

Tequesta:

Newspapers of America's Last Frontier

By JEANNE BELLAMY

Pistol in hand, the first newspaper editor of Florida's Gold Coast leaped toward the office of his rival. The editor of the second newspaper met him at the head of the stairs and hit him on the head with a printer's mallet. (3)*

Little more than half a century later, in 1950, the hamlet which was the scene of that encounter had become a bustling city—one of two dozen clustered together along the Florida shore of the Gulf Stream.

A motorist, journeying after sunset in the fall of 1950 from West Palm Beach to Homestead, could tell only by signposts where one town ended and the next began. Among cars, trucks and buses streaming along that highway, he would have passed through a few stretches with no buildings along the roadside, but nowhere in those 100 miles would he have been out of sight of an electric light gleaming somewhere in the darkness. Much of his way would have been neon-lighted.

Yet he would have seen only a fraction of the dwellings housing 700,000 men, women and children (20) in that 100-mile strip, the only sub-tropical corner of continental United States.

Who could believe that all this came into being in half a century?

Scores of men and women living and working in this place in 1950 remembered how it looked in the year 1900, with only 5,000 inhabitants. (20) These pioneers watched towns and cities spring up in the wilderness as people rushed to America's last frontier.

The story of its newspapers is the story of the frontier itself.

In the autumn of 1950, this region had seven year-round daily newspapers of general circulation, an eighth published daily each winter, and more than two dozen other journals, mostly weeklies.

* The numerals in parentheses indicate a numbered and alphabetized list of references at the end of the paper.

The combined circulation of the dailies in 1950 was more than 350,000. Heading them in circulation was *The Miami Herald*. Its 1950 circulation of 193,011 daily and 222,310 Sunday—more than half the total of the whole group—reached out into the entire region and far beyond. So did, to a lesser extent, *The Miami Daily News*, with a circulation of 94,031 daily and 88,228 Sunday. (9)

The oldest newspaper of the region still alive in 1950 was *The Palm Beach Sun*, published each Friday at West Palm Beach. It dates back to 1887. (9)

In its youth, *The Sun* was what you might call a migratory newspaper—a phenomenon of gold rushes, oil booms and the like. Started in Melbourne, Fla., as *The Indian River News*, it moved to Juno, changing its name to *The Tropical Sun*, then moved south again in 1895 to West Palm Beach. (19)

The migration of this newspaper paralleled the southward march of Henry M. Flagler's railroad empire, which started the Gold Coast's first boom just before the turn of the century.

Remember that Dade county in 1900 covered the whole region we are discussing, and more. Its north boundary was the St. Lucie River. It arched south along the coast nearly 150 miles to Card Sound, at the head of the Florida Keys, and reached about 50 miles inland to Lake Okeechobee.

In those days, Key West, in Monroe county, adjoining Dade on the south, was Florida's largest city with around 18,000 population. (20) It had nearly 75 years of newspaper history before the first weekly moved into the north end of Dade county.

Key West's first newspaper, *The Register and Commercial Advertiser*, was born in 1829 and died in infancy. (11) From that year until 1894, Key West had 11 different newspapers and a 12th which appeared briefly four times between 1845 and 1899. (2)

The Key West Citizen, a daily in 1950, received that name in 1904 but can trace its origin through two consolidations to 1894 when a group of citizens raised \$3,000 to start a newspaper. (2)

Remember, too, that in 1890 the population of the vast territory called Dade county was 861 souls. (20) Came Flagler with his railroad and by 1900 the population had leaped almost 500 percent to 4,955. (20)

Flagler brought more than two steel rails and wood-burning locomotives. At Palm Beach he built what was then the world's largest tourist resort hotel

—the seven-story Royal Poinciana, opened Feb. 11, 1894. To house carpenters and other workmen, Flagler bought land on the west shore of Lake Worth. (19) The workmen's settlement, then mostly tents and shacks, was incorporated Nov. 5, 1894, by a vote of 74 to one, as the town of West Palm Beach. (19)

In that same year, West Palm Beach got its first newspaper, *The Gazeteer*, which by 1950 had become *The Palm Beach Daily News*, second oldest newspaper along the Gold Coast.

