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Tequesta

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On the Cover: North bank of the Miami River, ca. 1899. On the front, to the right, is the *St. Lucie* steamer coming into the Miami River. The property of Flagler's Royal Palm Hotel, which opened 100 years ago, is on the back. (HASF x-93-1)

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Editor's Foreword

This has been quite a year for history in Miami and South Florida. The number, quality and variety of events, exhibits and publications surrounding the City of Miami's one-hundredth birthday observance far exceeded what many of us had anticipated. I felt the excitement throughout the year from enthusiastic tour-goers, the institutions I had the good fortune to visit and speak before, and the wonderful persons who called to share a special memory or to offer an item of memorabilia. The birthday itself was one for the books, with so many meaningful happenings coming together on a beautiful weekend filled with celebration. Clearly, the centennial observance provided the beleaguered city of Miami with a great lift at a critical juncture in its history.

Appearing in the centennial year, this issue of *Tequesta*, a journal that has been offering quality articles to readers for more than one-half of Miami's corporate existence, represents one step toward attaining my goal of broadening its offerings to include, in addition to Miami, other parts of south Florida and even points south. With this in mind, we offer readers an important article by historians Canter Brown and Larry Rivers on African American leaders in late nineteenth-century South Florida, defined here as the area from Tampa through the Florida Keys. This topic has come under little scrutiny until now. One of the men profiled here is Alexander C. Lightbourn, Sr., who was a prominent figure at the City of Miami's incorporation meeting, the founder of Greater Bethel AME church, Miami's first African-American congregation, and a leader in a host of other matters both here and elsewhere in Florida.

Peg Niemiec's article on Elliott Key, the longest in a chain of islands in south Biscayne Bay, traces its "many lives" and legends. With its rich array of legendary characters, hardy and industrious settlers and layered history, Elliott Key has intrigued many south Floridians for more than a century. Niemiec's essay examines these elements in an interesting, informative manner.

William Brown and Karen Hudson have made splendid use of the rich archives found within the Special Collections section of the University of Miami's Otto G. Richter Library. In examining the massive records of Henry M. Flagler's Model Land Company, authors Brown and Hudson have provided us with a behind-the-scenes peek at the marketing strategies and developmental activities of the Flagler organiza-

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tion in regard to the vast acreage it received from the state of Florida for extending the railroad south to the tip of the peninsula and beyond. The Model Land Company pursued an extremely ambitious agenda with this land, which sometimes gave rise to complicated legal problems over its disposition.

Finally, we are excited over the increasing number of articles coming into *Tequesta* from graduate students, professionals and the general public eager to share their love of the area's history with readers of this journal. I encourage you, the history-loving public, to continue to send articles to *Tequesta* for consideration. We will be only too happy to work with you in this enriching endeavor.

Paul S. George
Tequesta Editor