

Dr. William B. Sawyer of Colored Town

by Dr. Roderick Waters

Dr. William B. Sawyer was born November 23, 1886, in Waldo, Florida, a small community about fifteen miles northeast of Gainesville. Little is known about his parents except that they were from South Carolina. While working as a water boy at Waldo's train depot, a misunderstanding resulted in a fight with a white youth. Although Sawyer won the fight, his parents, fearing that whites would seek retaliation in a community not unlike thousands of others in the region with their rampant racism as manifested in a system of Jim Crowism or racial segregation, put their son on the next train out of town. Details of Sawyer's years after leaving Waldo and before enrolling in college are unknown.¹

He began his undergraduate college education at Edward Waters College in Jacksonville and then transferred to Atlanta University. While attending Atlanta University, Sawyer earned money to finance his education by cooking breakfast and firing the furnace for notable scholar W. E. B. DuBois. DuBois, serving as a mentor to Sawyer, encouraged him to attain the highest personal goals in life. Obviously, Sawyer heeded DuBois's advice for after graduating from Atlanta University, he enrolled in the Meharry Medical School in Nashville, Tennessee, the leading predominantly African-American medical school in the nation at the turn of the century.²

To earn money for his tuition at Meharry, Sawyer rose early in the morning and fired the furnaces "for the wealthy white students at Vanderbilt" so they could "awaken in warm dormitory rooms and get ready for their classes." Sawyer also augmented his academic training by enrolling in preparatory literary courses prior to matriculating at Meharry. Nevertheless, he graduated with honors in 1908, the youngest student in a class of one hundred seven.

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After graduation, Dr. Sawyer moved to Miami, settled in Colored Town, and established his practice in a three-room office.³ Established soon after the incorporation of the City of Miami in 1896, Colored Town was a segregated quarter for African-Americans lying in the northwest sector of the young community. Like other segregated communities in the south, it lacked many of the services and amenities of Miami's dominant white section.

African-Americans had resided in the Miami area since the early 1800s, when two slave plantations arose, at different times, along the banks of the Miami River. In the late 1800s, many black Bahamians who left their islands with their faltering economies for Coconut Grove and the prospect of new economic opportunities. Their growing presence led to the establishment of a sizable community sometimes called Kebo.⁴

While black Coconut Grove or Kebo was developing, Henry M. Flagler, a wealthy developer and oilman, had decided to extend his Florida East Coast Railway to the Miami River five miles to the north, lay out a city on that site, and build a grand hotel framed by the waters of the river and Biscayne Bay. On March 3, 1896, twelve African-American men accompanied John and E. G. Sewell, brothers who hailed from Hartwell, Georgia, to Miami to begin construction. They "landed at the dock at Avenue D, now Miami Avenue." The head of Sewell's crew, an African-American named A. W. Brown, "threw the first shovel of dirt to begin [construction of the] Royal Palm Hotel." Flagler's railroad endeavors resulted in a building boom which attracted many African-American men to the Miami area seeking to improve their lot in life.⁵

African-Americans were instrumental in the incorporation as well as the construction of Miami. On July 28, 1896, there were 424 registered voters in the territory, 181 of whom were African-American. Two thirds of the registered voters were required to vote on the question of incorporation. The required number was met and of the 344 votes cast, 162 were cast by African-Americans, who were also were instrumental in determining the winners in Miami's first municipal elections. The enfranchisement of African-Americans in Miami was short-lived and the same mentality which resulted in disfranchisement also made it virtually impossible for African-Americans to live anywhere in Miami save Colored Town.⁶

Miami and south Florida grew rapidly following incorporation. The city and area's growth and potential attracted many Bahamians,

who, as before, came primarily for economic opportunities. Bahamian historian Paul Albury explained that the exodus of his countrymen was spurred by the widely-held belief that: "... wonderful things were going on in Miami, and there was a great demand for labour there. Flagler's railroad was bringing in Northerners by the thousands, all anxious to stake a claim in southern Florida with its gentle climate. A remarkable building boom was on, and any Bahamian who wanted a job could find it."⁷

Between 1900 and 1920, ten to twelve thousand Bahamians, approximately twenty per cent of that country's population, immigrated to Florida. The Anglo-Bahamian culture was clearly evident in Colored Town; British holidays such as Guy Fawkes Day were celebrated there in recognition of this Bahamian presence. W. P. A. writers claimed that West Indian customs were predominant in Miami's African-American neighborhoods, especially in terms of dress, customs, and religious practices.⁸

