fill a vacancy on the six-man Civil Rights Commission. Carlton said he had no idea how President Eisenhower happened to appoint him to the group which was created by the Civil Rights Act of 1957, he a Democrat and a southerner.<sup>6</sup> He also served 13 consecutive years as president of Tampa's Pan American Commission.

Carlton remained active until several months before his death. He died Oct. 25, 1972 at age 85, Florida's oldest living former Governor.

Bob Martinez was Florida's 40th Governor, its first chief executive of Spanish descent and its first Roman Catholic Governor. He was the third Florida Governor from Tampa.

Martinez born in West Tampa on December 25, 1934, the son of Tampans Serafin and Ida Martinez. Christened in the Roman Catholic Church as Robert Martinez, he was called "Bobby" at the insistence of his grandmother, Isabel Carreno, who took care of him as a child while his parents worked.<sup>7</sup>

He received his formal education in the Tampa Public Schools. At Jefferson High School, Martinez lettered in baseball and

basketball and was co-captain of the basketball team in his senior year.

Martinez married his high school sweetheart, Mary Jane Marino in December 1954 when he was a sophomore at the University of Tampa. A degree in education from the University of Tampa enabled him to work as a high school teacher in his hometown, Tampa. Postgraduate studies at the University of Illinois earned him a master's degree in labor and industrial relations in 1964.

While in the school system Martinez was executive director of the Hillsborough Classroom Teachers Association.

In 1975, after 16 years of work in education and labor relations, Martinez bought the well known restaurant, the Cafe Sevilla. He spent the next four years as a restaurateur.

He became active in the Democratic Party politics in 1979. The Mayor's office at the time was up for grabs. Martinez ran against four other candidates and was elected Mayor of Tampa without a runoff.

His conservative views on government put him at odds with Democratic policies and he switched to the Republican Party in 1983, the year he was re-elected Mayor with 81 percent of the vote. He resigned his post in 1986, to run for governor of Florida against Steve Pajcic, whom he edged by 54 percent of the votes. He was Florida's second Republican Governor in 110 years.<sup>8</sup>

The former Tampa mayor was sworn in as governor of Florida on Tuesday, January 6, 1987, at age 52.

The Martinezes have two children, Sharon M. Keen and Robert Alan. Sharon presented them with identical twins, grand -daughters, Lydia Marie and Emily Ida Keen.

While in conversation with Governor Martinez the talk would drift to the then-approved amendment to the California State constitution declaring English the official language of the state. Martinez's answer was "I have always assumed that English is the language in which all business is transacted. No constitutional amendment or legislation is needed to confirm that fact."

Martinez was defeated at his second attempt at the Florida Governorship by Lawton Chiles in the 1990 election.

In March 1991, Martinez was appointed to head the National Drug Control Policy office by President Bush, a position he holds at the present time.

The U.S. Justice Department cleared former Gov. Bob Martinez of any violations of federal election laws relating to his donation to the Florida Republican Party of almost \$62,000 in 1990.<sup>9</sup>

A long time Martinez supporter. Brian Ballard said, "If the former governor chooses to leave Washington, he will go by choice and not because he's forced to."<sup>10</sup>

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> George B. Church, Jr., *The Life of Henry Laurens Mitchell, Florida's 16th Governor* (New York: Vantage Press, 1978).

<sup>2</sup> *Tampa Tribune*, March 24, 1984.

<sup>3</sup> Church, *The Life of Henry Laurens Mitchell*.

<sup>4</sup> *Tampa Tribune*, October 25, 1972

<sup>5</sup> *Tampa Tribune*, July 12, 1986

<sup>6</sup> *Tampa Tribune*, December 24, 1957

<sup>7</sup> *The Tampa Tribune*, December, 20, 1987

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<sup>8</sup> *The Tampa Tribune*, January, 7,1987

<sup>9</sup> *The Tampa Tribune*, May, 2, 1992

<sup>10</sup> *The Tampa Tribune*, March, 7,1992

*The Author gratefully acknowledges the assistance  
Of Leland Hawes in proofreading this article.*



# A PROFILE OF SCHOOL DESEGREGATION IN HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY

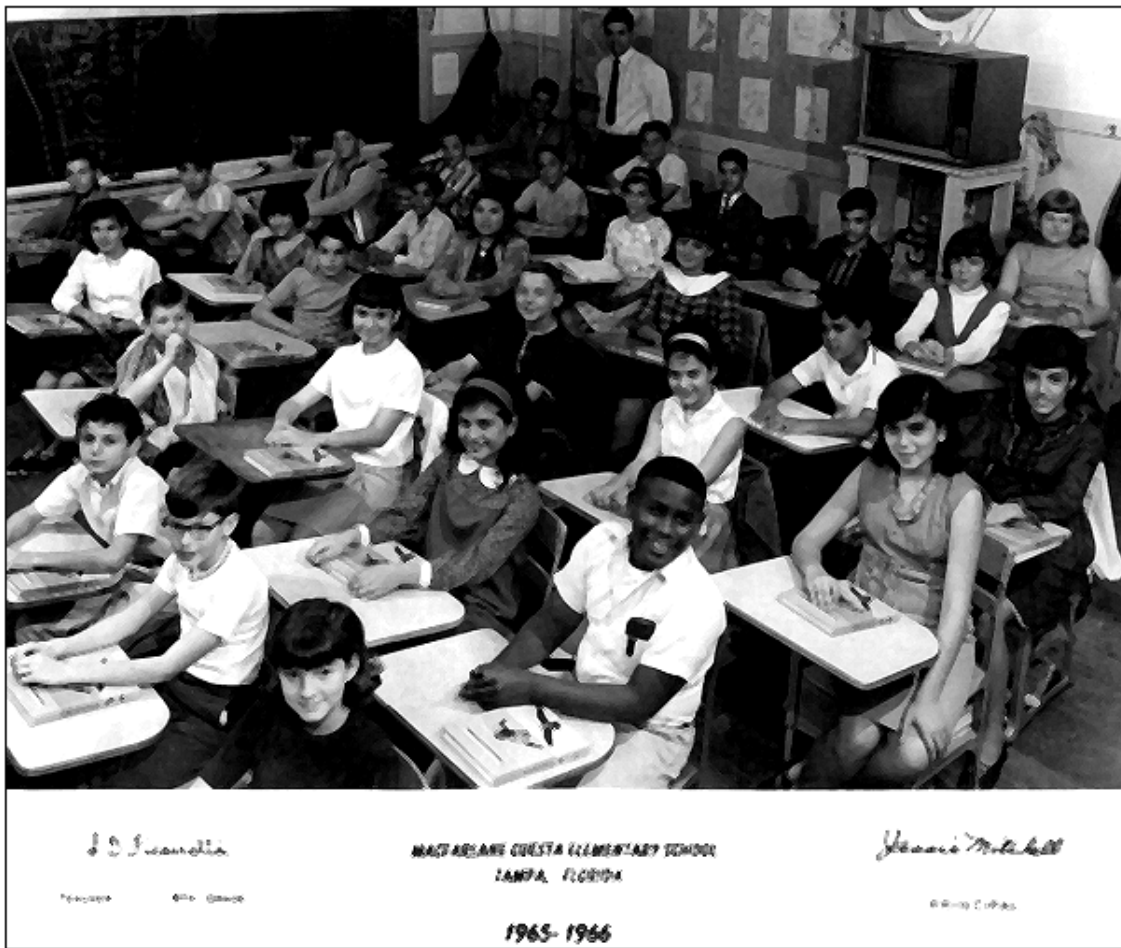
By **ROBERT W. SAUNDERS**

On January 23, 1962, I wrote a memorandum to my supervisor in New York, Gloster B. Current, with a copy to Ruby Hurley, the NAACP Southeast Regional Director. I informed them that:

"My son was enrolled in Macfarlane Park Elementary School this

morning. Police provided an escort which met no resistance. Approximately eight to ten mothers were around but without a doubt, their resentment has not had its effect upon other parents.

"The principal and teachers appear to



Robert W. "Bobby" Saunders, Jr. in center foreground.

be very cooperative and kind.

"We hope that this breakthrough will give encouragement to others since many felt that leaders of NAACP should take the lead. As you know Rev. Lowry's son was admitted to the school for the physically handicapped in September.

"Police have a round the clock guard at the house this week just to be certain that our "friends" in Oldsmar, Ruskin and Mulberry do not try to harm the kid. He took it like a real soldier. "

The efforts to enroll my son began in 1960. We lived in Lincoln Gardens, an all Black section of Tampa. Lincoln Gardens is nearly two miles from the then all Black Dunbar Elementary School -- the school to which my son was sent after our first attempt to enroll him in Macfarlane Park. To reach Dunbar, we had to transport him pass Macfarlane (which is about one mile and a half from Lincoln Gardens).

"Bobby" was born on August 11, 1954. Shortly after his sixth birthday in August of 1960, my wife and I carried him to Macfarlane Park Elementary school. When we walked into the school I could tell that everything had been prearranged. It was as if school officials knew that I would make this move. The Principal, Mrs. Mitchell was very polite. However, she refused to admit the boy and told us that he would have to be enrolled in Dunbar. I should mention here that we did petition the Board to have our son enrolled in the first grade at Macfarlane. However, our first notification that the petition would not be honored was in August, 1960. We protested this act of discrimination and enrolled him in Dunbar.

He attended Dunbar during the first year and several months into the 1961-62 semester.

The year 1962 was an active year for Civil Rights in Florida. NAACP Youth Councils were protesting racial discrimination from Pensacola to Key West. Organized efforts to prevent desegregation were present throughout the entire State. Jacksonville became the focal point of the most violent activity when members of the Jacksonville Youth Council, led by the Council's Youth Advisor, Rutledge H. Pearson, were attacked with baseball bats as they passed Hemming Park in downtown Jacksonville. The NAACP was still recouping from more than seven years of "war" with the Legislative Investigative Committee.

I remained in Jacksonville for approximately ninety days. It was during this time that, under the pupil placement law, I had to notify the school board of my intention to have my son reassigned to Macfarlane Park. To do this, I sent a telegram to the Board and to Superintendent Crockett J. Farnell clearly stating that the document should serve as notice of my intent to have my son enter the Macfarlane Park School.

When I returned to Tampa, I spoke with the principal of Dunbar (not having heard from the Board) and was told that instructions were to return the telegram to me and that I had to be present in person to seek reassignment. I immediately appealed and cited the "rule of agency". In the discussion with the principal, I suggested that I knew that directions had to be followed but I believed that the telegram should be returned to the Board. "I wouldn't become a partner in this," I cautioned.

In November or December of 1961, my wife and I were requested to bring our son and to appear before the Board in answer to my

appeal. Attorney Francisco Rodriguez accompanied the three of us as the NAACP's legal representative. I advised Bobby that if he were asked questions, to merely refer to his parents wishes for him to attend a desegregated school. Rodriguez, my wife and I had prepared ourselves for interrogation. But once the hearing began, my son became the target of Board members. I became very perturbed at the fact that Board members questioned him and him only under the glare of television lights and while newspaper reporters were present.

In 1962, Judge Brian Simpson, Chief Judge of the Southern District of Florida, in his ruling on the *Mannings* case, made reference to the "...patience of the Saunders parents...". (I made an attempt to obtain the entire ruling in 1980. I was advised by the Clerk of the Federal Court in Tampa that there was no file. I learned from another source that the records were destroyed by fire in Miami).

Nathaniel Cannon, and other parents of students enrolled in Hillsborough County's schools were constantly criticized and pressured because of their efforts to end racial discrimination. The Florida Legislative Committee, with Mark Hawes, a white Tampa Lawyer as its counsel, was attempting to show that NAACP efforts to provide legal counsel to parents was an act of barratry. Daily newspapers carried editorials attacking desegregation. The attack was significantly different from early attacks on NAACP leaders like Harry T. Moore only because this time there was a U.S. Supreme Court decision to back up our demands for an end to racially segregated schools.

On August 2, 1955, former governor Fuller Warren, the governor who had criticized Walter White for his demands calling for an

all-out state investigation of the Moore killings, made a public pronouncement that the problems of integration in Florida's school system "is one of those things that is going to have to be worked out gradually". Speaking at a conference of school teachers at the University of Florida, Warren based his statement on the "common law" practice of bringing suits on a case-by-case basis.

While Warren was making his remarks, a group of white students at the University of Florida were defending the rights of a white minister to take a stand on desegregation and integration at the University. The student executive council of the University of Florida voted unanimously to endorse a resolution which expressed confidence in Rev. Thaxton Springfield, pastor of the Wesley Foundation Methodist student center at the University. Rev. Thaxton had endorsed a petition calling for the Board of Control to open the university to Black students. His removal was sought by the Monticello Methodist (Florida) Church Board.

Late in January, 1955, the State Conference of Branches NAACP Education Committee met in Tampa to discuss methods for implementation of the 1954 and 1955 desegregation decisions. The outcome of the meeting were decisions to immediately file cases in the Federal Courts where school districts were reluctant to move and other methods were no longer possible; to press to open all of Florida's State Universities to Negro students and to call on all NAACP branches to begin petitioning school boards for action.

Seventeen Black parents petitioned the Hillsborough County School Board on July 22, 1955. Petitioners were:

W.L. "Bill" Larkins 1515 Governor Street

Rosa Lee Miller 1314 Chestnut Street  
Mamie Allen 1610 Garcia Avenue  
John H. Brown 1508 N. Boulevard  
Beatrice Tindall 1927 Laurel Street  
Annie R. Akins 1150 Union Street  
Macon Samples 1603 N. Delaware Avenue  
Mary Ethel Stirrup 2414 14th Avenue  
Sanders B. Reed 3309 Harold Avenue  
William A. Fordham 1117 Grace Street  
Calvin Alexander 3408 Lindair Avenue  
Edward Moragne 2402 32nd Avenue  
Robert Willis, Jr. 504 Scott Street  
Robert Martin 1510 Grace Street  
Willie Maude Freeman 3516 22nd Street  
Harold N. Reddick 1517 Ashley Street

Citing as an example of delaying tactics, Attorney Rodriguez took issue with a plan advanced by Hillsborough County School officials which established two separate committees, one white and one black, to advise the Board. Stating that the Board had not yet to his knowledge set up a separate committee to effect desegregation in public schools, "However," Rodriguez commented, "we will not feel bound by any hand picked blue-ribbon committee if they are temporizing or working against our program. We are very, very ready to take the case(s) to the courts."

J. Crockett Farnell, the Hillsborough County School Superintendent had appointed a 26 man superintendent's advisory committee in 1949. This committee, Farnell said, was the only committee that would be set up to handle the desegregation problem. The committee was made up of community leaders from the ministerial association, educators ' the Chamber of Commerce, various professional and civic groups. White and Negro sub-committees would be set up to serve as advisory committees.

Included in the original committee were Mrs. John D. Weekley, Juvenile Judge O.D. Howell, Attorney Ralph C. Dell, J.C. Council, Mrs. Frank McWilliams, David E. Smiley, A.S. Moffett, Russell S. Bogue, Richard M. Clewis, Jr., Mrs. V.M. Newton, Jr., Attorney Cody Fowler, Dr. Millard Berquist, Mrs. Leon Braddock, Frank Frankland, Richard D. Jackson, V.H. Northcutt, Mrs. Frank Cochran, Mrs. Louise McEwen, Mitchell Stallings, and Dr. Kenneth Gould.

School personnel serving on the committee were Frank D. Miles, Superintendent of Negro Schools; A.L. Vergason, Director of Education; Mrs. Martha Johnson, coordinator of family life education; L.E. Swatts, general supervisor; Crawford Greene, business manager for Hillsborough County schools; Miss Gladys Anthony, the personnel director; Dr. Denton L. Cook, supervisor of Plant City schools; Eugene Word, county office librarian and the secretary to Farnell, Mrs. Sadie Lobo.

On the same date that the committee was announced, Farnell also stated that a similar committee of Negroes was also being formed to serve in an advisory capacity. The names of members to serve on this committee had not been completed. NAACP took exception to the entire idea. This

exception became the policy for all NAACP units in Florida. A special meeting to discuss what appeared to be the development of procedures to delay and stall desegregation was called by NAACP. The meeting was held in Tampa.

Participating on a panel with Rodriguez were the Rev. J.H. Adams, Jr., who was pastoring in Leesburg. Speaking on the role of the church, Rev. Adams cited that "today (1955) we are living in an unsegregated society on a racially segregated basis". Albert D. Moore, district manager for the Central Life Insurance Company spoke on the role of John Doe, Citizen. Moore, an outspoken individual, berated the myth that desegregation was for the purpose of bringing about interracial marriages. "We're not interested in marrying white women," Moore said. "We can't do anything with the women we have," he concluded. I, as Field Director, gave direction to planning for desegregation and the NAACP's recently announced procedures for petitioning school officials. It was this meeting which set the ground work for full scale desegregation in Florida. Rodriguez as the NAACP Legal Chairman for Florida, took the leadership.

On March 25, 1960, I wrote a letter to the Editor of the Tampa Daily Times. This letter was in response to an editorial which appeared earlier in the paper criticizing a speech made by Governor LeRoy Collins. The editorial documented the kind of media generated misinformation against desegregation efforts that was so often printed in most Florida newspapers. It caused me to also sympathize with the Governor.

The full text of my letter is included here:

"Dear Editor:

"Under the caption "The Governor Misses The Point, " you attempted to justify racial segregation and to prove that young Negroes, who conducted sit-down protests against discrimination at lunch counters, were moved by "professionals" with no regard to the welfare of the protesters or to the advancement of the Negro.

"At the same time, you assumed a bigoted attitude against recent remarks made by Governor LeRoy Collins because of this stand on the issues.

