

# The Log of the Biscayne House of Refuge

By Dr. Thelma Peters

## INTRODUCTION

In the 1978 **Tequesta**, Dr. Thelma Peters shared an excerpt from the Biscayne Bay House of Refuge's log with our readers. Space limitations prevented the entire log from being presented. This continuation of the log begins on April 10, 1900, and ends on January 15, 1903. As with the 1978 edition, space limitations prevent reproduction of the entire log. To quote the 1978 article, "Entries are chronological and have been selected with an eye for historical significance and/or possible reader interest. Misspellings have been left but an occasional capital or comma has been supplied."

*During the summer of 1900 the keeper, William H. Fulford, had become increasingly ill and on August 18 left the station in the care of a temporary keeper, Ludwig H. Hovilsrud. Fulford with his wife had been at the station for ten years. He was from North Carolina and had been a sea captain before moving from New Smyrna to Station Five.*

### **April 10, 1900**

Keeper much better. Feaver broken. Mr. Roberts came over to stay with me. Keeper went to Lemon City to consult Dr.

### **Apr. 11, 1900**

Mr. Roberts left for his home in Lemon City this morning.

### **Aug. 5, 1900**

Ten years ago today I came to the station as keeper.

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Dr. Thelma Peters is a charter member of the Historical Association of Southern Florida and the author of *Lemon City, Biscayne Country* and *Miami 1909*.

## 60 TEQUESTA

### **Aug. 16, 1900**

Mr. Ludwig Hovilshrud came to station and relieved me temporarily. I am unwell and need treatment, previously reported.

### **Aug. 18, 1900**

At 11 A.M. keeper left station being able to do duty longer.

[signed] Ludwig H. Hovilsrud, temporary keeper

### **Sept. 10, 1900**

District Supt. inspected property by inventory and informed acting keeper as to his duties. Received from Captain C. A. Abbey inspector one anchor 30 lb in good order and two rolls of screens.

### **Sept. 11, 1900**

District Supt. still at station in order to drill acting keeper more thoroughly. Keeper Fulford at station from 9:30 A.M. to 3 P.M. and with Supt. corrected receipt books, finishing them to date.

### **Sept. 13, 1900**

Practiced signals from 8 - 9 A.M. Continue making a new mast for the supply boat. Taking out the old broken mast and carried it up to the house.

### **Sept. 17, 1900**

Practiced signals. Placing the flag pole in a vertical position which was bent over in the last storm. Also putting planks crossways at the bottom near the surface of the ground, nailed them in place, so as to make it stay.

### **Sept. 18, 1900**

Painting iron cots and the woodwork on the grindstone.

### **Sept. 24, 1900**

Trying moving boathouse back to the right position, which was leaning to the south, but could only move it 3". Put braces on to protect it from further damage.

### **Sept. 25, 1900**

Making a good room for the paint, oil, cans and different things, by closing in with boards all around the bench in the boathouse.

### **Oct. 1, 1900**

Practiced signals 9 - 10 A.M. Finished the table for the boathouse and painted the same. Keeper Captain W. H. Fulford came to station at 5 P.M.

### **Oct. 2, 1900**

Keeper left station at 8:30. Temporary keeper helping him move

some of his property down to the landing, which was left here. Preparing a room for painting by taking down shelves, taking out nails and filling holes with putty.

**Oct. 3, 1900**

Have been down the bay sailing this afternoon for the purpose of drying the sails quickly after the last rain.

**Oct. 12, 1900**

Started for the post office this morning at 6 a.m. Returned half ways on account of appearance of heavy rain from SW which came very suddenly before I got to the landing. Practiced resuscitation.

**Oct. 18, 1900**

Being patrolling the beach. Made a small flag pole for the signal flag.

**Oct. 20, 1900**

Being on the look out for wrecks. At 5 P.M. the surf was very rough and high. The surf making up under the house but no damage was done.

**Oct. 23, 1900**

Started to make sand bags as ballast for supply boat.

