

The Lower East Coast, 1870-1890

By W. T. CASH

The lower east coast of Florida, as discussed in this paper, in 1870 included the counties of Brevard, Dade and Monroe, including all of Lake Okeechobee. As all students of Florida know, there are more than twice that many counties in this area now but the additional ones have been created by various Florida legislatures in 1887 and since.

The total area of this section in 1870 was 14,130 square miles of which Brevard had 3,940, Dade 4,424 and Monroe, 5,766¹ The population of the three counties by the Federal census of 1870 was 6,958, including Monroe, 5,657; Brevard 1,216; and Dade 85. These figures evidently did not include such Indians as lived in the area.

The total assessed valuation of the property in the three counties was \$1,916,713, of which Monroe's was \$1,651,728; Brevard's \$240,000; and Dade's \$14,935.²

The United States census of 1870 reported Brevard as producing 38,650 bushels of corn, 38,700 of sweet potatoes, 4,000 of peas and beans, 6,450 pounds of rice and one hogshead of sugar; Monroe, 685 bushels of corn but no other crop; and Dade, no agricultural productions. The same census gave Brevard 69,390 head of cattle, 4,550 of hogs and 340 horses and mules. Monroe was given 14,706 head of cattle, but no other livestock; and from Dade nothing was reported.

Monroe County, the only one listed in the census of manufacturers, reported 29 manufacturing establishments with an invested capital of \$273,050. These paid their 300 hands \$215,700 and their total product was valued at \$612,050. Cigars were the principal product, but prior to the Civil War much salt was made. The salt-making industry was revived in 1871, but was put out of business by a hurricane in 1876, after which there was no attempt to revive it.

The lower east coast in 1870 presented a sorry educational picture. There were no schools in Brevard County and 305 of its 357 children of legal school age could neither read nor write. Three of Dade's 13 children of legal age attended school—doubtless outside the county—but only one could read or write. Of Monroe's 1,025 children of school age only 459 attended school and there were 802 who could neither read nor write.³

At this time both Brevard and Dade were without churches, though the citizens may have occasionally heard traveling preachers. Monroe had one

Baptist church with a seating capacity of 150; one Episcopal, seating 400; one Roman Catholic, seating 300; and three Methodist, seating 1,000. Valuation placed upon all church property was \$38,500.⁴

At the beginning of 1870 Key West had one newspaper—the *Dispatch*, founded by W. C. Maloney, Jr., in 1867. During 1870 Mr. R. E. Neeld founded the *Guardian*, a very short-lived paper.⁵

Why did this section, now so well known throughout the English-speaking world, and to quite an extent in other areas, go unnoticed so long? As a matter of fact a few persons, who might be regarded as visionaries today, had dreamed of its possibilities and a few had attempted to put foundations under the air castles they had built.

Dr. Andrew Turnbull may have been the first one. While his large land grant of 1767 was mainly within the present Volusia County, it did include a small part of what is now Brevard. Some very recent maps still list "Turnbull," a community about nine miles northeast of Titusville, and this neighborhood is doubtless near the southern end of the Turnbull holdings. Had the Turnbull colony not been broken up by disturbances related in most Florida histories, northern Brevard might have been a prosperous section when the United States took possession of Florida in 1821.

Although the writer has no proof to substantiate it, one is led to infer that Captain Pedro Marrot, Spanish surveyor general of East Florida, 1791-1800, had examined if not surveyed what we now know as Merritt's Island some time before the end of the eighteenth century. This island still bore his name when the United States land commissioners in 1823 were examining claims to land in East Florida.⁶ One man who early became interested in Merritt's Island was John H. McIntosh, a Georgian who had a number of run-ins with the Spanish authorities between 1790 and 1821. McIntosh supported his claim before the land commissioners on occupancy about 1804 to 1806. The evidence offered was that two of his slaves lived on the island for two years, but it was brought out that as soon as some white squatters there at the same time left, the blacks got out.⁷

But in 1830, Douglas Dummitt, a true developer, not merely a dreamer, settled on the northern end of the island and planted a 13½ acre orange grove, a few of whose trees were still bearing in 1926. It is asserted by some that the old Indian River oranges were descended from stock obtained from the Dummitt grove.⁸

