

# Some Pre-Boom Developers of Dade County

By ADAM G. ADAMS

The great land boom in Florida was centered in 1925. Since that time much has been written about the more colorful participants in developments leading to the climax. John S. Collins, the Lummus brothers and Carl Fisher at Miami Beach and George E. Merrick at Coral Gables, have had much well deserved attention. Many others whose names were household words before and during the boom are now all but forgotten. This is an effort, necessarily limited, to give a brief description of the times and to recall the names of a few of those less prominent, withal important developers of Dade County.

It seems strange now that South Florida was so long in being discovered. The great migration westward which went on for most of the 19th Century in the United States had done little to change the Southeast. The cities along the coast, Charleston, Savannah, Jacksonville, Pensacola, Mobile and New Orleans were very old communities. They had been settled for a hundred years or more. These old communities were still struggling to overcome the domination of an economy controlled by the North. By the turn of the century Progressives were beginning to be heard, those who were rebelling against the alleged strangle hold the Corporations had on the People. This struggle was vehement in Florida, including Dade County.

Florida had almost been forgotten since the Seminole Wars. There were no roads penetrating the 350 miles to Miami. All traffic was through Jacksonville, by rail or water. There resided the big merchants, the prominent lawyers and the ruling politicians. It was the metropolis of the State. Pensacola was very old and prosperous with its lumber and naval stores operations. Tampa had the cigar industry and was considered a stable manufacturing city.

But South Florida was being really discovered. A few of the rich had been cruising its lovely waters since the 80's. Now, the Everglades became out of a watery wilderness, an immense possibility for vast agricultural pursuits.

The great freezes of the early 90's had been the impetus for the railroad reaching Miami and the first emigration to the area. This was also the

beginning of the end of the American frontier. The westward movement to take up homestead lands was decreasing, it only remained for an announcement of the drainage of the Everglades to start the second phase of South Florida's growth which began about 1907.

Under Governor Napoleon B. Broward, draining of the Everglades was started then and following that came developers of that watery wilderness, promising canals and roads and a richness of soil rivalling the Valley of the Nile. During the next few years hundreds of people came to Miami either to engage in the selling of the Everglades lands or to buy land. These were the people who by their activity in real estate built up the interest in this area to the Boom which may be said to have begun by 1923.

The pioneers who brought the frontiers of America into civilization were all hardy souls, mostly strong young men, fierce optimists, adventurous, willing to work, and without background or capital. Dade County greeted the emigrants with deer flies, overwhelming hordes of mosquitoes and brackish drinking water. There was a year-round scarcity of milk and vegetables and sand in the tracks which served for roads was deep and white. One traveled by land only when navigable water was not available. But those who came and stayed saw a bright future despite these unpleasant features of existence in the semi-tropics.

In 1921 Isidor Cohen proudly describes the five successful candidates for the City Commission. They were Presidents of the town's banks and all men who had grown up with the community. He says they were "common bookkeepers, (Edward C. Romfh and James H. Gilman) a grocer, (J. E. Lummus) an oil man, (Charles D. Leffler) and a fish dealer (J. I. Wilson)."

The year 1907 was one of economic depression in the United States. Money was so scarce that script was issued here and there to facilitate trade. Infant Miami suffered severely. The Fort Dallas National Bank closed its doors. Isidor Cohen says that the bank probably failed because of its too generous assistance to the Halcyon Hotel and the "Street Railway" which he thought were premature developments. But despite these hardships, the depression was soon forgotten. Frank B. Shutts of Indianapolis was sent to Miami by the Comptroller of the Currency to liquidate this bank. He remained in Miami, became the owner of the Miami Herald and had a large and influential law practice.

The Halcyon Hotel was the center of Miami's social activity in 1911-12. Weekly dances were held which everyone attended. The orchestra was local.

On Sundays the Alabama at the Dixie Highway and Golden Glades Road was a favorite rendezvous for the young people. Its meals were famous.

From 1907 to 1922 real estate dominated the business scene, as indeed it still does. And, being a subdivider or a real estate salesman meant peddling. It was hard work selling lots. The 17th of March was the end of the season. After that it was not so easy to find a taker for the good "buy" that had just come on the market. "Three months hurry, nine months worry." That is, worry about whether next season would be a good one, and how one would get through the long summer.