**Nov. 1, 1900**

Went to post office at 8 A.M. Returned at 1 P.M. Received telegram from H. B. Shaw with order to go at once to Oslo where further order would await me. At the same time got letter from H. B. Shaw to see the keeper Capt. W. H. Fulford about getting a good man in my place at the station. Received letter at the same time from keeper W. H. Fulford, with order to get Mr. B. E. Curry in my place. I got Mr. B. E. Curry with me at once.

**Nov. 2, 1900**

Temporary keeper Mr. L. H. Hovilsrud left the station at 4 A.M. in charge of Mr. B. E. Curry. B. E. Curry went with L. H. Hovilsrud to Lemon City and returned at 10 A.M.

[signed] B. E. Curry, temporary keeper

**Nov. 3, 1900**

Cleaning house and working on road from the house to the landing.<sup>1</sup>

**Nov. 21, 1900**

Working on boat to see if I can stop it from leaking.

**Nov. 26, 1900**

Left the station at 7 A.M. and went to Lemon City for paint and oil from the east coast railway and returned 11:30 A.M.

**Dec. 1, 1900**

Walked the beach 2 miles each way and partly painted one room.

**Dec. 21, 1900**

Went to the post office at 9 A.M. Received one book list of merchant vessels of the United States 1900 from H. B. Shaw.

**Jan. 4, 1901**

Went to Lemon City to the depot and received one wheel barrow from H. B. Shaw.

**Jan. 6, 1901**

Wm. H. Fulford keeper came to the station Saturday evening and staid overnight and left this morning for his home.

**Feb. 4, 1901**

Very large whale seen off the station. It looked to be 70 ft. long.

**Feb. 5, 1901**

Very large steamship off the station 3 P.M. Came near getting ashore. I just had time to make a signal. Captain seeing it kept off about East, then blew three times and went off. I think it was a foreign ship.

**Mar. 1, 1901**

Saving some lumber that is drifted on the beach for the use of the station.

**May 23, 1901**

Repairing the broken chairs.

**June 15, 1901**

Raining all the week not able to do anything.

**Sept. 19, 1901**

Working on the station helping to block it up on its foundations.

**Sept. 24, 1901**

Working on the station helping to block it up and get it on rollers.

**Sept. 26, 1901**

Working on the station night and day to get it on a foundation to keep the sea from washing it away. A heavy sea undermined the chimney and washed it down and broke a hole in the roof.

**Oct. 1, 1901**

Working on the station getting it ready to move.

**Oct. 3, 1901**

Lifting the station to get it ready to put on rollers.

**Oct. 4, 1901**

Working on the station all day and part of the night to get it on rollers.

**Oct. 6, 1901**

Worked on the station and moved it in about fifty feet.<sup>2</sup>

**Oct. 9, 1901**

Working on the boathouse getting it ready to put on rollers to move it.

**Oct. 12, 1901**

Finished moving the boathouse today and blocking it up in its place.

**Oct. 18, 1901**

Working on the station. Moved it about 25 feet today.

**Oct. 19, 1901**

Got through moving the house at 11:30. Now blocking it up, taking the rollers from underneath it.

**Oct. 21, 1901**

Working around the station digging trenches for a foundation.

**Oct. 22, 1901**

Working moving the water tank.

**Oct. 24, 1901**

Working on the tank house, moving it in its place, blocking it up. Left the station at 3:30 P.M. to take Capt. Shaw and the mule across to Lemon City.

**Oct. 26, 1901**

Carpenters working on the station putting up a foundation.

**Oct. 30, 1901**

Finished putting the foundation under the dwelling and gone to work putting the foundation under the boat house.

**Nov. 2, 1901**

Carpenters working fixing up the kitchen and putting lattice work around the building.

**Nov. 28, 1901**

Driving the hoops down on the tank. Took one off and cut it and put it back on.

**Dec. 6, 1901**

This A.M. Mr. Curry left the station taking all his property with him and leaving me in charge. As there had been no provisions by anyone in authority I proceeded to Miami to our Dist. Supt. Shaw who instructed me to remain in charge.

[signed] W. C. Kemper, acting keeper

**Dec. 24, 1901**

A launch brought lumber and carpenters today. They will commence work tomorrow.

**Dec. 26, 1901**

Carpenters ceiling veranda. Four more carpenters came this morning making six in all.