The Gazeteer was consistently late in publication, and Editor C. M. Gardner always explained his failure to make edition time as "having had trouble with a drunken printer." Since he was the lone worker in his printing plant, everyone knew the identity of "the drunken printer" and he became a bit of a joke around town. (3)

The county seat of Dade county from 1889 to 1899 was at Juno, 12 miles north of Palm Beach at the head of Lake Worth. Juno was the southern terminus of a seven-mile narrow-gauge railroad which linked steamboats on the Indian River with other boats plying south to Lemon City on Biscayne Bay. (17)

Those familiar with small weekly newspapers will realize the advantage of a county seat site, with its easy access to the legal advertising which often is the financial backbone of such journals. Despite this, *The Tropical Sun* moved from Juno to booming West Palm Beach in 1895.

So the fledgling town found itself with two newspapers—C. M. Gardner's *Gazeteer* and Guy Metcalf's *Tropical Sun*. The warmth of their rivalry may be measured by the fact that Gardner was the pistol-toter who was knocked cold by a printer's mallet in the hands of Metcalf.

In 1896, *The Gazeteer* changed hands after a fire which destroyed its plant. (3) It was bought by S. Bobo Dean, who had been associated with Metcalf in Juno, and his brother, Joel S. Dean. They changed the name in 1897 to *The Lake Worth News*. (3)

Ex-Editor Gardner's disposition worsened after his plant burned, and proved his undoing. (3) Families named Frank and Shrebnick ran adjoining stores on Narcissus street, West Palm Beach, and were constantly bickering with each other. One day, Gardner stood on the sidewalk outside the Frank store and taunted Mrs. Frank. Her 17-year-old son, Marcus, drew a line across the sidewalk and dared Gardner to cross it. Gardner did. Marcus Frank shot and killed him. (3)

Mr. Shrebnick was the first to help young Frank, arranging bond to get him out of jail, and the Franks and Shrebnicks became great friends. (3) As for Marcus Frank, he expanded in business, became the owner of a large department store in Ocala, Florida, and represented Marion county in the Florida legislature for several sessions. (3)

In 1895-96, Flagler was pushing his railroad south from West Palm Beach through palmettoes, forests of towering Caribbean pines and across meandering water courses. He laid out the towns of Boynton, Delray, Deerfield, Fort Lauderdale, Dania, Hallandale, Ojus and Miami. (8) At the mouth of the Miami River, he built another big resort hotel—the Royal Palm.

For townsites, Flagler used chiefly lands given him by the State of Florida under laws authorizing such grants to encourage the building of railroads and canals. Millions of acres were granted thus to Flagler and others.

Railroads, which had made fortunes for men who flung them across the continent, were a popular target in those days. Government control of railroads was among the topics debated often in the 1890's in Congress and in state legislature. (14)

During those years around 1900, in the Flagler-built boom town of West Palm Beach, Editor Metcalf of *The Tropical Sun* was lambasting South Florida's own railroad magnate. Metcalf's rival, Editor Dean of *The Lake Worth News*, stood up for Flagler. (7)

Their clash grew loudest after the Florida legislature in 1901 enacted the "Flagler divorce law," which added incurable insanity to Florida's list of grounds for divorce until the law was repealed four years later. (7)

As soon as the law took effect, Flagler divorced his second wife, inmate of an insane asylum in New York. Within a month, he married Miss Mary Lily Kenan, for whom he built the palatial Whitehall at Palm Beach. (7)

Editor Metcalf of *The Sun* had plenty to say about this—all bad. In reply, Editor Dean of *The News* hinted that Metcalf's motive was to make his sheet such a nuisance that Flagler would buy it. (7)

"Flagler always believed that Metcalf's antagonism arose over a debt the latter owed and did not wish to pay," recorded two Florida historians. (7) "Flagler disliked him so intensely that he decided against being buried in Palm Beach when Metcalf's father was elected to municipal office in the town across Lake Worth.

"Editor Dean of *The Lake Worth News* supported Flagler not only on the divorce issue but on the general practices of the (railroad) system. It has

been alleged on good evidence that the paper was indebted to Flagler, who was 'pressing Dean rather hard.' . . . In 1905, Dean sold *The Lake Worth News* to the Flagler interests and moved to Miami . . . He bought *The Metropolis* and, as editor-owner, became the inveterate critic of the Flagler corporations." (7)

This brings us to what was, in 1950, our region's third oldest newspaper, *The Miami Metropolis*, which became *The Miami Daily News*.