In 1808 one John Egan of St. Augustine received a grant of 100 acres of land on the north side of the Sweetwater (now the Miami) River. He soon had it surveyed and, moving his family down, cultivated it for a time. In 1821 James Egan, his son, acquired 640 acres adjoining his father's tract, and

the same year Rebecca Eagan, a widow,⁹ took up 640 acres on the south side of the river. About this time Jonathan Lewis and Polly Lewis each acquired 640-acre tracts still farther south. In 1827 Richard Fitzpatrick of South Carolina purchased the Egan and Lewis lands and, it is claimed, raised cotton and sugar cane on them from 1830 to 1837.¹⁰

Years before Richard Fitzpatrick began agricultural operations on his Miami River estate there were persons up Philadelphia way who dreamed of even bigger achievements than the South Carolinian. On June 7, 1821, The East Florida Coffee Land Association, with some ninety stockholders, was organized in Philadelphia, with the stated purpose of growing coffee, cocoa and such tropical fruits as were adapted to the climate and soil of lower southern Florida. First, needing to obtain the land the stockholders petitioned Congress to sell them 24,000 acres for \$1.25 per acre. The location of the land asked for was described as "Cape Florida, or Key Largo named Monroe's Presque Isle. This peninsula is connected to the mainland by a narrow isthmus or neck of land; (and) is situated between latitude 24 degrees, 56 minutes and 25 degrees, 12 minutes".

Notwithstanding the glowing hopes held out by the petitioners as to the benefits the United States would get from coffee growing, Congress turned them down.¹¹

The next attempt to secure a grant of land, although it took years of knocking at Congressional doors, was more successful than that of the Coffee Land Association. As early as 1832, Dr. Henry Perrine, a native of New Jersey, but from 1821 to 1827 a resident of Natchez, Mississippi, became interested in securing a grant of land within the limits of the present Dade County to use as a tropical plant introducing station. Dr. Perrine's interest was first aroused as early as 1827, soon after he was appointed United States consul to Campeche in Mexico. Noting many plants in that area that he believed could be grown with benefit to his country within the limits of the present Dade County, he early sought a grant of land where he could prove his faith. Perrine's activities were noted in Tallahassee, where the acting governor, James D. Westcott in his message to the legislative council, meeting January 2, 1832, recommended that a charter be granted to a community composed of Dr. Perrine and his associates, authorizing them to cultivate tropical exotics.

Notwithstanding Perrine's failure at first to influence Congress he began as early as 1833 to send to Indian Key selected specimens of useful tropical plants and by 1838 had a nursery there of not less than 200 different varieties.

The legislative council of 1838 passed an act, approved by the governor February 8, incorporating the Tropical Plant Company of Florida, with Dr. Perrine, James Webb, District Judge at Key West, and Charles Howe, postmaster at Indian Key, as directors. Congress later the same year made a tentative grant of a township of land within Dade County to Dr. Perrine and the above named associates.¹²

Dr. Perrine lost his life during the Indian massacre at Indian Key, August 7, 1840,¹³ and this was the sad end of his tropical plant experiment in Dade County.

"The earliest recorded data about Key West" says Judge Jefferson B. Browne in his "Key West, the Old and the New," "is to be found in a grant of the island of Cayo Hueso on August 26, 1815, by Don Juan Estrada, the then Spanish governor of Florida (East Florida is correct), to Juan Pablo Salas."

Judge Brown further tells us that on January 19, 1822, Salas sold the island to John W. Simonton of Mobile for \$2,000. Later Simonton sold most of his purchase to John Warner, United States consul at Havana, John Mountain, United States commercial agent at Havana, John Whitehead and John W. C. Fleeming.¹⁴

Many persons, probably more from South Carolina than any other state, soon made purchases from the original buyers of Cayo Hueso, or Key West, and by 1829, it had sufficient population to secure legislative incorporation. By 1850 it had become the largest town in Florida.

Between 1870 and 1880 Monroe County's population grew from 5,657 to 10,940, nearly doubling, but in Dade and Brevard the increase was less striking. It is true that the increase in Dade County from 85 persons to 257 was nearly 300 per cent, but this was no great growth, considering its small number to begin with. Brevard's was not greatly above what might have been expected from the natural increase.

What makes this the more surprising is the big expectations some people had. An act of Congress, approved July 2, 1862, provided that an agricultural college should be established in every state, each to receive land scrip sufficient to put its college in operation. To secure a college for Florida under the Federal act, the legislature of 1870 passed an act, approved February 18, that year, establishing the Florida Agricultural College, and another, approved February 19, authorizing the governor to receive from the Federal government the state's share of the land scrip. The college was incorporated two years later, but no location for it was chosen.