"First of all, it should be made crystal clear to your readers that unless they are Negroes, they do not know, nor can they describe the experiences and heart breaking incidents in which the average Negro finds himself when faced with having to accept, against his wishes, the worse that his City, State and Nation have to offer.

"It should also be made clear that enforced racial segregation by governing authorities is as dead as any corpse buried since man first started dying. Your readers should not be led into thinking that segregation can be revived (it cannot be maintained) because the Courts of this land are constantly closing each legal loop hole through which states have tried to find escape.

"Certainly, if railroads, airplanes and busses cannot legally require persons of varying races to accept segregation, then businesses I, licensed by the State (the people), should also be made to cease their

unamerican activities. It is only a matter of time before the Courts will also define the limitations by which a business can discriminate against its customers.

"History shows that each generation of American Negroes has fought with as much fervor to end discrimination and segregation as the present generation. During Slavery, they died rather than remain slaves.

"Therefore, it is needless in going into a discussion on how or why the protests are started. It is a matter of foregone conclusion that Negroes have protested against ill treatment received down through the ages since they were first brought to these shores in 1619. Therefore, your argument about "...the leadership could not agitate adult Negroes to greater activity of this sort,..." is almost baseless and without truth.

"To criticize Negro youth or any Negro for using peaceful and legal methods to achieve his just rights as a citizen is to rebuke the Hungarian youth for trying to lift the yoke of Communism from their Nation or curse Polish youth for their efforts in trying to obtain freedom from the Communist tyrant.

"Certainly, racial segregation at a lunch counter or in a school, cannot be, and is not, any better than Communism. Both systems are designed to destroy individual initiative and both are equally contemptible. One is just as dangerous to the American way of life as the other. It is therefore to the benefit of this Nation, that if it is to

survive against the tyrants and bigots, it must protect itself from the clutches of each of these tyrannical systems.

"We are glad that you realize that there are professional Negroes in the South. However, your argument, that "...they feed on discord..." is a new note. Perhaps, what you mean is that the professional Negro has become aware that his profession is jeopardized when his non-professional brother cannot achieve equal opportunities because of segregation. The professional recognizes that he cannot remain on top when his brother is forced to stay on the bottom.

"No, school desegregation is not dead. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People recognized in 1954 that the fight to end school discrimination and integration are two different things. Certainly, any American child has the right to attend a desegregated system. Each semester, more and more schools are being desegregated.

"But at least in one paragraph, we do strike in accord. We do agree that there is a need for communications between Negroes and whites. Lines of communication are being developed between Nations, why not lines of communication between American citizens of varying races so that they may better understand each other?

"But most of all, there is a need for white leaders, especially politicians, to realize that there must be progress towards the elimination of segrega-

tion. This should be done voluntarily.

Your truly  
/s/ Robert W. Saunders  
Field Secretary National Association  
for the  
Advancement of Colored People"

James Johnson, secretary of the Tampa Branch, was directed by the Branch to obtain my assistance in drafting a letter to school superintendent J. Crockett Farnell. Taking into consideration the failure of the Board to act on petitions, the methods being used to intimidate Black parents seeking to end racial segregation across the entire state and attempts to satisfy pro-segregation forces such as Lt. General Sumter Lowry, it was decided that the NAACP in Tampa would speak out strongly for the immediate end of racial segregation.

A series of letters were sent to Farnell calling for immediate action. On September 29, 1958, Farnell received the following letter:

"Dear Mr. Farnell:

"Your attention is called to the fact that this office has received numerous complaints alleging discrimination because of race from parents of Negro children attending schools in Hillsborough County. These parents are dissatisfied with the present conditions and state that in the past they have brought to your attention the various conditions existing and which are not in the best interest of the welfare and education of their children.

" Several years ago, our Local Branch of NAACP submitted a

petition to you requesting that you consider implementation in education. Since that time, and from time to time, letters have been sent to, you. As of this date, the Hillsborough County School Board has made no effort to comply with the decision of the court and its interpretation of the U.S. Constitution.

"It is not the policy of the NAACP to "stir up litigation," nor is it our policy to "go around looking for plaintiffs". However, we cannot stand idly by ignoring the request of citizens whose legitimate demands are not being met by the school board and who seek to be recognized as American citizens and not as members of any particular caste.

"The NAACP would rather seek peaceful methods to solve the problems and to bring about compliance with the mandate of the Supreme Court. We have constantly brought this to your attention in the past. However, where the School Board continues to evade the issue and does not come forth with a program of action which would be in accordance with the U.S. Constitution then the Association must yield to the petitions that it receives from aggrieved persons and seek other means of ending the racial discrimination that does exist in the Hillsborough County School System.

"May we expect a prompt reply from you with regards to this matter?"

Farnell responded to the September 29 letter from the NAACP and invited Johnson "as secretary of the Tampa Branch of the

National Association for the Advancement of Colored People" to "personally" talk with him concerning a program that would end racial segregation and discrimination in the public schools.

On October 3, 1958, Johnson was directed to respond to Farnell's invitation.

"I wish at this time to convey to you the fact that after meeting with the Branch's executive committee, it was agreed that since the Superintendent is in reality the "chief planner" for the school board and that since it remains the recognized duty of the Board to come forth with a policy to cover all efforts to end racial discrimination in the schools of this county, the committee does not consider it appropriate at this time to discuss the problems that exist.

"It should also be noted here that complaints have been brought to the NAACP by parents of children who presently live in or near ten areas served by schools having an enrollment of all white students. These children, many of them not yet out of elementary school, must pass schools that are in some instances just across the street or around the corner" to attend racially segregated schools that are from a mile to ten miles from their homes.

"The officers of the Tampa Branch would rather see the School Board ... assume its constitutional role as that body that is lawfully responsible for a program of compliance with the U.S. Constitution there by seeking peaceful but lawful methods of implementation of that Court's decrees."

The issue of procrastination, divisiveness and evasion was next addressed in this same letter:

"The Tampa Branch further states that whenever you in your official capacity as Superintendent and your Boards of Public Instruction and Trustees produce a tangible program seeking to comply with the Constitution of the United States and the Supreme Court's recent decision, then the Tampa Branch will recommend that its committees cooperate with you and your Boards in any way that we might be able to render constructive, democratic and Christian suggestions. Provision is reserved by the Branch however, to withhold comment or cooperation when such policy or program is deemed to be a scheme or device for evading or slowing down the ending of racial segregation in the public school system."

The letter concluded with an offer made by the NAACP to:

"...sit down as men of good will, disregarding the extremist, for the purpose of putting into execution an orderly program for the benefit of the people of the County."

Contrary to some published views, Florida's civil rights program was on schedule. While Governor Collins' approach to school desegregation was looked upon as one of delay and moderation, NAACP leaders across the state recognized that implementation efforts had to be pushed. Go slow, moderation and the organized pro-segregationist push had to be countered with demands for immediate compliance.



The death of the Moores in Mims, gave credence to the fact that there would be no progress in the state unless a drive against racial discrimination and segregation was continued on all fronts, nothing would be realized. Governments -State and local - were almost violently opposed to institutional change. We also took into consideration that since 1948, Florida had reluctantly resisted efforts to open the University of Florida.

In 1944 Rev. R. L. Cromwell, a Pensacola Baptist Minister, won a victory when the Florida Supreme Court declared that political parties could not keep Negro voters from participating in state and local primaries. This victory followed a U.S. Supreme Court decision which struck down similar laws in the States of Louisiana and Texas. The same State Court had refused to open the University of Florida's graduate schools to Black students even though other Southern States were forced to do so by the Nation's highest Court. The case of *Virgil Hawkins v. Board of Control of Florida* was still see-sawing between the Florida Supreme Court and the U.S. Supreme Court all during the time that Branches and a few other individuals were embarking on legal actions in Federal Courts to desegregate elementary schools.

Complaints and demands for better schools for Black students in Hillsborough County were "old hat". The committee named by Farnell followed in the exact pattern as one named in 1949 to respond to demands from Black leaders.

In September, 1949, a group of Black citizens calling themselves the Citizens Committee for the Improvement of Negro Schools threatened to file a law suit in Federal Court if the following demands were not met by the Board:

1. Elimination of double-sessions by which one group of students attended schools from 8:00 A.M. until noon and another group from noon until 4:00 P.M.
2. Building more classroom space.
3. Construction of a new gymnasium and establishment of a supervised program for indoor sports.

The Board turned the letter over to Farnell for a response. His answer was that school officials were aware of the problems faced by both whites and Negro students and that plans were already started to build a six room elementary school for Black students in Sulphur Springs. The plans also including the expansion of Middleton with six classrooms and a lunchroom and acquiring additional land for several additional Negro schools. He mentioned that four portable classrooms had been placed in Port Tampa.

Chairing the group was Perry Harvey, Sr. He was accompanied by William Henry Gordon, James T. Hargrett, C. Blythe Andrews and Earl E. Broughton. Alex Akerman, the lawyer handling the suit to desegregate the University of Florida was hired to handle the filing of a suit. A suit was filed with Hargrett as the lead plaintiff. However, the suit was never tried after the school system published a letter from D.E. Williams outlining the projects underway to "improve schools for Negro students."

The situation in Tampa, regardless of what might be said about Tampa's "good race relations," followed the pattern set by the racist efforts of the State Legislature. An elected school superintendent and an elected school board seemed to play up to the "racist

views" of what they thought were the wishes of their constituents. In doing so, the sworn oath to abide by the laws of the land was swept under the outdoor mat which welcomed every one into the mainstream except citizens of African ancestry.

Few Black citizens in Hillsborough County have had the opportunity of studying the development of Hillsborough County's educational system as I experienced when I was assigned to read the School Board's Minutes. It was interesting reading. Beginning with the earliest hand written recordings of the 1800's until actions of the Board in mid-1958, it was overtly evident that it never was intended for Black students to obtain the same level and kind of education that was provided for white students and in the same school. After reading each page of every record, I knew now that the educational system was reliably responsible for the implantation of race hatred in the minds of the white population. The slave mentality was plainly observable. This task took almost three weeks. My report substantiated the fact that the current Board (1958) as did all Boards in the past, treated "Negro Education" or "colored schools" as a necessary evil. Paternalism was the main theme when decisions were made effecting the entire Black community.

It was not coincidental that the first desegregation suit filed in Florida's Federal District Courts were dismissed. This included an action filed by Attorney Holland in Palm Beach. The *Mannings* case was no exception. Federal District Judge George Whitehurst, relying on the recently enacted Florida Pupil Placement Act, held that remedies provided by the State had not been exhausted by the four plaintiffs in the *Mannings* case. His decision lay dormant for several years and was almost lost by default.

I approached Attorney Rodriguez in 1961 regarding filing an appeal to the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals in New Orleans. Rodriguez was in favor of this action but pointed out that an appeal had not been filed due to the lack of funds. As an NAACP Attorney, he, like most Black Lawyers in the State, were called on to give their legal talent often with little or no remuneration. Several prominent Black leaders were also prone to prefer that the issue should be dropped. C. J. DaValt, a Central Life Insurance Company official, and I discussed the problem. The deadline for filing was near. It was Roy Wilkins who wisely came to our assistance. I made a long distance call to him and told him of the predicament. Roy's directive was that I should tell Rodriguez that his plane ticket would be awaiting him at the Tampa Airport. The filing fees would be waiting for him when he arrived in New Orleans. Rodriguez wasted no time in leaving for New Orleans. The rest of the *Mannings* story is included in judge Simpson's decision.

Between the dates when the original case was dismissed and the rehearing on August 21, 1962, the Tampa Branch encouraged parents to file under the Placement Act. Attorney Constance Baker Motley was assigned to the case by the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, Inc. Rodriguez was the Attorney of local record. Attorney Motley came to Tampa several days prior to the trial date in 1962. We talked about the case and the ground work leading up to that time. She was surprised when I told her that nearly one hundred and fifty petitions had been filed by Black parents with the School Board requesting reassignment and that the Board had taken no action. Contact with as many of the filing parents was the immediate task.

Another problem developed. Black teachers in Hillsborough County were not included in

the document filed with the Court. With the Court's permission, the two lawyers worked far into the night to prepare the paperwork for submission to the Court on the next morning.

At the hearing, the two lawyers advised the court that a number of requests for reassignment had been filed with the Board and no action had been taken. Judge Simpson ordered the Superintendent to produce the petitions. Within the hour the requests for reassignment were brought before the court. Searching through the pile, Attorney Motley brought to the judge's attention that there was one petition missing. The missing document was the petition that was filed on behalf of my son. School officials were ordered to present the missing petition immediately or face contempt of court.

Willie L. Mannings, mother of two boys and the lead plaintiff in the Hillsborough County case, died in October, 1989. I talked about the case with her about six months before her death. "I was sitting in the Court during the hearing," she remarked, "when the judge corrected one of the lawyers for the Board of Education by pointing to me and saying that "Andrew Mannings, 11, through his parent was leading the plaintiff and his mother is sitting across the room." Mrs. Mannings recalled the judge telling the lawyer that he did not like technical answers to questions when the attorney referred to Macfarlane Park Elementary School as a "predominately white school." Judge Simpson admonished him that Macfarlane was all white." "Let's quit quibbling," is what she said the judge told him.

I was surprised that she remembered what happened in that Federal Court after twenty-seven years. She remembered Constance Baker Motley's cross examina-

tion of Superintendent Farnell and Board members and how they responded when asked by Attorney Motley if they thought "it would be easier to draw attendance area lines and to fill them without regard to race or color than to examine 80,000 students each year based on the State of Florida's criteria." Each of them answered that the situation was not easy and that the Board was continuing to work towards a solution. She even showed me newspaper clippings to document what she was telling me.

Brian J. Simpson was appointed to the Federal Bench by President Harry S. Truman in 1950. He served as the Chief judge for the Southern District of Florida and later assumed duties as Chief Judge for the Middle District. On the morning that he appeared in Tampa's Federal Court to hear the *Mannings* case, he was dressed immaculately, with white wavy hair. His was a manner of "all business." As he strolled down the court house corridors, he commanded attention and the respect of local Federal officials, the news media and just about everyone else present. According to the witnesses who sat through the hearings, he was real down to earth, courting no favors with local school officials. Judge Simpson's ruling on school desegregation cases drew much anger from segregationists when he called before him in Jacksonville, every jurisdiction in Florida in which desegregation suits were pending. He was the judge of the hour.

# THE OUTLAW LONG JOHN WHIDDEN

By SPESSARD STONE

South Florida in its pioneer days, like the "Wild West," had a wide-open range with a number of infamous outlaws, one of whom was John L. Whidden, commonly known as "Long John" Whidden.

A member of the prominent Whidden family, John L. Whidden was born in 1836 in Florida. Early Hillsborough County, Florida records of guardianship show that on January 11, 1855 James Whidden, Sr. and others petitioned that James Whidden, Jr. be appointed as guardian of John, William, Mary, James, and George W. Whidden, "minor heirs of Lucinda Whidden, late of said county." On September 26, 1859, however, James and George W. Whidden, minor children of William Whidden," citing the failure of James Whidden, Sr. to perform his duty, requested that their brother, John Whidden, be appointed their guardian.

Thus orphaned with the care of his siblings, John L. early learned, as President Jimmy Carter was later to observe, "Life isn't always fair." How John was to react, however, was to set him apart from other members of his clan and the community-at-large.

During the Third Seminole War, John enlisted as a private in Capt. Leroy G. Lesley's Company. Here John L. first began to evidence that nonconformist conduct which would later lead to his downfall. Capt. Lesley, who was also a Methodist minister in the Old Testament warrior tradition, on November 25, 1857 requested that Private Whidden be discharged for disobedience and insolence, and he was drummed out of the service.

It appeared, however, that John was ready to settle down from his rowdy ways as on January 14, 1858 he took as his bride 17-year-old Artemissa Driggers. It seemed only an aberration when he in April was charged with "willfully marking the calf of another." His mavericking was settled, and John and his wife started anew at Fort Hartsuff.

The Whiddens were living in the Fort Hartsuff area (now Wauchula) when the 1860 census of Manatee County was enumerated in June. Besides their one-year-old son William and one-month son James, living with the young couple was John's 18-year-old brother, James, and 16-year-old brother, George W. Neighbors included the families of: Daniel Douglas, Isaiah Smith and Ann Driggers.

During the Civil War, John enlisted as a private at Key West on December 8, 1863 in Company A, Second Florida Cavalry, United States Army. After the war, he settled near Fort Ogden, where he resumed his livelihood as a farmer/stockman.

1869 found John again in trouble with the law. In May 1869 he was charged with larceny. Owen R. Blount and David D. Whidden became his sureties, which action they would later regret when on November 11, 1872 John L. was declared in default, and they were ordered by the State to pay the recognizances.

While in Manatee County court, John L. burned his bridges with his religious neighbors when on May 7, 1869 he filed an affidavit in which he alleged:

"That on or about the third day of April 1869 one Wm. P. McEwen did create a disturbance at a place of worship in the vicinity of Fort Ogden -- by loud and abusive language addressed to the deponent, and by threatening and drawing a weapon upon him."

Wm. P. McEwen was the Rev. William Penn McEwen, a beloved circuit-riding Methodist minister. No further legal action could be found on the absurd allegation.

On March 7, 1870, Frank Griffin gave a deposition before John Bartholf, Clerk of the Circuit Court of Manatee County, in which he charged that on February 7 in the vicinity of Fort Ogden he was assaulted "with the intention of killing him" by F.C. M. Boggess, John L. Whidden, Joseph Brooker, and David Whidden. A cowhunter employed by Simeon Hollingsworth, Griffin is believed to have been an ex-slave. (See pages 205 and 408 of Canter Brown, Jr's *Florida's Peace River Frontier*.)

Whidden next added manslaughter to his crimes.