But first let's wind up the story of the second oldest. The purchaser of Bobo Dean's *Lake Worth News* was Richard Overend Davies of Cleveland. (13)

The News became the scene of one of Florida's longest careers in journalism—that of Miss Ruby Edna Pierce. She became its cashier in 1907, then business manager on March 17, 1908. In 1910, she was made editor and general manager, which post she still occupied in 1950. (13)

Not long after Miss Pierce took the helm, *The News* moved across Lake Worth to the oceanfront resort. That was in 1913. *The Palm Beach Daily News* was published every year from the middle of December to the middle of April to give the winter colony its own daily newspaper. (13)

One month to the day after the first train chugged into Miami, *The Miami Metropolis* published its first edition on May 15, 1896. (17) The six-column, full-size weekly was named by Flagler, and its two pioneer editors might be classed as Flagler partisans.

The owner and publisher was Dr. Walter S. Graham, who had left the practice of medicine for law and was a member of the law firm of Robbins, Graham & Chillingworth, with offices at Titusville, West Palm Beach and Miami. The editor was Wesley M. Featherly, who came from Michigan. (17)

The first edition advertised bargains unbelievable to Miamians of 1950, such as "fine business lots" on the south bank of the river at \$300. The newspaper also called for immediate incorporation of Miami, predicting that "there will be 1,500 people before the first of July." (17)

Work on the Royal Palm Hotel was being rushed for the formal opening on New Year's Day, 1897. People poured in on the Florida East Coast Railway Company's new trains. "All kinds of eating places and sleeping places opened up, some in tents, some in shacks and some in cheap houses," wrote John Sewell, who arrived in Miami March 3, 1896. "Some of them would be built in a day."

Liquor was forbidden inside the town limits, so saloons mushroomed at the north edge of the settlement. "The night after payday there were great

times, the workmen spending their money getting drunk, fighting, shooting and killing," Sewell recalled. "I have known as high as three or four dead men there after one night's jamboree. They had a number of dance halls, and you could hear the dancing and music for half a mile around until the dead hours of night." (17)

Miami was incorporated as a city on July 28, 1896, and in 1899 regained the courthouse from Juno. "The rough element was cleaned out and conditions bettered," Sewell reported. (17)

In that year, the three-year-old *Metropolis* was bought by B. B. Tatum, former sawmill operator who had controlled a newspaper in Bartow, Florida, in 1887, then four newspapers successively in Rome, Ga. (21)

The Metropolis flourished. By 1903 it had a circulation of 1,500, and Tatum changed it from a weekly to an eight-page daily. (21)

It was also in 1903 that Frank B. Stoneman and A. L. LaSalle, Sr., carted machinery from their printing shop in Orlando to Miami and started *The Miami Evening Record*. A few years later it became *The Morning News-Record*. (21)

Tatum's real estate interests demanded increasing quantities of his time, so he organized the Miami Printing Company to run *The Metropolis*. Secretary-treasurer of the company was S. Bobo Dean, who came from West Palm Beach and acquired a half-interest in 1905. (21)

During those years, Flagler had extended his railroad south to Homestead and started surveys to a deep-water port somewhere in southernmost Florida. (8) A preliminary survey in 1902-04 through swamps and forests to Cape Sable produced an adverse report on that route. Late in 1904, Flagler gave the order that the extension should go to Key West. The result was the fabled "Railroad That Goes To Sea" over the Florida Keys, finished January 22, 1912, at a cost of \$20,000,000. (8)

The thriving town of West Palm Beach wanted to take the county seat from Miami, and it is to this era that *The Palm Beach Post* traces its origin in 1908. (9) D. H. Conkling established a weekly named *The Palm Beach County*, which later became the daily *Palm Beach Post*. The rivals for county honors took their case to the state legislature. "There was no way out of these dissensions except to divide Dade county," a writer of that era noted, "so, in 1909, its northern part was lopped off with West Palm Beach as the county seat, leaving Fort Lauderdale and Miami in the new Dade county." (8)