A failure of certain Alachua County persons to raise the money promised to get the college located in their county gave William H. Gleason, first lieutenant governor of Florida under the constitution of 1868, his change to advance the value of the large acreage of land he had acquired in Brevard County. In a letter to the trustees, dated April 10, 1875, Gleason offered to give them 2,320 acres of land if they would locate the college in the village of Eau Gallie. The trustees accepted the Gleason offer and on May 18, 1875, employed John Varnum, former state treasurer and now treasurer of the college,¹⁵ "to proceed to Eau Gallie and begin at once the work of clearing and laying out the land necessary for the erection of buildings that will serve for the educational uses of the college . . . , and he is granted plenary authority to use such measures as in his discretion may seem best in the shortest possible time and in the most economical manner will give shelter and accommodation to such scholars and teachers as may resort to the college, and in the exercise of such discretion, it is recommended to him that, if it is not deemed good to begin the erection of the main college, then he erect somewhere upon the college lands wherever it can be most economically done, a substantial temporary building that will suffice for the necessary uses of the college at first . . ."¹⁶

On December 31, 1876, Varnum made a report to Honorable W. W. Hicks, state Superintendent of Public Instruction and ex-officio President of the Board of College Trustees, which stated in part:

"I began work at Eau Gallie in May, 1875, and after infinite discouragement finished the work proposed.

"The college building was completed about December 1st. It is built of cut coquina stone, thirty-five by sixty-five feet, two stories high, and contains ten rooms and a hall. It is made fire proof by stone partitions between all the rooms. The roof is covered with tin. The walls are plastered and the woodwork painted and grained. A dormitory of two rooms, a tool-house and other out-buildings have been provided, and the town lot on which the building stands is surrounded by a picket fence. The building is, in my opinion, well adapted to the use for which it is designed, a temporary college edifice; and it will be of use for other purposes when the permanent buildings shall have been erected.

"An avenue nearly two miles long, and various cross streets about the buildings have been opened and are in good condition for travel. An avenue has also been opened from Indian (probably "river" should have been added) to Lake Washington, a distance of six miles. It passes through the college lands, greatly improving their market value.

"The college is provided with a fine pair of mules, double and single harnesses, a wagon, cart, light and heavy plows, wheel-barrows, a harrow, a great variety of farming and carpenters' tools; a kitchen stove and utensils, beds and bedding, tables, chairs and forms, a set of Fairbanks scales, a handsome sloop-rigged yacht boat and a skiff."

Varnum stated further that "Professor Hill is now at work clearing and fencing the park, which he will plant with vines and fruit trees. It lies upon an eastern slope touching the river, and is covered with stately groves of palmettoes, oaks and pines. College Place is opposite the park and is destined as the site of the permanent college buildings."¹⁷

One would have thought that Gleason's big dream was about to be realized.

Unfortunately for the former Republican lieutenant governor, the Democrats won the election of 1876 and the Democratic Assembly of 1877 took a step to beat Gleason's game if that is the right word for it.

A legislative act approved March 7, 1877, in section 4 read as follows: "It is hereby further enacted, That the said Board of Trustees (a new board had been created by the act) provided for and established by this act *shall have power to remove said agricultural college on Indian River in Brevard county,*¹⁸ to any point that in their judgment will be for the best interest of the State of Florida; Provided, That the point which may be selected for its location shall be easily accessible, and as near the center of the State as possible."

It seems very likely that the legislative act of 1877 authorizing the newly named trustees for the Agricultural College to move it from Eau Gallie put an end to the operation of the institution there. On page 88 of *Florida of Today*, J. Wood Davidson (N. Y., Appleton, 1889), speaking of Eau Gallie mentions "its State Agricultural College building as a monument of reconstruction sham and of Gleason."

In 1876 a company of which E. Hopkins was president, W. H. Churchill, superintendent, and S. J. Fox, treasurer, opened a railroad from Titusville to Salt Lake, connecting with the St. Johns River. Its length was 8.25 miles but no report of its operations was ever made to the publisher of *Poor's Railroad Manual*, from whence this writer has obtained his information. Apparently this road was about 1882 merged with the Atlantic Coast, St. Johns and Indian River Railway and extended to Enterprise on the St. Johns River. By 1886 it had been leased to the Jacksonville, Tampa and Key West Railway, whose principal office was in Jacksonville.

