

Map of the Florida East Coast Railway, taken from an FEC timetable, ca. 1930. (Historical Association of Southern Florida)

Henry Flagler and the Model Land Company

by William E. Brown, Jr. and Karen Hudson

Henry Flagler, founder and president of the Florida East Coast Railway (FEC), created the Model Land Company in 1896 to manage his expanding real estate holdings in Florida. Flagler first arrived in Florida in 1885 and soon launched a railroad system that extended the length of Florida's east coast, from St. Augustine to Key West. The railroad spurred the economic development of Florida, and Flagler was encouraged in this endeavor by the state's offer of free land to anyone who would finance construction of a railroad line. The surviving records of the Model Land Company, largely unexplored to date, provide an underutilized avenue to explore the economic, political, social and cultural history of southeast Florida.¹

Flagler acquired several million acres of real estate between 1885, the year he purchased two short-line St. Augustine railroads, and 1912, which marked completion of the Key West railroad extension. To encourage Flagler's railroad plans, the state of Florida offered approximately 2,050,000 acres of public lands. Flagler received the customary 3,840 acres per mile allotted to railroads for his work in northern Florida. The State legislature also passed a special land grant law to award Flagler 8,000 acres per mile for the extension of his line south of Daytona.²

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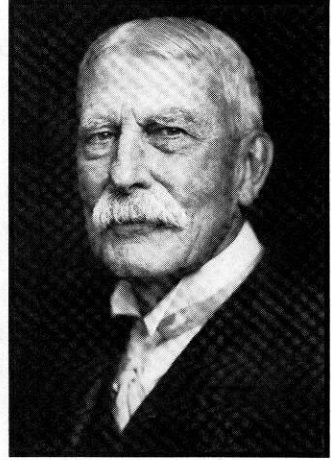
The Swamp Land Grant Act of 1850 authorized the federal government to “patent” or “deed” selected swamp lands to the State of Florida, provided that the state grant these lands to developers interested in drainage and reclamation. The revelation that the state legislature awarded valuable lands to railroads, however, led the federal government to terminate the land grant program. As a result, the state did not provide a great deal of the land promised to Flagler.

A protracted legal battle with the Internal Improvement Fund (IIF) — an entity that exercised jurisdiction over swamp and overflow lands awarded the state of Florida by the federal government — ended in compromise as Flagler accepted 260,000 acres, nearly ten percent of his original grant. The location of Flagler’s property varied; portions were located in Broward, Dade and Palm Beach counties, but the largest portion, 210,000 acres, belonged to the swampy Cape Sable area. Ultimately, Flagler obtained the bulk of his real estate through financial relationships with other Florida corporations. Two corporations, the Florida Coast Line Canal and Transportation Company and the Boston and Florida Atlantic Coast Land Company, received abundant public lands, yet faced financial difficulties in canal construction and business ventures. The railroad baron subsidized the Canal Company for \$100,000. In return, Flagler received debenture bonds and a note for the difference in the two amounts. He was also named head of the company, although he did not own any large block of stock. Flagler then financed dredging projects and promised to transform these lands into valuable real estate by building a railroad.³

By 1895, Albert P. Sawyer, head of the Boston and Florida Company, feared a takeover of the Canal and Transportation Company and attempted to force Flagler out. Although Flagler would not relinquish his power entirely, he agreed to exchange a subsidy note for land in southern Dade County, at a rate of six dollars per acre. To entice Flagler to build the railroad on their land, the Canal and Transportation Company and the Boston and Florida Company also “donated” lands to Flagler. The Canal and Transportation Company promised 1,500 acres per mile for the extension south of Lake Worth, and the Boston and Florida Company agreed to provide 10,000 acres for the Miami extension. Other individuals and corporations made similar pledges.⁴

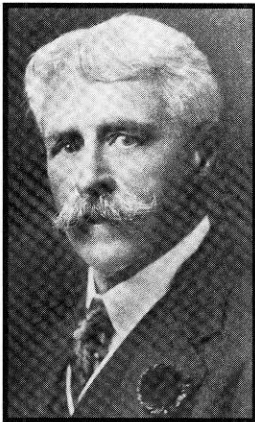
Rather than provide the FEC Railway an outright land grant, the Boston and Florida Company donated land in the form of a one-half interest in its planned immigrant communities. George Miles, a Com-

pany official, proposed this plan to protect the Boston and Florida Company from “being discriminated against by ... the railroad company ... if they decided to offer advantages to settlers which we would not be in a position to parallel.” The Boston and Florida Company and the FEC Railway began their joint venture in 1896, and organized the colonies of Modello and Hallandale. Disputes soon arose over the freight rates charged by the FEC Railway. By 1902, Miles suspected the FEC Railway of financially suppressing the Boston and Florida Company to prevent construction of a canal along the east coast. Although no evidence exists to support this suspicion, Miles urged against the appointment of joint land agents. However, the Boston and Florida Company’s lands continued to be sold through Flagler’s corporate enterprises until the 1920s.⁵



Henry M. Flagler
(HASF 1981-116-2)

As Flagler received land titles from the IIF, the Boston and Florida Company, and other companies and individuals, he established a special “Land Department.” James E. Ingraham, former president of Henry S. Sanford’s South Florida Railroad Company, served as Land Commissioner. Ingraham, a Wisconsin railroad engineer, came to Florida in 1874. In 1892 he surveyed the Everglades for a possible railroad route for Henry B. Plant’s railroad system. Ingraham caught Flagler’s attention when he reported that the east coast would serve as a more practicable route. Flagler immediately hired Ingraham and eventually placed him in charge of all land holdings.⁶



James E. Ingraham
(HASF 1976-85-1)

Ingraham soon made Flagler’s real estate holdings as profitable an enterprise as the railroad and his hotels, which included superb hostleries in St. Augustine, Ormond Beach and Palm Beach. The key to Ingraham’s early success proved to be advertising. Ingraham dis-

tributed booklets, pamphlets and a magazine, the *Florida East Coast Homeseeker*, in which he described the attractions of Florida's east coast as well as the lands for sale at most points along the railway. By 1896 the Land Department was incorporated as the Model Land Company (MLC), and Ingraham appointed its president.⁷

Henry Flagler established the Model Land Company as a separate corporation for "business and bookkeeping purposes." In 1902 Flagler's auditor began the transfer of titles of FEC Railway lands to the Company. In addition, financial transactions appeared as "the true and proper sums received, paid and due by each of the said companies." This separation and transfer of titles also had the advantage of improving the financial status of the railroad company for purposes of borrowing on bond markets. In 1909 Flagler instructed his auditor to place all lands "for farming or for other than railway purposes" in the Model Land Company account. Accordingly, in 1911 the FEC Railway transferred lands in Dade, Palm Beach, Brevard, Volusia, St. Lucie and Monroe counties to this account.

Flagler also created three subsidiary land companies to sell lands in specific areas, with a central office in St. Augustine to oversee administration of the land companies. The Fort Dallas Land Company, created on March 17, 1896, sold Miami-area lands; the Perrine Grant Land Company, organized on May 6, 1899, sold Perrine lands; and the Chuluota Land Company, established 1912, sold Chuluota (Central Florida) lands.⁸ The four companies, together with the FEC Railway and the Federal East Coast Hotel Company, constituted the Flagler System. The land companies assumed control of the majority of Flagler's real estate holdings, and the Hotel Company and the FEC Railway retained property pertaining to their respective businesses.