In 1917 the City Directory discloses a dozen companies with large tracts of Everglades lands engaged in intensive selling campaigns. In 1908 J. H. Tatum and Company bought 12,000 acres at \$2.00 and \$3.00 an acre, W. R. Comfort bought 6,422 acres at \$2.00 an acre and R. P. Davie of Colorado Springs purchased 107,500 acres at \$2.00 an acre and less. Richard J. Bolles acquired 500,000 acres from the State at \$2.00 an acre. One-half of this sum was pledged by the State "solely and exclusively for drainage and reclamation purposes." In 1881 Hamilton Disston had purchased 4,000,000 acres for \$1,000,000. Three years before similar lands had been offered by the State at as little as 12½ cents an acre.

The Everglade Land Sales Company was conducting probably the most extensive campaign to sell its lands. It published a magazine from its office in Chicago. V. W. Helm was editor and maintained headquarters there. In Miami, Henry G. Ralston was active in directing the affairs of the company. Dale Miller who had come here in 1901 from West Palm Beach, where his father had a grocery store, had become one of the land company's principal salesmen. The Company's magazine was filled with pictures of Glades lands, mostly around the settlement called Davie, and of the large canals and laterals. There were generous sprinklings of photographs of groups of persons who had come to inspect the lands. Mr. Ralston reported in each issue the progress of the dredgings. Walter Waldin and John C. Gifford, both specialists in horticulture, wrote at length about the large variety of plants including of course those producing marketable food which could be grown on the lands offered for sale. With the purchase of 10 acres of rich Everglades lands, there was a gift of a lot at Fort Lauderdale in Progresso.

One advertisement in the magazine is quite illuminating. It first gives the details of how to install a septic tank underground but later gives a description and sketches showing how a septic tank may be installed above

ground. This should have been a warning to buyers that the water was still close to the surface.

Frank Clark was U. S. Representative from Dade County for twenty years and made at least two speeches in Congress in 1911 and 1912 in which he emphasized that he was in nowise opposed to "Progress of my State," however, "I have not said that the lands were good or bad. I do not know. The only thing I have contended against is the conscienceless exploitation of these lands, making misrepresentations, and publishing and circulating deliberate falsehoods in reference to them."

In 1912 A. W. Gilchrist, Governor of Florida, and the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Fund organized an expedition to witness the opening of the Gulf to Atlantic Waterway of Florida. This waterway was from Fort Lauderdale, through Lake Okeechobee, to Fort Myers. This expedition was composed of the Governor, and many other officials of the State of Florida, and a number of newspaper men from the Middle West. Its avowed purpose was "to leave no stone unturned; to either confirm or disprove the charges made by one of Florida's own representatives in Congress, that the Everglades Drainage Project was a failure." The souvenir booklet distributed after this expedition contains facsimiles of letters, and photographs of the writers, from Lincoln Hulley, President, John B. Stetson University and 14 representatives of newspapers from Baltimore, Maryland to Topeka, Kansas.

These letters are fulsome in their praise of the drainage and of the lands. T. A. McNeal, Managing Editor of the Topeka (Kans.) Capital, says "The liar has no chance in Florida, for the truth is more impressive than any lie that can be told." Also, he says "The problem of the reclamation of the Everglades is one in which just three things are necessary — labor, money and gravitation. The laws of gravitation have not been replaced; the necessary money seems to be provided for and the labor is obtainable. Once relieved from overflow the Everglades lands will be found to possess a fertility almost beyond the powers of belief and a range of possibilities in the way of diversified crops that staggers the imagination. In the course of time a large part of the Everglades region will be as densely populated as Holland is now and its aggregate wealth in proportion to its area will be greater than that of any other purely agricultural or horticultural community in the world."

W. J. Etten, Managing Editor of the Grand Rapids News, said "I'm speechless; actions speak louder than words — I have purchased one hundred

acres of Everglades land ten miles west of Fort Lauderdale and wish I had the money to purchase more."

An examination of current maps of the territory ten miles west of Fort Lauderdale indicates that this one hundred acres has not yet come into use.