Francis A. Ivey, who'd served with John in Company A, Second Florida Cavalry, lived in Fort Ogden township with his wife, Barbary, and two daughters, Mary Francis and Caroline. (On February 9, 1871 in a double ceremony, they married respectively James A. and Oliver A. Albritton, sons of Thomas H. Albritton of Lily.)

The nickname of "Long John" was first applied in print to Whidden in the *Florida Peninsular* of June 29, 1870:

"Francis A. Ivey was killed by John Whidden (Long John) near Fort Myers, Monroe County, not long since, under the

following circumstances as we have heard them:

"The parties were minding a drove of beef cattle, and fell out as to which had control of them. High words ensued; Ivey advanced upon Whidden, threw sticks and trash in Whidden's face; whereupon Whidden, after repeatedly warning Ivey to stand off, drew his knife and stabbed him in the abdomen. Ivey lived about a week after he was stabbed.

"Whidden had not been arrested up to latest dates."

Ivey died on June 11, 1870. Long John fled and was never arrested. A later account had that Ivey had killed a brother of Long John so it would seem frontier justice chose to call it even.

Long John Whidden was soon heard of again when the *Florida Peninsular* of October 5, 1870 chronicled a further altercation in Manatee County:

"We learn that a difficulty occurred between a young man named Parish and a man called Long John, in which the long gentleman was stabbed. The wounds inflicted upon Long John are supposed to be mortal, and Parish has left the county."

Described by one paper as a giant in size and in appearance as strong as Hercules, Long John arose from his "death-bed" and fled the (for him) hostile environment for Sumter County.

But trouble and Long John were synonymous. Returned to Manatee County, he had taken sick and was lying in bed at the home of Jackson and Frances Prine when on the evening of August 7, 1878 he heard a gun fire. Going to the shed, he found Jackson lying dead at the feet of Frances,

who had suffered a whipping with a strop of leather by the assailant who, apparently, was never apprehended. Long John fled back to Sumter County.

The Whiddens were enumerated in the 1880 census of Sumter County. Listed in the household, besides John and his twenty-one-year-old second wife Mary, were seven children, ranging in age from eighteen to two years. Not recorded with the family was his eldest son, William.

Long John and his son, Irvin, in May 1882, provoked a fight that led to murder, which placed them beyond the pale of the law to become outlaws with a bounty on Long John.

The *Florida Daily Times* of May 21, 1882 reported:

"Tampa, May 16-

"The news reached Tampa Monday (May 14) of the murder of Mr. Tom Jones, formerly a citizen here, in Webster, Sumter County, last week. The circumstances appear to be about as follows:

"Two rowdies came to the mill Mr. Jones was employed at, and started the machinery of the mill while the workmen were at their dinner. Jones immediately stopped the moving machinery, and ordered the men to desist and leave. The rowdies then knocked Tom down and left. Tom, being a small man, of course, could not defend himself against two giant, drunken bullies.

"At the close of the day's labor, Jones returned to his boarding house, and there he encountered the men who so cowardly assaulted him at the mill. However, being a peaceful turn of mind, he overlooked the occurrence of the morning.

"At the supper table the two rowdies commenced again to renew the quarrel, and threw a plate at Jones and cut him up pretty badly. Even then Jones would not fight, and went down to the store of the mill-owner. He did this in order to keep out of their way. He was fearful the men might follow him still, so he took his gun and loaded it.

"To protect his life he loaded his gun with buckshot. Soon his tormentors followed him, this time on trouble bent. Jones called to them to leave, but they still advanced, threatening him. He fired a load at one, and then another load at the other. The loads were well aimed, but a lack of powder made them ineffective.

"The ruffians advanced and shot him down. He was killed at the first fire. This was not enough. The murderers advanced and emptied their six shooters in the dead body of their victim, and then coolly walked off."

Declaring they would not be taken alive, Long John, now called "Black John," and Irvin eluded capture by a sheriff's posse to flee to the Ten Thousand Islands. There they were joined by others of the family and secreted themselves on Ramrod Key, opposite Torch Key. An enticing \$1,000 reward was offered for Black John.

In 1888 H.H. Herndon, deputy sheriff of Sumter County, having learned of Whidden's hideout, journeyed to Key West. Posing as desirous of purchasing land somewhere on the coast to engage in the breeding of sheep, goats, and poultry for the Key West market, Herndon engineered a "sting," maneuvering Long John to come to Torch Key to discuss selling his improvement on Ramrod Key and with the assistance of a Mr. Johnson and Garry Nile captured the fugitive, but only after a desperate struggle with Whidden and the

seizure of Long John's trusty rifle from his twelve-year-old son who was in the act of firing when Johnson snatched the rifle.

Then, Herndon went to Ramrod Key and arrested Irvin, who offered no resistance. Thus, after three or four weeks, the lawman had finally snared his prey. On March 31, 1888 he arrived at Key West with his prisoners and from there they were sent via mail boat to Tampa and then to the Sumterville Jail. Left behind at Ramrod Key were Long John's wife and three children.

Sumter County sheriff Chapman subsequently carried Long John to Gainesville on April 11 where he was imprisoned awaiting the next session of the circuit court. Irvin, deemed less dangerous, was left confined in the Sumterville jail.

On March 15, 1889, Long John Whidden for murdering Tom Jones was sentenced to life imprisonment. The 24-year-old Irvin also received a life sentence. Long John died in prison November 11, 1891. Irvin, due to his youth when the murder occurred, drew sympathy from a number of prominent citizens in Sumterville, including the jury who convicted him, and a petition was circulated for his pardon. On March 15, 1897, Irvin was released. Thus did mercy season justice.

*Acknowledgment: Canter Brown Jr. researched most of this article.*

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# THE INTER-SOCIAL LEAGUE: 1943 SEASON

By WES SINGLETARY

Through its ongoing task to support every war in which the United States has been a participant, Baseball has gained chauvinistic recognition for its morale boosting, which in turn, has enhanced its claim to being the national game.<sup>1</sup>

Such recognition does not fall upon "organized" baseball alone. During World War 11, the long hours served working at shipyards and in defense factories by many citizens rendered the game an almost essential means of relaxation and entertainment. Regardless of the quality presented, the demand for baseball was extremely high in wartime America. However, due to limited communication, organized baseball was unable to reach the amount of people it does today. This was particularly true in the South, where the major exposure to big-league baseball had been spring training. With the wartime relocation of all spring training sites to the north, as the result of fuel and travel restrictions, many southern cities and towns had only their local amateur leagues to turn to.<sup>2</sup>

Tampa, Florida had long been a winter home to baseball, its principal occupant being the Cincinnati Reds. With the 1943 pullout of the Reds came the realization that big time baseball would remain a remembrance of the past until the war was over. Citizens of Tampa, many working tiresome shifts at shipyards or in cigar factories, were as baseball hungry as any in the nation and were not about to do without it. Consequently, they turned out weekly, in

numbers ranging from 1500 to 2000<sup>3</sup>, and witnessed their own brand of baseball; the Inter-Social League.

The Inter-Social League was made up primarily of Latin players living in both Ybor City and West Tampa. Their games were played on Sunday afternoons at Cuscaden Park in Ybor City<sup>4</sup>. The League was comprised of four teams, Centro Asturiano, Cuban Club, Loyal Knights and the Italian Club, which were all sponsored by well known mutual aid societies and social clubs of the same names. League play had begun in 1938, with the Italian Club proving dominant by winning three of the first four championships.

The 1943 season featuring the Italian Club promised to be a great year. The Italian Club however had lost many of their top players to the service and other defense related endeavors. As such, when the start of the season was trumpeted in the *Tampa Tribune*, the Cuban Club and Centro Asturiano were listed as co-favorites.<sup>5</sup>

That prediction proved accurate as the two teams raced to early season victories and exchanged the league lead time and again. By midpoint in the season the teams were locked at identical 6-2-1 records, the lone tie coming in their first head-to-head meeting.<sup>6</sup>

The season was marked by player shifts and managerial changes primarily due to conflicts in work schedules. The Loyal Knights club suffered through two such changes in the early months of the season.



When the original manager of the Knights was obligated to resign, Marcelo Maseda, a sure hitting second baseman for Centro Asturiano, assumed the Knight's reins. However, Maseda proved to be a short lived helmsman as he quickly returned to the Asturians. Maseda, who would go on to play for the Atlanta Crackers of the Southern Association as well as the Class A Tampa Smokers remembers the league for its competitiveness and would later coach again at the University of Tampa.<sup>7</sup>

In early August, Arnold Holmes, who had been leading the Loyal Knights, left town to join the Marines and Louis Piniella, a well known pitcher with an excellent mind for baseball, became the new leader of the cellar dwellers. Upon arrival, Piniella quickly inserted himself into the Knights starting rotation and an immediate improvement was noted.<sup>8</sup> Piniella also brought with him his brother-in-law, hard hitting Joe Magadan, to help man the outfield and to provide some needed punch on offense.<sup>9</sup> These additions to the Knights helped improve their record significantly and ended their year on an up note. Piniella and Magadan would also prove to be gifted in rearing baseball playing sons as "Sweet Lou" Piniella, the manager of the Cincinnati Reds and David Magadan, the New York Mets third baseman, have grown into quality major leaguers.<sup>10</sup>

The season came to a close on September 26, with the Asturians, who had gradually pulled away from the others, winning the regular season championship. The Asturian's catcher, "Big" Manual Fernandez, was named the regular season outstanding player. Fernandez however, was unable to participate in post-season play as he was inducted into the Navy. As a catcher, Fernandez was "terrific" with the bat as well as the glove and played minor league

baseball with the Tampa Smokers and others upon returning from the service.<sup>11</sup>

League playoffs then commenced with the second and third place teams vying to win the best 3 out of 5 games, and the winner moving on to play the Asturians in a best of seven "little world series".<sup>12</sup> As the games were played only on Sunday afternoons, the tournament continued into the latter part of November.

In the playoffs, the Cubans, relying on strong pitching by their duo of Charlie Cuellar and Alston McGahagin and the slugging of first-baseman Benny Fernandez (the brother of Asturian catcher Manual), bested the Italians thereby earning the right to face the Asturians. Charlie Cuellar, who in the playoffs was rebounding from a hard-luck season, was a pitcher of some talent and later pitched for the Class A, St. Petersburg Saints, of the Florida International League.<sup>13</sup> Benny Fernandez, like his brother Manual, went on to play and manage in minor league baseball. He was a first baseman of such merit that "if he were playing today, with his glove and hitting, would almost certainly be in the big-leagues".<sup>14</sup>

The series proved to be much the same, as the Cuban Club continued its strong end of season run. Centro Asturiano, with Willie Paz behind home-plate substituting for Manual Fernandez, and the hot hitting Marcelo Maseda, jumped out to secure the series lead with an opening game victory. However Maseda, who in the past had hit McGahagin so regularly that the latter took to throwing at him when he came to bat,<sup>15</sup> and his teammates could only watch as the undaunted Cubans battled back to sweep the next four games and capture their first Inter-Social League crown.<sup>16</sup>

While the quality of play in this league and others like it was never assumed or presented as being that of major league, it nevertheless provided good baseball and served the purpose of detouring the minds of the local citizenry away from the larger events at hand. The relaxation provided by the game made the effort of returning to the job not quite as taxing. This in itself, was -a purpose well served; and perhaps gives us yet another indication of why so many "true" Americans believe the last eight words of the "Star Spangled Banner" to be "and the home of the brave ... play ball".<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> *Tampa Tribune*, October 17, 1943 - November 29, 1943.

<sup>17</sup> Will, George. *The Morning After*. New York, 1986.

## ENDNOTES

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<sup>1</sup> Voight, David. *America through Baseball*. Chicago, 1976.

<sup>2</sup> Goldstein, Richard. *Spartan Seasons: How Baseball Survived the Second World War*. New York, 1980.

<sup>3</sup> Oral Interview with Marcelo Maseda. June 12, 1992. Tampa, Florida.

<sup>4</sup> Id.

<sup>5</sup> *Tampa Tribune*, March 15, 1943.

<sup>6</sup> *Tampa Tribune*, May 17, 1943.

<sup>7</sup> Maseda.

<sup>8</sup> *Tampa Tribune*, August 8, 1943.

<sup>9</sup> *Tampa Tribune*, August 29, 1943 and Maseda.

<sup>10</sup> Maseda.

<sup>11</sup> Id.

<sup>12</sup> *Tampa Tribune*, September 26, 1943.

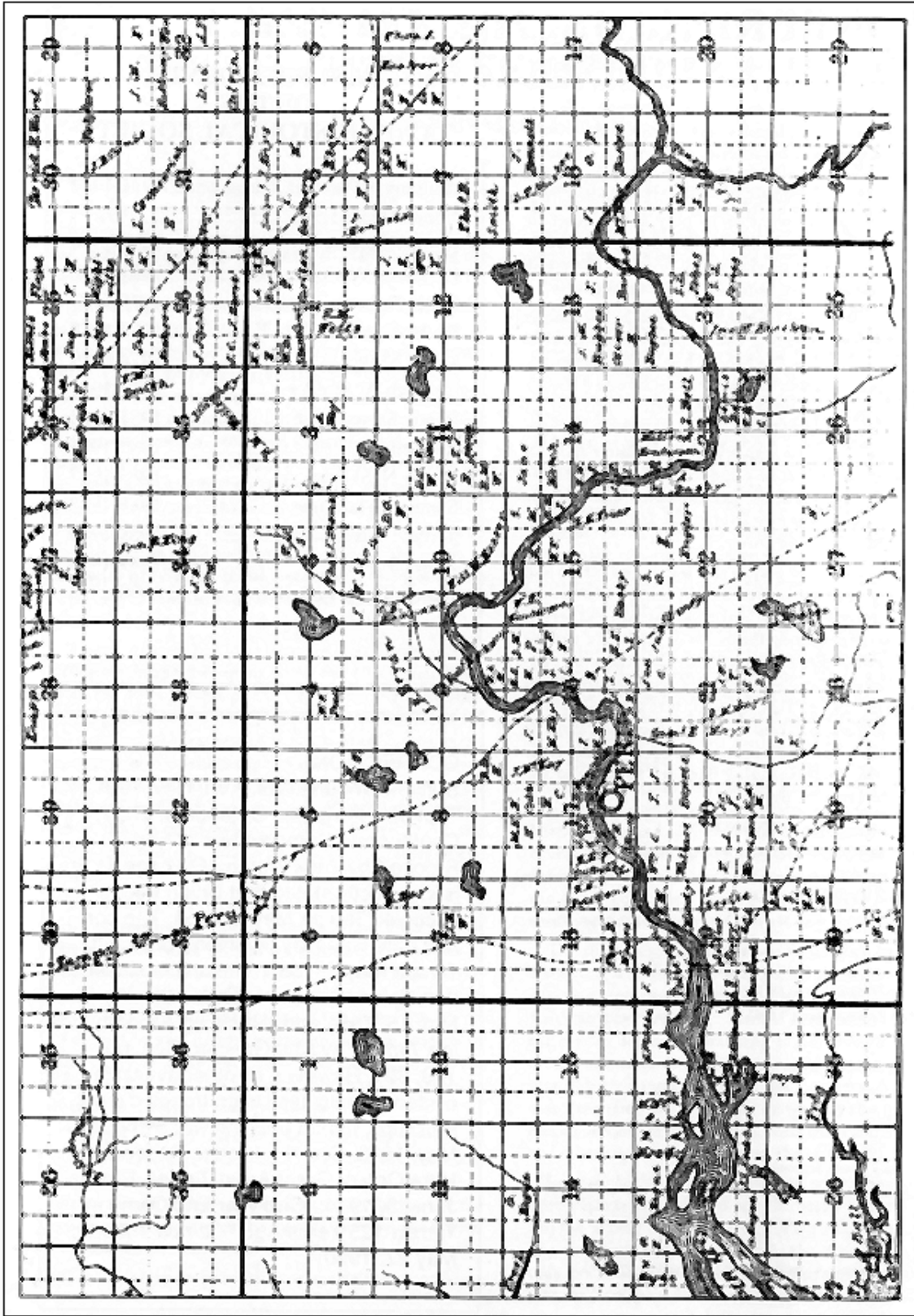
<sup>13</sup> Maseda.

<sup>14</sup> Id.

<sup>15</sup> Id.

# PAST PRESIDENTS OF THE TAMPA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Anthony P. Pizzo	1971-1972
Nonita Henson	1972
Hampton Dunn	1972-1974
Dr. James W. Covington	1974-1975
Bettie Nelson	1975-1977
Dr. L. Glen Westfall	1977-1978
Leslie Nink	1978-1979
Kenneth W. Mulder	1979-1981
Randy Stevens	1981-1983
Richard S. Clarke	1983-1985
Nancy N. Skemp	1985-1987
Samuel L. Latimer	1987-1988
Terry L. Greenhalgh	1988-1989
James S. Judy	1989-1990
George B. Howell, III	1990-1992



Map of Hillsborough County, Florida, compiled from U.S. Land Office, U.S. Coast Survey, and special surveys, by the Florida Land Improvement Co., Nov. 1882. J.J. Treveres, Jacksonville, FL, 1882.

# PIONEERING ON THE LOWER ALAFIA AND THE EARLY SETTLEMENT OF PERU

By NORMA GOOLSBY FRAZIER



**Benjamin Moody**

In 1843, the year after the Second Seminole War ended, adventurer and Indian fighter Benjamin Moody and his family arrived in the Alafia River area, then a wilderness of thick pine forests, abounding in fresh game.

The Alafia riverbanks, surrounding marshes and swamplands were the habitat of wildcats, panthers, wild hogs and a variety of animals native to the area, including deer, cat squirrels, rabbits, and wild turkeys.