The three subsidiary land companies differed in the types of property sold, in dates of operation, and levels of success. The Fort Dallas Land Company possessed the most valuable property. Flagler purchased eighty per cent of the Company's stock for \$8,000; he divided the remaining twenty per cent between two FEC Railway vice presidents, Joseph R. Parrott and James Ingraham. Ingraham, as president of all the land companies, controlled Fort Dallas sales. Fort Dallas sold lots for \$50 to \$100, and constructed cottages which sold for \$1,500. By 1899 business was booming, and in 1902 property sales totaled approximately \$182,600. The Fort Dallas Land Company operated until 1908, when it was "amalgamated with the Model Land Company" to

“simplify the work and reduce the operating expenses.” Fort Dallas profits, totaling \$248,000, and several Miami lots and buildings, were transferred to the Model Land Company.⁹

The Perrine Grant Land Company managed valuable farmlands located along Biscayne Bay, eighteen miles south of Miami and extending six miles west. Information compiled by George Robbins, an FEC Railway attorney, who had extensive correspondence with the Perrine heirs, as well as an abstract of title, allowed Miami attorneys Hudson and Boggs to trace the title of the Perrine Grant for the Model Land Company in 1914. Their research revealed the circumstances that enabled Flagler to acquire an interest in the Perrine property.

In 1838 the Legislative Council of the Territory of Florida granted land to the Tropical Plant Company of Florida, directed by Dr. Henry Perrine, J. A. Webb and Charles Howe. During that same year, the Congress of the United States also granted a township of land to Dr. Perrine, provided that every section in the tract have “an actual settler engaged in the propagation or cultivation of useful tropical plants” by 1846, eight years after the passage of the act. If Perrine failed to meet this condition, the land would be forfeited to the United States. After Perrine was killed by Indians during a war with the Seminoles, Congress renewed the conditions of the grant in 1841 for the benefit of Perrine’s widow and his children.¹⁰

Mrs. Ann Perrine requested the aid of Charles Howe, a former associate of Henry Perrine, and promised a twenty per cent interest in the land. Howe surveyed the land and brought thirty-six Bahamian families as settlers. Conflicts with the Seminole Indians, however, soon drove these new settlers off the land.¹¹

In spite of the Perrines’ failure to meet the conditions of the grant, heirs attempted to secure a land patent in 1862. Their efforts bore no success until 1896, when the FEC Railway intervened on behalf of the Perrines, obtained the patent, and settled claims with independent homesteaders already living on the land. The FEC Railway assisted the heirs in a second lawsuit initiated by the American Contract and Finance Company, a New York corporation assigned the interest of Charles Howe and others. The Supreme Court of Florida decided in favor of the Perrine heirs in 1899. According to Model Land Company records, “After securing the patent, the [Perrine] heirs, ... undertook to convey an undivided one-half interest in the grant ... to the Federal East Coast Railroad Company [sic].”¹² To FEC Railway representatives the deed was

“open to serious and fatal objections as to certain of the grantors.” The deed was ineffective to convey the claims of one heir “as her signature and her husband’s lack witness;” the sanity of another grantor at “the time of conveyance” was “extremely doubtful” and a third did not sign the document “at all.”¹³

Litigation concerning the title to the Perrine land continued. James Thomas Walker, for example, sued the Model Land Company and the FEC Railway in 1911 for his interest in the grant because the companies had negotiated the purchase with Walker while he was in the New York State mental asylum. Ingraham was notified of a suit filed in the United States Court in the State of Rhode Island and instructed his Miami sales agent to “simply reserve the lands set aside in the suit with Mr. Walker and not to make any explanation of it to anybody.” There are no records of the suit in the Company Records, although the Model Land Company sold the Walker lands in 1913.¹⁴

In spite of early legal problems, the Perrine Grant Land Company was profitable and survived into the 1960s, longer than the other subsidiaries. The Chuluota Land Company, the third subsidiary company, was unable to sell the 11,000 central Florida acres allotted it by the Model Land Company, and was phased out of the Flagler system during the 1930s.

The main office of the Model Land Company, located in St. Augustine, managed all these lands, although numerous sales agents operated throughout the state. The practice of employing agents began during Ingraham’s administration of the Land Department. Occasionally, railroad agents doubled as Model Land Company representatives and provided information on soils, crops and farm production on lands. The original Model Land Company sales agents included Frederick S. Morse, Miami; F. J. Powers, Homestead; J. B. McDonald, West Palm Beach; Austin and McNeil, Okeechobee; C. D. Brumley, Chuluota; Miller Hallows, Ft. Pierce; and others. The original Miami agent, Frederick Morse, maintained extensive files, which help to clarify the role of the local sales units within the larger corporation.

The relationship between the Miami agent, Frederick Morse, and the Model Land Company began in 1907, with Morse acting as “special agent for the Railway Company during the time it was building in and out of Miami.” Morse purchased much of the right-of-way and other properties between Miami and Key West for the FEC Railway. The agency, officially titled, Frederick K. Morse Real Estate and Fire Insurance, “was

planned and developed for the sale of MLC land jointly with the Boston Company Land,” which Mr. Ingraham formerly sold in his St. Augustine office. Like other agents, Morse worked on a commission basis.¹⁵

Morse’s successors, Frank J. Pepper and Burr S. Potter, began working with the Morse agency in 1910. Pepper came to Miami in 1907 and worked for the Engineering Department of the FEC Railway and on the construction of the Key West extension, until he became a partner with Morse. After Morse’s death in 1920, Pepper “took Mr. Burr S. Potter in as a partner.”¹⁶ “Pepper and Potter” became the official sales agent for Model Land Company real estate in territory designated as:

That part of Palm Beach County South from South line of Boynton Canal, Broward County, and Dade County to West line of Range 37 East and to South line of Twp. 61 South including Key Largo Lands, excepting and reserving there from all lands and lots in the City of Miami.¹⁷

Pepper and Potter devoted “practically all their time and attention to the sale of company lands.” They made sales, collected payments on contracts, attempted to prevent the expansion of city limits to keep taxes

IF YOU Want Orange Groves, Pineapple Plantations or Fruit and Vegetable Lands see
Fred’k S. Morse
MIAMI, FLORIDA



Agent For Lands of
Florida East Coast Railway Co.
Florida Coast Line Canal and Transportation Company.
Boston and Florida Atlantic Coast Land Co.
Model Land Company.

Advertisement in the *Florida East Coast Homeseeker* for Frederick S. Morse, the Miami agent for the Model Land Company, July 1910. (Historical Association of Southern Florida)

down, and kept local records and surveys.¹⁸

In 1927 the agents relocated to the Ingraham Building in downtown Miami. The agency prospered during the real estate boom of the 1920s, and subsequently struggled through the Great Depression of the 1930s. According to Pepper,

Miami banks began to fail in 1928, with the Southern Bank and Trust Company, and in 1930, with the Bank of Bay Biscayne. Then is when our troubles began. Our bank accounts became frozen and real estate stopped moving, and of course, our income (commissions) likewise stopped.