Many travelers visited the three counties herein discussed during the 1870-1880 decade. One of these was Sidney Lanier, the famous Georgia poet, who after visiting Dade County in 1874 wrote:

“There are settlements in Dade County at the mouth of the Miami River, along Biscayne Bay and at Key Biscayne, the latter being the county-site . . . A railway (‘the Great Southern’) has already been projected to run from Jessup, Georgia (the intersection of the Atlantic and Gulf Railroad with the Macon and Brunswick) to Jacksonville, and thence down the center of the Biscayne Bay and Barnes Sound.”¹⁹

F. Trench Townshend, a British captain, who took a hunting trip to Florida in 1874, was not too favorably impressed with the lower east coast, or, in fact, with any other part of the state he visited. Of Key West he said, “The principal occupation of the inhabitants is sponging, turtling and wrecking. The Cubans settled in Key West are largely employed in the manufacture of cigars of which there are about fifteen factories in the island. The leaf, which is grown in Cuba, or supposed to be so, is rolled at these factories into cigars, which are very good, though inferior to the genuine Havana in everything except the price. The other industries of the island consist in (‘of’ is better) a factory for canning pine-apples, which are grown on some of the keys, and extensive salt works where 3,000 bushels are annually made by solar evaporation.”

In later paragraphs Captain Townshend discusses the lazy negroes, the general monotony of the town and the high prices. He evidently was not charmed much by what he saw.

Nor was he impressed by Miami, of which he said in part:

“Throughout Florida, the settlement of Miami, on Biscayne Bay, is represented as a sort of terrestrial paradise, cultivated like the garden of Eden, where fruit of the tropics grows luxuriantly, where magnificent scenery delights the eye, and fever and death are unknown. . . . A great objection to settling in Miami is its location, the only communication with the outside world being by a little mail-cutter which sails twice a month to and from Key West, but a greater objection still, in my opinion, are the winged insects. . . . A great deal is said by Florida land agents about Biscayne being made the terminus of a railway to be constructed from Jacksonville via the town of Enterprise and St. John’s River to Miami, and thence along from key to key on tressel work as far as Key West, so as to convey the trade of the West Indies and South America through Florida to the North. Beyond the fact that the track is marked in the maps of Florida, published at Jacksonville, there is no reason to suppose that such a line is ever likely to be built as long as Florida remains in her present bankrupt and impoverished condition.”²⁰

Ralph Middleton Munroe, lovingly called "the commodore" by his friends, who first visited Biscayne Bay in 1877—three years after Captain Townshend—fell in love with the beauties of the region round about, making intermittent stays till 1885 when he became a permanent resident.²¹

One of the most interesting characters coming to the Indian River section in the early 70's (he was certainly there by 1874) was Colonel H. T. Titus, who was soon after sufficiently prominent to get his own name applied to the little Sand Point settlement, which has ever since been called "Titusville". Captain Townshend said Titus had made everybody his enemy, but admitted that tourists who stayed at the Titus Hotel claimed it was the only house worthy of the name in the settlement.²²

It is possible that in spite of the hope of getting the state agricultural college for Eau Gallie and the building in 1876 of a railroad from Titusville to the St. Johns River, settling of the Indian River section was long held up by tales of the ferocity of the mosquitoes. A correspondent of the *Rural Carolinian* in 1873, as quoted in Sixth Annual Report of the Commissioner of Lands and Immigration, paid his respects to those tales saying:

"The many fabulous stories, which have been told of the insects of the Indian River Country are mainly the results of the wonderful growth which such hearsay tales are wont to make in the fertile minds of imaginative narrators as they pass from lip to lip. I was so dismayed by these exaggerations as I first passed up the St. John River, on my way to the Indian River, that had I not been ashamed to turn back, I should probably have never seen what I consider the most beautiful, fertile and healthy country of which I have any knowledge. I remained there during the winter of 1868 and the summer following, clearing and planting in a hammock. Some orange trees which I then planted have ripe fruit on them now. I have revisited the country since and am now about to make it my home, satisfied that the insects will not seriously interfere with the comfort of myself or family. . . . It is being demonstrated that not only the wild beast, the Indian and the pioneer can stand the insects, but the delicate women and children are happy and contented in their new homes, and hopeful in prospect of the golden harvest of the future."