J. F. Jaudon was the guiding genius of the Chevalier Corporation which owned some hundreds of thousands of acres between Miami and Fort Myers. Dr. E. V. Blackman says that Mr. Jaudon "predicts the largest sugar plantations in the world between Miami and Fort Myers, as well as large furniture factories. He also predicts large cattle ranges, with the possible establishment of shoe factories." This may be taken as a fair sample of the propaganda which brought people flocking to Miami along about 1910.

The lands of the Chevalier Corporation were largely in Monroe County, south of what is now the Tamiami Trail. In 1952 and 1953 two groups of qualified real estate appraisers have appraised the lands of the Collier Brothers which are closely comparable to the Chevalier Corporation. 765,000 acres were appraised at \$4.30 an acre, including the oil, mineral and timber rights and 653,000 acres at \$6.15 an acre. About these lands, these current appraisers say "By far the larger number of acres of this property in its present condition is better suited as a wildlife and recreation area than anything else" and, "On a major portion of the property, soils are shallow and underlaid with rock. In many places this rock is exposed, has a flat surface and is dotted with potholes." Grazing lands on the western and northern portions of the Everglades Drainage district which has native pasture is very poor. 20 to 50 acres are needed for each grazing animal.

There is a difference in South Florida farming and farming in the temperate zone. T. B. McGahey aptly phrases the difference between "farming" as generally known and "farming" in South Florida. One might make a living in South Florida but one could not live his making.

Thus, most of the extravagant claims made for 4,000,000 acres of Everglades land have never been realized. The Pennsylvania Sugar Company story has been told, ample brains and money, but failure. A. N. Sakhnovsky, an attorney for the Czar, residing in New York at the time of the revolution, not wishing to return to Russia struggled to make a living on lands bought from Pennsylvania Sugar Company. From 1920 to 1927 he says they planted everything and every year there was a catastrophe.

John E. Withers came to Miami in 1912 to see land which he had bought in the Everglades. He had sold his transfer and storage business in Minne-

sota. His son, Charles E. Withers, says that the family still owns the Everglades land and has never seen it. The first winter they were here they planted a crop in the Hialeah neighborhood but were unable to find a market and lost everything they had. Thereupon, Mr. Withers started again with a one horse dray and built his fortune anew in the Magic City.

Van Huff of Dade County heard of Dade County in Colorado and invested his savings in Everglades lands. He came here to see the land in 1912 and has yet to view his purchase. But, he stayed in Dade and has had a successful life as an engineer and inventor.

A notable exception to the long list of failures in agricultural pursuits was Thomas J. Peters. In 1895 Solomon J. Peters, his eight sons, one daughter, and Tom's wife Texas, arrived at Coconut Grove running from the frost.

Tom wanted to plant tomatoes and found the right land on Model Land Company property near Perrine, a marl glade, on which he was planting in 1910-13 as much as 1250 acres of tomatoes. And, the profits were so substantial that he bought the Halcyon Hotel about 1913 and later owned nearly the whole of that city block. Tomato planting on the Glades which indent the coastal ridge, except for a few seasonal setbacks, continues to be a successful operation.

Dade County has used so much of its high ground that in 1957 it now witnesses the use of Tom Peters' tomato glades for a residential development. In order to raise the level of the glade a canal is being dug through the property to furnish the fill.

The Dorn boys, Harold and Robert, arrived in Miami in 1910 and engaged in the growing of fruit. Harold reported in the 1956 *TEQUESTA* the story of mangoes which they have found to be continually rewarding.

Before the digging of the Miami Canal the Miami River extended only a few hundred feet west of Grapeland Boulevard (N. W. 27th Avenue). When the Glades were full, the clear, cool water spilled over the coastal ridge into the river. This is shown on early maps as "The Rapids" or "The Falls" of the Miami River. The enormous reservoir, west of the ridge, yielded abundant fresh water for shallow wells in the high pinelands bordering the coast and along the shore were wonderful springs. Of course the River was free of City waste and the boys swam in any water that was deep enough. Off the shore at Silver Bluff there were fresh water springs well known to youthful swimmers. At the site of the Avenue D (Miami Avenue) Bridge, John Sewell reported a spring of such volume and force that it raised the surface of the river four or five inches.

Drainage meant cutting the coastal ridge at the rivers and creeks and along the lines of the glades indenting the coast. The surface water ran off, the shallow wells and the springs were dried up. Now thousands of homes are on land west of the coastal ridge which, in 1910, was covered by water and inaccessible.