During the 1930s the agency lost its northern clientele, while local sales grew increasingly difficult. Local farmers began to suffer from tariff laws and poor markets, and they could not afford to buy new land or make payments on the farmlands. A lack of quality farmland compounded the problem. By 1939, Pepper reported “all our best lands for farming purposes in Palm Beach, Broward, and Dade Counties have been picked over and sold out ...”¹⁹

With the return of prosperity to the nation, conditions improved by the 1940s. Another former associate of Morse, Milo Coffrin, assumed Potter’s place within the agency, and Pepper and Coffrin, Inc. acted as the Model Land Company’s local agency. The agency changed its name in the late 1940s to Frank J. Pepper and Son, Inc., and again in the 1960s to Frank J. Pepper, Inc. Over the years, the agency assumed a number of extra duties and came to exercise influence in local politics. Pepper wrote that members of the agency could be found:

attending council meetings ... and also County Commissioner Meetings in Broward and Dade County in connection with which we are positive thousands and thousands of dollars have been saved the Flagler Companies because of our close attention to these matters and our personal friendship and influence with these officials. We have made it a rule to go over our territory at least once a week ... visiting the Court Houses, City Halls, etc., along with our other business to keep up our friendship, acquaintances, and political prestige with these officials, so that when matters come up affecting

taxes, zoning, condemnation, or anything else in which your companies are interested, we are informed and in a position to get satisfactory results.²⁰

The agency also participated in Drainage District meetings from Lake Worth to Naranja, and assisted in foreclosure suits by collecting affidavits, testifying, and gathering witnesses. Agents maintained records of all these activities, in addition to records of surveys, taxes, sales and other transactions and information on significant local events.

With its ability to influence local development, the Model Land Company supported Flagler's intention, "... to work in sympathy with the plans of the FEC Railway for building up along its line, thriving settlements and increase the revenues ... from freight and passengers" utilizing the line. Flagler once remarked, "Every new settler is worth \$300 a year to me. He has to bring in everything he uses and send out everything he produces over my railroad." The power of the MLC also helped the subsidiary land companies as they sought profits from land sales. One MLC sales agent, writing in 1911, reported that "Mr. Ingraham ... instructed me to sell the land at the best possible advantage to the company on the basis that the company is now working for profits in land rather than traffick."²¹

The activities of the Model Land Company grew to encompass sales and the promotion of Florida throughout the country. The Company focused on advertising the agricultural and industrial potential of the land, and employed agriculturalists, horticulturists and stockmen to attend to the development of the East Coast. The Model Land Company influenced the development of the South Florida region from a subtropical frontier to a modern civilization, and the Company has maintained a lasting impact on the area. Through a myriad of activities as a corporate land enterprise, the Model Land Company affected the economic, agricultural, political and social growth of the area. The accomplishments and shortcomings of the Company, many of which are documented in these records, offer a unique view of this region's history.

The Model Land Company Records include the administrative and financial records of the Company's Miami-based land agent, Frederick S. Morse, and successor agencies including: Pepper and Potter; Pepper and Coffrin, Inc.; Frank J. Pepper and Son, Inc.; and Frank J. Pepper, Inc. The files date from around 1907 to 1967, and are housed in 159 boxes and total sixty-six cubic feet of files. The files do not

represent the comprehensive records of the Model Land Company, as the records of the central office in St. Augustine were destroyed by office personnel between 1963 and 1967.

The files document three major areas: real estate transactions, general company business and topical files. Files contain a variety of documents including correspondence, memoranda, maps, blueprints, clippings, publications, photographs and other materials. These documents also include documentation on tax matters, incorporation of towns, alterations of city limits, surveys, company and agency policies and sale prices of lands.

Tax issues were of great concern to Company officials, and the files document negotiations with local officials to lower taxes. Tax agents had success in arranging for the Company to pay regular taxes on smaller properties and limit taxes on larger, more valuable properties. The Company used other means to reduce taxes, including efforts to prevent the expansion of city limits. City lands bore greater tax rates, so the Company sought to prevent the incorporation of most towns. The agency maintained files on efforts to determine the city limits of the following communities: Deerfield, Pompano, Oakland Park, Fort Lauderdale, Hollywood, Perrine, Hallandale, Miami, Homestead and Florida City. The Company also kept records on the incorporation of the following towns: Princeton (1915-16), Hallandale, (1921), Redland County (1925), Pompano (1927-33), and Floranada.

With the exception of the 1930s, the Model Land Company abided by a policy of selling — never renting — land. Sales contracts bound farmers to their property, and prevented farmers from moving to new lands. Typical files contain requests for land and correspondence between the buyer and the agency on price, location and description of lands, followed by the negotiation of terms for sales contract. Extensions were often granted to farmers during hard times. Occasionally, the Company allowed farmers to forego interest payments if payment of the principle was possible.

Mortgages replaced sales contracts during the 1920s and constitute a large portion of the records. Occasionally, one contract holder would agree to exchange land with another, requiring certain paperwork. Deeds of easement allowed a company or individual to use land owned by another for a specific purpose. Easements were granted for the purpose of constructing canals, bridges and power lines. Options were granted only in cases of large purchases.

Files contain requests for land, information on the availability of land, and the price and quality of land. A contract holder sometimes assigned responsibility for fulfilling the contract, as well as the land, to another individual or company. Men serving in the Armed Forces in World War I assigned their contracts to others, as did farmers unable to complete the payments on their lands. Surveys created to map plats of Model Land Company holdings, useful to settle disputes over boundaries, are scattered throughout the files. The failure to receive a contract extension often resulted in the voiding of a contract and the return of the land to the Model Land Company. Property was leased only in rare cases, but hardly ever to homeowners. The Company granted leases to certain groups, such as the Veterans of All Wars and the National Soil Fertility League. Once a contract holder had completed payments, a deed was issued and the property was recorded.

Topical files document important economic, political and social aspects of South Florida's development. Topics represented in the files include: Chicken Key, immigration/colonies, legal cases, land drainage, the Everglades, housing projects, the Miami Country Club, migratory labor, parks, public relations and World War I.

Chicken Key

The acquisition of "Chicken Key" proved a complex process. Charles Deering, a wealthy industrialist, expressed interest in Chicken Key, an island in Biscayne Bay. Frederick Morse undertook the numerous steps involved in securing the property. Morse applied for a "Special Certificate of Location" to provide a legal claim on the land. He placed a "Notice for Publication" from the U.S. Land Office in local newspapers for five weeks. The notice described the location of the land and instructed "any and all persons claiming adversely the lands described, or desiring to object because of the mineral character of the land or for any other reason, to the disposal to applicant," to file an affidavit of protest in that office. Morse also posted this notice on the island and obtained an affidavit stating so.²²

Prior to approval of the application, the government was required to survey the land, and Morse had to prove that the island existed prior to the 1850 Swamp Land Grant. The island, if underwater at that time, would be considered the property of the State of Florida. Morse gathered affidavits asserting that the land was "not in 1850 swamp and overflowed land." Experts were consulted in this matter, including John K. Small,

Head Curator of the New York Botanical Garden, and a close friend of Charles Deering. Small, who had conducted "a special study of the plants and the vegetation of Southern Peninsular of Florida and the Keys," submitted photographs of mangrove trees located on the island, estimated at 200 years old.²³ These photographs, preserved in Company files, substantiated claims that the island existed for centuries.

After Morse succeeded in protecting his claim to the Key, he was forced to contest a second adverse claim made by Mr. Thomas A. Walsh of Brooklyn. Walsh had purchased the Key from William Fuzzard, an early settler of Cutler, South Dade's first community, in 1904 for five-hundred dollars, but neither man had a title to the property. Since Fuzzard was a friend of Morse, the latter agreed to pay Walsh five-hundred dollars for the land.

Afterwards, Morse took the final step and filed legal notice of the plat of the Key for five consecutive weeks. This notice stated that a detailed map had been filed by the land office of both Chicken and Commodore Keys, making the land available for purchase. Morse presented the warranty deed for the property to Charles Deering in 1920, concluding the transfer of the property. Although Walsh continued to pay taxes on the island and to claim title to the property, the land was securely in the hands of Charles Deering.