As the Moody family slowly made their way through thickets of bushy palmettos and stands of tall, yellow Pines, all their worldly goods packed into horse-drawn covered

wagons, alligators in varying sizes up to twenty feet in length, first appearing as fat, dark brown logs, lay sunning themselves on the Alafia riverbanks. In the distance, dusty gray colored whooping cranes with their crimson crested heads, could be seen in the swampy area nearby, as they perched erectly on their thin, stilt-like legs, their young strolling casually nearby, poking among the small rocks and shells as they searched for food, oblivious to the alligators who were lurking nearby. The Florida Indians called the cranes, which are said to reach six feet in height, "Wartola-lacha," their croaking or whooping sounds echoing for a great distance. The cranes were often seen feeding in the high lands as well as savannas, feeding like a deer.<sup>1</sup>

Hunting expeditions in the vast wilderness lying east of Tampa Bay and in the proximity of the Alafia River had long been favored by the Florida Indian tribes with a bounty of fresh game available. The peaceful and winding river was not only favored for its beauty; its waters held an abundance of fresh fish for food, and within a five mile radius of the site of an early Indian village, where Peru would be founded, crystal clear water flowed profusely from an underground "silvery spring" first known by white settlers as McLaughlin Springs, now known as Lithia Springs. In a westerly direction at the mouth of the Alafia, lay rich oyster beds, not only a favorite of the Indians but settlers as well.

According to oldtimers, many kinds of people have lived along the lower Alafia in



**William Ben Moody Jr. (born 1861, died 1935, grandson of adventurer and soldier, Benjamin Moody who came to the Alafia Section in 1843. William Ben Moody, Jr. was an early Hillsborough County Commissioner, owner of the Alafia Hotel, general store and postmaster of the first Riverview Post Office which was established November 19, 1891 (photo taken circa 1930.)**

years past with stories having circulated about a colorful deerskinner. They say that he made his abode in a crude hut beside a branch of the river located just east of the Rice Creek bridge in a swampy area at the base of the hill on what is now McMullen Loop. Deerhides and also fresh deer meat were said to have been traded or sold by the early Peru swamp dweller.

The beautiful and peaceful Alafia, "Alafeah," "river of fire," was believed to have been named by the Indians as it appeared to them at night as a river of fire due to the high phosphoric content of its waters.

The river which had long been desired by the Florida Indian tribes whose villages were found on its banks, including the



**John Barnes and wife, Dee Brewer Barnes, early settlers of Peru, the settlement which existed on the south bank of the Alafia River. The Barnes family shared early Hillsborough County with the Seminole Indians whom they considered not only as neighbors but also as friends.**

Timucuan; their village was located near its mouth, bordered by Tampa Bay. The Timucuan, Calusa (Caloosa), Apalachees, and Ais, were early Florida tribes. The Calusa and Timucuan tribes were two large tribes in early Florida with the chief and main town of the Timucuan being located on Tampa Bay. The Caloosas were congregated further South, mainly near the mouth of the Caloosahatchee River, while the Timucuan reigned from St. Augustine southwesterly to the headwaters of Peace River, and along the west bank of the Caloosahatchee to the Gulf. The northern boundary of the Caloosas was the east bank of the Peace River to its head and in a northeasterly direction towards the east coast to a point near Cape Canaveral. The Peace River was the dividing line between the two tribes with the river being neutral and holy ground.<sup>2</sup>

The beauty of the Alafia's tranquil waters later drew the Creeks fleeing the conflicts which took place north of the Georgia border during Andrew Jackson's campaigns; some of whom fled to the beautiful

woodlands lying east of Tampa Bay. Peter McQueen, uncle of the great Osceola, and McQueen's followers, were among those who came in the early part of the nineteenth century to McQueen's Village, found on the east side of Tampa Bay with Low-Walta Village and Red Town at Tampa Bay, believed to have been in the same vicinity, as stated in a letter addressed to a Committee of Congress in February 1821 from Captain John H. Bell, Agent for the Indians in Florida, naming the Indian villages which existed at that time.<sup>3</sup>

The Florida Indians, who no doubt loved the area no less than its later residents, left many evidences of their habitation and lifestyle such as chippings of flint used by the Indians to make arrowheads to obtain food and to provide protection, which were found by early settlers. Indian villages which existed in central Florida included villages found at the mouth of the Little Manatee River and at Bullfrog Creek. Many pilings of shells accumulated over a long period of time by the Indians who hauled oysters from the nearby bay, would later be used to build roads in southeastern Hillsborough County over the dusty trails which had earlier carried oxen and horsedrawn wagons. Many of these Indian trails would carry supply wagons of volunteers and soldiers who fought during the Seminole Wars and were the beginnings of roads which exist today.

The Alafia would later be seen and admired by riverboat captains and seafaring men whose vessels plied the waters of Tampa Bay; many of whom would fulfill their vow to settle on the riverbanks found on the south bank of the Alafia in the early settlement of Peru. John Pixton used to steamboat on local waters; he was a fireman on the tug, "Resolute," a fireman on the "Clark," and the "Mistletoe," which ran

between Tampa and Sarasota in the 1800's. He was also employed on the "Pohanet" and the "Manatee," and was an oiler on the "General Timothy," a government steamer which ran from Tampa to Egmont Key. This was during the time when a fort was maintained on the Key. Captains Brophy and Bob Starton were sea captains who settled on the Alafia riverbanks, the latter being the captain of the "General Timothy." These early seafaring men, together with the early Barnes, and Duzenbury families were numbered among the first white settlers in the settlement of Peru.

Following fifty years with the Bull Steamship Company as its commander, Captain Tom Thebald made his first home ashore on the banks of the Alafia River in the mid 1800's. Warren Hall, owner and master of the steamer, "Ancient City," which was reportedly quite a novelty in that a figure made of brass, highly polished, and holding a bow aimed and ready to shoot, appeared on the large vessel's pilot house. Captain Hall, who was also an engineer, when short of crewmen, would hire a boy to steer the vessel and take on the task of stoking the boilers himself. In later years, the "Ancient City" made three or four trips weekly between towns lying on the Alafia River and Tampa, bringing needed supplies to the early settlers.<sup>4</sup>

Soldiers from Ft. Brooke (from which Tampa grew, established in 1824 on the east bank of the Hillsborough River), who would fight in the Second Seminole War (1835-'42), so impressed by the beauty of the forests, savannas, and meadowlands found in central Florida, would also vow to return and bring their families and earthly possessions for a "fresh start" on the Alafia riverbanks and the wilderness that lay beyond.

One early pioneer soldier was Benjamin Moody, who settled in 1843 along the Alafia. Few white settlers had ventured that far south at that time, but the Barnes family, believed to have been the earliest settlers in the tiny community of Peru, made their home in rustic dwellings near the shoals of the Alafia River, now known as Bell Shoals. Peru was the name of the pioneer community established on the south side of the Alafia River during the mid-1800's.

The area was a virtual wilderness when the Moody family arrived with many tall, lean "cabbage palms," their crooked "necks" hanging low, casting a dark shadow over the dark waters, amidst centuries-old oaks draped with Spanish moss, flowering bay trees, hickories, and waxy green leaved palatka holly trees ablaze with clusters of shiny red berries, growing nearby. Wild plums, persimmons, mulberries, and guavas were found growing not far from the riverbanks, proving to be a further enticement to the Moody family as well as the handful of other early settlers who would make their home in the Alafia River section.

In 1840, when the first census was taken in Hillsborough County, the county population was 452 persons with approximately 360 of these living at Ft. Brooke; this included the Pinellas Peninsula and the areas of Manatee and Sarasota Counties.<sup>5</sup>

The Barnes family, comprised of the families of Lon, John, and Bud Barnes and believed to have been among the first settlers to penetrate the central Florida wilderness as far south as early Peru, settled not far from the Alafia River near the present day Bell Shoals bridge, in an area which today, continues to provide some of the most beautiful scenery found in central Florida. Understandably, the family found the availability of fresh game and fish from



**Elizabeth McDonald Moody, wife of William Ben Moody, Jr. and member of the pioneering McDonald family of Hopewell in eastern Hillsborough County. The family was one of the earliest producers of citrus in central Florida (photo taken circa 1930).**

the waters of the Alafia deciding factors in their selection of homesite, with the natural beauty of the area an enticement as well. Today, as in the 1800's, as fall approaches, rust colored scarlet maples, snowy white blossoms of wild plum trees, sweet gum, white bay, hickory, pecan and other trees native to the "Sunshine State," still paint the roadside in varying hues of browns, rusts, and golds, with colorful lantanas I pale orchid colored morning glories and yellow jasmine vines often found growing near their base, covering the hillsides surrounding the Alafia riverbanks.

The Barnes family children swam in the shallow, clear falls of the cool river waters as no doubt did the children of the area's earlier residents, the Florida Indians who



swam the waters of the Alafia and nearby lakes and streams while older family members hunted the abundance of deer, bear, wild turkeys and the plentiful bounty of game then found in the thickly wooded forests with areas so dense they were never penetrated by the light of the sun. The pioneering Barnes family came to central Florida from their home in Southern Alabama, the Barnes menfold having made a previous trip, returning to their Alabama home for their wives and children prior to embarking on the long journey by covered wagons drawn by teams of oxen. The children and livestock walked alongside the caravan which reportedly stopped each day as the sun made its way over the horizon, as they located a campsite along the trail.

Descendants of oldtimers who lived in the area during its founding days, and visible evidence of the remains of somewhat crude wooden dwellings of the early Barnes family, found on the Alafia riverbanks near the present Bell Shoals river bridge by settlers arriving much later, substantiate the belief that early settlers found land lying near the Alafia a desirable place to settle and raise their families. Pottery remnants and other household utensils believed to have been used by the Barnes family were also found near a stand of tall, old oaks situated northeast of the Boyette Road/McMullen Loop intersection. Timbers of another early dwelling were also found at a site near the Valrie Lane/McMullen Loop intersection. Remnants of glass and pottery were found by early residents who came to Peru in the late 1800's, evidencing the fact that a few brave settlers shared the wilderness then found in central Florida.

Otha Goolsby, of the pioneer Goolsby family who came to Hillsborough County from Orange County near the turn of the century, recalled visiting the Barnes family



**Leon Whitt Murphy (born 1890), daughter of Amanda Barnes Whitt and Jefferson Whitt. The Barnes family was among central Florida's early settlers. Leon Whitt Murphy vaguely remembered attending the early Peru Baptist Church and school situated on the south bank of the Alafia River. (photo circa 1905)**

homeplace near the Bell Shoals bridge and viewing the many small graves found in a family cemetery there indicating the likelihood of an epidemic occurring in the 1800's, causing death to many of the Barnes children who either died in infancy or early childhood.

The Barnes family, no doubt learned survival secrets and choice locations to secure food from the Indians living in the area at that time, as they either grew, caught, or killed their foods which were then often smoked or dried. Indications are that the earliest settlers enjoyed a relatively peaceful coexistence with the Indians during that period.



**William Amos Goolsby, Jr. and wife, Effie Vernon Tyner Goolsby (both born in 1872), pictured with Will's "toy," his 1902 Model T. Ford. The Goolsby family was among Peru Baptist Church's earliest members with the Goolsby family property on Boyette Road serving as home to the sixth generation of Goolsby family members. (photo taken 1938).**

Many tales of events which occurred during this time have been handed down through the years. It is said that during a time of unrest between the races, a group of Indian braves made their way cautiously toward the home of a white man, and upon peering through a window, the night lit dimly by a small candle, viewed the family at their evening devotions. According to the storyteller, upon finding the family praying to the "Great White Spirit," the young braves retreated.

Since leaving their home and moving slowly southward, the Moodys' journey had taken them across some of the most beautiful areas of the Territory, having crossed the waters of a number of scenic rivers enroute, including the historic Suwannee, but considered the serenity and beauty of the Alafia to be unrivaled.

Pioneering families such as the Simmons, Bravos, Saffolds, Barnes, Murphys, McGriffs, Whiddens, Hendrys, Hardings,

and a handful of other families, began raising their families, cutting the long virgin timber, and ranging their stock on the rich land lying on the curving banks of the Alafia River.

No roads existed at that time, only a few wagon trails made from the oxdrawn carts of those who dared the trials, hard times, sickness and often hunger which often accompanied early experiences during those settling days. Many early settlers barely eked out a day-to-day existence for themselves and their families.

Benjamin Moody, the son of Samuel Moody, was born April 15, 1811 in Telfair County, Georgia. On February 7, 1833, Benjamin Moody and Miss Nancy Hooker were married in Hamilton County, Florida. She was born May 23, 1811, the daughter of Stephen Hooker and Elizabeth Brinton, with the bride's brother, William B. Hooker performing the ceremony.<sup>6</sup>

Moody eventually settled in early Peru at the old Weldon place, establishing his residency in a log cabin by the Alafia River, where he began raising cattle on the vast open ranges which existed in central Florida at that time.

Benjamin Moody was among numerous brave, adventurous early settlers in the Territory of Florida who were lured by the beauty of the Alafia River and who filed applications under the "Armed Occupation Act of Florida" (1842); the unified Territory of Florida having been established on March 30, 1822 with President Monroe signing into law a Congressional act providing for a government headed by a Governor and a Legislative Council.<sup>7</sup>

James Whitton, Henry S. Clark, James C. Pearce, Uriah John Collier and Benjamin Moody filed their applications at the



**The first bridge spanning the Alafia River, connecting the early settlements of Peru and Riverview, built circa 1900. The impressive ironwork was formerly used on the Lafayette Street Bridge in Tampa with the wooden floor of the bridge "raised" to allow riverboats and steamers passage. Dr. G. H. Symmes, Peru's first medical doctor, is pictured 8th from left.**

Newnansville office for property lying on rich land lying near the Alafia River. Land applications under the "Armed Occupation Act" were also filed in St. Augustine with the Act stipulating that 160 acres would be given to any head of family or single man over 18 who was able to bear arms, with the applicant required to live on the land in a house fit for habitation during five consecutive years and cultivate at least five acres.<sup>8</sup>

Soon after arriving in the area, Benjamin Moody built a spacious log cabin home which was said to have been one of the first and finest in central Florida. In 1845, following three years in her new home near the Alafia riverbanks, in the same year in which Florida attained statehood, Moody's wife Nancy, mother of his six children, died.

Benjamin Moody, soldier, cattleman, civic leader and now a young-widower, and the father of Martha E., William B., James

O.A., Jane, Mariann, and Eloise M. Moody, soon became involved in politics and in 1846, he was chosen as one of the first County Commissioners in Hillsborough County. He also served as Chairman of this group. Other Commissioners serving on that first Board were James Goff, William Hancock, and M.C. Brown, with their first meeting held January 5, 1846. It was at that time known as the "Commissioners Court," and paid its members a fee of \$2.00 for each meeting they attended. The total amount of money in the county treasury at that time was \$267.63. S.L. Sparkman was Tax Assessor with John Parker serving as Tax Collector.

Moody donated land for the first Methodist church at Peru on the south side of the Alafia River about 1850. With the assistance of George Simmons, the earliest known operator of the ferry crossing the Alafia, and two or three other families, he erected a small log cabin on the back of Moody's land at the edge of the Alafia River where a handful of families met each Sunday morning in that small wooden structure to worship the Lord. This early church in Peru was one of the first Methodist Churches to be constructed in Hillsborough County and also in south Florida. The church would later be moved across the river, reorganized by Rev. Leroy G. Lesley, (himself a soldier during the Indian wars) and renamed Lesley's Chapel in his honor.

The title of "Grandfather of the Southern Methodist Church" had been bestowed upon Benjamin Moody by Judge Wilson of Bartow in recognition of his early efforts in organizing the Peru church. He was reportedly a man who devoted much time to his church. Lesley, who would become well known in central Florida, not only as a "man of God," but also as a soldier, was born in

Abbeville, South Carolina on May 11, 1808 and settled in Tampa in 1848.<sup>9</sup>

Historical accounts bear out the fact that following the Civil War, Lesley moved his family into the log cabin church Benjamin Moody and Simmons had "reared" on the Alafia riverbanks at Peru. Lesley operated a ferry on the Alafia River there by 1867, providing settlers access to Peru and to South Florida as well. The ferry crossed east of the present bridge, near an old store on the riverbanks. This store in later years was converted to a church, serving as the second building occupied by the Peru Baptist Church.

It is believed that Lesley Chapel, served as a schoolhouse five days each week for six months of the year during a period in its history. Hillsborough County School Board minutes dated September 2, 1883 make mention of a school named "Lesley's Ferry:" "G. W. Kennedy, J. M. Boyet, and G.H. Symmes were appointed trustees for "Lesley's Ferry." An earlier school, the earliest known school in South Florida, was situated on the Alafia riverbanks in 1850. Soldier and adventurer, Francis C.M. Boggess, in *A Veteran of Four Wars*, said that he "took a school on the Alifia River and taught almost continuously for three years in the same neighborhood, and taught the first free school for forty days, that was ever taught in South Florida."

Boggess, a young man who loved adventure, a sailor and also a soldier in the Seminole Wars, was very familiar with the wilderness then found in central and South Florida. Boggess had met Mr. Gideon Tyner (uncle of Effie Vernon Tyner Goolsby, wife of William Amos Goolsby, Jr.), who had come to Tampa to catch a supply of mullet. Tyner and his family were then making their home at Fort Dade north of Tampa, In

conversation with Mr. Boggess, Tyner had mentioned that no schooling was available at Fort Dade for the Tyner children; this situation causing him great concern. Mr. Boggess finally agreed to return to Fort Dade and serve as a teacher for the Tyner children.