These were the years when Miami counted with satisfaction the coming of important people to the area. William Jennings Bryan was here in 1909 to deliver a lecture. He later purchased a home and Christmas of 1913 he spent at Villa Serena on Brickell Avenue.

James Deering built Viscaya from 1912 to 1916. There were probably 10,000 people in Dade County and at least one out of every ten was working on this construction. It has been said frequently that Mr. Deering's operations saved the town from starvation.

The newspapers in these middle years also noted the presence of Flanders, President of Maxwell Motors; Lyons of tooth-powder fame; Mellin of Mellin's Food; Matheson, Manufacturing Chemist; Keith, President, Keith and Proctor Theaters; Col. Thomas Watson, Indiana Politician; Van Court, Founder of the Central Trust Company of Philadelphia; John C. Gifford, Horticulturalist of Cornell University; Carl Fisher, President of Prestolite Company; Charles Simpson, Naturalist of Smithsonian Institute; W. L. Douglas, Shoe Manufacturer, and others.

The Community was struggling and noting progress.

A railroad, Atlantic, Okeechobee and Gulf Railway, across the Glades south of Lake Okeechobee from Tampa to Miami was being promoted. The directors of the corporation were named, engineers announced, method of financing arranged, but the project was never fulfilled.

The Great White Way made with 1,000 candle power lamps was inaugurated on 12th Street (Flagler) in 1914. The Tatums were announcing a 9-story skyscraper to cost \$125,000 which was never built. Mr. and Mrs. Alex Orr and four children arrived in Miami from Scotland to join brother John B. Orr. First map of Greater Miami was printed by the Realty Securities Corporation. Avenue B (N. E. Second Avenue) was opened across the railroad track at Buena Vista. It was reported that a "highway from Tampa to the East Coast is being rapidly completed so that it will soon be possible for the people of Miami to drive an automobile to the West Coast by way of Titusville," and by 1925 one could drive to Tampa by using a ferry west of Melbourne. In 1914 a large number of petitioners, most of whom subscribed a sum of money, asked for the construction of three miles of rock road

west of 27th Avenue on 12th Street (Flagler). "This extension will make 12th Street 10 miles long and before many years it will go straight across the Peninsula to Fort Myers on the West Coast." It took 17 years for this prophecy to be fulfilled.

In 1913 the *Metropolis* reported "Solomon G. Merrick and Son (Solomon died in 1911. George was still using his father's name) besides having one of the most famous groves in the entire county, Coral Gables Plantation, annually produce large crops of truck. Mr. Merrick was successful in interesting a number of northern people in Dade County and in Miami and sold a number of tracts of the Coral Gables Plantation lands. A section of this plantation has been divided and is being developed by the Firm. Some of the purchasers are men of means and will in the near future build beautiful homes along Coral Way, the Avenue upon which these lots face."

"While North, Mr. Merrick put into operation an advertising campaign which he confidently expects to attract the attention of many to Miami in general, and to Coral Gables Plantation in particular."

On August 15, 1914, the Panama Canal was opened. Miami expected to benefit considerably in commerce after the opening of the Canal. This did not materialize but a number of people who had been engaged in the construction of the Canal stopped off at Miami on their way home and remained to become permanent residents.

Miami's great need was money for mortgages. Mrs. Mary B. Brickell had money, cash in the bureau drawers and she loaned it, sometimes with recorded security; sometimes there was no recorded security, just a note; sometimes just a word "That's all right. I know you'll pay it back." There are today many in Miami Mrs. Brickell helped with ready cash in times of stress. Mrs. Brickell was loathe to trust a bank. We have it on good authority that she cashed Mr. James Deering's check for \$120,000 within an hour after she received it, and James M. McCaskill says that as Mrs. Brickell's attorney, he persuaded her to open a bank account but that later he was present when Mrs. Brickell delivered money for a \$5,000 note saying "I have only \$4500 in cash. Would you mind taking a check for \$500.00?"

Garfield L. Miller came to Miami in 1910 having bought 30 acres in the Everglades for \$300.00. He never could find where his land was, but he liked the town so well, he stayed and was soon in the mortgage business.