Immigration/Colonies

The FEC Railway planned "colonies" and encouraged immigration to increase the population and settlement rate along the east coast. A number of cities and towns began as "colonies," planned or supported by the railroad. Flagler's "Land and Industrial Department" encouraged the immigration of colonists from Norway, Sweden, Japan and other countries. On occasion, the FEC Railway Land Department played an active role in facilitating their migration to southeast Florida. Flagler aided in the development of a Danish colony, White City, after the death of its founder in 1893. The Model Land Company and the Boston and Florida Company cooperated in organizing Modello and Hallandale, colonies for Swedes and Danes. The FEC Railway also participated in the establishment of the Japanese colony at Yamato, near present-day Boca Raton. Company files document attempts to arrange similar immigration projects in the Lake Worth area during the 1920s.

Subjected to annual floods, the Lake Worth district proved extremely difficult to promote as a settlement. Yet, several farmers settled

on the Company's land anyway by 1920. Pepper's description of the area included grim observations, such as a notation of a family surveying their property from their porch, which was surrounded by water. To improve the potential for agriculture, the Model Land Company organized a drainage district to drain the lands of excess water and improve farming opportunities.

Initially, the Model Land Company considered a joint drainage project with the Boston Company in order to remedy the situation and to improve the value of the lands. The Company also explored the establishment of a Company Farm, to disprove the growing belief that the land could not be farmed. Changing the farmers attitudes had become imperative. In a letter to Ingraham in 1922, Pepper reported that "There is one thing for certain and that is we are not going to get local farmers interested in the district, at least until others have gone in there and demonstrated a success."²⁴

Many farmers expressed reluctance to "put any more labor and fertilizer in the ground" until they saw results from even one successful farm in the area. The farmers experienced many seasons of over drainage during the cropping season and flooding during the winter season. They also complained of the burdensome drainage tax. Although the Company Farm idea is discussed in correspondence, there is no indication of its creation.²⁵ Other alternatives that Pepper suggested to Ingraham included colonization of the land and the sale of the property. He wrote that the Company "should either colonize it ourselves by Japanese or others whom we might find desirable," or put it on the market together with the Boston Company's holdings. Pepper was already in contact with Syrians and with Japanese in California.²⁶

Ingraham responded to Pepper's letters, stating:

As to the colonization by the Japanese ..., or Syrians I have never seen in any of our relations with the Japanese at Yamato, anything that was objectionable. They are hardworking, intensive, and persevering. As far as I know, the Japanese are more self-assertive as to their social rights than any of the others that you discussed with me.²⁷

No indication is given of whether this quality was a desirable one in prospective colonists; however, Ingraham suggests the English as a second, preferred possibility. He wrote:

I am inclined to think that if a properly sustained effort to was made, that we could reach a class of young Englishmen and Englishwomen, and perhaps good Irishmen and Irishwomen, good educated people, who want to make a new start, and these people make the very best colonists in the world. They assimilate readily, they are socially acceptable, and they don't know what failure means.²⁸

Subsequent correspondence between Ingraham and the Miami agency called for a meeting between Pepper and Potter, as agents responsible for much of the Lake Worth lands, and Mr. J. B. McDonald, an agent operating in Palm Beach County, and the British Consulate. The purpose of the meeting was to "discuss the matter of encouraging some British immigration of high class."²⁹

Although the progress of this idea beyond this point is unknown, another colonization plan materialized a year later when Alfred Minssos of Norway approached the Model Land Company with his own immigration plan. Minssos, "who had lived in the U.S. for ten years, and who in 1916, was a member of a commission sent to this country to study and investigate the cooperative features used by our manufacturers," proposed to bring one hundred Norwegian families to the Lake Worth area. Each would be required to possess \$2,500 in cash in addition to the funds necessary to purchase their houses and five acre lots. Minssos promised to construct a community center, streets, a store and clubhouse, and to improve the area by planting shrubs and flowers.

The Company agreed to provide several acres after Minssos demonstrated the viability of his colony by successfully settling the majority of the families. The company was cautious, but expressed its hope that "... this colonization improvement will prove to be only the beginning of a permanent setting up of that back country by a substantial set of farmers and good citizens, and to this end, it goes without saying, that everybody is interested."³⁰

Legal Cases

The files also contain correspondence and records concerning U.S. Government and Seaboard Airline Railway condemnation suits, foreclosure suits and suits against squatters and trespassers. Three significant cases occurred between 1911 and 1915 concerning the settlement

of homestead claims on lands owned by the Model Land Company. Files on these cases detail the complications related to vague federal provisions for granting public lands in Florida and illuminate the doubts many people harbored about the legitimacy of land companies operating during this period.

Suits settling homestead claims were brought by homesteaders who contested Model Land Company titles to certain lands. The homesteaders or individuals who settled on the land argued that the property was public land owned by the federal government and therefore open to claims. The Company had to prove to the court that the federal government transferred the lands in question to the state under the Swamp Land Grant of 1850. If the state owned the land, the homesteaders could have no claim upon it, and the Company titles would be protected. Although only one of these cases determined a Company title to be invalid, the homestead suits proved to be lengthy ordeals which damaged the reputation of the Model Land Company.

In *J. W. Blanding v. MLC* (1912-15), the plaintiff contested the Company's title to land in Homestead. According to the Company, the state deeded this land to Sir Edward James Reed who deeded it to the Land and Trust Company of Florida. The Trust Company conveyed this parcel with other lands to the Model Land Company. Apparently, the Company held reservations about the legality of the transfer and distinguished the land from regular transactions by referring to it as "Model-Reed land" in financial records. The investigation conducted on the title of these lands revealed that the lands were never transferred to the state. As J. E. Ingraham wrote, it looked "as if there might be a good mix up in these unfortunate transactions."³¹ This situation resulted in unfavorable publicity for the Model Land Company and caused some Homestead residents to become "rather excited about this rumor."³²

The Company's local agents gathered "swamp land affidavits," signed statements attesting to the fact "that at the date of the Swamp Land Act September 26, A. D. 1850, the greater part of each said quarter sections were wet and unfit for cultivation, and except for the artificial drains since made, the greater part of each of said quarter sections would now be wet and unfit for cultivation ..."³³

The Company recorded the names of witnesses, records of the fees paid witnesses, and other relevant information. The case appeared to be settled in 1913, when Chief Justice Lamar of the Supreme Court of the United States issued a decision "against the homesteading of

lands conveyed by the state and to which the U.S. could be the only legal claimant.”³⁴ The judgement providing that homestead claims would no longer be upheld if they involved lands claimed by a state should have concluded the Blanding case. However, by 1914, the Company land still had not been deeded to the state.

In 1915 the United States government finally patented, or officially deeded, the lands to the State, completing the Model Land Company title. On January 28, 1915, Mr. Dewhurst, the FEC Railway attorney, notified Ingraham that “the Secretary of the Interior has rendered a decision in our favor for the whole SW 1/4 at Homestead.”³⁵

S. P. Lewis initiated a second case involving the Reed land in 1911. This case involved the land in section 12-56-39. As in the Blanding case, the Model Land Company argued that the state conveyed the land to Sir Edward Reed in 1883, and that the title came to the Company through the Florida Land and Trust Company in 1903. However, the Company attorney, Mr. Dewhurst, employed a different strategy to prove that the land should have been transferred to the state. During the course of the case, documentation in the files of the General Land Office in Washington, DC, listed the land under the description of “swamplands patented to the state.” The land was, however, omitted from the list of swamp lands in the Surveyor General’s Office. Dewhurst argued that a simple clerical error had caused the misunderstanding and that the property had, in fact, been patented to the state.