Colored Town's population rose rapidly due to the large Bahamian, and to a lesser degree Jamaican and Haitian immigration, coupled with a high birth rate. Although Colored Town at times contained at least twenty-five percent of Miami's population, it did not receive its fair proportion of city improvements. The quarter possessed inadequate streets, drainage and sewage collection, and lacked fresh water. This and the quarter's overall impoverishment contributed to epidemics of yellow fever, influenza, small pox and venereal diseases. Although the birth rate was high in Colored Town, its infant mortality rate, twice that of white Miami, was higher still.⁹

Dr. Sawyer, among the first African-American physicians in Miami, was a welcomed addition to Colored Town. (Despite popular belief, he was not the first African-American physician in Dade County.) Dr. Sawyer was quite committed to his work and made tireless efforts to enhance his medical expertise. To remain current on the latest medical advances, he continued to study medicine, earning post-graduate certificates from, among other places, Frederick Douglass Hospital in Philadelphia and Providence Hospital in Chicago. Among other accomplishments, Dr. Sawyer became a well known surgeon in Miami.¹⁰

In 1910 Dr. Sawyer married Alberta Preston. How and where they met and fell in love is unknown. According to Gwendolyn Sawyer Cherry, their daughter, her parents made their wedding plans in 1910 as Alberta was returning to Benedict College in Columbia, South Carolina. Alberta and William Sawyer both boarded the train in West

Palm Beach. Exactly what transpired between West Palm Beach and Ft. Pierce is unclear, but when they reached the latter city, they left the train station and were married. After the ceremony, Dr. Sawyer threatened to remove his medical practice to California if Alberta returned to college. Yielding to his threat, the new bride returned to Miami with her husband.¹¹

Dr. Sawyer and Dr. S. M. Fraizer, the only other local African-American physician in Miami at the time, were extremely busy. Sawyer's practice included house calls from West Palm Beach to Homestead "in an area of more than 100 miles." Over the years, Sawyer's mode of transportation to make his medical visits included a bicycle, a mule named Nellie, a horse and buggy, and automobiles of various models.¹²

Drs. Sawyer and Fraizer were constantly frustrated by their lack of support and the absence of a hospital in which to treat their patients. They were compelled to take patients in need of major surgery to Meharry College in Nashville, Tennessee, for the operation. One of Sawyer's personal goals was to build an adequate hospital facility for Miami's white and African-American communities.¹³ In an 1948 interview, Dr. Sawyer told of how and why this goal was obtained:

During those early days there were no hospitals available for Negro patients in this area. . . . A committee was formed . . . to organize the effort and find a solution. A white wealthy visitor, a Mrs. Cross, became interested and impressed by the committee's plan and she raised \$5,000 from her friends. In addition the committee raised \$4,000 of its own and the \$9,000 was given to the building of [City hospital.]¹⁴

After City Hospital was erected, hospital director Dr. James Jackson not only permitted African-Americans patients to be treated at the hospital, but allowed them to choose black physicians to treat them. African-American doctors were also permitted to intern there. However, after Jackson's death in 1924, black physicians were no longer allowed to treat patients in the hospital.¹⁵

Sawyer and the committee realized that their "next move was to make arrangements for an all Negro hospital – and thus the idea of the Christian hospital first came to light." Financing the hospital was facilitated by a "substantial contribution" from a white donor, Clarence Bush. Lots on which to build the hospital were purchased in 1920 and

construction of the hospital building began soon after. Thus “the first unit of the all Negro hospital was started.” Dr. Sawyer became chairman of the board of Christian Hospital, a position he held for almost three decades. Clara Taylor of Dunnellon, Florida, became the hospital’s first supervisory nurse.¹⁶

Christian Hospital experienced difficulty in its early years. In 1924 it was destroyed by fire, but a new building was erected which contained eighteen more beds than the original. Moreover, many people feared that they would receive inferior treatment at a small African-American owned hospital, causing them to stay away. Eventually the handicaps “of a poorly equipped and privately sustained hospital” and the “natural doubt and reluctance” of the African-American community as to the quality of medical treatment and hospital service were overcome by qualified and dedicated physicians. One feat that enhanced the hospital’s reputation was that in a span of ninety days in late 1932, its physicians “performed seven successful major operations.”¹⁷

Dr. Sawyer was involved in medical endeavors other than those with his private practice or as director of Christian Hospital. He served as a Dade County Public Health physician for fifteen years and he “worked closely” with the University of Miami in an unsuccessful attempt to establish an African-American medical school.¹⁸