Talk of draining the Everglades had been snowballing for several years, and by the end of 1905, one dredge was being assembled at Fort Lauderdale

and headed northwest from New River toward Lake Okeechobee. Large tracts of public land were sold to finance the digging. High-pressure sales increased the number of owners of Everglades land from about a dozen in 1909 to upward of 15,000 in July, 1911. (16) "The transformation of the entire region from inaction to hopeful and confident activity was magical." (8) At the height of the drainage boom, *The Fort Lauderdale News* was founded in 1910. (9)

Meantime, Miami's only bank had trouble. As its receiver, Washington officials selected an Indiana attorney named Frank B. Shutts, who arrived about 1907. In carrying out his assignment, Shutts met Flagler, who hired him as his Miami attorney. (12)

The Stoneman-LaSalle newspaper experienced financial difficulties, and Shutts bought it for \$29,000, borrowed from Flagler. The newspaper emerged Dec. 10, 1910, as *The Miami Herald*, a morning daily, with Stoneman as editor and Shutts as publisher. (12)

Shutts had obtained the \$29,000 loan from Flagler by the argument that Miami needed a newspaper which would present Flagler's side of public questions as well as the anti-Flagler side. (12)

This last was rip-snortingly represented by Editor Dean of *The Metropolis*, who had transformed that newspaper from pro-Flagler to anti-Flagler.

Miami merchants expressed disapproval of Dean's views in a petition intended for the eyes of the Flagler interests. Before delivering it, they showed it to Dean. He told them he wanted to have the signatures checked and would return the original. Next day, the petition appeared on Page One of *The Metropolis*. (7)

This occurred at the height of a fight in which *The Metropolis* was championing the demands of growers for lower freight rates. The merchants were chagrined at seeing their pro-Flagler petition displayed to their customers. Some recanted. Those who didn't stopped advertising in *The Metropolis*. (7)

It was shortly thereafter that *The Miami Herald* made its debut. The \$29,000 loan to Publisher Shutts did not remain outstanding long. An accountant, checking The Herald's records for Flagler, noted that a large automobile and the wages of a chauffeur were among the expenses of the business. Flagler remonstrated, and Shutts promptly paid off the balance of the loan, refusing to budge from his stand that a chauffeured car for the publisher was a proper expense of the newspaper. (12)

As part of the drainage boom, a Colorado corporation acquired state lands south of West Palm Beach, dug a canal and laid out the townsite which became Lake Worth. The sales agents, Bryant & Greenwood, established *The Lake Worth Herald* in 1912 as part of their promotion program. (18)

Something similar was going on at Florida City, just south of Homestead, where settlers included men who worked on the railroad to Key West. Florida City was laid out by the Tatum Brothers Investment Company. *The Homestead Leader-Enterprise* traces its history to this period. It was founded in 1912 as *The Homestead Enterprise* by J. A. Kahl, a Methodist minister, who sold his interest in 1915 to A. C. Graw, former Philadelphia publisher. (6)

Aboard his yacht on the way to California, Graw and his family were halted in Florida by the outbreak of World War I. Tatum Brothers induced Graw to go to Florida City, and the yacht entered the Florida City canal on February 16, 1915. Graw several years later started the first newspaper in Hialeah at the instance of its developers, James H. Bright and Glenn Curtiss. (6)

The year 1915 saw the creation of Broward county, named for Gov. Napoleon Bonaparte Broward, whose drainage program touched off the boom there. The new county's 720 square miles were taken about half and half from Dade county on the south and Palm Beach county on the north. Fort Lauderdale became the county seat. (8)

"It shares with Miami and West Palm Beach the expanding productivity of the districts being steadily reclaimed. Large power boats operate between Fort Lauderdale, the canals and Lake Okeechobee, taking supplies and passengers westward, and returning with the products of the Everglades, which are chiefly shipped northward over the Florida East Coast Line. Pleasure boats also pass back and forth." (8)

It was also in 1915 that A. J. Bendle, who had bought Tatum's interest in *The Miami Metropolis*, sold out to Bobo Dean, already half-owner. (21)

Not one of the newspapers, daily or weekly, published in this region in 1950 dates its establishment to the decade between 1912 and 1922. (9) It was a lull between booms.