The *Carolinian* writer did not deny that mosquitoes existed along the Indian River but said they "are smaller and more frail and clumsy than those found in Georgia. The gallinippers and blind mosquitoes of the St. Johns River are never found here."²³

The counties of Brevard and Monroe played their parts in the political life of the times. Judge Jefferson B. Browne told the writer that it was owing to the activities of Jephtha V. Harris of Monroe County that the first primary

election of Florida was held. This was in 1876 and prior to that time, according to Judge Browne, a clique or group of political leaders, in Monroe County, "the best people," got together in election years and nominated the most suitable candidates for representatives and state senator (the only state and county officials they were allowed to vote for except constables).²⁴

Dr. Harris²⁵ wanted to represent Monroe County and as he knew the old crowd of "best people" didn't want him, kept agitating the matter of leaving nominations to all the people so much that a primary was the final outcome. Dr. Harris won both nominations and election, though many were opposed to him. This Dr. Harris was a Mississippian recently moved to Florida, first settling in Dade County, where he acquired an interest in the old Fort Dallas properties.²⁶

The Board of State Canvassers of the election of 1876, two of whom were Republicans, subtracted 401 votes from what the returns showed the Democratic candidates for presidential electors received in Monroe County, charging that their majority of 57 had been won by fraud and violence.²⁷ Apparently the votes of Broward and Dade, together amounting to only 173,²⁸ went uncontested.

After the 1878 Congressional election in the Second District, Brevard County, notwithstanding its small vote, got plenty of notice. It is apparent to the writer that there was nothing less than an attempt to "doctor" the returns in behalf of the Democratic candidate—none other than Noble A. Hull, then serving as lieutenant-governor of Florida, to which position he had been elected in 1876 when George F. Drew was chosen governor. The State Canvassing Board gave the election to Hull by a majority of 13 votes,²⁹ but Brevard's vote was not counted.

Presumably Brevard's vote was left out because the election had been conducted without any attention to law, John M. Lee, clerk of the circuit court of the county, admitted under oath the county commissioners failed to provide any registration books, he himself did not provide them and if either of his deputies prepared any he did not know it. He also said if any such books were furnished election managers it was unknown to him, and that the election managers furnished the ballot boxes themselves. It may be stated here that when Lee gave this testimony he was an inmate of the Federal penitentiary in Albany, N. Y., to which he had been sent for participating in election frauds,³⁰ but the State Canvassing Board doubtless already had the information.

The most interesting person connected with the Brevard election frauds was E. S. Gaulden, a bright young man, whom Florida historians have so far neglected. Born in South Georgia about 1854 or 1855 and receiving a

better than average education at the Bradwell Institute near Savannah, Gaulden apparently moved to Orange County not long after his schooling was completed to seek out such opportunities as might present themselves.

Because of his superior knowledge Gaulden was soon employed as a teacher. But being an ardent Democrat and not too squeamish as to means used to promote his party's success he was soon given political offices in Orange County, where he claimed citizenship, and in neighboring Brevard. His first was special registration clerk of Orange and following this he served as deputy tax assessor, deputy tax collector, deputy sheriff and deputy clerk of the circuit court in Brevard.³¹

Gaulden admitted under oath during the United States court investigation of the 1878 election that he had been an ardent worker for Hull in the campaign and that Hull had promised him a good office and \$1,000.00 for his services. Gaulden also testified that Hull had told him the Republicans were going to perpetrate frauds in some of the counties in order to have a majority on the face of the returns and for the Democrats to win they must fight fraud with fraud. Gaulden further stated that Hull asked him if he (Gaulden) thought Brevard County could be so managed as to give a sufficient Democratic majority to offset any majority the Republicans might get outside, and that he replied with money the county canvassing board could be controlled.

Gaulden swore that he had seen a letter Hull sent Nat Poyntz of Orlando three days after the election which read:

"I inclose a telegram from John A. McRae, dated November 7, 7 P. M., which says Bisbee's majority is 940; Orange, Volusia, Brevard, and Dade to hear from and since Orange and Volusia only give me 738 (I think), it leaves me a few over 200 to come from Brevard and Dade. Do you think those 202 could be had? Would it do any good for you to go to Brevard? I would give anything if this could be accomplished. Expenses of the trip are no consideration to me. Think of it.

Your friend,

N. A. HULL."

"I am very much mortified at the conduct of Orange and Volusia. If they had only done their duty I would have been all O. K."