At first Mr. Miller had only money to lend for winter visitors, well-to-do men who believed in the stability of the new town. But soon this source of money was insufficient and he began selling mortgages in small units,



"Baby Bonds." By this method he financed many of Miami's landmarks, The Granada Apartments, Pancoast Hotel, El Commodoro Hotel and many other buildings. By 1925 his organization was financing building operations all over the Eastern part of the United States.

At Hallandale Road and U. S. No. 1, any day in the Racing Season one will find 25,000 people, and nearly as many automobiles, betting \$2,000,000 on assorted horses at a multimillion dollar race track. Picture the scene 40 years ago. Two young men, Hugh F. DuVal and Thomas B. Hamilton parked their car in the bushes and started walking, wading and swimming to the beach. Hugh's father, Harvie, had run the township and range lines down the East Coast.

Hugh's brother, Harvie, was in New Mexico for his health when he met Richard J. Bolles and interested him in Everglades lands. Harvie died in 1910 and Hugh came to Dade County to settle his brother's estate. A part, a mile of ocean frontage in Broward County, was considered worthless. But by 1916 he had interested Tom Hamilton, whose grandfather bought for him a one-half interest for \$4,000. With this money they were going to build a road and bridge from Hallandale. But the money ran out and the war intervened. Broward County finished the bridge, receiving as inducement an ocean front park. Then Hugh sold the balance to Tom for a bungalow in Miami.

Harrison Reed of Erie, Pennsylvania, built a beautiful house on 350 feet of that frontage but was careless about paying taxes and lost the title. Today, that 350 feet plus another 100 feet may be had for \$1,250,000.

P. L. Watson remembers that when the Hallandale Road and bridge had been finished in 1918 that he bought one mile of the tract now occupied by the Town of Golden Beach for \$22,500. He fenced it for a hog farm.

The Tatum Brothers, B. B., J. R., Smiley and J. H. came to Miami in the early days. B. B. had owned the *Ocala Banner* and bought the *Metropolis* in Miami in 1899. After selling one-half interest in the *Metropolis* to Bobo Dean in 1905 he and his brother began development of real estate and also took an interest in many other ventures. They owned an abstract company, dealt in acreage and city lots, both in a large way, and built the first street railway in 1906.

The rails and equipment probably came from Bradenton. At any rate both were second-hand. The *Bradenton Record* reported on August 19, 1904 that the trolley line was doing well. However, it also reported that it was out of business in about a year.

Two of Albert Ogle's daughters recall that their father came to Miami from Indiana in 1906. Mr. Ogle was superintendent of the street railway, kept the books and was a general manager for the Tatum's varied interests. The *Metropolis* reported in 1907 that the city had electric railway service but the service was discontinued about that time.

Tatum Brothers' first big subdivision was Lawrence Estate Land Company's Subdivision in 1912 of some 400 acres, purchased from General Samuel C. Lawrence who had acquired the land in the 90's.

In 1914 the Tatums secured a franchise from the City of Miami for a trolley line. This franchise required that the cars be run by power other than steam and horse power. They settled for electric battery power and operated the railway all the way out Flagler Street to 16th Avenue where the line turned north to the car barn at the present site of the Orange Bowl. When this barn burned destroying most of the equipment the operation of the System was discontinued. However, the City of Miami purchased what was left of the Miami Traction Company in 1922 and began the operation of its own street railway.

In 1916, the Tatums subdivided 35 sections in South Dade from Biscayne Bay to Florida City as Miami Land and Development Company. \$200,000,000 worth of this property was sold by contract. Few of the contracts were fulfilled. It was this property which was only brought into use 30 years later. It is a wonderful potato and bean producing area.

The Tatums subdivided several hundred acres called Altos del Mar which is now the Town of Surfside, also Ocean Beach Park, 10,000 feet of ocean frontage north of Baker's Haulover, now a Dade County Park. The Tatums were said to control 200,000 acres of land in the Everglades, 70,000 of which were sold or leased to Pennsylvania Sugar Company in 1919.

In 1909 after the election of Dan Hardie as Sheriff, he and Henry R. Chase began the operation of busses known as the C&H Line. This they continued to operate until 1914. Mr. Chase says that they had 10 busses which they sold to George Okell for use in the sightseeing business.