Interest in Florida properties had been stimulated in the first ten years of the century when lumber and turpentine barons began selling vast acreages from which they had made fortunes in naval stores and lumber. (1) Railroad-building brought a new wave of immigrants.

Fast-talking salesmen peddled Florida swamplands all over the country on the strength of drainage work in the Everglades. Doubts began to rise

in 1911. Despite the clank of ditch-diggers, the black muck and peat soil remained wet or under water, and vegetables which grew rankly at first mysteriously wilted and died.

The result is recorded by J. E. Dovell in the appendix to Volume IV-A of the Proceedings of the Soil Science Society of Florida:

“The enterprise became a subject of national agitation. A resulting panic among purchasers of lands saw many payments on sales contracts lapse . . . Several dealers in Glades lands were indicted for using the mails to defraud. Accounts of these indictments were published throughout the United States, especially in cities from which much money and many settlers had come.”

Still, the Land Where Summer Spends The Winter drew people from afar. By 1922, subdivisions were springing up in rapid succession. That year saw the start of four newspapers which still were being published in 1950—*Lake Worth Leader* and *Palm Beach Times*; the weekly *Miami Beach Times* and *Hialeah Review*. (9)

The Delray Beach News dates from 1923, (9) dawn of the great Florida real estate boom. The year also marked Bobo Dean's sale of *The Miami Metropolis* to James M. Cox, former governor of Ohio, who renamed it *The Miami Daily News*. (21) In 1924, Cox bought a site on Biscayne Boulevard for the 26-story, million-dollar News Tower. (21)

The same year saw the beginning of *The Everglades News*, founded at Canal Point in March, 1924, by Howard Sharp, who had edited *The South Florida Developer* as a weekly edition of D. H. Conkling's *Palm Beach Post*. (15) Sharp's weekly was edited after 1934 by Paul Rardin, who became the owner in 1937. (15)

The 20th anniversary edition of *The Everglades News* explained that several publications had used the same name as early as 1912. The edition also told of a novel premium given in the early days with each \$2 subscription to *The East Beach News*. (4)

The East Beach News was just a column of booster material inserted in copies of *The Moore Haven Times* sent to Pahokee. The material was gathered by Guy Stovall, who sold home-lighting equipment; Boas Levins, who ran a meat market, and Paul Mansfield, who got a room for the project in the same building with Levins' meat market.

“There was a sliding panel connection in the partition between Boas' and Guy's rooms. Guy or Paul would knock on the wall, the panel would open, a 25-cent piece would be laid on the ledge and from the other side of the wall a two-handled jug would appear and the 25-cent piece would disappear.

“The subscriber would grasp the jug by the two handles, tip it to his mouth, and when he gurgled twice, the jug would be snatched away and the panel closed.”

Conkling paid Stovall \$500 for *The East Beach News*, but offered no premiums for subscriptions. (4)

“There being no drink of shine as a premium,” *The Everglades News* related, “*The East Beach News* dried up and blew away.”

The South Florida Developer—Conkling’s weekly edition of *The Palm Beach Post*—was bought by Edwin A. Menninger, who moved it to Stuart on the coastline. Menninger continued *The Developer*, serving subscribers at Lake Okeechobee from Stuart, until he brought out *The Stuart News*. (4)

At the height of the real estate boom, on July 26, 1925, *The Miami Daily News* celebrated its 29th anniversary and the opening of its new plant with a 504-page edition weighing 7½ pounds. It was the “world’s largest single edition of a standard-size newspaper.” (5)

The Miami Herald set a world’s record in 1925 with 42,500,000 lines of advertising—12,000,000 lines more than any newspaper ever had carried in a year’s time. (1)

The News Tower was the northernmost of 16 tall hotels and office buildings completed along Miami’s bayfront in July and August, 1925. They gave the city its skyscraper skyline almost overnight. Steel skeletons of 14 more rose at the same time in the city. (1)

The fateful year of 1926 saw the establishment of *The Coral Gables Riviera*. (9) It was by no means the only newspaper started in the region during the great land boom. None of the rest survived in 1950.