Boggess wrote that the schoolhouse at Fort Dade had only one door, no benches and no blackboard, but with the aid of the young men, several of whom were older than Boggess, benches were made and he taught a successful school for a three months period, at a salary of thirty five dollars a month. After trying his hand at sailing and spending some time in Key West, Boggess agreed to return to Fort Dade with Mr. Tyner, serving as schoolmaster to the Tyner children for three months more. After deciding he had nothing better to do, Boggess then took a school on the Alifia (Alafia) River and taught the first free school ever taught in South Florida.<sup>10</sup>

Rev. Leroy G. Lesley, who contributed greatly to early Methodism in central Florida, often traveling by horseback to outlying sections, became well acquainted with much of the wilderness area to the east and south of Tampa. On April 17, 1856, while he was in Tampa, word came that a white man had been murdered and scalped in the Bloomingdale area. Rev. Lesley and a party of men including his son, John, conducted a mounted search near the home of John Carney, continuing on the trail of the renegade Indians, tracking them to the Peace River valley. The white man, John Carney, operated a ferry crossing the Alafia River, probably at a site near what is now known as Lithia Springs. Rev. Lesley had served in three wars; the Second Seminole War, 1835-'42, the Third Seminole Indian War, 1855--58, other Indian conflicts; and also the Civil War which began in 1861 and

ended in 1865. In the last Indian war and in the Civil War, Lesley raised and commanded companies of cavalry as a Captain, and in the Civil War, served as a soldier in the Confederate States of America.<sup>11</sup>

Members of early settling families who served in Captain Leroy G. Lesley's Company in the Seminole War of 1856, included Parker, Alderman, Blount, Hancock, Mizell, Seward, Summerall, Varn, Wiggins, and Whidden families. Captain Lesley's son, Corporal John T. Lesley, Antoine Wordehoff; John Carney, murdered by renegade Indians in 1856, and Carney's neighbor, John Vickers.<sup>12</sup>

One of the young men who served in Captain Leroy G. Lesley's Company in 1856 was Willoughby Whidden, Jr. The Whidden family is known to have made their home on the Alafia riverbanks in the early 1840's, near the site of an early Indian village.

A killing which touched the Whidden and McCullough families occurred in July 1849. The incident took place at the Indian store of Messrs. Kennedy and Darling at a location on Peas Creek which is now known as Bowling Green. On July 17, about noon, Echo Emethla Chapco and three Indian women came to till store bringing watermelons, venison, sweet potatoes, skins, and beeswax, with trader, Captain Payne, purchasing a few of the watermelons along with the other items. The Indians told him that they had a large pack of skins on the east side of Peas Creek and needed his boat to get them across; the Indians also stating that they wanted to spend the night in the store. Upon closing the store, Capt. Payne went inside for supper with the Indians being seen outside smoking their pipes. Without warning, the Indians fired inside the door with Capt. Payne and Dempsey

Whidden being killed. William McCullough, a trading post employee, was shot in the left shoulder. He quickly grabbed his child, and joined by his wife, the threesome fled into the night. Frantically, they proceeded in the direction of a bridge, all the while being pursued by the Indians who fired at the fleeing family with a ball passing through the flesh of McCullough's right thigh, the same ball passing through his wife, Nancy's leg. After crossing the bridge, they hid themselves as the three Indians passed close by, searching in vain for the family. After eluding the Indians in the darkness, the family fled through the thick underbrush, having their clothing torn from their bodies as they made their way through the woods some twenty to thirty miles distant, finally reaching their home on the "Big Alafia".<sup>13</sup>

Nancy Whidden McCullough, sister of Dempsey Whidden, one of the men killed at the trading post in 1849, would lose another brother, Lott Whidden, seven years later in another killing involving renegade Indians which took place at the Tillis homestead in Ft. Meade in 1856.

Benjamin Moody, one of central Florida's earliest residents, and his grown sons, James, and William Ben, fought in the Indian wars and the Civil War. The Moody family is believed to have taken refuge in nearby forts during the early settling days on three separate occasions, the last being at the early fort at Ft. Meade which was established in Polk County in 1849.

"Miss Mary" Moody, born in 1901, great granddaughter of pioneer Benjamin Moody and beloved teacher of many of the children of Peru's founding families, recalled experiences related to her by her grandmother and other family members of the days when they and the Florida Indians

shared central Florida. Rachel Alderman Moody, daughter of the man for whom Alderman's Ford was named, and grandmother of "Miss Mary", was among those who took refuge in Fort Alafia.

Oldtimers tell us that during one Indian uprising in the early area of Peru, settlers hurriedly sought refuge in Fort Alafia, located in the Alafia settlement in southeastern Hillsborough County. Due to the urgency of the situation, they left virtually everything behind but their children. As a sense of calm and peace was once again restored, and the early settlers returned to their homes in the community of Peru, the group found the body of a neighbor woman whose home was situated on the outskirts of the small community who had not reached the fort in time, having been ambushed and killed as she sought refuge in Fort Alafia.

Indian uprisings at that time were reportedly quite rare, as oldtimers have also passed down many tales of the Indians' friendliness and desire to coexist with early settlers. The brave settlers who ventured as far south as central Florida were lured to the area by its beauty, availability of fresh game, and rich soil on which to grow food for their families and themselves, all this at the risk of hostilities from renegade Indians. Following the end of the Seminole wars, Benjamin Moody is said to have gathered his children from the homes of family members and returned to his log cabin home on the Alafia riverbanks where once again, he began raising cattle on the open range.

With the coming of settlers into central Florida, the establishment of homes, churches and schools, and the passing of time, settlers were soon faced with the need to bury their loved ones. Early families often buried family members in small family cemeteries, oftentimes locating them behind their homeplace. Today, the location of their

remains is often known only to God as the wooden crosses or other markings used soon deteriorated, resulting in no visible evidence of their early burial existing today. One of the oldest cemeteries in Hillsborough County and the first in the community of Peru, is the Duzenbury cemetery, now known as the Samford Cemetery, and located approximately two miles south of the Alafia River. The early "burying place" is named for the Duzenbury family, one of Peru's earliest. Oldtimers recalled orchards of avocado and citrus trees on one of the community's earliest homesites. A number of family members are believed to have been buried in unmarked graves there during the early 1850's. Some oldtimers believe that the cemetery also holds the remains of Russian nobility.

Early circuit riding "preachers" are among those buried in the Duzenbury cemetery with Reverends Urban S. Bird and A.M. Samford, both having served as early ministers of the Riverview Methodist Church, lying side by side.<sup>14</sup>

The old Duzenbury Cemetery also holds the remains of a beautiful young mother who is said to have had soft, delicate features and long black hair. Vianna Clardy Watts Hendry died in April 1858 at the age of twenty-five, leaving behind two tiny daughters, Julia Amanda, age 3, and Tampa Anna age 1, also her young husband, Charles Wesley Hendry.

The Hendrys had been married on December 2, 1853 and made their home in the early community of Peru. This was the second wife Charles Wesley Hendry had lost; the first, Jencie Alderman, whom he had married on January 10, 1847, had died in 1852 and left an infant daughter who made her home with her grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. James Alderman.<sup>15</sup>

In 1866, William Ben Moody, Sr., purchased the first general store in Peru which had been jointly owned by F.S. Morrison and J. M. Boyett. Groceries, supplies and mail were brought from Tampa once a week on a little schooner owned by Moody called the "Josephine," stationed on the south side of the Alafia near the old Humphries home.

The first post office was established in Peru on December 8, 1879 with J.M. Boyett serving as its postmaster; mail had earlier been distributed to settlers by horseback. During the early days, children of pioneering families were instructed at home, often by their mother. Moody, being concerned at the lack of education available to children living in the early Peru settlement, soon secured the services of a schoolmarm named "Miss Annie" who taught a handful of neighborhood children living in Peru in the late 1860's. F.S. Morrison would serve as schoolmaster when an early school was built near the Moody store in 1875. This was the second known school on the Alafia riverbanks.

Official School Board minutes for Hillsborough County date back to the year 1871, at which time there were already several schools in existence in southeastern Hillsborough County. A "Moody's" and/or "Moody's Church" is mentioned in minutes dated October 15, 1875. September 1, 1885, Peru School is mentioned: "Upon motion, J.M. Boyett, G.M. Parrish, and O.P. Buzbee were appointed trustees of School No. 29 at Peru. This community was on the south side of the Alafia River near what is now Riverview. August 4, 1893 minutes: "Petition from patrons of Pine Landing and Peru schools to consolidate these two schools was granted." Pine Landing is believed to have been east of Peru on the Alafia riverbanks. This tiny school was

attended by members of some of Peru and Riverview's earliest families including the Whitts, Murphys, Goolsbys, Sharps, Brandons, Killions, Symmes, Thompsons, Mays, Scotts, Kerseys, Baumings, Buzbees, Williams, Thomassons, Roddenberrys, Halls, Mansfields, Duzenburys, VanLandingshams, Caldwelles, Alsobrooks, and Shakers. Many of these early settling families, who were primarily engaged in cattle raising, logging, and the planting of citrus groves, not only shared close friendships, but many of these intermarried. Large grove operations in Peru in the late 1800's included the Mays, Carlton, Drew, and Pelham groves.

The small school then found on the south bank of the Alafia River, also served as the first facility of the Peru Baptist Church (now known as the First Baptist Church of Riverview) and was just northeast of the home of Captain Robert Sharp and his family. The church, organized May 7, 1893 by a handful of early dedicated Peru settlers desiring a "meeting place" to worship the Lord, joined by Rev. Tom Jaudon, a farmer and the father of fifteen children, who rode his mule to outlying areas preaching from the "good book" and establishing many churches still in existence today. The First Baptist Church of Riverview will observe its centennial May 1993.

Mrs. Leon Whitt Murphy, born in Peru on December 5, 1890, vaguely recalled attending the church and school there, with vivid memories of children romping on the structure's neat little front porch as their parents chatted with their neighbors.

Since the arrival of the Spanish explorers in the sixteenth century and the introduction of citrus to the Florida Indians, orange trees grew in abundance near hammocks and marshes; a result of the seeds being scattered

by the Indians and their families as they moved from place to place.

By the 1870's "orange fever" was spreading throughout the state and the Mays' groves in Peru on land acquired by the Mays family soon after the Civil War, were some of the first in the county. About 1875, Samuel Edwards Mays, a merchant, in addition to a citrus grower, planted hundreds of acres on the family property which at that time was the last outpost of early Peru; beyond that point, lay a virtual wilderness.

Neighbors in Plant City, Civil War soldier, CSA, William Amos Goolsby, Sr., his son, Will, grandson, Otha, and the Goolsby family, also came from Plant City to Peru to assist in clearing the thickly overgrown land which had never before been cultivated, and also in the planting, budding, and nurturing of the young seedlings. First, they cleared the land of virgin timber, stands of tall pines, oaks and viny vegetation, also undertaking the task of ridding the woodlands of stubborn scrub palmetto clumps which dotted the landscape and whose long brown roots anchored them deeply in place in the sandy soil. This task was slowly and painstakingly completed by hand utilizing a grubbing hoe. Many varieties of citrus such as valencias, pineapple oranges, Parson Browns, tangerines, kumquats, and grapefruit trees would fill the sprawling citrus groves. The grapefruit trees would in years to come, grow to such heights that the Goolsby grandchildren would often scamper to the top of the tallest of these to view the huge Peoples' Gas tank in downtown Tampa, some fifteen miles distant.

For generations, the Goolsby menfolk had been known as successful planters, having come to the state in 1850 from their home in Jasper County, Georgia, and settling in

Orange County prior to their move to Plant City near the turn of the century.

As the tiny citrus trees in the Mays' Groves grew, the three Goolsby children played nearby, spending their childhood at the Mays homesite found at the crest of a steep hill topped by a huge camphor tree; the dusty, dirt topped wagon trail leading southward from Peru, not far from its base. The Florida Indians had often followed this early trail on their many treks to the bay for oysters, as evidenced by the huge mounds of oyster shells found on the shores of Duck Pond on the Goolsby family property, near the Indian burial mounds. The children often played quietly near the small family cemetery (its location known only by a few), "protected" by a neat, white-washed picket fence, containing several graves including one tiny one, as blossoms from violet colored crape myrtles which had been planted in the corners of the small cemetery, randomly fell on the windsept, sandtopped graves below.

Within a few years, the Mays' Groves had become one of the major producers of citrus in Hillsborough County and "Grandpa Will" Goolsby, his working days past, began to enjoy the long awaited "fruits" of his labor. His long handled shotgun resting on his shoulder, his old hunting dog tagging close behind, he could often be seen headed out to the bayhead just east of the Mays' grove, ever mindful of the Florida Indians who had lived on the land and enjoyed similar hunts in the nearby forests years before. Granpa Will, who with his long, silver handlebar mustache, could easily have stepped out of an early tintype, spent his happiest hours with his favorite "toy", his shiny black, Model T Ford. The old man, in his black, shiny boots, his shirtsleeves rolled to his elbows, all but disappeared in the motor and assembly of the early Model T Ford with its



wooden spoked wheels; the car, purchased shortly after it was invented, was his pride and joy. Granpa Will's son, Otha, often related tales of his early childhood to his children, many of these centering around the family's days of rest, when their work was finished and their evening meal enjoyed, his parents and siblings, joined by his beloved grandfather, the devoted Christian and music teacher, William Amos Goolsby, Sr., took the family's horse-drawn wagon and headed down the steep hill which was topped by the mammoth camphor tree, toward the "church on the river," the second building of the Peru Baptist Church. As they slowly made their way down the hill which was flanked by sweet smelling magnolias on the south and banana trees to the north, winding their way towards the early church, the old man sang, his clear, strong voice rising above the treetops of the woodlands bordering the dusty wagon trail; his grandchildren believing that the old hymns were being enjoyed by the wildlife as well as themselves. The family happily made their way towards the early church where they would see their friends and neighbors, sing their favorite hymns and hear a Bible message delivered by a circuit riding preacher. On Sunday afternoon, the Goolsby family, consisting of three generations, and other early settling families who attended the Peru Baptist Church, often spread their noon meal beneath the live oak trees on the Alafia riverbanks.

During central Florida's settling days, circuit riding preachers often served churches in several counties as they delivered God's word to pioneer settling families. Their visits were much anticipated by children and adults alike who often travelled several miles on horseback or by horse and buggy to the "meeting place". On Saturday, their best clothing was made ready for the Sunday meetings, with children often

going barefoot on weekdays, saving their one pair of shoes to be worn on Sunday. Favorite dishes such as sweet potato pie, green tomato pie, collard greens and cracklin' cornbread, baked wild turkey and dressing and pitchers of tea were prepared for the day's activities which included Sunday morning preaching, and dinner on the grounds, served on rustic, wooden tables carved from oak timbers. The gathering also provided an opportunity for neighbors living as much as ten miles distant, to congregate and fellowship.

One delicacy enjoyed at early church dinners on the ground was huckleberry pie. The shiny, deep purple colored huckleberries, grew in abundance in the pasturelands of early Peru.

A tale is told of a lady who found great delight in picking huckleberries from which she baked delicious huckleberry pies. These berries grew very near the ground on small bushes requiring the picker to bend or stoop very low to retrieve them from their delicate and waxy green bushes. The lady was found by neighbors, still in her wagon and quite dead, having hurriedly driven into old Peru after an unfortunate meeting with a rattlesnake who lurked among the patches of huckleberry bushes.

In 1885, six years after the first post office was established in early Peru on the south bank of the Alafia River, Riverview would be established on the river's north bank with postal service there beginning on November 19, 1891, and discontinuing in Peru on December 31, 1900. William B. Moody, Jr. served as the first postmaster at the Riverview Post Office which also housed a general store where early settlers could purchase needed supplies. A winding shell road was found not far from its entrance, crossing

the Alafia and continuing on to Wimauma, having originated in Tampa.

Soon after phosphate was discovered in Florida in the mid 1880s, mining operations in the Alafia River were begun, with the Peruvian Mining Company, the name derived from the early community, conducting mining operations. The Alafia Hotel, built in 1898 to house mining workers, was situated west of the present W. T. Williams bridge at the top of the hill near Riverview's first post office.

Tampa became the principal shipping point for the mineral with shipments totalling 345,327 tons being shipped from Port Tampa in 1892. A large quantity of pebble phosphate was mined in the Alafia River and carried by barge to the drying plant near Platt called the Peruvian Phosphate Works.<sup>16</sup>

Crossing the Alafia River became somewhat less of a problem when the ferryboat was replaced by a wooden bridge built about 1900, with a section allowed to open when needed to allow riverboats passage. It also had a steel frame and was located some sixty to seventy yards west of the present bridge. Minutes of the Hillsborough County Board of County Commissioners meeting of August 15, 1900, state that bids were received on the Alafia River bridge with the project awarded to Virginia Bridge and Iron of Roanoke, Virginia for their bid of \$7,864.00. Board members present at that meeting included S. J. Drawdy, Chairman, J. E. Tomberlin, E. C. Blanton, W. A. Belcher, and J. W. VanLandingham.

When the City of Tampa decided to build a better bridge, it sold the ironwork of the old bridge on the Hillsborough River at Lafayette Street to the county. In an early photograph, Dr. G. H. Symmes, Peru's first medical doctor, who traveled by horse and buggy to the outlying areas of Peru as he

delivered babies and doctored the sick, was among early residents who assembled to admire the "modern" bridge with its vertical iron bars stretched skyward.

The two communities, old Peru, known to have existed for nearly one hundred years, and Riverview, established in 1885, now connected by the impressive new conveyance, would coexist until the late 1940s when the town of Peru, one of the oldest settlements in central Florida, remained only in the minds of its early settling families. Riverview today, includes the land lying south of the Alafia River, the beautiful wilderness where Peru once stood.

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> *Notices of East Florida With an Account of the Seminole Nation Indians*, by W. H. Simmons, pg. 39.