We get from all this court investigation that Gaulden was sent to Brevard with one Major J. H. Allen, who carried money to pay for raising its vote and by this means succeeded in having it changed from 118 to 310. In this vote alteration, J. M. Lee, clerk of the court, would take no part, but he did give his deputy, E. S. Gaulden, the key to his office and let him make

out a "corrected" set of returns. Following this Gaulden and Major Allen took the new returns to Orlando from which they were sent to Tallahassee.

Gaulden testified that soon after Bisbee gave Hull notice that he would contest the election, he received an unsigned letter from Hull stating, "You are going to be summoned before the United States court as a witness against the Brevard canvassing board; you must keep out of the way; they will not be able to prove anything; I will remember my promise." A second letter was in substance, Gaulden swore, "I want you by all means to keep out of the way; if you have money don't call on me, but if you have not I will honor your draft for \$250."³²

In spite of the fact that he had received only a small part of the money he had been promised, Gaulden seems to have done his best to keep hidden and U. S. Marshal Albertus Vogt, who finally arrested him, swore that although he received the necessary warrant on January 21, 1879, it took him till February 28 to find Gaulden.

If Gaulden told the truth in the United States court trial he followed the safest course for himself in hiding out. "I did not find out," he swore, "until I was arrested that they (some Orange County Democrats who wanted to clear Hull) were seeking to take time by the forelock, by trumping up some charges made before a justice of the peace, in Orange County, on which they had issued warrants for my arrest, in order that they might hold me until the sitting of the court in Brevard, and the impression forced itself upon me that they would sacrifice me to save Governor Hull."

After the United States court-session in which Gaulden gave so much damaging testimony against Hull's campaign methods and the Brevard County Canvassing Board we lose sight of him for a while. It seems, however, that he went back to Orange County and there somebody shot him, the wound so affecting him that he ever afterward was drawn over as from a rheumatic attack.

We next find Mr. Gaulden living in the Old Town neighborhood of Lafayette County. In his new home he soon became so popular that he was elected tax assessor, a position he seems to have held at least six years.³³ In the late 1890's Gaulden is said to have operated a Suwannee River steamboat line and gave the general impression that he was something of a capitalist. Early in the twentieth century he left Lafayette County for parts unknown and when he returned about 1915 he said he had been living in Mexico.³⁴ The post-office of Eugene, a few miles south of Cross City on the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad, was established after Gaulden's return and he received the double honor of being made postmaster and having the office given his first name "Eugene".

In 1921 after the creation of Dixie County, Gaulden was appointed tax assessor by Governor Cary A. Hardee and held this office until his death a few years later when his wife was appointed to succeed him.

An aged and truthful citizen of Alachua County, who knew Gaulden from the time he moved to Lafayette County, told the writer he doubted if Gaulden ever had the money he pretended to have and this citizen thought Gaulden operated "on a shoestring," trying to impress people with his capability. He further stated that he was by no means certain that Gaulden ever went to Mexico.³⁵

Key West, which then as now contained most of the population of Monroe County, made great strides during the 1880-1890 decade, and at the latter date was the largest city of Florida with a population of 18,080 against 17,201 for Jacksonville. In 1887 over 4,300 square miles of the mainland portion of Monroe was cut off to form Lee County. Had this not occurred the population of Monroe County in 1890 would have been 20,200, an increase of almost 85 per cent for the decade. The two industries most responsible for Monroe's growth were cigar manufacturing and the taking of sponges.

There were some labor troubles about 1886, which caused V. Martinez Ybor, a leading cigar manufacturer of the island city, to look elsewhere for a location and led to his purchasing land on which to locate his factories just outside the city limits of Tampa. This was the beginning of Ybor City and the first step toward making Tampa rather than Key West Florida's leading cigar city. However Key West was still ahead for years to come.

In 1885 a franchise to operate a street car line in Key West was granted by the Florida legislature to Eduardo H. Gato and others, but this was merely a mule-car affair. The line was not electrified until 1900.

In 1880 Charles T. Merrill started a banking business, but this did not last long. In 1884 George Lewis of Tallahassee and George W. Allen of Key West founded the Bank of Key West. It was still in operation at the end of the decade, but failed in 1891.