An afternoon daily, *The Miami Tribune*, was founded in 1924 with N. B. T. Roney as its first backer. The editor was scholarly Clayton Sedgwick Cooper. (1)

On January 12, 1925, appeared the 40-page first edition of *The Illustrated Daily Tab*, a venture of Cornelius Vanderbilt, Jr. At 26, he was publishing two tabloids in California. He breezed into Miami in October, 1924, lined up some backing and awarded \$1,000 to the winner of a contest to name his Miami tabloid. (1)

The splashy *Tab* had its plant in the old home of *The Metropolis*, just east of the Central Fire Station on W. Flagler Street. The offices faced north toward the old three-story Dade county courthouse. (1)

On the opposite side of the courthouse stood *The Tribune*’s plant in a two-story building on N. W. First Street. (1)

Between these two newspaper plants a lurid incident occurred. Clatter of air drills and riveters at work on skyscrapers nearly drowned the sound of gunshots which burst from the courthouse on the morning of September 27, 1925. The shooting foiled a jail break led by the notorious Heywood Register of the Ashley-Mobley gang of bandits and bank-robbers. Two prisoners were killed, but Register played possum and was not hurt. (1)

You will gather from this that newspaper work in Miami in the 1925 boom—like the city itself—was far from dull.

Journalists poured into town along with men from all other walks of life. They found jobs quickly on Miami newspapers, bulging with more ads than they could print.

The real estate fever infected newsmen, too. Many would work a few days or weeks, then vanish into the maelstrom to buy and sell.

So fast was the turnover that managing editors didn't know the names or even the faces of all their employes, or how many would be likely to show up for work on any given day. (12)

At the peak of the confusion, *The Miami Herald* newsroom was on the second floor of its old building, approached by stairs from Miami Avenue.

One night, a chubby man wearing a derby appeared at the top of the stairway, facing the bustling rim of the copy desk. He singled out a copyreader and asked: "Can you direct me to Colonel Shutts?"

"Shutts?" asked the copyreader absently. Then he addressed his co-workers: "Anybody know a fellow named Shutts?"

None replied.

"Sorry we can't help you," the copyreader said.

With a look of wonder, the visitor asked permission to use a telephone, put in a call and beckoned one of the staff to speak to the party on the other end of the wire. Through the receiver, the staffer heard:

"This is Frank Shutts, publisher of *The Herald*. Can't someone in the office bring that man out to my house? He's Herbert Hoover." (12)

The News Tower provided a vantage point for watching the 1926 hurricane. The story was told by Jesse O. Irvin, a *Herald* copyreader at the time of his death in 1950, who was working on *The News* in 1926:

"Wives of two *News* executives came to the office when the wind got bad. After a big chunk of concrete hurtled down from the tower, we put the women under the press. I wasn't scared until I happened to glance out a window and saw tank cars on the railroad siding topple and roll before the wind."

Irvin, staring in frightened fascination, saw a huge schooner bearing down on the building. It veered off and careened out into the bay, then back inland farther north, where it went hard aground.

"After the storm," Irvin recalled, "cars moved along Biscayne Boulevard right under its prow."

On June 16, 1926, Vanderbilt's *Tab* vanished with the announcement that E. A. Inglis had been appointed receiver. (1)

The next November, *The Miami Tribune* withered to tabloid size. In February, 1927, it shrank to a weekly, and ceased publication in August, 1927. (1)

Eight lean years ensued. Banks failed along the Gold Coast and elsewhere in Florida. As late as Christmas of 1934, you could buy a full meal—meat, potatoes, a vegetable, dessert and coffee—at several downtown Miami cafeterias for the flat sum of 10 cents. A deluxe eatery charged 15 cents.

This was the era of the world-wide depression, yet new settlers continued to move into Southeast Florida's 100-mile wide. Its population climbed from 214,830 in 1930 (17) to 257,233 in the state census of 1935 and 387,522 in 1940. (17)

More newspapers were born in this period—*The Hollywood Herald* in 1929 and *The Hollywood Sun-Tatler* in 1932. (9)

The year 1932 also saw the debut of *The Florida Sun*, (9) which by 1950 had become a daily at Miami Beach under the ownership of George B. Storer, proprietor of a chain of radio and television stations, who also had bought *The Coral Gables Riviera*.