<sup>2</sup> *DeVane's Early Florida History*, by George Albert DeVane, Sebring Historical Society, 1978, pages not numbered

<sup>3</sup> *Notices of Florida and the Campaigns*, by M. M. Cohen, pg. 46

<sup>4</sup> "Pioneer Florida," by D. B. McKay, *Tampa Tribune*, Nov. 6, 1955

<sup>5</sup> *An Inventory of the Built Environment*, by the Historic Tampa/Hillsborough County Preservation Board, pg. 7

<sup>6</sup> "South Florida Pioneers," Issue #8, pg. 9

<sup>7</sup> *The Florida Handbook*, 1985-86 Edition, pg. 28

<sup>8</sup> *The Story of Southwestern Florida*, Volume 1, by James W. Covington, pg. 106

<sup>9</sup> *Genealogical Records of the Pioneers of Tampa and of Some Who Came After Them*, by Charles E. Harrison, pg. 67

<sup>10</sup> *A Veteran of Four Wars*, by Francis C. M. Boggess, pg. 18

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<sup>11</sup> *The Early Days of New Hope Church*, by Paul B. Dinnis, pg. 5

<sup>12</sup> *Soldiers of Florida in the Seminole Indian, Civil and Spanish American Wars*, published under the supervision of the Board of State Institutions, pgs. 19 and 20

<sup>13</sup> *DeVane's Early Florida History*, by George Albert DeVane.

<sup>14</sup> "Riverview Methodist Church," by Garnet K. Tien

<sup>15</sup> "South Florida Pioneers," Issue 35/36, pg. 31

<sup>16</sup> *Tampa*, by Karl H. Grismer, pg. 222

*Many oral interviews conducted over a period of some twenty years with "Miss Mary" Moody, (born 1901) great-granddaughter of soldier, cattleman and civic leader, Benjamin Moody. Oral interviews with Otha and Alva Goolsby, Effie Vernon Tyner Goolsby, Lulabelle Goolsby Bugbee, Cecil Bugbee, Sr., (born 1899); Leon Whitt Murphy, Irma Whitt Egnor, Theresa Sharp Powell, Kenneth Brandon, Sr., and others. School Board of Hillsborough County and U.S. Postal System records, and Hillsborough County archives.*

# ORANGE GROVE HOTEL



Capt. William B. Hooker

On Saturday, June 20, 1992, the Tampa Historical Society dedicated a historical marker to commemorate the Orange Grove Hotel. Erected by cattleman William B. Hooker on the northwest corner of Madison and East Streets in 1859, the building played an important role in Tampa's early history. The marker, on the corner of Kennedy Blvd. and East Street, was unveiled by Kyle S. VanLandingham, a great-great-great grandson of Capt. Hooker.

You will be glad to know that we are situated much more comfortably than we could have hoped. Tampa is the most forlorn collection of little one-story frame houses imaginable, and as May and I walked behind our landlord, who was piloting us to the Orange Grove Hotel, our hearts fell nearer and nearer towards the sand through which we dragged. But presently we turned a corner, and were agreeably surprised to find ourselves in front of a large three-story

## ORANGE GROVE HOTEL

THIS HOUSE, having just been renovated, and refitted, is now ready for the reception of boarders. Regular and day boarders will find this a comfortable and respectable house, and every attention will be paid to the wants of travelers. The table will be filled with the best the market affords, and the charge will be reasonable.

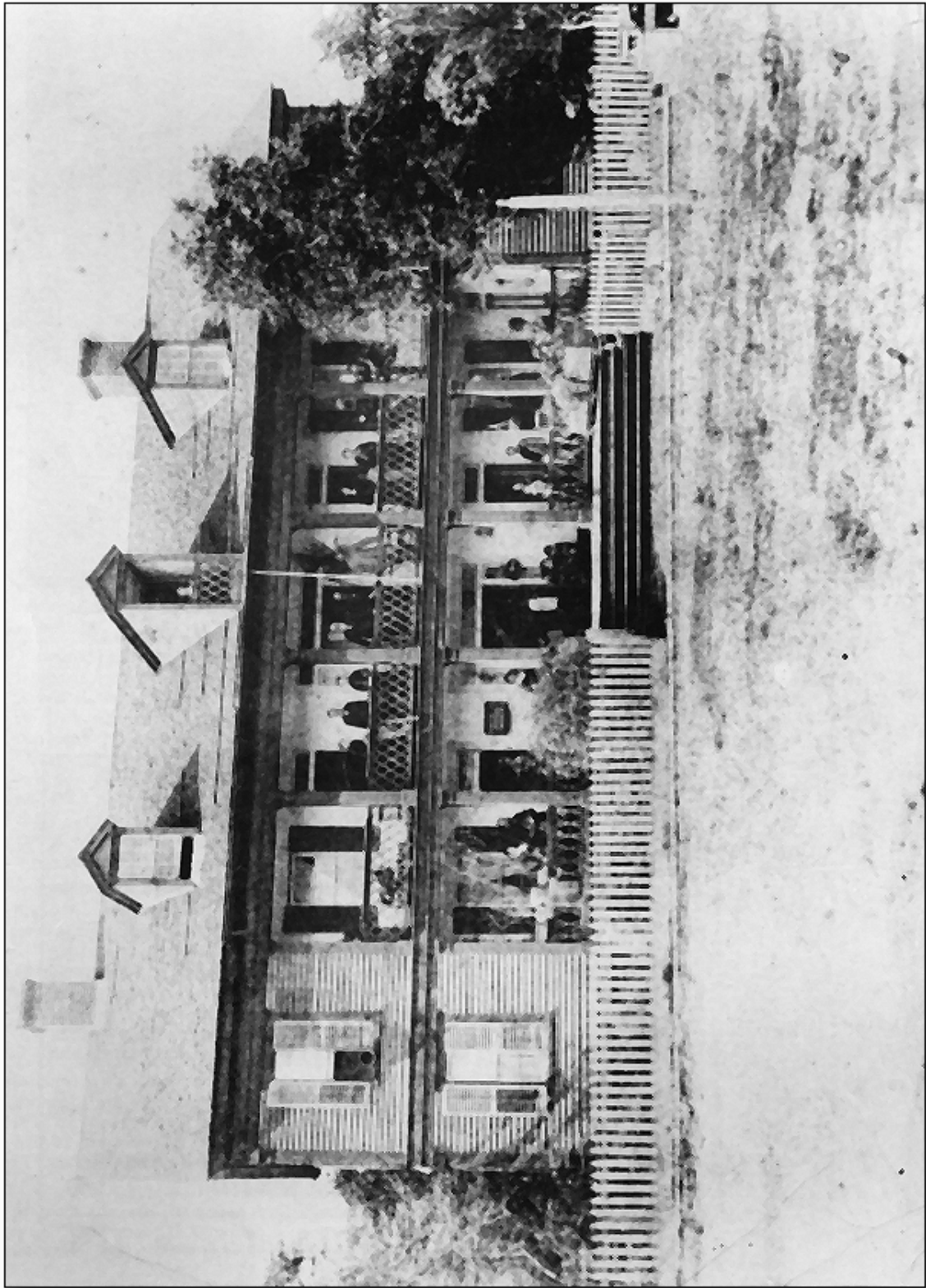
The climate, the sea breeze, fish, oysters &c., makes this a place of resort, for health and pleasure.

Stables are attached to the premises where horses, will be well attended to.

**W. B. HOOKER, Proprietor.**

Tampa, April, 23<sup>rd</sup> 1866. 3-m

Tampa Florida Peninsular, June 9, 1866



The Orange Grove Hotel during the 1876-77 winter season. Judge and Mrs. Henry L. Crane, who operated the hotel, are standing on the left side of the second floor porch. Sidney Lanier has been identified by contemporaries as the man standing on the far right side of the second floor porch with his leg propped on the rail. But D.B. McKay in the Tampa Tribune, March 6, 1955, said Lanier is standing at the left end of the first floor veranda. The original of this photo was owned by Mrs. Samuel E. (Mary Hooker) Hope, later Mrs. Clara (Hope) Baggett and now by Mr. and Mrs. L.E. Vinson of Tarpon Springs.



Tampa Guardian, Dec. 4, 1880  
 Sidney Lanier, Dec. 27, 1876 from  
*Letters of Sidney Lanier*, Charles  
 Scribner's Sons, New York, 1907.

house with many odd nooks and corners, altogether clean and comfortable in appearance, and surrounded by orange-trees in full fruit. We have a large room in the second story, opening upon a generous balcony fifty feet long, into which stretch the liberal arms of a fine orange-tree, holding out their fruitage to our very lips. In front is a sort of open plaza, containing a pretty group of gnarled live oaks full of moss and mistletoe.

They have found out my public character already: somebody who had travelled with me recognized me on the street yesterday

and told mine host. He and his wife are all kindness, having taken a fancy, I imagine, to my sweet angel May. They have just sent up a lovely bunch of roses and violets from the garden, -- a sentimental attention which finds a pleasant parallel in the appearance of a servant at our door before breakfast to inquire whether we prefer our steak fried or broiled.

The weather is perfect summer, and I luxuriate in great draughts of balmy air uncontaminated with city-smokes and furnace-dusts. This has come not a moment too soon; for the exposures of the journey had left my poor lung in most piteous condition. I am now better, however; and May is in good case, except that the languid air takes the spring from her step, and inclines her much to laziness. . . .

We have three mails a week: two by stage from Gainesville (which is on the railroad from Fernandina to Cedar Keys) and one by steamer from Cedar Keys. Address me simply "Tampa, Fla." I have a box (No. 8 : -I don't think there are more than twenty-five or thirty in all) at the Post-office, and the clerk knows me: as in fact everybody else does, -- a stranger is a stranger in Tampa. . . .

### TAMPA ROBINS

The robin laughed in the orange-tree:  
 Ho, windy North, a fig for thee:  
 While breasts are red and wings are bold  
 And green trees wave us globes, of gold,  
 Time's scythe shall reap but bliss for me  
 --Sunlight, song, and the orange-tree.

Bum, golden globes in leafy sky,  
 My orange-planets: crimson I  
 Will shine and shoot among the spheres



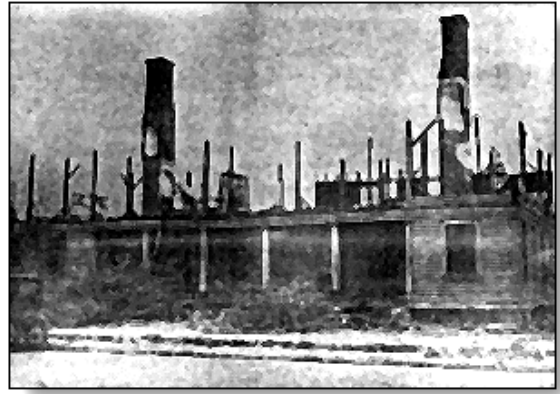
**The Orange Grove Hotel building, 806 Madison street, as it appeared May 7, 1924, During this period the building was used as a rooming house.**

Photo courtesy of Tampa-Hillsborough County Public Library System



**A later picture of the building taken after the second floor porch was closed in. Louise Frisbie, in an article in Tampa Bay History, Spring/Summer 1983, vol.5, No.1, p.49, incorrectly identified this photo as showing the building during its early years.**

Photo courtesy of University of South Florida Special collections.



(Blithe meteor that no mortal fears)  
And thrid the heavenly orange-tree  
With orbits bright of minstrelsy.

“If that I hate wild winter's spite --  
The gibbet trees, the world in white,  
The sky but gray wind over a grave  
Why should I ache, the season's slave?  
I'll sing from the top of the orange-tree  
*Gramercy, winter's tyranny.*”

I'll south with the sun, and keep my clime;  
My wing is king of the summer-time;  
My breast to the sun his torch shall hold;  
And I'll call down through the green and  
gold,  
*Time, take thy scythe, reap bliss for me,  
Bestir thee under the orange-tree.*”

From *Selected Poems of Sidney Lanier*,  
Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1947.

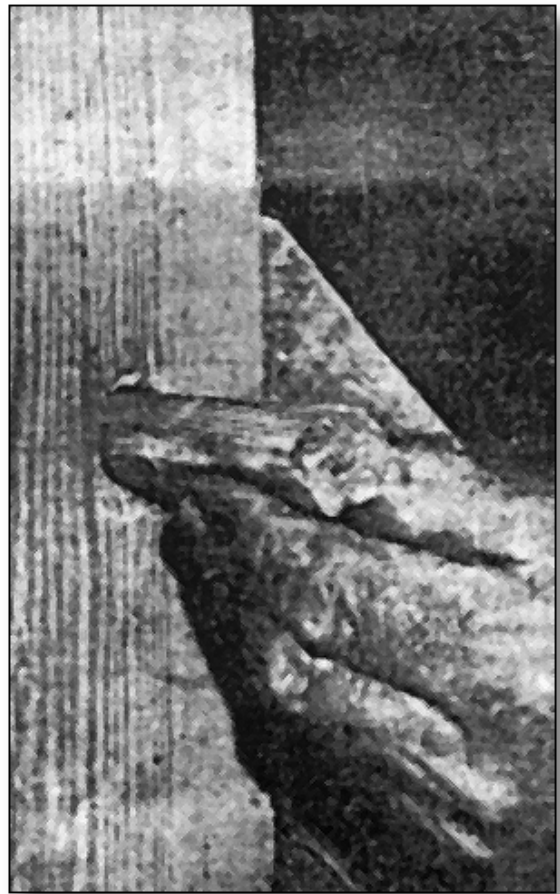


Photo from the *Tampa Tribune*, May 10, 1945,  
showing, above, the Orange Grove Hotel  
building during demolition and left, a wooden  
peg used in construction.



# AN HISTORY OF BLACKS IN TAMPA/ HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY FROM 1526 TO THE PRESENT

By JAMES E. TOKLEY

& Who shall tell our history when we are  
dead  
and gone  
of the beauty and the mystery & the pain of  
Freedom  
Song  
Shall I tell you, sitting 'round me/ of our  
long and sacred past  
Will you tell it to your children - tell it true,  
so it  
will last?

It was said by all the wisemen/and the Truth  
is still complete:  
If you do not learn from Hist'ry/Then from  
Hist'ry you'll  
repeat &  
If you do not know you hist'ry that began  
across the waves  
You have doomed yourself, my children, &  
your children shall  
be slaves.

This Truth I come to tell you - all about that  
which has been  
As a poet, this I tell you/of the long &  
winding sin/  
Of a time when days were filled with  
pain/confusion walked  
the land/& all who were Black were  
considered slaves every  
woman, child & man.

I speak, young ones, of a wonderland  
that rose from a painted sea  
A golden Caribbean Paradise - like the land  
of Adam and Eve; I bring you memories/

of a land so green & abundantly given by  
God  
that our Spanish cousins - once removed -  
fell in love with this mystical sod  
& They christened the land El Florida  
(which means  
the flowery plains)  
Then proceeded to search for the Fountain  
of Youth -  
at a place that they also would name

T'was Espiritu Santo - a place by the Bay  
The land of the Timucuan  
and the home of the brave Caloosa tribe  
who made the Spaniards run!  
T-'was the year of 1526  
on the voyage of Narvaez  
that an African hero called Esteban  
established  
himself in the West/as  
the first Black man to land in Tampa  
and walk its winding shores  
This Estevanico - which means "Little  
Stevie"  
was born a North African Moor.  
As a matter of fact, it was Esteban -  
as the story is often told -  
who was sent by Narvaez to find The Seven  
Cities of Gold!

Some seventy years before John Smith  
built Jamestown for the King,  
young Esteban and Narvaez claimed Tampa  
Bay for  
Spain

I sing of a time when Florida was the  
Promise of

Liberty

When the Seminole Joined the African slave  
in the hopes they  
could both be free.

On the Apalachee-cola back in 1695, they  
built a fort  
& called it Musa - like a king of days gone  
by.

But the fort was destroyed by battleships  
and many Africans died/The Seminoles,  
who were  
their friends, died also at their side.

Yet, the fight was far from over & the  
Seminole Wars raged on  
Inspired by men like Osceola and men like  
Gopher John.

Osceola was Chief of the Seminoles and he  
was also  
Black.

His Seminole wife was Pee-to-Kiss, but  
Cher-to-Cher  
he liked.

For, Cher-to-Cher was his African bride  
whom the  
slavers stole away –  
which started the Second Seminole War that  
made  
America pay!

& Then, there was ol' Gopher John  
as dark as a Tampa night  
whose warrior spirit & cunning ways  
prolonged the  
Freedom fight  
until there was a treaty signed & the  
Seminoles moved West.

Black Seminoles were the first to leave  
But the struggle would not rest.  
Blacks fought in Florida - the Civil War –  
in the 48th Infan-try  
Then took Rough Riders up San Juan Hill  
just to hel the Cubans get free.  
O' the Buffalo Soldier was their name –  
when they camped in Tampa Town

The 9th and 10th Horse Cavalry even took  
Geronimo  
down

& Even though the Tampa Press accused'em  
of acting White  
They walked the streets of Downtown  
Tampa & weren't  
afraid to fight.

Then Ybor City opened its doors and  
Cubans gathered  
'round  
& we marveled at Black Cubans/as they  
wore their freedom  
crowns

But we could not speak their language &  
they did not  
know our names  
So, our African reunion was a day that never  
came.

But the days of the 1900's/just before the  
First World War,  
were the days of pain and murder:  
Blacks folks dying by the score!  
& the papers printed front page news while  
Tampans read  
their fill/  
of the "Nigger In The Woodbox", or "That  
Bad Black Negro  
Killed"!

"At Fleeing Coon He Fired" ("Coon" is what  
they called us  
then.)

"The Unspoiled Nigger" was another  
headline (For, we were  
Niggers ... never men.)  
in that same old Dally, another headline  
states:

"Negro Death Rate Doubles Birth Rate" - it  
announced in  
gleeful hate.