In 1889 John Jay Philbrick established an electric light plant, which superseded the old gas plant.³⁶

According to the state census of 1885 Dade County had a population of only 333, but settlers were even then coming in, most of them, locating around Lake Worth. A Florida State Gazeteer issued in 1887 gave Lake Worth a population of 400 and listed 42 pineapple growers. The business of the town was quite limited, however, as it reported only one store, two hotels and a machine shop. Miami with an estimated population of 150 reported two stores, a steam starch factory and seven run by horse power. Unimproved

land around Miami sold for \$1.25 per acre, but at Lake Worth it was reported as selling at from \$100 to \$200 per acre.

But Miami was going down. At an election held February 19, 1889, the county seat was removed from there to Juno at the extreme north end of Lake Worth, over sixty miles away, where it remained for ten years. It was moved back to Miami, as a result of the East Coast Railroad's extension to Biscayne Bay.

Brevard County grew rapidly between 1880, considerably more than doubling its population. Many citizens moved in, induced to come there not only by the fine climate, but by the opportunities the section offered for growing pineapples and oranges, thought to be unequalled. It also grew in fame as a stockraising region and in 1886 was said to have more cattle on its ranges than any other county in Florida, however something like one third of its area was taken away in 1887 when Osceola County was created.³⁷

Many persons from the northern part of Florida and from various states of the union were visiting the Indian River country, often becoming so enraptured with it as to move there. The writer remembers reading with interest about 1889, a letter to our local paper from a Madison County Primitive Baptist preacher, who gave a delightful account of the section and visits with friends of his in south Florida who had already gone down there.³⁸

The *Titusville Star*, established in 1880 by Ellis B. Wager, has continued its existence to this day³⁹ and has been one of the chief promoters of the development of Brevard County. A second Brevard County newspaper, the *Cocoa Public Spirit* was founded in 1888 by R. N. Andrews.

Three years before the present Lee County was cut off from Monroe a Mr. A. L. Cleveland began the publication of the *Fort Myers Press*. Many years later it was combined with the *Fort Myers Tropical News* as the *Fort Myers News-Press*.

Newspapers published at Key West during the 1880-90 period were the *Key of the Gulf* started by H. A. Crane who continued to publish it until ill health forced him to quit in 1887, the *Democrat* founded by William Curry, Asa Taft and others in 1880 and combined in 1888 with the *Equator-El-Ecuador*, the two taking the name of *Equator-Democrat*, which had its beginning in 1887, and the *New Era* founded about 1888 by George Eugene Bryson. It was seldom that any of these papers remained in the hands of their founders long. Some of the editors during these years were among the very ablest in Florida.

This section during the 1880-1890 decade was beginning to furnish leaders in several lines. In politics were emerging such young men as Jefferson

B. Browne of Key West, and J. Wood Davidson of Lake Worth; in literature, Kirk Monroe and J. Wood Davidson, both of Dade County;⁴⁰ in horticulture, T. E. Richards of Brevard; in industry F. A. Hendry and William B. Curry of Monroe. By 1890 this area had an influence in the state far out of proportion to its population.

It was quite an honor to the section to have Dr. Joseph Yates Porter, of Key West, made the first state health officer, after the state board of health was created by a legislative Act of 1889.

This section could show great improvement in educational conditions between 1870 and 1890. Instead of having 462 children in school at the first date, there were 2,222 reported in public schools for the year ending December 31, 1890. At this time Key West had some of the best public schools in Florida. Among these were the Sears School operated in a three-story building erected in 1874, Russell Hall, opened in 1887 and the Douglas Negro School, which had its beginning in 1870.

Key West also had in 1890 two convent schools and St. Joseph's College, a Catholic institution established for white boys in 1881. The attendance at these private schools would add considerably to the public school enrollment given in the preceding paragraph.

A booster for the lower East Coast section in 1890 could truthfully say, "We make more cigars than all the rest of Florida; we grow more pineapples than the remainder of the United States. Our climate is discussed over the English-speaking world. In Kirk Monroe we have the best-known writer of Florida. In Joseph Y. Porter, we have perhaps the best authority on yellow fever in the country. Henry M. Flagler, the oil magnate, has already got his hand on the railroad to Titusville and will soon build it farther down our way. Our population has increased over 400 per cent in twenty years' time, and we have only just begun to grow. Just watch us!"