In 1934 *The Redland District News* made its bow in Homestead, capital of a thriving agricultural district of tropical fruit groves and winter vegetable farms.

It was a time of newspaper deaths and consolidations in many parts of the country. In West Palm Beach, *The Palm Beach Post*, owned by D. H. Conkling, joined forces with the *Palm Beach Times*, then owned by Sheriff Robert Baker. Conkling and Baker each had borrowed about \$100,000 from E. R. Bradley, longtime operator of Bradley's Casino at Palm Beach, where only rich visitors were allowed to gamble. Bradley took over the two newspapers in February, 1934. (18)

The winter of 1933-34 brought out *The Miami Beach Tribune*, published daily during that tourist season. It was backed by M. L. Annenberg, who had made a fortune from racing news.

The tabloid *Tribune* resumed on November 15, 1934, as a year-round daily. It set Miamians agog with such scare headline as: COSSACKS BEAT BOY, 500 DIE IN KEYS HURRICANE, GRAND JURY PROBES CITY GRAFT. (10)

A three-cornered war, replete with name-calling, ensued among *The Miami Herald*, *The Miami Daily News* and *The Tribune*, which on January 1, 1936, became *The Miami Tribune*. It was the first newspaper in the region to pass the 100,000 circulation mark.

The Tribune's guiding genius, Paul G. Jeans, gave Miami a movie-like version of a tabloid in action. He often wrote of "the city hall gang" and once quipped that the ideal tabloid headline would be: "Sex Fiend Slays Six In Penthouse Orgy."

Jeans's impish humor came out in such tales as the story of the time he sent investigators to track down rumors of jury tampering.

Criminal Court Judge E. C. Collins had been indicted January 17, 1935, on a charge of accepting a bribe. Six jurors deadlocked four to two, and *The Tribune* reported the outcome thus: "Four Fixed Jurors Save Collins From Chains." (10)

Criminal libel charges were filed against Jeans and the reporter who wrote the story. Jeans sent two hirelings to Ojus to look for a man named by a tipster as the jury-fixer. Jeans' men found him, got him drunk and heard him boast that he was "more evil in Broward than I am in Dade." (10)

That was the phrase which delighted Jeans, who died in the spring of 1937 in a highway accident.

On December 1, 1937, *The Tribune* ceased publication. It had been bought by John S. Knight of Akron, Ohio, who had purchased *The Miami Herald* from Shutts on October 15, 1937.

Tribune support had helped elect three Miami city commissioners—a majority of the board—in the spring of 1937. *The Herald* and *The News* called attention to their faults loudly and often.

The News coined the title of "the termites" for the three, who were removed from office in a recall election 15 months after *The Tribune* folded.

For its role in the recall campaign, *The Miami Daily News* won the 1938 Pulitzer Prize for "distinguished and meritorious service to the community."

By this time the Gold Coast had entered a boom linked with the Federal Housing Authority's guarantees of loans for home-building. This period saw the birth of three more weeklies still published in 1950: *The Fort Lauderdale Record* in 1935, *The Dania Press* in 1939 and *The Belle Glade Herald* in 1940. (9)

An even bigger building boom began toward the end of World War II. New weeklies sprang up in communities suddenly dense with homes. The list included *The Pahokee News*, *The Boynton Beach News*, *The Riviera Beach News* and several in Greater Miami—*The Hialeah Home News*, *Allapattah News*, *Little River Shopper* and *North Miami Sentinel*.

Early in 1947, *The Palm Beach Post* and *Times* were purchased for \$1,050,000 by John H. Perry, who then owned six dailies and 15 weeklies in Florida. The West Palm Beach dailies had come on the market because of the successive deaths of Bradley and Barry Shannon, to whom Bradley had left them. Perry also acquired *The Palm Beach Daily News*.