While Black soldiers risked their lives in  
World Wars I & II,  
We were living, leaving and dying as we  
paid our

Tampa dues  
But even then we kept the faith, though  
surely most would  
disbelieve  
Yet, Black folks came to Tampa, by the  
thousands –  
thick as bees...  
came from Georgia, S. Car'lina, from New  
Orleans,  
Alabam  
Came from up in Archie, Florida, even  
Bealsville lent  
a hand  
& together with Italians, Germans, Jews and  
Spaniards, too,  
We built Henry Plant a railroad & a fine  
hotel, to boot!  
For, the building that most people know as  
good ol'  
U. of T.  
was once the grandest hotel that the world  
had ever seen.

Now, after we had built this town & laid its  
red brick streets  
We built our tabernacles where the children  
of God could meet  
& when our souls had rested and the White  
Man's work was  
through  
We gathered all our dreams & put up  
Central Avenue

There was Saunders' Central Blue Room,  
Palm Dinette &  
Green's Cafe;  
'Was the Lincoln Movie Theatre, Central  
Theatre on the way.  
Jackson, Fordham & Rodriguez - three  
Black men who  
practiced Law  
Drs. Richards, Williams & Silas who were  
always there  
on call  
We had Richard's Photo, the Pepper Pot,  
Central Newstand

& beauty shops  
The Shoe Shine Parlor, Johnny Gray's, the  
ol' Stink Moon  
where the big boys played  
There was the old Kid Mason Hardware  
Store, Palace Drugs  
and many more!  
We had the Florida Sentinel ('fore the  
Bulletin came)  
& Central Life Insurance (To this day, it's  
called the  
same.)  
There was the Clara Frye infirmary where  
only Blacks  
could go  
a union of Longshoremen whose Black  
membership would  
grow.  
There were High Schools - Blake &  
Middleton,  
Debutants and big parades - like the Tilt of  
the  
Maroon and Gold when FAM and Cookman  
played.

There were names like Armwood, Wilson,  
Dorsett,  
Davis and Stewart, too  
Rodriguez and Hammond answered the call  
But Lowry made it through!  
Rev. Lowry was the first Black man to win  
by local vote  
Then Hargrett, Perry & Padgett/each  
increased Black voters  
hopes.  
Jim Hargrett won a capital seat/Rubin  
Padgett –  
a County beat  
& Perry Harvey prospers in  
his post as City Council-man.  
Yet, there are others who soon will be/a part  
of  
our prosperity  
whose dreams & hopes have yet survived  
the thin that eat Black dreams alive

Like Urban Renewal –a “dream-come-true”  
- that murdered  
Central Avenue  
& Integration - which was used as a tool  
to steal from Black Tampa its public high  
schools.  
Yes,

even the drugs and crime we see  
that ruin our communities

...these, too, will pass, though many may  
die  
But we'll remain & continue to try  
Until one day when most of us/will pack our  
bags  
for the Exodus....

These things I sing as History/But the truths  
I speak  
are Destiny.  
For, I am a poet of the Line of Kings  
& I speak of Black Tampa & all that it has  
been.  
May your young ears listen & your spirits  
hear  
What my heart has told you  
In Truth and Fear.

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# POLITICS IN HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY: 1855

## Proceedings of the Tampa Convention, held on the 15th Sept. '55.

Rev. L. G. LESLIE was called to the Chair, and Dr. D. A. BRANCH chosen Secretary. Messrs. H. A. Crane, Enoch Collins, and Edmund Jones were appointed a Committee for the preparation of business for the meeting. After consultation, the Committee reported the following Resolutions, which were unanimously adopted—

First, *Resolved*, That, in the incipency of the American Party, secrecy was necessary in order to prevent its being crushed in the bud by hostile influences, but, in the present strong and commanding position of the Party, secrecy, in our opinion, is no longer necessary or advisable.

Second, *Resolved*, That the American Party in Hillsboro' County, acting in pursuance of the above resolution, hereby declares its determination to operate no longer as a secret Order.

Third, *Resolved*, That we approve and will abide by the principles of the American Platform, as adopted in Convention at Philadelphia, on the 5th of June last.

Fourth, *Resolved*, That we regard any one who avows, and will co-operate with us, in carrying out the principles of that Platform, to be as truly of the American Party as though he had been regularly inducted into the secret workings of the Order.

Fifth, *Resolved*, That we do not construe the 8th Article of the Platform as Applying to American Born Roman Catholics who do not hold allegiance to the Pope of Rome.

Sixth, *Resolved*, That we are proud of the position which the Party occupies on the slavery question; the secession of the Abolitionists from the Philadelphia Convention having purged the Party of Abolitionism.

Seventh, *Resolved*, That none are of the American Party who do not stand upon the Platform, and that we will never affiliate or co-operate with the Abolitionists, nor are we or the American Party responsible for their opinions or acts.

Eighth, *Resolved*, That in the American Platform are laid down those broad Constitutional principles which, if carried out in good faith, will infallibly perpetuate the Government and Union of the United States of America; and it is only by carrying out those principles that we pledge ourselves to support the Union—not an

unconstitutional Union but a Union based upon the Constitution.

After the adoption of the Resolutions, the meeting proceeded to the nomination of candidates for the different County offices, which resulted as follows—

For Judge of Probate, J. L. LOCKHART;  
 " Sheriff, E. T. KENDRICK;  
 " Clerk of C. C., R. H. HARDEE;  
 " Commissioners, J. P. McMULLEN,  
 J. T. GIVENS,  
 JOEL KNIGHT,  
 JOSEPH MOORE;  
 " County Surveyor, LEWIS LANIER.

On motion it was  
*Resolved*, That these proceedings be published in the Florida *Peninsular*.

After the passage of this Resolution J. K. GLOVER made an eloquent speech in defense of the principles of the Party.

The meeting then adjourned *sine die*.  
 L. G. LESLIE, Ch'n.  
 D. A. BRANCH, Sec'y.

## Proceedings of the Alafia Convention, held on the 15th. Sept. '55.

On motion of B. J. Hagler, F. M. Durrance was called to the Chair, and H. L. Mitchell acted as secretary. The President explained the object of the meeting, in a brief and appropriate manner.

The Districts were represented by the following Delegates, to wit:—

Dis. No. 1.—B. J. Hagler, A. N. Pacotty & H. L. Mitchell.

2nd. Not represented.

3rd.—John B. Raulerson, William Wiggins & Wm. H. McDonald.

4th.—Daniel Stone, John Carney and James Alderman.

4th.—Francis M. Durrance, Wm. Parker, & Thomas Ellis.

The following candidates were unanimously nominated.

For Judge of Probate, *Simon Turman, Sr.*  
 " Sheriff, *Henry Parker.*  
 " Clerk, *Joab Griffin.*  
 " Co. Com'rs'rs, *M. C. Brown,*  
*Benj. Moody,*  
*Francis M. Durrance*  
*William Wiggins.*  
 " Surveyor, *Michael Garrison.*

On motion, the meeting adopted the Resolutions of the Anti-K. N. Democratic Meeting, held at Tampa, on the 4th of August last.

On motion, the Secretary was instructed to inform the Candidates of their nomination.

On motion, the proceedings of this meeting, be published in the "Fla. Peninsular."

On motion of Wm. H. McDonald, this meeting adjourn *sine die*.

FRANCIS M. DURRANCE, Ch'n.

H. L. MITCHELL, Sec'y.

## Ratification Meeting.

On the return of the Delegates from the Alafia Convention, the Democratic party met in Mass Meeting at Tampa, on Monday Evening, 17th inst.

After receiving the Committee's report, the following resolutions were unanimously adopted.

*Resolved*,—That we cordially approve of the candidates nominated by the Alafia Convention. That to each and every Delegate of said convention, we tender our thanks, for the satisfactory manner in which they executed the trust reposed in them by the anti-know-nothing democratic party of Hillsboro' county,

*Resolved*,—That whilst we view with regret the abandonment of the sound democratic doctrines, by some of our old associates, it is with sincere pleasure we hold out the right-hand of fellowship to those patriotic whigs, who, rising superior to minor considerations, have joined our ranks to defeat doctrines utterly at war with the fundamental principles of Republican government. Tampa Florida *Peninsular*, September 29, 1855

## HILLSBORO' COUNTY.

The election went off in a very orderly manner. Below we give the result:—

### Judge of Probate,

Simon Turman, Dem., 173  
 Joel L. Lockhart, Am., 134

### Sheriff,

Henry Parker, Dem., 151  
 E. T. Kendrick, Am., 147  
 Oakey Mansfield, Ind't Am., 16  
 S. Phillips, 4

### Clerk Circuit Court,

Joab Griffin, Dem., 159  
 R. H. Hardee, Am., 153

### County Surveyor,

Michael Garrison, Dem., 197  
 Lewis Lanier, Am., 118

### Coroner,

W. R. Moore, Am., 43

### County Commissioners,

M. C. Brown, Dem., 162  
 F. M. Durrance, " 165  
 Benj. Moody, " 171  
 Wm. Wiggins, " 176  
 John T. Givens, Am., 137  
 J. P. McMullen, " 144  
 Joel Knight, " 138  
 Joseph Moore, " 120

All the Democratic candidates are elected—there being no nominee for Coroner.



## War Closed!!

VOLUNTEERS TO BE DISCHARGED!!

Gen'l B. Bowlegs and Principal Chiefs  
Departed for the West!

HEAD QUARTERS DEP'T OF FLA. }  
Ft. Brooke, May 8th, 1858. }  
**General Orders,**  
**No. 4.**

Having proclaimed the Florida war closed, and having ordered the entire Volunteer force under his command to be mustered out of the service of the United States, the Colonel Commanding takes this occasion to say to the forces—Regulars, Volunteers and Boatmen: You have, with untiring zeal and energy, penetrated, in every direction, the swamps and everglades of the country, driving the enemy from their strongholds and hiding places; you have engaged them in several skirmishes and actions, killing more than 40 of their warriors, as acknowledged by the Chief, Billy Bowlegs; you have destroyed their magazines of stores and provisions; you have captured more than forty of their men, women and children; you have rendered them hopeless of remaining any longer with safety in the country, thereby preparing them for, and greatly facilitating their peaceful emigration, by the delegation under Colonel Rector, Sup. Indian Affairs. For all these services, the Col. Commanding gives you his sincere thanks, and would further state, for your gratification, that the joy of the captive women and children, upon being restored to their friends on board the steamer "Gray Cloud," was deeply affecting and overpowering to many among them, even Billy Bowlegs himself.

By order of Colonel Loomis.

THEO. TALBOT,

1st Lt. 1st Art'y, A. A. Adj't Gen'l.

The following interesting Indian intelligence is from Maj. F. N. Page, late Adjutant Gen'l. and of course, reliable.

BOCA GRANDA, May 5th, 1858.

"On the 30th ult, the U. S. steamer *Gray Cloud*, arrived at Fort Myers prepared to emigrate the Indians, which through the untiring exertions on the part of the peaceful commissionary in Florida, had been collected at that place. We found the *Ranger* still absent down the coast, conveying a portion of the delegation, with some of Billy's men in pursuit of the boat party. Col. Garrett was still absent with Halleck Tustenuggee, on a mission to old Sam Jones' people. On the morning of the 1st, the *Ranger* arrived without finding any traces of the Boat party, although a thorough search was made by Billy's men in boats, where they supposed they were to be found. This Boat party, has not been seen by any of Billy's

men for five months.

On the night of the 2d, Col. Garret returned bringing with him three of Sam Jones' men with their families, 9 in all.

Sam Jones in person had removed off, positively refusing to have any further intercourse, and says, he would not emigrate for two wagon loads of money. Some of his men and women, followed those of his party, leaving their camps, and ridiculed them for selling themselves for money!—On the arrival of Col. Garrett at Fort Myers, Col. Rector gave notice that on the morning of the 4th, the Indians intending to emigrate, should be ready to embark in time to leave the same day. At an early hour on the morning of the 4th inst, all the hostiles, then at Fort Myers, together with the delegation, embarked, the payment commenced and at 11 o'clock we were under way steaming down the River, with 122 hostile Indians, men women and children, on board.

"The number of hostile Indians emigrating voluntarily, is 125, and in addition to the captives, 105, all told, will be taken from Florida.

The Indians left in the country are now in three parties; 1st, the Boatmen, numbering 12 warriors and one boy capable of bearing arms. This party Billy leaves with reluctance, and asserts, positively, that if they could have been found they would have emigrated willingly: He hopes that they will not be killed, and says they will notice a white flag. He says, further, Sam Jones is a fool and he does not care what becomes of him. 2d, Sam Jones' party, numbering 17 men with their families, including Sam Jones; of these, are 5 old men and 12 warriors. Sam Jones' party originally numbered 21 warriors—4 of them are on board. 3d, the Tallahasseees. The strength of this party is not accurately known, but, from all the information received, numbers 8 warriors with their families. Billy says he has not seen these Indians for five years.

Of the 105 Indians emigrating, there are 38 men and boys capable of bearing arms, and claimed by Billy to be 15 years and over; besides these, two negroes capable of bearing arms, and, probably, more belligerent than the hostile Indians. The remainder—127—are women and children (boys and girls.)

"If Col. Rector is successful in getting this number out of the country, (and if they get away they will have to swim ashore) the number of Indians remaining in Florida may be summed up as follows—and this data is obtained from the most authentic sources practicable:—

"Sam Jones' party 17—of this number—5 are old men. Boat party, with no Chief 13,—of this number one boy capable of bearing arms. Tallahasseees—but, as reported from various sources, certainly not over 8,—making 38 warriors with their families left in Florida.

"I omitted to mention that the father of

one of the Boat party is on board, and that several others of this party are his relations—nephews and neices. He confirms Billy's statement that, if found, this party would certainly come in. He exhibits great anxiety for their safety. We are lying here weather-bound and in bad luck. Had the weather favored us we would have been at Egmont this morning, 5th."

The *Gray Cloud* arrived at Egmont 6 p. m., on the 6th, with all safe on board.—Ed.

### EGMONT KEY.

In anticipation of the arrival and departure of Gen'l Billy Bowlegs and party from Egmont Key, the Col. commanding and officers at Ft. Brooke, determined on having a final interview with him, left this place in the U. S. steamer *Ranger*, Capt. Jno. Montes DeOca, on the morning of the 5th inst. The signal gun for departure, as expressed in our invitation, was fired at 7½ a. m., when, all being in readiness, our commodious steamer left the wharf. We found, on board, Col. Loomis, Commanding Army in Florida, Col. Thomas, Inspector General, Maj. McKinstry, Q. M. Department, Maj. Leonard, Pay Department, and Lieut. Talbot, Ass't Adj't Gen'l, Capts. McNeill and Kendrick, Fla. M. V.s, Col. Rutherford, with a part of the Indian Delegation, several citizens, and ladies from the Garrison and Town, making in all a very respectable assemblage, and a proper representation from the Army and City, to receive the august and fallen King of the Seminoles: The day was auspicious—calm, clear and delightful. On nearing Gadsden's Point, the wind veered from S. to S. W., and blew just enough to cause an undulating movement on our steamer. At 11 a. m. we arrived in full view of Egmont, and finding the non-arrival of the *Gray Cloud*, bore away for Manatee, passing up as far as the plantation of Maj. Gamble, and in turning, fired a blank cartridge from our sloop piece; the reverberating echo awakened but one individual, throughout the village. He evidently, to make amends for the tardiness of his neighbors, waved gallantly a large palmetto fan. On nearing the residence of Madame Joe, the ladies, by a *visa voce*, voted, determined on a recess, and our craft was, in a few moments, snugly moored along side her little wharf, and the whole passenger force flocked gladly on shore. The ladies were duly cared for by this hospitable lady, and greeted with soft music from her fair daughter.—After partaking refreshment and plucking some flowers, returned on board, and landed at Egmont at 3 p. m. Col. Rutherford with his delegation was taken ashore, and the expected steamer still not in view, determined our party to return to Tampa, for the night, at which we arrived at 8 p. m. determined previously to meet again on board at 7, the the next day.

May 6th.—Punctual to the hour, our party came on board, except Maj. Leonard and lady. The day proved fine, and in four hours, anchored at Egmont Light house. No boat as yet in sight, various causes and conjectures were assigned as to the detention of the *Gray Cloud*. The party landed and visited the newly erected Light house, which, for beauty, symmetry and mechanical construction, cannot be excelled on our whole coast. The Indian prisoners were in good health, and seemed to enjoy themselves. Some persons on the Light-house discovered smoke to the southward, which was watched with much attention, until near a point some 8 mile distant, when the *Gray Cloud* opened in full view. "Fire up," was the order,—a heavy column of smoke ascended from our chimneys; and in an incredible short time, we were on our way to meet the boat, thronged with passengers. As we neared the outer bar, the heavy sea, caused our steamer to roll as she rounded to under the stern of the *Gray Cloud*, and the roar of Art'y, ringing of bells, and the shrill whistle of the engines, waving flags,—three hearty cheers were given and returned, presenting a scene, that will long be remembered with pride. On nearing the Key our boats were lashed side by side and in a few moments were ushered into the presence of Bowlegs, surrounded by the *War Spirits* of his nation, Col. Rector, Maj. Garrett, Maj. Page, and Cap Kilburn, appeared well pleased, and soon the sparkling wine was pledged to the success of the Indian delegation. Near the captive women and children from the Key came on board. The deep anxiety betrayed by them as they watched the deck, the long estranged mother clasped her child, while others wildly shrieked for the loss of kindred, the low wail of desecrated grief—stern warriors bowed to the mark of affliction, and the scalding sympathetic tear was seen to fall, as we turned from the scene.

May 7th.—At 11 a. m., the *Gray Cloud* parted from us, bearing Billy Bowlegs with all the principal Chiefs and war spirits of the nation, amid the booming of Artillery, and deafening shouts from those on board.