The State’s title was recognized in 1912, but S. P. Lewis filed a “swamp contest affidavit” in a final effort to keep the land. He secured affidavits and witnesses to testify that the land being contested was not swampland and that it should have been retained by the federal government. In order to demonstrate that the land was not “wet and unfit for cultivation,” neighbors argued that tomatoes could be successfully grown on surrounding tracts of land. In spite of this testimony, Lewis won his case and was allowed to keep his land.”³⁶

A third case involving a Homestead claim occurred in 1912. *MLC v. Jack Davis* was settled, like the Blanding case, in favor of the Model Land Company. Although homestead claims were few, they generated a great deal of controversy and negative publicity. Flagler, with his keen business sense, foresaw the negative consequences of these legal battles. Shortly before his death in 1913, Flagler warned Pepper of the dangers of settling homestead claims in court. Flagler argued that even if the Company won all such suits, it could still lose a great deal of business:

I have a feeling that we ought not stay in the Courts and have our titles under a cloud, if we can adjust them for a reasonable amount of money or in any other way. I do not know what Mr. Dewhurst has done beyond the fact of bringing suit. There is a side of this that the lawyer should not be concerned with and that is the business side of it; and it looks to me that either you or some representative of yours might be able to reach these parties in such a way as to straighten up and clear out titles better than if this litigation is continued.³⁷

An unfriendly relationship with the *Miami Metropolis*, the city's first newspaper, contributed to Flagler's concern. A "general belief" developed in Dade County that "the titles of the MLC are not good, due to attacks upon it by the *Miami Metropolis*." An outraged Ingraham instructed Pepper to convince the *Metropolis* that it would be harming Miami far worse than the Company if stories on the "Homestead Affair" continued to appear in print. The Model Land Company was strong enough to withstand the attacks. "The MLC's holdings extend from Jacksonville to Key West and will be enlarged rather than diminished, and I think it is powerful enough to protect the deeds it issues."³⁸ Ingraham observed that the Miami real estate market could be more vulnerable. Newspapers should be careful since "a very little thing will sometimes stop a 'boom' and create a panic ..."³⁹

Land Drainage

A large portion of Florida land south of Orlando was originally wet lands, and drainage in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries proved essential to the development of the region. The Model Land Company, and other large landowners, had an important stake in the drainage process. The Company initiated drainage operations, financed dredging projects, and attempted to influence the policies of state drainage district boards. In correspondence, Frederick S. Morse and William J. Krome, the engineer who oversaw the construction of the FEC Railway's overseas railroad to Key West, discussed a plan to drain the prairie land of the Perrine Grant, located in today's South Dade, into Biscayne Bay. Morse was responsible for obtaining the necessary information. Krome gave his opinion as construction engineer that the fall was sufficient for drainage into the Bay.⁴⁰

Other instances of drainage projects appear in the records. In one case, Carlton Marshall of Pompano requested an option so that he could ditch the land, install drainage pumps, and determine whether his drainage method could make the land suitable for farming. The Company granted Marshall the option and agreed to sell the land at the price he named because if Marshall succeeded, "... it would no doubt be of great assistance in the sale of the balance."⁴¹

In addition to facilitating the drainage process, Flagler and his companies exerted control over the drainage district boards created by Governors Jennings and Broward. The first comprehensive drainage law established a drainage board which levied taxes, planned canal routes and ordered dredges. Flagler and the Boston Company united with other large land owners to oppose the drainage tax. They won a lawsuit against the state, and in 1906, the drainage commissioners drew new boundaries for the drainage district, excluding most of the lands of these companies.

Various state-organized drainage districts continued to supervise drainage for a number of years. The local Model Land Company office maintained files on these districts and participated in landowners leagues, organizations of large land holders who joined forces to fight unfavorable drainage board policies. Two drainage districts, the Broward Drainage District and the Southern Drainage District, posed problems for the Company. When Sidney Harrison, the secretary of the Company, learned of their organization, he complained about the "objectionable features" of the Broward organization's bill in a letter to Frederick Morse. The bill authorized the Board "to levy an unlimited amount of taxes for an unlimited amount of years." The Board possessed similar broad powers in regard to its ability to issue bonds, to change the boundaries of the district and to utilize funds. Furthermore, there was no appeal from the board.⁴²

Harrison, however, reported that the Model Land Company succeeded in seeing all of these features altered by amendments after "considerable controversy with the Representatives and Senators introducing this bill." Harrison also informed Morse that a similar effort concerning the Southern Drainage District bill was underway and instructed him to "see the Editor of the *Miami Herald* and give him our side..." in case it became known that "our companies are opposing the Bill in its original form."⁴³

Everglades Development and Preservation

The Model Land Company exercised an enormous impact over the recent history of the Everglades. Cape Sable, in the southwestern sector of the Everglades, is documented in numerous files recording land transactions and plans to develop roads, experimental farms and other facilities. James Ingraham initiated the drainage and development of the area. As an employee of Henry B. Plant's South Florida Railroad, Ingraham explored the Everglades for construction of a railroad route to the Keys. He reported that the land was unsuitable for a railroad but had enormous potential for farming. Plant was uninterested, but Flagler pursued this information, and eventually acquired and began the process of draining the land so it could be sold as farmland.

In addition to promoting the sale of the land and encouraging the establishment of agricultural experiment centers by providing low rate leases, the Model Land Company constructed roadways and advertised hunting and fishing attractions. Records regarding the transformation of the Cape Sable area into Everglades Park begin in 1928, with Ernest Coe's enthusiastic announcement of the campaign for "preserving this Cape Sable section of South Florida as a national park for all time." Coe, a local landscape artist, became known as the "Father of the Everglades." Early correspondence reveals local landowners and land companies had no objection to the park except that they did not "consider ... all the agricultural lands in that area should be included in its boundaries or that their lands should be confiscated without proper reimbursement ..."⁴⁴

The bill drafted in 1929 provided that the lands could be taken by the government by condemnation, prompting the fear by land owners that they would receive less than market value for their lands. During the late 1920s and early 1930s, the Model Land Company continued to follow the progress of the park. The Company gathered the addresses of all landowners in November 1931, and arranged for a meeting of "all the larger landowners in order that we may be all of one accord if and when the land is purchased or taken by condemnation for park purposes."

The files contain maps showing various proposed boundary lines, newspaper clippings, pamphlets, memos, transcripts of radio broadcasts and other materials documenting the controversy over the park. Numerous letters to congressmen and records of landowners meetings



- National Parks
- + New National Parks
- Proposed National Park

COUNTY COURT HOUSE
MIAMI, FLORIDA
TELEPHONE

April 29, 1931

PRESIDENT, DR. DAVID FAIRCHILD
VICE-PRESIDENTS, CLAYTON BEDWICK COOPER
DAVID SCHOLTZ
JOHN O. BHARES
TREASURER, F. L. WALL

"Public opinion must
be enlightened."
George Washington

ERNEST F. COE, CHAIRMAN

Mr. Frank J. Pepper
Ingram Edg.
Miami, Fla.

*Eastern National Parks
and Proposed National Parks*



Macadia Mammoth Cave Shenandoah Great Smoky and Tropic Everglades what a magnificent string of Eastern National Parks that will make!
GILBERT GROSVENOR
National Geographic Society.