The Mary Elizabeth Hotel in Overtown, 1981. Built in 1921, the Mary Elizabeth was an integral hub of Colored Town’s festive night life. (HASF, Miami News Collection, 1989-011-7550)

Dr. Sawyer's pioneer activities also included several significant contributions to Colored Town's business and social scene. In 1921, he built the Mary Elizabeth Hotel, which was operated by his wife. Alberta Sawyer was a businesswoman at a time when such vocations for women were exceptional. The hotel was named after their first child, Mary Elizabeth, who had died in infancy.¹⁹

According to the *Miami Times*, the Mary Elizabeth with three floors was the tallest building in Colored Town. The ninety-room hotel was located on the corner of Northwest Second Avenue and Seventh Street and was considered quite "up-to-date" with "elevator service and an inter-communication system" connecting the rooms to the desk clerk in the lobby. Private bathroom facilities were available for thirty-seven of the rooms and there was a "penthouse and a beautiful roof garden" for all the visitors to enjoy.²⁰ The Mary Elizabeth was a favorite retreat for dignitaries. Sawyer renewed acquaintances with his former mentor, W. E. B. DuBois, who stayed there "on his way to and from conferences in the West Indies." Mary McLeod Bethune, a close friend of the Sawyers, and whose son Burt managed Sawyer's hotel-based drug store for many years, stopped at the hotel frequently. Other dignitaries who stayed at the hotel included A. Phillip Randolph, Thurgood Marshall, and Adam Clayton Powell.²¹

The hotel boasted of hosting a large number of Latin-American visitors.²² On at least one occasion, the Mary Elizabeth Hotel hosted the Miss Latin-America beauty pageant. On July 23, 1950, the Latin-American Club sponsored the event, which was held in the hotel's patio. Representatives of many Latin-American countries as well as numerous guests from the United States attended the beauty contest where Monica Major of Puerto Rico was crowned Miss Latin-America.²³

Although many white Miamians thought of Colored Town only "in a criminal context or during periods of unrest," the community had "a bustling black business community . . . [and] variety of entertainment." The business and entertainment establishments were located on a segment of Northwest Second Avenue between Sixth and Tenth Streets known as "The Strip" or "Little Broadway."²⁴ The Mary Elizabeth was an integral hub of Colored Town's festive night life. Historian Paul S. George wrote of the active social scene of Colored Town:

Northwest Second Avenue acquired fame for . . . entertainment. The syncopated sounds of jazz and the blues

issued nightly from its nightclubs and dance halls. Northwest Second Avenue also contained the Lyric, a legitimate theater and several movie houses as well as its own trolley car line. The strip's rich entertainment accounted for a new sobriquet, "Little Broadway," and a growing national reputation. In the 1930s its clubs presented such stars as Marian Anderson, Bessie Smith, Hazel Scott, and Nat "King" Cole.²⁵

The reason so many renowned African-Americans, such as Anderson and Smith, lodged in Colored Town with such frequency was that while they performed in the great hotels on Miami Beach, they could not stay in these hostleries because of racial segregation, which forced them, regardless of status, to seek lodging in the African-American sections of cities and towns. After their last shows, these entertainers journeyed to Colored Town's hotels and nightclubs, often holding all-night jam sessions for their African-American audiences. The two lounges of the Mary Elizabeth, the Flamingo Room and the Zebra Lounge (so named because of its black-and-white motif), were among the favorite stops for entertainers. Ironically, the oppressive acts of racial segregation made "little Broadway" an economically vibrant section of Colored Town.²⁶

Because of Sawyer's status in the community, it was inevitable that he would become a spokesperson for Colored Town. In 1932, when black Miamians were unsuccessful in their attempt to vote in white primaries, the NAACP wrote Sawyer to canvass his opinion as well as those of other prominent civic leaders about their personal battles to vote.²⁷

Another example of Sawyer's civic prominence was illustrated when he became part of a peaceful effort to secure a portion of Virginia Key in Biscayne Bay for a black beach in 1945. His daughter, Gwendolyn Sawyer Cherry, provided an account of how this development:

I remember very vividly how Virginia Beach was first opened for our use, before blacks had no safe place to go swimming in Miami. One day a group of blacks decided to go swimming along with the other swimmers on Miami Beach. This created pandemonium. I remember Jack Bell, from the local newspaper (he was called the town crier) coming to daddy's office where they talked about the situ-

ation. Later a group of well intentioned, white citizens came over to daddy's with the astonishing information that we were going to be allowed to use Virginia Key for bathing in the surf. The only catch was there was not [a] way to get to it. . . . However, this was eventually solved by [use of] a ferry boat.²⁸