Before Bradley and Shannon died, *The Palm Beach Post-Times* figured in an incident which received national publicity. It began on New Year's Eve in the darkest days of World War II. (3)

Donald Whitehurst, who substituted in the slot of the copy desk when the regular news editor was away, wrote a story contrasting the honor roll of soldiers in downtown West Palm Beach with New Year's Eve cocktail parties, dining and dancing in Palm Beach. (3)

The story appeared on New Year's Day, and Shannon, who had gone to the horse races at Miami, was buttonholed there by several Palm Beach friends. When he returned, he spoke severely to Don Morris, *Post-Times* editor, who not only fired Whitehurst on the spot but ran a Page One apology, saying Whitehurst was a mere substitute desk man and had no authority to publish such material without consulting the editor. The apology praised Palm Beach for its war effort. (3)

While this may have mollified the resort-dwellers, it had the reverse effect on readers with sons or relatives overseas. The story was reported in newspapers throughout the country, and by a broadcaster on a nationwide radio network. (3)

Probably the shortest-lived metropolitan daily in journalistic history was *The Daily Mail*, a tabloid published at Miami Beach from January 11 to February 28, 1950. It lasted exactly 49 days.

Nearly a month before he started the newspaper, Publisher Harry O. Voiler sued *The Miami Daily News* for \$300,000 damages for saying Voiler was acting as a "front" for "criminals, racketeers and hoodlums." Voiler insisted that he and his wife, Louise, who was listed as "founder," owned all the assets of *The Daily Mail*.

On January 25, 1950, while Frank Costello, New York racket bigshot, was registered at a swank Miami Beach hotel, *The Mail's* leading editorial

remarked: "As for Frank Costello, *The Herald's* and *The News's* bogeyman, we hope that while he is a guest at Miami Beach he enjoys our sunshine, our flowers, our myriad attractions."

On the same date, *The Pathfinder*, a national newsmagazine, said: "For the first time in many months, the Florida Gold Coast's \$100,000,000 gambling syndicates thought they had a friend" in *The Mail*.

It ceased publication with Voiler's explanation that "we have run out of money."

You will gather from this that *The Mail* bloomed and died at a time when *The Herald* and *The News* were hammering hard against the activities of gamblers and racketeers in the community.

Not all the region's newspapers agreed on the desirability of stamping out illegal gambling. For example, Editor Knight of *The Herald* quoted Editor Charles Francis Coe of *The Palm Beach Post* on January 28, 1950, as writing: "Nice people will gamble. And so long as betting on a horse at a race track is legal, while betting the same amount on the same horse away from the track is illegal, nice people will gamble more than ever."

Knight's editorial comment was: "Editor Coe, meet Editor Voiler. Nice people should get together."

Disclosures in testimony before a United States Senate committee investigating interstate crime led to the suspension from office of the sheriffs of Dade and Broward counties. As the 1950-51 winter tourist season began, illegal gambling in both these counties was on a "sneak" basis.

This was a topic *The Herald* had been pursuing for more than 10 years. "For disinterested and meritorious public service in 1950," *The Herald* was awarded the Pulitzer prize for its "tireless campaign against crime and official corruption and in behalf of good government."

The big daily also was an early and persistent supporter of plans for building the Tamiami Trail, control of floods and droughts in the Everglades, and the Everglades National Park, which was created in 1947 after intensive efforts spearheaded by Associate Editor John D. Pennekamp.

The cosmopolitan atmosphere of the Gold Coast in 1950 was reflected in the presence of a dozen journals addressed to special groups of the population.

Among these were *The Florida Echo* for citizens of German ancestry, established in 1925, and *The Jewish Floridian*, founded in 1928. (9)

Negro residents had a choice of four weeklies printed in Miami—*The Tropical Dispatch*, *The Call*, *The Times* and *The Whip*.

Organized labor had two weeklies—*The Miami Labor Citizen* and *The Union Labor News* in West Palm Beach.

The growing volume of legal news and advertising gave rise in 1926 to *The Miami Review*. In 1950, it was being published five days a week. (9)

During the racing season, a Miami printing plant published an edition of *The Daily Racing News*, the “bible” of race fans.

Miami also had a weekly named *Miami Life*, whose role is difficult to describe. A nightclub owner once boasted to me that, by judicious use of folding money, in the days when gambling casinos ran wide-open in Miami, he arranged to have hawkers for this publication stand in front of crowded Miami Beach hotels and bellow: “Gambling running wide open at Such-and-such club,” using the name of his establishment. There was nothing about that in the papers they carried, but the stunt filled his gambling rooms, he said.

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