My dear Mr. Pepper:

PICTURE LANGUAGE is the UNIVERSAL LANGUAGE. It's pictures of Flamingoes, Egrets, Sailfish, Tarpon, Alligators, Palms, Orchids, Seminoles, which tell their own story so that everybody can quickly read and see why the Everglades National Park will be different from all other National Parks.

The Miami Daily News, at the request of this Association, agrees to get out a special rotogravure National Park Sunday edition devoted exclusively to pictures of the Everglades National Park.

As this edition will carry no advertisements, it is only reasonable that the actual cost should be borne by popular subscriptions. The names of the subscribers will appear under the caption: "This Everglades National Park Lumber Sponsored by,...."

A representative of the News will call and explain to you more fully the scope and purpose of this issue.

Sincerely yours,
Ernest F. Coe
Ernest F. Coe, Chairman

EFC:EN

This association can use ten thousand copies of this rotogravure Everglades National Park edition to advantage for general distribution. It is the belief of the writer that this rotogravure picture edition will be a most effective help in carrying on the work this Association is now doing. Eliminating all advertisements in this issue and inviting only individuals to subscribe will give this edition a distinctive character. This will show the public that representative local citizens are personally sponsoring the Park project.

AN ASSOCIATION TO PROMOTE ACQUAINTANCE WITH THE WONDERS OF AMERICAN TROPICS IN THE CAPE SABLE REGION OF SOUTH FLORIDA AND ADJACENT AREAS.—ITS SCIENTIFIC INTERESTS INCLUDING ITS VARIED PLANT AND ANIMAL LIFE; MUCH OF IT UNIQUE TO THIS SECTION.

TO CO-OPERATE WITH MEASURES FOR THIS CAPE SABLE COUNTY'S PRESERVATION AS A GREAT NATIONAL PARK, WHERE ALL FORMS OF LIFE WILL BE PRESERVED, AND ITS VARIED OTHER CHARMES OF TROPIC GLADES, JUNGLES, AZURE BEAS, EMERALD ISLES, LAKES, RIVERS AND BEACHES WILL BE FOREVER CONSERVED TO THE BENEFIT OF ALL HUMANITY.

MEMBERSHIP.—FREE TO ALL WHO WRITE OR OTHERWISE COMMUNICATE TO THE ASSOCIATION EXPRESSING THEIR INTEREST IN THE OBJECTS OF THE ASSOCIATION.

SUSTAINING MEMBERS.—COMPOSED OF THOSE WHO CONTRIBUTE FUNDS.

HONORARY MEMBERS

ALL MEMBERS WILL RECEIVE BULLETINS AND OTHER PRINTED MATTER FROM TIME TO TIME.

Letter from Ernest Coe to Frank Pepper soliciting support for the promotion of the Everglades National Park, dated April 29, 1931. (Archives and Special Collections, University of Miami)

provide evidence of the Model Land Company's effort to work with large landowners, oil companies, and land companies providing oil leases in the Everglades area. These groups opposed the park and sought to preserve oil and mineral rights for a set period of years.

In 1934 President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the Enabling Act, allowing the "creation of the Everglades National Park, in Monroe, Dade, and Collier counties, ... within the boundaries to be determined by the Secretary of the Interior." Ingraham sought out Coe, who at this time served as Chairman of the Everglades National Park Association, in order to determine the boundaries of the park and to plan future action in response to the condemnation of Company land.

The Company also compiled a report on the 270,760 acres it owned, placing their value at \$5,036,800. The report describes drainage activities performed, crops raised and the industries that could be developed on these lands. The report argues that if the lands are taken for park purposes, industry and farming should not be curtailed. "If these lands ... were set aside for a park or game preserve, attractive activities could be carried on without interfering with the industrial development of the land."⁴⁵

On April 2, 1947, the Secretary of the Interior finally selected the lands for the park. The Model Land Company sold the property to the government. When plans to extend the park boundaries arose in the 1950s, the Company and its local Miami agency took action. A letter from Pepper to the main office revealed that "15 interested landowners and oil men first had ... a 'policy' meeting, ... from which we adjourned to the Court House for a meeting with the Board of County Commissioners." The commissioners, according to Pepper, seemed interested in the landowners views, but reluctant to "take a definite stand on their behalf due to the presence of [John] Pennekamp, a *Herald* reporter who supported the park."⁴⁶

Housing Developments

Throughout the early twentieth century Blacks migrated to Florida from southern states, as well as from the Bahamas and the Caribbean. Henry Flagler encouraged this trend by employing many black workers in his hotel and railroad construction projects. However, strict residential segregation affected the settlement of the Miami's growing black population. An area on the northwest border of the downtown business

district — Colored Town, later called Overtown — was the one of the first black residential areas. Smaller black communities had also emerged in Coconut Grove and Homestead. Model Land Company files contain mortgage documents for many black Homestead residents, several of whom purchased large tracts and resold the property to other buyers.

By the late 1920s Colored Town came to be an overcrowded slum, with the relocation of residents restricted due to policies by Miami's officials to keep them confined to that quarter. When the city's business leaders moved to enlarge the downtown business district in the 1930s, they initiated the first steps to move blacks out of the downtown area. "New Deal" public housing projects provided the opportunity for businessmen to implement expansion and resettlement plans. The Dade County Planning Board also perceived the removal of blacks from the downtown area as desirable, and discussed the creation of planned communities elsewhere in the city.⁴⁷

Company files record the business transactions involved in two of these housing projects. The first, the Liberty Square Project of the 1930s, was constructed on 62 acres of land bounded by NW 12th Street (East); NW 67th Street (North); NW 15th Avenue (West); and NW 62nd Avenue (South). This project area and the area around it came to be called Liberty City. Work on Liberty Square began in 1935, and by 1937 the first families had moved to the project "from an extremely congested



Liberty Square Project, ca. 1937, one of two housing projects supported by the Model Land Company. (HASF, Miami News Collection 1995-277-6975)

colored section of the City of Miami.”⁴⁸ All of the 234 houses were soon occupied. Files contain a plat showing the project location, documents indicating the goals and operating methods of the associated consumers’ cooperative, and a list of the various government agencies involved. Files also record the financial transactions between James E. Scott, Liberty Square’s manager, and the Model Land Company. Scott’s dedication to the establishment of Liberty Square is apparent. Although the government eventually provided a loan, Scott borrowed funds from personal acquaintances to meet initial payments. Correspondence provides descriptions of the improvements made on the property and the overall success of the undertaking.

The second major housing development documented in the files is Richmond Heights, located eight miles south of Miami and one-and-one-half miles west of Dixie Highway. Files dating from 1946 to 1955 describe this project and provide mortgage records. According to a *Miami News* article, former Pan American pilot Captain Frank C. Martin “spotted and selected” the location for this community after “having flown over Dade County for a score of years.”⁴⁹ Martin purchased 3,000 acres of pine land from the Model Land Company. The government occupied 800 acres for Richmond Air Base. After consulting a member of the Coral Gables Board of Realtors, Martin decided to use the remaining land to establish a planned “Negro development.”