Virginia Beach offered cabins for rent, "picnic tables, barbecue pits, pavilions for dancing and places to buy . . . hot dogs hamburgers and peanuts."²⁹

Sawyer's influence in civic affairs even affected the lives of those affiliated with Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University, at the time the only state-supported college for African-Americans. The Orange Blossom Classic was a football game that this institution, whose nickname was the Rattlers, hosted in December. This game often determined the National Black College Championship. From 1933 to 1946, Jacksonville and Tampa were home for the Classic. In 1947, the Classic headed south to Miami.³⁰

The Orange Blossom Classic brought a strong festive atmosphere to an already vibrant Colored Town as well as to other portions of



The Florida A&M University marching band in the Orange Blossom Classic Parade, 1972, in Downtown Miami. (HASF, Miami News Collection, 1989-011-12043)

Miami. The classic was akin to “a grand homecoming or a large family gathering with all the festivities planned to go along with it.” There were two parades in honor of the Classic. One was held downtown on Flagler Street on the day before the game, and the second took place on the following day in Colored Town on Second and Third Avenues. At the Colored Town parade, proud African-Americans “showed off their convertibles in the high noon day parade.” Gwendolyn Cherry recalled how “both Second and Third Avenue[s] were lined with people. . . . Visiting couples strolled casually down the street, happy, carefree . . . looking forward to enjoying themselves for the remainder of their stay.” One way in which Florida A & M alumni, or Famcians, displayed their college pride was to wear their college colors – orange and green. Lodging for the African-American visitors was a simple matter for “hospitality was open to all. No matter how humble, homes were open to share what they had with friends and visitors alike.”³¹

The Miami-hosted Classic was such a huge success that the city became its permanent home. The Classic was great for the business sector of Colored Town, including the Sawyers, who did their best to accommodate the crowds that the activities associated with the Classic generated. By 1948, the second year the Classic was held in Miami, the Mary Elizabeth Hotel had added a large dormitory room “especially to accommodate the visiting athletic teams.” In that year, both the Rattlers and the Virginia Union Tigers were housed in the dormitory. The hotel also served as a ticket outlet for the Classic.³²

Besides upgrading the hotel for the Classic’s guests, the Sawyers made sure that their hotel was up-to-date in every way possible. Sawyer’s son, William (Bill) Jr., who, by the late forties, became owner of the hotel, had installed “a first class cafeteria.” He believed that “no expenses should be spared in making” the hotel the best it could be. The elder Sawyer echoed his son’s sentiments when he asked “why our people should not be able to enjoy the best of everything?”³³

Dr. Sawyer’s business and civic influence extended beyond the boundaries of Colored Town. In November 1949, Sawyer began a half million dollar housing project, Alberta Heights, named in honor of his wife, in the Brown subdivision, (later renamed Brownsville by the residents) another African-American community located in northwest Miami. This subdivision was bounded by N.W. 27th Avenue on the east, N.W. 37 Avenue on the west, N.W. 54th Street on the north and N. W. 41st Street on the south. According to the *Miami Times*, Alberta Heights was to have 80 units, including 64 one-bedroom and 16 two-bedroom

apartments. In 1950, the *Miami Times* reported that the construction of Alberta Heights was almost complete and that Dr. Sawyer was the “only colored man we know of to build such a project in the South.”³⁴

Dr. Sawyer’s tireless efforts to improve the quality of life for African-Americans led the *Miami Times* to name him outstanding citizen in January 1950. It was one of the last times Dr. Sawyer’s community would have the opportunity to recognize his achievements while he was alive. On July 29, 1950, the aging physician entered Jackson Memorial Hospital at 3:00 A.M. after “he felt [a heart] attack coming on.” He was unable to overcome his illness and died 8:30 P.M. the same day at the age of sixty-three.³⁵

Prior to the funeral, “hundreds of men and women from all over Dade County viewed his body as it lay in state in the upstairs lobby of the hotel.” The funeral was held in Bethel A. M. E. Church, which counted Dr. Sawyer as a member. The spacious church was barely able to accommodate the large numbers of dignitaries and common citizens who came to pay their final respects. After the funeral, Dr. Sawyer’s body was sent to West Palm Beach to be buried in the Sawyer’s family plot.³⁶

Dr. Sawyer’s daughter, Gwendolyn, gave this tribute to her father, which illustrates his close relationship with her:

He was my friend, my pal, my father, and my confidant. We were happiest when we were together. We dearly loved one another and spent as much time together as possible. Daddy built a hotel, a housing project and a hospital during difficult times. If I am able to do half as much, I’ll be happy.³⁷



Gwendolyn S. Cherry.
(HASF 1977-171-1)

Cherry’s father was a great role model for his intelligent and ambitious daughter. He worked hard, was successful and he gave back to the community. Sawyer’s popularity, philanthropy, and wide circle of friends helped Gwendolyn Cherry become the first African-American woman elected to the Florida legislature in 1970 — twenty years after his death. Her district included Colored Town, presently known as Overtown, the neighborhood Dr. Sawyer helped develop.

Endnotes

1. Thirteenth Census of the United States, 1910, Population, Florida, Dade County, Miami, April 21, 1910, Enumeration District 55, Sheet 12-B, Line 353; Kelsey Leroy Pharr, "Colored Town Section of the City of Miami is a Thriving Community," *Miami Metropolis*, October 16, 1915, 46; Gwendolyn Cherry, "Mother and Me . . . Christmas 1974," *Miami Times*, January 9, 1975, 6; Charles C. North, "Miamians Mourn the Passing of Dr. W. B. Sawyer," *Miami Times*, August 5, 1950, 2.

2. William B. Sawyer, Jr., and Bernice C. Sawyer, Telephone conversation with author, February 4, 1994; Pharr, "Colored Town Section of the City," 46.

3. Gwendolyn Cherry, "Cherry '74 Legislative Package," *Miami Times*, February 14, 1974, 6; Pharr, "Colored Town," 46; North, "Miamians Mourn the Passing of Dr. W. B. Sawyer," 2; *Meharry Medical, Dental, and Pharmaceutical Colleges, Walden University, Catalogue of 1907-1908, Announcement for 1908-1909* (Nashville, Tennessee: Marshall & Bruce Co., Printers, 1908), 17; Thirteenth Census of the United States, 1910, Population, Florida, Dade County, Miami, April 21, 1910, Enumeration District 55, Sheet 12-B, Line 353.

4. *From Wilderness to Metropolis: The History and Architecture of Dade County, Florida, 1825-1940*, Researched and written by Metropolitan Dade County Office of Community and Economic Development, Historic Preservation Division (Miami: Metropolitan Dade County, 1982), 36.

5. *Ibid.* See also Edward F. Keuchel, *Florida Enterprise Under the Sun* (Chatsworth, California: Windsdor Publications, Inc., 1990), 58, 65-68, 94, 95.

6. *From Wilderness to Metropolis*, 29, 39; Paul S. George, "Colored Town: Miami's Black Community, 1896-1930," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 56 (April 1978): 433, 435; Dorothy J. Fields, "Blacks Played Major Role in Building of Miami," *Miami Times*, July 1, 1976, 24; George, "Colored Town," 435; "From Wilderness to Metropolis," 36.

7. Paul Albury, *The Story of the Bahamas* (London: Macmillan Caribbean, 1975), 168-169.

8. Albury, *The Story of the Bahamas*, 169; Raymond A. Mohl, "Black Immigrants: Bahamian in Early Twentieth-Century Miami," *Florida Historical Quarterly*, 65 (January 1987): 296; George, "Col-

ored Town,” 439; Gary W. McDonogh, ed., *The Florida Negro: A Federal Writer's Project Legacy* (Jackson, Mississippi: University Press of Mississippi, 1993), 16.