About this time there was another bus line in operation owned by W. T. Price of Coconut Grove. Mr. Price operated this line three or four years, leaving Coconut Grove at 9:00 and leaving Miami at 10:30 in the morning. The evening schedule would leave Coconut Grove at 1:30 and Miami at 3:30. Special trips were advertised for \$2.00. The vehicle used was an early Ford Motor Company truck with solid tires. W. T. Price is now Chairman of the Board of Coconut Grove Bank and has for 30 years been one of Miami's prom-

inent contractors for heavy road, levee and ditch work. He came to Miami in 1913 and was employed by the Hardie Blacksmith shop. Mr. Price when asked about matters pertaining to development of Miami at that time said that he was too busy with a mule's foot in his lap to know much about what was going on.

Thomas B. McGahey came to Miami in 1902 in a box car with the livestock while the rest of the folks rode in the passenger cars. The family drove a wagon and a buggy from Williamson County, Tennessee to Jacksonville but were advised there not to try to drive the rest of the way. For several years Tom worked in a store on Flagler Street. In 1910 he married Miss Maud Willard who was keeping books for the Frank T. Budge Hardware Company. They soon realized that when Mrs. McGahey had to quit work that the \$100.00 Tom was making would not be sufficient income, so Tom began to cut the timber on the family's 40 acres at N. W. 17th Avenue and 36th Street. He furnished the lumber and the piling for the Collins Bridge at \$12.00 per 1,000 feet. J. I. Conklin was the contractor. Later Mr. McGahey furnished the lumber for the Flagler Street Bridge which the Tatums built to carry the street railway in 1914 and he also salvaged 77,000 cross-ties which had been wrecked on the beach near Pompano for this railway. Later Tom built the streets in Lawrence Estate and many other subdivisions for the Tatums, handled the filling of Star Island, and built most of the streets at Miami Beach for Carl Fisher. The boy who came to town in a cattle car was South Florida's biggest road builder.

Locke T. Highleyman first came to Miami in 1901. By 1910 he had decided to make Miami his home and purchased property to the south of the Bliss property on Brickell Avenue which Carl Fisher had acquired. Mr. Highleyman being a man of considerable means as a real estate developer in St. Louis, loaned John S. Collins various sums for development at Miami Beach. Later when Mr. Fisher became interested in the Collins development and Mr. Collins gave Fisher a considerable bonus in land, Highleyman was repaid and began the filling of the mangrove swamp now known as Point View. Highleyman built there several large houses for sale. Mr. Luden of Luden's Cough Drops bought one, "Father John", the Medicine Man, bought another and Mr. McGraw of the McGraw Tire and Rubber Company bought one. Mr. Highleyman founded the Fidelity Bank and Trust Company which was later merged with the Miami Bank and Trust Company and then the City National Bank.

Another group prominent in the developing field was headed by Thomas O. Wilson who came to Miami from Chicago in 1911 on account of poor

health and lived an active and successful life for another 27 years. The next year he had purchased land and organized Woodlawn Park Cemetery. Mr. Wilson was the moving spirit in the building of the Congress Building mortgaged to the Dade County Security Company. After the collapse of the Boom the building could not carry the mortgage and the property went into the assets of the Security Company.

In association with George E. Merrick and J. E. Junkin and Clifton D. Benson, who also came to Miami for his health and died only in 1957, he organized the Realty Securities Corporation, a prolific subdivider. The mortgage and insurance department later became the Seminole Bond and Mortgage Company owned by J. E. Junkin and C. A. Avant. Mr. Avant was instrumental in bringing the Equitable Life Assurance Society to Miami. It was probably the first insurance company to lend money in Miami, lending \$300,000.00 in 1922 for the construction of the First National Bank Building.

Realty Securities Corporation's office was at 1109 Avenue C (N. E. 1st Avenue). Within two blocks on that street and on Flagler Street, largely in storerooms, 25 individuals and companies were listed in the 1917 Polk City Directory as being in the real estate business. All of them were boosters for Miami and their enthusiasm was kept at a high pitch by Everest G. Sewell, President of the Chamber of Commerce. Mr. Sewell raised, in 1915, the first money used for advertising Miami. In 1917 he had raised \$20,000.00 to have Arthur Pryor's Band in the Park. The whole community was behind his effort to extend the season from the customary 12 weeks to 17 weeks. The Board of Trade, later the Chamber of Commerce, was so virile that it purchased 20 feet of land on Avenue C between Miami Bank and Trust Company and Mr. W. S. Witham's new 5-story reinforced concrete Lawyers Building.