Martin’s community included plans for schools, roads, parks, churches and recreation centers, in addition to housing. Construction began in 1950, and several residents moved into the area by May 1951. As in the case of Liberty City, “practically all” of Richmond Height’s home buyers “came from the Central Miami or Coconut Grove Slum Districts.”⁵⁰

Tensions between black and white residents occasionally developed in spite of segregated housing policies. Files discuss the rezoning of an area on Coral Reef Drive between Richmond Heights and white neighborhoods. A resident requested Company support for a petition to obtain business district zoning so that business facilities could be constructed between these communities, both for the convenience of the “colored people” and for creation of a “neutral buffer.” According to the writer, “This is especially so when you consider that white ownership of this business property is practically assured.”⁵¹ Another file mentions an incidence of violence against a black man who moved into a white neighborhood.

FACTS...

ABOUT THE

LIBERTY SQUARE CONSUMERS' COOPERATIVE ASSOCIATION

THIS is a public Association for economy and service, NOT an organization for private profits. It is a true Cooperative enterprise designed to conduct the retail distribution of the items most important in the average family budget. Its stores will sell at current retail prices BUT its profits will be returned periodically to its members in direct proportion to their purchases at Cooperative stores.

SERVICE

THRIFT

COOPERATION



Pages from a pamphlet promoting the Liberty Square Consumers' Cooperative Association, ca. 1940. The Cooperative sold grocery and household items at the competitive retail prices while the members of the organization, with a membership fee of \$1.00 and the opportunity to buy stock at \$2.00 per share, periodically received a portion of the

*We Haven't Any Big Money, Let's
Work Our Little Money Together*

▲▲▲
NOW is the TIME for ACTION

Join The

**Liberty Square Consumers'
Cooperative Association**

Headquarters

6302 NORTHWEST 14th AVENUE
MIAMI, FLORIDA

AND HELP BUILD A COOPERATIVE ECONOMIC
FOUNDATION

▼▼▼
STOP TALKING--THINK . . .

About what the "RACE" Needs
About what the "RACE" Has Done
About what the "RACE" Should Do
About what the "RACE" Should Have

NOW IS THE TIME TO GET TOGETHER And . . .

Act Work Combine

Your energy, intellect and money with a sound, substantial
and profit earning enterprise

▲▲▲
MEMBERSHIP FEE \$1.00 SHARE UNITS \$2.00 PER SHARE

DO IT NOW!!!

SERVICE

THRIFT

COOPERATION



association's profits. This effort encouraged members of the housing community to take a personal interest in the development by offering patronage to the Cooperative and helping prevent the same decline that occurred in Overtown. (Archives and Special Collections, University of Miami)

Miami Country Club

Files document the history of the Miami Country Club, which contained one of the first golf courses constructed in the United States. Flagler's magnificent Royal Palm Hotel, a hostelry in the FEC Hotel Company chain, managed these facilities and hosted numerous tournaments which generated publicity for Miami. When the Royal Palm closed in 1928, the Country Club was "organized by three hundred prominent Miami business men." The new club administrators leased the club house and golf course from the FEC Hotel Company and kept these facilities open on a year-round basis. In 1944 the Miami Country Club concluded a purchase on an option with the Hotel Company for the club house, golf course and all other assets on the premises. Even after the Hotel Company sold this property, it maintained close ties with the owners; Frank J. Pepper became a member of the club's board of directors so that the Flagler interests would be represented. The files contain financial and administrative records dating from 1933 to 1944, as well as information on golf tournaments and special events.

Migratory Labor

Files document two federal government efforts to locate migratory labor camps in South Florida. In 1940 a representative of the Farm Security Administration made inquiries on Company land in the Pompano, Pahokee and Homestead areas. Since a local farmer donated two eighty-acre tracts for the establishment of a black and a white labor camp, the Model Land Company was unable to sell any land on this occasion. Another camp to accommodate what one news article called "Florida's own 'Oakies'" was established in 1941. The government requested a tract of Company land in the Lake Okeechobee vicinity, but this piece of property was under lease.

Parks

The City of Miami leased Royal Palm Park, a popular gathering place in downtown Miami, for one year as a park, freeing the Company from an annual tax on this property. The Model Land Company attempted to persuade Homestead officials to provide a similar arrangement, but the City of Homestead could not afford to lease the down-

town property known as the “triangular tract,” sixty acres bordered by Krome Avenue. The Company, however, sold other lots to Homestead for parks, and pledged to help the city by clearing underbrush and preparing the property for “beautification.”⁵²

Files also document the establishment of the Boca Raton Park and Playground. The city’s mayor, George A. Long, provided the land for a baseball field and park but he requested that the Model Land Company donate an adjoining piece of land. The Company supported the Mayor’s project and agreed to the donation.⁵³

Public Relations

Flagler operated his railroad, hotel and land businesses during the 1890s with a policy calling for widescale national and local publicity. Flagler purchased an interest in several Florida newspapers, and he and his associates employed a variety of methods to increase demand for lands. The Travellers Information Company promoted the Flagler System in thirteen northern cities. “Florida on Wheels,” a special railroad car constructed to tour the Midwest, was another innovative idea.

By 1900 a new attitude had replaced Flagler’s initial interest in publicity. At this point, he told Ingraham that “it seems to me that the East Coast is so well known that we ought to stop all expensive advertising.” Ingraham apparently continued to advertise, but concentrated on the northern market almost exclusively.

One exception to this policy is recorded in the files. When F. W. DeCroix requested that the Company take out an advertisement in his new publication, *The Illustrated Review: A Florida Magazine for Florida*, Ingraham instructed Pepper to purchase space for an ad because of current circumstances. “We ordinarily do not advertise much in local papers, for the reason that we spend our money in the North, where we endeavor to draw our customers from, but I realize that the ‘fake companies,’ et cetera, are bringing about a suspicion with regard to Florida enterprises, and it therefore may be very desirable for us to put ourselves before the public in a straightforward and legitimate way.”⁵⁴

The local office did not engage in the business of advertising itself, but it did distribute copies of “Lure of the South Land” to northern agents when requested. It also gathered photographs of Miami to be compiled into albums “used in soliciting homeseekers.”⁵⁵ Ingraham requested pictures of “the different buildings and improvements in and

around the Miami area as contained in the ... Miami booklet issued by your board of trade ... or ... any other cuts showing the developments in and around Miami.”⁵⁶ The Company collected photographs, including *Miami Herald* prints of a successful tomato farm, *Everglades Magazine* photos of a cattle farm, and other views of Biscayne Bay and the Dixie Highway.

The only other evidence of agency advertising is information on a sign advertising Key Largo lands. The Company had to submit extensive paperwork to obtain a permit to maintain the sign, eventually destroyed in a hurricane in the 1940s. The agency refused to replace the sign since neither the local office nor the St. Augustine agency believed, by this time, that advertising was profitable: “This office has never yet been able to trace a sale ... directly as the result of such a sign, or similar advertisement in Northern papers ... either Mr. Ingraham or Mr. Harrison informed me that was the experience of the St. Augustine office.”⁵⁷

World War I

Files document Model Land Company cooperation with the Food Preparedness Commission to ensure an adequate wartime food supply. Ingraham realized

the necessity for a large increase of acreage in corn, sweet potatoes, and other products raised in the South, not only for the sustenance of the South during the period of the war, but in order to supply the entire country and assist to the utmost of our ability in making up the shortage of crops which is anticipated throughout the North and West, and that as much as possible surplus ... may be shipped over to the Allied Nations in Europe ...⁵⁸

From 1917 to 1918, the Company maintained records of farm crops, enabling the Food Commission to predict the various yields of produce. The Company also took land applications, ordered seed and distributed goods to farmers. The Model Land Company offered to furnish free seed to all Broward County farmers who would grow a summer crop of corn. In spite of its desire to aid the war effort, the Company would not concede to the use of its land for growing extra crops.