Space and time will not allow us to give a more extended notice of this event. We stand committed that *the war is over*—that hostilities ought to cease until the return of Billy from Arkansas, for reasons we will assign in our next issue. One remarkable coincidence we will mention—that the boat conveying Billy and his party, carried also the remains of his friend the lamented Capt. Casey, to the last resting place among his friends. Billy ever expressed that Capt. C. was an honest and good man—a truthful tribute. We arrived at Tampa 5 p. m., after enjoying one of the most delightful and exciting excursions it has ever been our lot to enjoy.

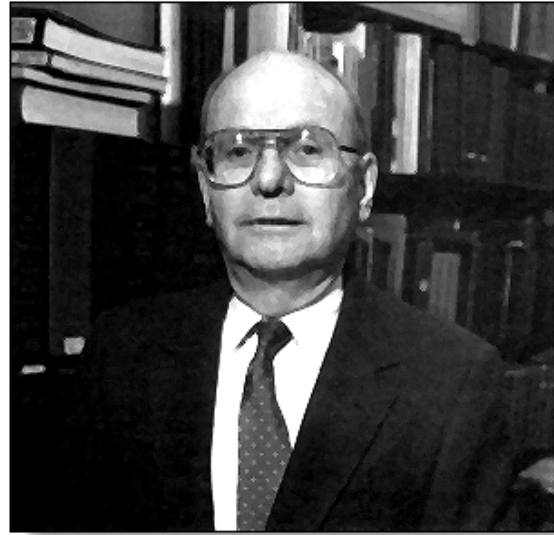
Tampa Florida Peninsular, May 8, 1858

## 1992 D.B. McKAY AWARD WINNER: JULIUS JEFFERSON GORDON

Julius Jefferson Gordon, 66, a native of Arcadia who grew up in Zephyrhills and Haines City, is the recipient of the 1992 D.B. McKay Award. He attended the University of Alabama and was there when he entered the U.S. Army during World War II. After the war he returned to Alabama but then transferred to Trinity University in San Antonio, Texas. He received his undergraduate degree in history and biology and became a manager for Roadway Express, a freight trucking firm. He later entered city government in San Antonio, "always in the finance division." Gordon first worked in purchasing, then internal auditing, then became chief accountant and finally city treasurer.

He retired in 1983 and later decided to return to Florida, moving to Tampa in 1987. "I knew nothing about my family until I started my research here," said Gordon. On his mother's side he is descended from the Pelhams, an early pioneer Florida family. Beginning with research at the Hillsborough County Historical Commission he wound up writing three volumes-1780 pages of biographical data, supporting documents, photographs, etc., on the Pelham family.

Other projects have included *Biographical Census of Hillsborough County, 1850*, which contains 457 biographical sketches of pioneer citizens in a book of 772 pages; also seven volumes on volunteers who served in Florida units during the Third Seminole War. He has authored a *Study on Free Blacks in Florida, 1850-1860*, and has compiled two volumes on *Oaklawn Cemetery and St. Louis Catholic Cemetery: Biographical and Historical Gleanings*. His



**Julius J. Gordon**

Staebler photo  
Courtesy of **Tampa Tribune**

most recent project is an indexing of the early Tampa newspaper, the *Florida Peninsular*, from 1855-1861 and 1866-1871. He is now working on indexing the *Sunland Tribune* newspaper. Gordon doesn't sell his volumes, he makes copies and gives them to area libraries and the Florida State Archives.

Along with Lester Olson, Arsenio Sanchez and others, Gordon has become personally involved with the upkeep and upgrading of the historic Oaklawn Cemetery. He checks the cemetery every few days for vandalism, fallen limbs and trash. He has hired labor-pool help to come in and "police" the grounds on Saturdays. He has personally paid for repairs to dozens of tombstones and keeps the Constantino Monument people busy, trying to stay ahead of the vandals who tip over and desecrate the memorials to Tampa's pioneer families.

Gordon says he would like to see Oaklawn declared a historic site with old-fashioned street lights illuminating the place. He believes events should be held there regularly to focus attention on the cemetery's heritage. He assisted Arsenio Sanchez in staging this year's Oaklawn Cemetery Ramble.

Congratulations to Jeff Gordon: historian, researcher and "Conservator of Oaklawn Cemetery."

## **D.B. McKAY AWARD RECIPIENTS**

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  
1978 Hampton Dunn  
1979 William M. Goza  
1980 Tony Pizzo  
1981 Allen and Joan Morris  
1982 Mel Fisher  
1983 Marjory Stoneman Douglas  
1984 Frank Garcia  
1985 Former Gov. Leroy Collins  
1986 Dr. Samuel Proctor  
1987 Doyle E. Carlton, Jr.  
1988 Leland M. Hawes, Jr.  
1989 U.S. Rep. Charles E. Bennett  
1990 Joan W Jennewein  
1991 Gary R. Mormino  
1992 Julius J. Gordon



## MEET THE AUTHORS



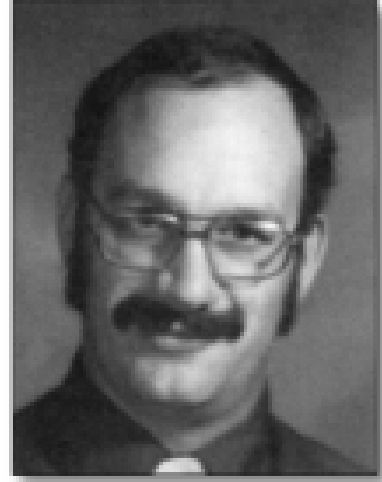
**FRAZIER**

**NORMA GOOLSBY FRAZIER** is a native Floridian, born in 1936 in the early settlement of Peru, Florida which then existed on the south bank of the Alafia River. She is a descendant of the pioneer Goolsby, Hendrix, Tyner, and Purvis families and makes her home on the Goolsby family property purchased shortly after the turn of the century. Norma retired from the Hillsborough County School Board in 1989, serving for the previous 11 1/2 years as Executive Secretary to the Director of Administration of Hillsborough County Schools. Prior to that time, she was associated with Brandon State Bank (now Sun Bank of Tampa Bay) as Executive Secretary to Charles Westfall who retired as bank president. Business courses completed during her career, including banking, word processing and computer skills. While at Brandon State Bank, she served as correspondent for the *Brandon News* for 12 years, with her writings including articles of historical interest regarding early churches, people, places, and events.



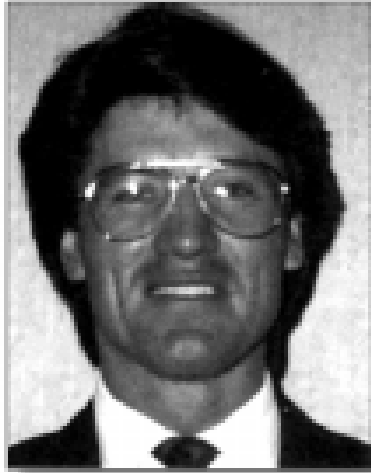
**GOOCH**

**TERESA M. GOOCH** received her B.S. degree magna cum laude in Business Administration in 1986 from Georgetown College Georgetown, Kentucky. She received her M.A. degree in Education: Economics and History, in 1989 from the University of Kentucky. She has received the State and National Award from joint Council on Economic Education-Development of Economic Education Unit. Ms. Gooch is currently employed at Valvoline, Inc., in Lexington, Kentucky.



**KNETSCH**

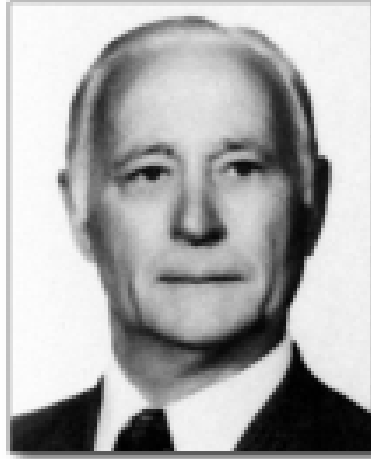
**ELINOR KIMMEL** received her B.A. in history and is currently attending the University of South Florida in pursuit of a second B.A. in Classics and a Florida Teacher's Certificate in Latin. She spent 15 years in banking operations management and in addition to attending USF full-time, she works fulltime as an accountant. A resident of Tampa since 1969, she became interested in busing in Hillsborough County



**MEYER**

when she was a high school sophomore in 1971.

**DR. JOE KNETSCH** was born in Galesburg, Michigan and received his Bachelor of Science degree from Western Michigan University. Moving to Florida in 1969, he taught high school at North Fort Myers Sr. High and proceeded to Florida Atlantic University where he received his Masters of Arts degree (history) in 1974. During and after his days at EA.U., he taught at Broward Community College, Florida Atlantic University and in the Broward County School system (and at two private schools in Southeast Florida). After serving on the Broward County Historical Commission and on the Board of Directors for the Broward County Classroom Teachers Association, he left the county to work on a Ph.D. at Florida State University. While working on his degree, he taught at Tallahassee Community College and Florida State University and began his current career with the State. He received his degree in 1990 and has continued to work for the Florida Department of Natural Resources as a Senior Management Analyst 11. His primary function with the Department is to research Florida's history for early methods



**SANCHEZ**

of transportation on and the usage of Florida's waterbodies. He has recently been president of the Tallahassee/Leon Historical Society, a member of the Board of Directors for the Florida Historical Society and is currently vice-president of the newly formed Tallahassee Civil War Roundtable. He is married to the former Linda Drexel of Sarasota and lives in Tallahassee.

**THOMAS H. MEYER** was born in Patchogue, NY, in 1962, and grew up in Hanson, MA. He has lived in Tampa since 1982, and married Elisabeth Hamilton of Sarasota in 1989. He received his B.A. in Political Science from the University of South Florida in August, 1992, and is planning to attend law school.

**ARSENIO M. SANCHEZ**, a member of the Tampa Historical Society since 1981, is a native of West Tampa. He attended West Tampa Academy of the Holy Names, Jesuit High School and graduated from Plant High in 1937. He served in the Navy during World War 11 and graduated from the University of Florida in 1951. Sanchez was employed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture until he retired in 1978.



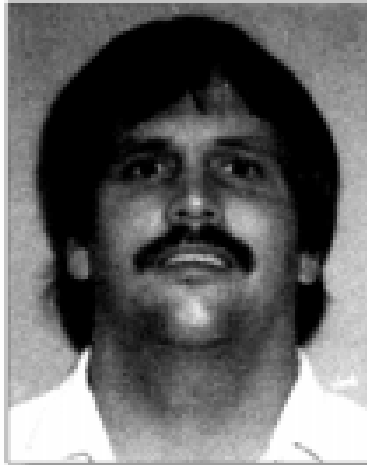
**SAUNDERS**



**SCAGLIONE**

**ROBERT W. SAUNDERS**, a native of Tampa, received his B.A. degree from Detroit Institute of Technology. He also attended the University of Detroit Law School. In 1952 he became NAACP Field Secretary for Florida, following the murder of Harry T. Moore. He was NAACP Field Director until 1966 when he became chief of the office of civil rights for the Office of Economic Opportunity in Atlanta. He continued in that position until 1976 when he returned to Tampa to establish and head Hillsborough County's Office of Economic Opportunity. In 1987 he became executive assistant to the County Administrator and retired in 1988. He was instrumental in the adoption of affirmative action programs and the human rights ordinance in Hillsborough County.

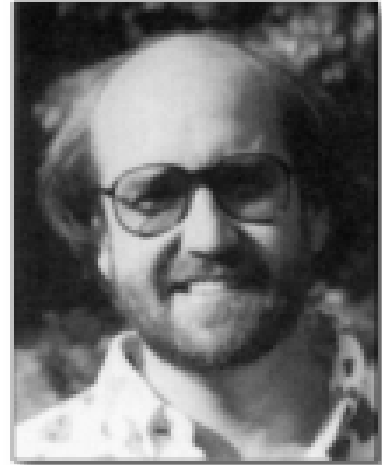
**JOE SCAGLIONE**. Born in Tampa's Ybor City in 1950, Joe Scaglione holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in history from the University of South Florida. Past President of The Greater Tampa Gas Association, as well as a union local, Scaglione was employed by Peoples Gas System, Inc., for almost twenty years. Married to Cassandra Moran



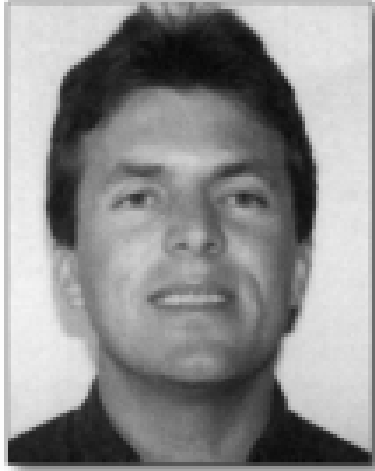
**SCHNUR**

Scaglione since 1969, the author is a life-long resident of the area and currently resides in Temple Terrace. Composer, musician and writer, Scaglione's primary historical interests include Cuban and Florida history. The author has recently concluded research and written a study examining the impact of Cubans in the Miami area prior to the Cuban Revolution. Another recent work looks at leisure time and pop culture in the Tampa Bay area circa 1900. Scaglione's family worked in the cigar factories from the turn of the century well into the 1930's, thus stimulating his interest in the cigar industry here.

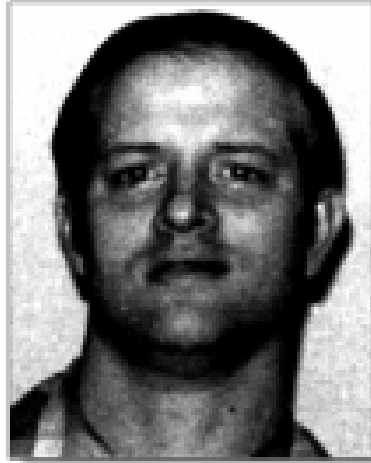
**JAMES A. SCHNUR**, a native of St. Petersburg, attended the University of Tampa before receiving his B.A. from the University of South Florida in 1988. After winning the undergraduate award for best essay in Florida history from the Florida Historical Society in 1989, he won the graduate equivalent known as the LeRoy Collins Prize from the Society in both 1991 and 1992. He is currently a graduate student in history at USF, and plans to work as an archivist or professor of library science upon graduation.



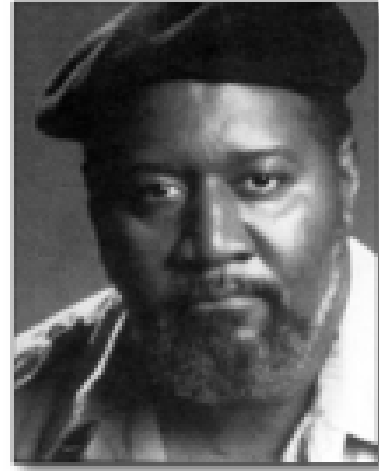
**SHARPE**



**SINGLETARY**



**STONE**



**TOKLEY**

**CLIFFORD C. (KIP) SHARPE** is a Mobile, Alabama attorney, and considered a leading historian on southeastern breweries. Currently he is working on a book covering southeastern breweries. Mr. Sharpe would welcome hearing from anyone having information or artifacts. He can be reached at 3249 Autumn Ridge Dr. W., Mobile, Alabama, 36695. (205) 666-6222.

**WES SINGLETARY** was born and raised in Tampa, Florida, attending both Hillsborough and Land O' Lakes High Schools. Upon being discharged from the United States Air Force, he began college in Cheyenne, Wyoming, and subsequently transferred to the Florida State University where he earned a B.S. in Political Science. Wes is presently finishing work on a M.A. in History at Florida State and plans to pursue a Doctorate in that field. Furthering his interest in the History of Sport, he recently presented a paper on the life of *Jack Roosevelt Robinson*, to the 1992 Graduate History Forum at the University of North Carolina Charlotte. The paper emphasized Robinson's role as leader among Black Americans. Wes is married to the former Toni Zarate of Cheyenne, Wyoming. They

have been happily married for eleven years and make their home in Tallahassee.

**SPESSARD STONE** was born in Clewiston in 1944. He is a descendant of the pioneer Stone and Hendry families of Florida. He was reared in Hardee County and in 1960 suffered a broken neck in a diving accident, resulting in quadriplegia paralysis. Spessard is accounts receivable clerk for S & S Irrigation. He is author of *John and William Sons of Robert Hendry*, a Hendry genealogy; *The Stone Family*, *Thonotosassa Pioneers*, and *Lineage of John Carlton*, as well as numerous historical articles and biographical sketches for various publications. He lives in Wauchula and his hobbies are reading and Florida history.

**JAMES E. TOKLEY** received his B.A. in English from Delaware State College, Dover, Delaware. He has also received a M.Ed. in English from Temple University and a M.A. in English from the University of South Florida. He is currently pursuing two doctoral degrees. He is President and Principal Trainer for Tokley and Associates in Tampa. Mr. Tokley has been a Facilitator in Cultural Diversity/Human Relations Workshops for various entities in the Tampa

Bay Area. He has been an English instructor, host/commentator for a local television program and is an author, researcher and poet.

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## CORRECTION

Sunland Tribune, Vol. XVII, Nov. 1991; "Tampa's Forgotten Defenders: The Confederate Commanders of Fort Brooke," by Zack Waters. On page 11, it is incorrectly stated that Union troops occupied Tampa May 5, 1864. The correct date was May 6. Union troops left Tampa May 7, 1864. The article states that Union troops reoccupied the city, May 15, 1864 and remaining a month, citing *Tampa*, by Karl Grismer; See. pp. 148, 301. However, all other available evidence indicates Union troops did not reoccupy Tampa until the war's end, in May, 1865. See "Ft. Brooke Reservation Here One of Great Area, *Tampa Times*, Jan. 25,1934; "Civil War End Came in Tampa 125 Years Ago," *Tampa Tribune*, May 27, 1990.