Fred H. Rand, Jr., began his career in Miami as a lawyer but was soon more interested in real estate than the law. His home was on the site of the Huntington Building. This gave Mr. Rand an especial interest in South First Street and East Second Avenue. He acquired many corners on N. E. Second Avenue on which buildings were erected, all unsuccessful financial ventures. This was the only through street leading North out of Miami. Later he undertook the widening of South First Street from East Second Avenue to Beacom Boulevard. The remains of this unsuccessful venture are apparent now. Mr. Rand got little assistance from the City which accounts for the street's ragged curb line.

J. I. Wilson was President for many years of the Dade County Security Company which was the major source of mortgage funds for small dwellings in the early days.

Anderson, Chaille and LeGro was a name to be conjured with in 1916.

F. C. B. LeGro came for an interview with W. R. Comfort who owned the land from N. W. 7th Street to 36th Street from 27th Avenue to Red Road more or less. Comfort's fortune had been made in sugar and in candy manufacturing in Brooklyn. "Dick" LeGro told me that for this first call on Mr. Comfort in 1910 he dressed up to make a good impression. He wore a white linen suit, white buckskin shoes and a Panama hat and took a hack to the Comfort house on N. W. 7th Street west of Douglas Road. Mr. Comfort said they wouldn't need the rig any more. They would walk. And walk they did, some times up to the armpits in water through the swamps to 36th Street and Grapeland Boulevard. (27th Avenue).

J. W. Pearce came to Miami shortly after 1918 and worked for W. R. Comfort. Mr. Pearce says that his first day with Mr. Comfort in the field was to visit the dredge in the Comfort Canal just west of 27th Avenue and that Mr. Comfort waded through the mud and water to reach the dredge.

LeGro is given credit for promoting the purchase of bay bottom for Hibiscus and Palm Islands. The bulkhead around "Bull Island" now known as Belle Island was completed in 1914. Locke Highleyman had loaned Anderson, Chaille and LeGro \$14,000.00 for the preliminary expenses in connection with the purchase of the bay bottom. When Anderson and his partners were unable to produce additional capital they withdrew and Highleyman finished the project. Star Island was laid out in 1917 and filled with the spoil from Government Cut which had been piled on the west side of Miami Beach, south of Fifth Street. Tom McGahey moved this material to the island.

R. M. Davidson came here with Battle Klyce from Vanderbilt University to design and lay out the County Causeway in 1916. The Causeway was built on the spoil bank from the Government channel. This Causeway was finished in 1919.

Shortly before the opening of the County Causeway, Anderson, Chaille and LeGro bought the Collins Bridge for \$40,000. Along the bridge they designed and built the Venetian Islands having paid the State \$78,000.00 for the bay bottom.

These master planners and salesmen sold lots from the plat long before the islands were pumped in. Someone remembers a newspaper cartoon of Anderson in a row boat pointing to a distant wave in the Bay. "That's where your lot is."

Josiah Frederick Chaille was born in Humphreys County, Tennessee, in 1874. The family migrated to Texas in 1878, wandered from place to

place until 1886 when they got to Ocala where the father, William Hickman Chaille, supported the family making candy.

Joe worked on the Ocala *Banner* for B. B. Tatum in 1898. In 1899, when the soldiers left Miami the Chailles arrived and opened a "racket" store on Avenue D (Miami Avenue), now a part of Burdine's. By 1916 Burdine needed the location, purchased the building and the business.

With the capital realized, Chaille with Hugh Mitchell Anderson subdivided 160 acres at Buena Vista called Wynwood Park and subsequently bought, sold and subdivided lands until the Venetian Islands venture absorbed all of their time.

In the meantime, Mr. Chaille, a member of the City Council, had taken the initiative in designing Miami's present street naming system.

Hugh Mitchell Anderson was a country boy from near Chattanooga. His formal education was scant: in a country school house in the "Ridges", according to his sister Ellen now 80 years of age and living in the old homeplace. He had two years at Maryville College in the high school department. Hugh tried his hand in the coal mines at Whitwell and on the farm but in 1909 was selling Everglades lands in the Sequatchie Valley and Chattanooga. At the end of that year he was in Miami with the whole family. Hugh was described as a wonderful salesman and he was soon doing well enough to take his family to Lookout Mountain for the Summer. When Venetian Islands had been sold out in 1923 to Miami's prosperous merchants and professional men, he began with Roy Wright to assemble lands for what is now the City of Miami Shores.