**Dec. 28, 1901**

Carpenters working on tank house, ceiling veranda, and building a new way to boat house. Put new floor in kitchen.

**Dec. 31, 1901**

Carpenters working on addition to kitchen, fixing steps and putting up moulding.

**Jan. 4, 1902**

Carpenters about finished. Chimney topped out. Took Mr. Woodworth to Lemon City.

**Jan. 23, 1902**

Cleaning and burning brush. W. L. Kemper, acting keeper.

**Feb. 3, 1902**

I was at Miami this morning and Mr. Kemper came from the station with all his things in the boat and turned boat over to me at 11:30 A.M. and told me I could go and take charge of the station, that he would not wait any longer.

Name of substitute — B. E. Curry

**Feb. 9, 1902**

Keeper absent on account of sickness.<sup>3</sup>

Name of substitute B. E. Curry

**Feb. 10, 1902**

Name of substitute C. J. Yates

Taken charge of House at 6 A.M. Carried Mr. Curry to Lemon

City and went on to Miami. Got my family and returned at 3:30 P.M.

**Feb. 11, 1902**

Am sunning all the blankets and mattresses and cleaning up the house generally.

**Feb. 27, 1902**

Painting some on house today and planted flower bed in border around one side of house.

**March 22, 1902**

Painting lattice work around cistern and scrubbing kitchen and dining room.

**Mar. 25, 1902**

Two boys came over to the beach today from Lemon City and their boat left them. They came up to the house and stayed overnight. I took them back across the bay the next morning.

**Mar. 28, 1902**

A fish boat came in from the bay with sail torn to pieces and remained here overnight. 2 men on board. I gave them beds and 2 meals, helped them mend their sails and they returned to Miami.

**Mar. 29, 1902**

Putting new screens in some of the doors and cleaning house inside. Cleaning up the yard around the house.

**Apr. 1, 1902**

One large steamer tried to pass inside of buoy today at 10:30 going south. I put up I.D. flag. She immediately turned her course and went outside of buoy. The direction she was going would soon have put her on the banks.

**Apr. 4, 1902**

A party of 10 people came to the house today to get water and rest. They were from Miami.

**Apr. 5, 1902**

A young man named Sturgis came over from Miami to go in surf bathing and after coming out said he felt very badly and stayed overnight. During the night I heard him struggling and I went to his room and found him with an epileptic fit. I applied the usual remedies and brought him around all right. He went back to Miami today.

**Apr. 6, 1902**

Gen. Gordon and party came over from Biscayne to station today. Got water from cistern.

**Apr. 17, 1902**

Heavy rain and hail storm this afternoon.

**Apr. 21, 1902**

Went to Miami today and returned at 4 o'clock P.M. Received word from Capt. H. B. Shaw Dist. Supt. engaging me as keeper in charge of this station in place of Capt. W. H. Fulford who received his discharge on account of sickness.

**Apr. 24, 1902**

Visitors from Miami today

Mr. and Mrs. Bennett	Mrs. Adams
Miss Louise Bennett	Mrs. Hassell
Mr. and Mrs. Brice	Mrs. Rutherford
Mrs. McAlaster and son	Mr. Brickle

All went in the surf.

**Apr. 26, 1902**

Visitors<sup>4</sup>

Mrs. W. M. Burdine Miami  
 Mrs. L. E. Hill "  
 Mrs. Fred Kronowitter "  
 Mrs. V. A. Rutherford "  
 Miss Helen F. Burr Little River  
 Miss Clarissa Stone Miami  
 Miss Sadie Kolb  
 Mr. and Mrs. Peter F. Boyce Chicago, Ill.  
 D. E. Stocking [?] Miami  
 Mr. \_\_\_\_\_ Stockman [?] Miami  
 Miss Maud Coahman, Miami  
 Miss Florence Frederick Miami  
 Miss Lucy Collier [?]  
 Miss Willie Colier [?]  
 Miss Grace Rader  
 Miss Rosalin Quarterman Miami  
 Miss Belle Blackman "  
 E. V. Blackman "  
 W. S. Miller Columbus Ohio  
 Miss Mamie Gamble, Jacksonville  
 Mrs. H. C. Walton Lady Lake, Fla.  
 C. E. Mc Lean, Leesburg, Fla.  
 Joe Frier Little River  
 Corah Freeman