NOTES

- 1 See page 14 of state census report of 1905. This does not include Lake Okeechobee, all of which was in Dade.
- 2 The figures for Brevard and Dade are from 1871 tax rolls, as those for 1870 have apparently disappeared. It is not believed that one year made any great change.
- 3 These educational statistics are from the U. S. Census of 1870 and probably refer to the previous year.
- 4 From U. S. Census statistics of 1870.
- 5 Page 145 of "Key West, the Old and the New," by Judge Jefferson B. Browne, 1913.
- 6 While Merritt's Island doubtless originally took its name from the Spanish surveyor-general, Pedro Marrot, it could have been named for the Mr. Merritt whom John Lee Williams in his Territory of Florida (New York, 1837) says once cultivated a part of

- it. See page 42, next to final paragraph. See also American State Papers, Public Lands, vol. III, pp. 633-647.
- 7 See American State Papers, Public Lands, pp. 633-647.
 - 8 See Florida Horticultural Society Proceedings for 1926, pp. 234-235.
 - 9 She may have been the widow of James Egan.
 - 10 See special edition of Florida Times-Union and Citizen, December, 1897. There are reasons for believing there are errors in the Times-Union and Citizen article. See pp. 27-29, Senator F. M. Hudson's article, "The Beginnings of Dade County," in Tequesta for July, 1943.
 - 11 House Executive Document 114, 17th Congress, 2nd session.
 - 12 The information above given is from the following sources: (a) Journal of the Fla. legislative council, 1832; Dictionary of American Biography, v. 14, pp. 480-481, Fla. Hist. Quarterly, v. 5, pp. 38-39, and article in vol. 1, no. 8, of Tequesta, pp. 9-10.
 - 13 Pages 18-38, v. 5, of Fla. Historical Quarterly.
 - 14 p. 7, Chapter 1, "Key West, the Old and the New," 1913.
 - 15 Varnum had by this time acquired considerable acreage in Brevard County. See tax roll for 1871.
 - 16 P. 116, appendix to Senate Journal, legislature of 1877.
 - 17 Pp. 105-106, appendix to Senate Journal of 1879.
 - 18 Italics mine.
 - 19 Page 155, Florida, Its Scenery, Climate and History, Philadelphia, 1875.
 - 20 Extracts from chapters XII and XVIII, "Wild Life in Florida," by F. Trench Townshend, London, 1875.
 - 21 Munroe's adventures in Florida are related in "The Commodore's Story," by Ralph Middleton Munroe and Vincent Gilpin, N.P. 1930.
 - 22 Pp. 279-280, Wild Life in Florida, by F. Trench Townshend, London, 1875.
 - 23 Page 186 of the 6th annual report of the Commissioner of Lands and Immigration. Tallahassee, 1874.
 - 24 See article V., Constitution of 1868, which gave the governor the right to appoint all state and county officials, except constables and members of the legislature.
 - 25 See page 85, part 1 of Miscellaneous Documents, House of Representatives, 44th Congress, 2nd session. Dr. Harris testified at a Congressional investigation of the 1876 election in Florida that he was an allopathic physician.
 - 26 I believe this statement correct. See paragraph 2, page 238, Wild Life in Florida, by Trench Townshend, London, 1875.
 - 27 Page 722, Civil War and Reconstruction in Florida, by W. W. Davis, N. Y., 1913.
 - 28 See page 79 of Miscellaneous Document 35, part 3, U. S. House of Representatives, 44th Congress, 2nd session.
 - 29 Florida Mirror, issue of Dec. 28, 1878.
 - 30 Information about Gaulden's activities in Orange and Brevard Counties is found in pages 188-208 House Document No. 26, 46th Congress, 1st Session.
 - 31 *Ibid.*
 - 32 See Bisbee vs. Hull, pp. 198-208, Miscellaneous House Doc. 26, 46th Cong., 1st Sess.
 - 33 It may have been ten. The Secretary of State's report shows him as holding the place for at least six. Prior to 1893-94, the Secretary of State did not report county officials.
 - 34 All these are not guaranteed, but, in general, they are based on statements the writer has heard from persons who knew Gaulden.
 - 35 Recollections of a conversation in 1935 and memory may have played me a trick.
 - 36 Paragraphs about Key West are based on statements in Chapter xvii, Key West, the Old and the New, by J. B. Browne, 1913.
 - 37 Osceola County was created from territory taken from both Orange and Brevard.
 - 38 As I read article about 59 years ago and have no copy of it now I can only speak of it from memory.
 - 39 Many years later it was combined with Advocate, a paper established in 1890 by C. H. Watts.
 - 40 Davidson, just mentioned as a political leader, had already written two or more books before moving from South Carolina to Florida.

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