L. T. Cooper of Dayton, Ohio, who had become well-to-do with a formula for a tonic called "Tanlac", subdivided a tract between N. E. 2nd Avenue and the Bay, along what is now 96th Street, as well as what is now El Portal. Anderson and Wright bought Bay View Estates and later 100 acres from Major Hugh Gordon and called it Miami Shores. A large tract from the railroad to the Bay at 125th Street, including Indian Creek Golf Club Island and Bay Harbor Islands was added. A causeway was projected to connect the islands with the mainland and the mangrove swamp was laid out in lots. Thirty years later the causeway was built and now the swamp is being filled.

Biscayne Boulevard was Anderson's idea and his genius interested the Phipps Estate in acquiring the necessary land to cut the Boulevard through indiscriminate subdividing which prevailed from 13th Street to 52nd Street. Biscayne Boulevard was announced and built at the time when Miami might well have despaired of rising from the ashes of the Boom.

C. J. Holleman was an Alabama farm boy. His only education was in night school. He went to Pittsburgh in 1910 and was a streetcar conductor for several years, then about 1918 began developing real estate in that city. His lawyer, William E. Walsh who came to Miami in 1921 says, Mr. Holleman came to Miami about that time to spend the winter and the next year purchased from Mary Brickell 160 acres at \$3,000.00 an acre. This land lay between Miami Avenue and 15th Street to the southwest and was subdivided and sold as Holleman Park. One-fourth of this purchase price was in cash and added to Mrs. Brickell's store of liquid assets. An interesting sidelight about this tract of land is that Mrs. Brickell had had it platted as "South Miami" but did not record the plat. Leaving the land in acreage rather than turning it into lots resulted in much lower taxes. Plats of the area still show a lot here and there marked "Lot number so and so, unrecorded plat." Mr. Holleman is given credit for widening S. W. 3rd Avenue which was the inspiration for the widening of Coral Way leading to Coral Gables. On September 1, 1925 Mr. Holleman was killed in an automobile accident.

One of Miami's tireless boosters and developers was W. S. Witham of Atlanta, Georgia. Mr. Witham had a chain of 100 odd banks and began coming to Miami about 1910. He was very active in the organization of William Jennings Bryan's Bible Class in Royal Palm Park. Mr. Witham built several business buildings all of reinforced concrete, including the 5-story Lawyers Building now known as the American Title Building, 37 N. E. 1st Avenue; a business block at 8th Street and North Miami Avenue, and the Esmeralda Hotel at the corner of 5th Street and Biscayne Boulevard. He purchased one of the houses on the bay front in Point View from Locke Highleyman. He also was one of the founders of the Miami Bank and Trust Company.

Many young men coming to Miami for whatever purpose usually found their way into the real estate business. Lester B. Manley arrived in 1913 representing a paving company. His machine that heated and spread oil was probably the first used in the State of Florida.

In 1919 he became associated with P. H. Arthur and subdivided a 45 acre tract named Shenandoah. A high rock wall was along the entire Tamiami Trail frontage and the street was lined with Australian Pine trees. The developers used the wall for paving streets and planted two grapefruit trees on the back of every lot. When the first sale of lots was held in 1920, they gave away 550 boxes of grapefruit to those who attended the sale, but didn't sell a lot. By 1925, however, when the same company subdivided and

offered for sale New Shenandoah, 105 acres bought from the Brickells, the demand for lots was so great that the whole subdivision was sold for a total of three and one half million dollars the first day. The sales crew entitled to receive commissions and stockholders numbered twenty-eight. There was so much rivalry among them that numbers were put in a derby hat from which each man drew a number for position. The salesman who drew Number 1 was offered \$10,000.00 for his number but would not sell.

During the middle years there were many others making a mark on the community, business men and professional men. There were many not mentioned who were active in the real estate field. The accident of the writer's acquaintance and the difficulty in finding records account for omissions.

Acknowledgment is made to the many who were gracious in giving interviews for the preparation of this paper.