Rebecca Freeman  
A. C. Wolf Birmingham, Ala.  
Miss Kate Wolf Grandview, Tenn.  
Miss Annie Wolf " "  
J. B. Merritt and wife, Lemon City  
M. J. Parsons, Denver, Colo.  
Josephine Parsons " "  
O. D. Markley, Cincinnati, Ohio  
Bessie Sligh Miami  
Agnes Sligh "  
Daisy Sligh Jacksonville  
Fraser McHook Gainesville  
Mr. Gasper Ind.  
Mr. J. C. Sawyer Grand Rapids, Mich.  
Mr. W. J. Williams McRae, Ga.  
Miss Mona Smith Cleveland

**May 1, 1902**

A party of 30 were prevented from visiting the station today on account of low water.

**May 2, 1902**

Mr. and Mrs. R. C. Roome and W. G. Roome on Yacht *Roomy* Jersey City, N.J.

**May 4, 1902**

A small sail boat going to Boynton from Miami came ashore this morning at 9 o'clock with sick man aboard. He came ashore and I gave him some medicine which relieved him. Boat went on and left him here. His name is Hamp Streggle Phelps [?]. He lost his shoes overboard and I gave him 1 pr. brogue shoes and 1 pr. wool socks and took him to Lemon City.

**May 13, 1902**

A picnic party of col. people numbering about 200 came to station today and got water.

**May 17, 1902**

Mrs. Comstock  
Madame Trybom  
Mrs. Walter S. Graham  
Miss Haslett  
May Worley  
Miss Gunilla Sjostrum  
Harold Graham

Harold Sjostrum  
Jno. Allen  
all of Miami

**July 15, 1902**

Went to Miami to vote in the primary election.

**July 25, 1902**

A small schooner came ashore to get the time and some fresh water this afternoon. Hailed from Palm Beach and bound for Elliotts Key.

**July 29, 1902**

Went to Miami today to take my family over to the Jubilee celebration.

**July 30, 1902**

Went over to Miami and about the time was ready to start back took a chill and high fever. Had to remain overnight but sent my son over to take care of the station.

**Aug. 1, 1902**

Returned from Miami early this A.M. after fever went off and found station all O.K.

**Sept. 28, 1902**

Mr. Tatum and party came over from Miami today. Also a party from Little River.

**Oct. 20, 1902**

One small schooner came ashore today for provisions and water. Said they left Palm Beach 6 days ago bound for Miami.

**Nov. 14, 1902**

Six Indians are camping with us tonight.

**Nov. 27, 1902**

Mr. Norton and party   Lemon City  
James Pent and party   Lemon City  
C. Hughes and party   Miami  
All came over and spent day.

**Dec. 25, 1902**

Joseph Thrift party  
F. Gillett party  
Deughase party   [DesRochers]

**Dec. 27, 1902**

A party of fishermen came to the house from the bay side at midnight and said they were about frozen. I gave them lodging and they went away Sunday morning. Temperature at sunrise 38.

**Jan. 15, 1903**

Capt. A. H. Johanson arrived this A.M. to take charge of station.

(This concludes Part I or the first 20 years of the log.)

To be continued . . .

NOTES

1. Curry made a daily entry of a line or two but with little variation: "walking beach," "painting," "cleaning house."
2. The *Miami Metropolis*, Oct. 18, 1901, reported that high tides had undermined the House of Refuge and made it necessary to be moved "across the ravine on the west to a high ridge."
3. Captain William Fulford was still official keeper. According to a *Miami Metropolis* story about the town of Fulford, April 26, 1901, Fulford was living in his "pleasant home" and was the "efficient" postmaster of Fulford.
4. This list is apparently in the handwriting of the guests. Many other lists were in Keeper Yates' hand. On two occasions as many as 96 persons came to the station in one day. Only a few of the visitors are given here. The station appeared much less "social" under Yates' successors.