Ingraham asserted that “we are doing our share in furnishing free seed without furnishing free land.”⁵⁹

Epilogue

Whether the issue was agriculture or immigration, land sales or migrant labor, drainage of swamp lands or race relations, taxes, tourism, or housing, the Model Land Company played a major role in shaping the economic, political and social issues that dominated the development of southern Florida in the first half of the twentieth century. Henry Flagler and his corporate enterprises literally shaped the landscape of the southern half of the state through the activities of the Florida East Coast Railway and the Model Land Company. Preserved within these corporate records are the many stories that continue to shape the destiny of our region.

Notes

1. Model Land Company Records, Archives and Special Collections, University of Miami, Coral Gables, Florida. This collection, processed with a grant from the Florida State Records Advisory Board, contains administrative, financial, property, and client files for the Model Land Company.

2. Chandler, David Leon. *Henry Flagler: The Astonishing Life and Times of the Visionary Robber Baron Who Founded Florida*. (New York: MacMillan and Company, New York, 1986), 130-32.

3. Akin, Edward N. *Flagler, Rockefeller Partner and Florida Baron*. (Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 1988), 177.

4. *Ibid.*

5. *Ibid.*, 178.

6. Martin, Sidney Walter. *Florida's Flagler*. (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1949), 240-41.

7. *Ibid.*, 130-131.

8. Martin, 240.

9. Akin, 164.
10. Model Land Company Records, Box 6, Folder 178, Special File 207, Letter from Hudson and Boggs to Frederick S. Morse, June 12, 1914.
11. Ibid.
12. Ibid.
13. Ibid.
14. Model Land Company Records, Box 14, Folder 14, Special File 15, Letter from James E. Ingraham to Frederick S. Morse, April 10, 1911.
15. Model Land Company Records, Box 90, Folder 1,640, Special File 2,085, Letter from Frank J. Pepper to Carl Hawkins, June 21, 1939.
16. Model Land Company Records, Box 96, Folder 1703, Special File 1,703, Letter from Frank J. Pepper to William Kenan, Jr. , January 21, 1944.
17. Ibid.
18. Ibid.
19. Ibid.
20. Ibid.
21. Model Land Company Records, Box 1, Folder 15, Special File 16, Letter from Frederick S. Morse to James E. Ingraham.
22. Model Land Company Records. Box 11, Folder 323, Special File Number 390, *Miami Herald* clipping, November 17, 1916, p. 4.
23. Model Land Company Records, Box 11, Folder 322, Special File 390, Copy of Affidavit, 1917.
24. Model Land Company Records, Box 41, Folder 946, Special File 1,321, Letter from Frank J. Pepper to James E. Ingraham, August 28, 1922.
25. Ibid.
26. Ibid.
27. Model Land Company Records, Box 41, Folder 946, Special File 1,321, Letter from James E. Ingraham to Frank J. Pepper, September 5, 1922.
28. Ibid.
29. Ibid.
30. Model Land Company Records, Box 39, Folder 912, Special File 1,257, Letter from Frank J. Pepper to James E. Ingraham, April 4, 1923.
31. Model Land Company Records, Box 1, Folder 32, Special File

35, Letter From James E. Ingraham to Frederick S. Morse, July 3, 1911.

32. Model Land Company Records, Box 1, Folder 32, Special File

35, Letter from Frederick S. Morse to James E. Ingraham, June 27, 1911.

33. Model Land Company Records, Box 1, Folder 32, Special File 35, Copy of Affidavit.

34. Model Land Company Records, Box 1, Folder 32, Special File

35, Letter from James E. Ingraham to Frederick S. Morse, July 10, 1913.

35. Model Land Company Records, Box 1, Folder 31, Special File 35, Letter from William W. Dewhurst to James E. Ingraham, January 28, 1915.

36. Model Land Company Records, Box 2, Folder 72, Special File 79, Correspondence, 1912-17.

37. Model Land Company Records, Box 2, Folder 65, Special File 72, Letter from Henry M. Flagler to James E. Ingraham, December 12, 1912.

38. Model Land Company Records, Box 2, Folder 63, Special File 70, Letter from James E. Ingraham to Frederick S. Morse, February 22, 1912.

39. Model Land Company Records, Box 2, Folder 63, Special File 70, Letter from James E. Ingraham to Frederick S. Morse, February 10, 1912.

40. Model Land Company Records, Box 4, Folder 120, Special File 138, Correspondence between Frederick S. Morse and William J. Krome, 1911-13.

41. Model Land Company Records, Box 13, Folder 353, Special File 426, Letter from Frank J. Pepper to James E. Ingraham, July 15, 1916.

42. Model Land Company Records, Box 21, Folder 535, Special File 655, Letter from Sidney Harrison to Frederick S. Morse, May 19, 1919.

43. *Ibid.*

44. Model Land Company Records, Box 75, Folder 1,439, Special File 1,869, Memorandum, Office of Frank J. Pepper, April 30, 1929.

45. Model Land Company Records, Box 75, Folder 1,441, Special File 1,869, "A Report on the Lands of the Model Land Company in South Dade and Monroe Counties Florida," p. 8.

46. Model Land Company Records, Box 112, Folder 1,938, Special File 2,596, Letter from Frank J. Pepper to Carl W. Hawkins, February 4, 1954.

47. Paul S. George, "Policing Miami's Black Community, 1896-1930," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 52 (April 1979): 438, 443-444; Raymond A. Mohl, "Trouble in Paradise: Race and Housing in Miami During the New Deal Era," *Prologue: The Journal of the National Archives* 19 (spring 1987): 7-21; and Paul S. George and Thomas K. Peterson, "Liberty Square: 1933-1987 — The Origins and Evolution of a Public Housing Project," *Tequesta* 48 (1988): 53-68.

48. Model Land Company Records, Box 104, Folder 1,803, Special File 2,250, Document entitled "Liberty Square Consumer's Cooperative."

49. Model Land Company Records, Box 108, Folder 1, 868, Special File 2,326, *Miami News* clipping, May 20, 1951.

50. Model Land Company Records, Box 108, Folder 1,868, Special File 2,326, *Miami Herald* clipping, May 20, 1951.

51. Model Land Company Records, Box 108, Folder 1,868, Special File 2,326, Letter from John A. Tackaberry to Mr. Frank J. Pepper, November 13, 1952.

52. Model Land Company Records, Box 19, Folder 493, Special File 597, Correspondence, 1928-39.

53. Model Land Company Records, Box 41, Folder 951, Special File 1,428, Correspondence, 1924.

54. Model Land Company Records, Box 2, Folder 68, Special File 75, Letter from James E. Ingraham to Frederick S. Morse, December 29, 1911.

55. Model Land Company Records, Box 11, Folder 330, Special File 397, Letter from Louis Larson to Frederick S. Morse, April 25, 1916.

56. Model Land Company Records, Box 11, Folder 330, Special File 397, Letter from Frederick S. Morse to James February 24, 1916.

57. Model Land Company Records, Box 110, Folder 1,899, Special File 2,370, Letter from Frank J. Pepper to James E. Ingraham, March 10, 1948.

58. Model Land Company Records, Box 15, File 413, Special File 498, Letter from James E. Ingraham to Frederick S. Morse, April 20, 1917.

59. Model Land Company Records, Box 15, Folder 413, Special File 498, Letter from James E. Ingraham to Frederick S. Morse, March 1, 1917.