9. George, “Colored Town,” 436-437;

10. Gwendolyn Cherry, “Blacks and the Bicentennial,” *Miami Times*, June 24, 1976, 6; Dorothy J. Fields, “Black Miami, The Way it Was: What Can We Tell the Children,” *Miami Times*, December 2, 1982, 17; L. E. Thomas, “The Professions in Miami,” *Crisis* 49 (March 1942): 85; Pharr, “Colored Town,” 46. Dorothy J. Fields, an historian who specializes in the social history of Miami's African-Americans, claimed that the first African-American physician to practice in Miami was Dr. Rivers, who is believed to have begun his practice as early as 1896. Rivers only stayed in Miami for a few months before moving his practice to Tampa. Dr. James A. Butler was reputed to have been Miami's second African-American physician. However, Thomas March's 1942 *Crisis* article claimed that the first African-American physicians to practice in Miami were Dr. James Butler and Dr. Culp. They arrived prior to 1904, the year that Dr. S. M. Fraizer began his practice. The article listed Dr. W. B. Sawyer as the fourth African-American physician to practice in Miami. In succeeding order came Dr. A. P. Holly, Dr. H. H. Green, Dr. W. A. Chapman, Dr. N. R. Benjamin and Dr. T. L. Lowrie. After 1920, these African-American physicians came to establish their practices in Miami: Dr. F. D. Mazon, and Dr. R. B. Ford. By 1942, with the addition of Drs. R. H. Portier, C. M. Smith, J. H. Smith, and S. H. Johnson (with Dr. Fraizer the dean of this group), there were ten African-American doctors practicing in Miami (Drs. Benjamin, Chapman, Ford, and Mazon were deceased by 1942). The *Crisis* article emphasized the diversity the physicians' specialties. Miami's African-American community could boast of ten well trained physicians, whose ranks included three surgeons, Benson, Sawyer, and Smith; an anaesthetist, Portier; a tubercular specialist, Green; and a roentgenologist, Johnson. In addition, Dr. Portier was reputed to have “the most extensive x-ray equipment of any private Negro practitioner in the United States. It is equal of any in private practice in Miami.”

11. Cherry, “Mother and Me,” 6; Thirteenth Census of the United States, 1910 Population, Florida, Palm Beach County, West Palm Beach, April 27, 1910, Enumeration District 124, Sheet 12-A, Line 295; *Meharry Medical, Dental, and Pharmaceutical Colleges*, *Walden University*, 17; *Meharry News*, 6, (January 1, 1908): n.p.

12. North, "Miamians Mourn," 2; Cherry, "Blacks and the Bicentennial," 6.

13. North, "Miamians Mourn," 2.

14. Ibid.

15. Ibid. Soon after Jackson's death, City Hospital was renamed Jackson Memorial Hospital.

16. Ibid.; See also John Gordon DuPuis, *History of Early Medicine in Dade County* (Miami, Published by author, 1954), 71.

17. "In Miami," *Crisis* 39 (December 1932):381. See also Fields, "Blacks Played A Major Role in Building Miami," *Miami Times*, July 1, 1976, 24. According to Fields, Christian Hospital was moved to 4700 N. W. 32nd Avenue in 1959. According to Lia Fish in her article "History Around Us," Neighbors, Northwest Edition, *Miami Herald* on June 4, 1989, 16, Christian Hospital was closed in 1983. Her claim was substantiated by the *American Hospital Association Guide* for it was in 1983 when Christian Hospital had its last entry.

18. Allen Morris, *A Changing Pattern: Women in the Legislature* (4th ed., Tallahassee, Florida: Office of the Historian, Florida House of Representatives, 1991), 128; Gwendolyn Cherry, Interview by Jack Best and Walter De Vries, May 21, 1974, Transcribed by Joe Jaros, #4667 A-47 transcript, Southern Oral History Program, University of North Carolina Library, Chapel Hill, 5.

19. Ellyn Ferguson, "Page of History Razed with Hotel," *Miami Herald*, December 6, 1983, 1-D, Sandra Ross, Dennis M. Ross, John Rosner, and Hy Rosner, *The Dade County Environmental Study* (Miami, 1985), 147.

20. "Miami's Mary Elizabeth Hotel Finest in the South," *Miami Times*, December 14, 1948, 13.

21. "Miami's Mary Elizabeth Hotel," 13; Ross, et. al., *The Dade County Environmental Study*, 147; Gwendolyn Cherry, "To a Great Lady," *Miami Times*, July 11, 1974, 6.

22. "Miami's Mary Elizabeth Hotel," 13.

23. "Miss Latin-America to be Selected," *Miami Times*, July 22, 1950, 2; "Miss Puerto Rico Crowned 'Miss Latin-America.'" *Miami Times*, July 29, 1950, 2.

24. George, "Colored Town," 440; Ross, et. al., *The Dade County Environmental Study*, 147-148.

25. George, "Colored Town," 440.

26. Ross et. al., *The Dade County Environmental Study*, 147,

Ferguson, "Page of History Razed," 1-D.

27. Papers of the NAACP: Part 4, "The Voting Rights Campaign, 1916-1950," Bethesda, Maryland: University Publications of America, 1991, Reel 1, Frame 00968. See also Frames 00956-00957, 00963-00964.

28. Gwendolyn Cherry, "What's Next???" *Miami Times*, March 6, 1975, 6; Sandra Ross, et. al., *The Dade County Environmental Study*, 53; Dr. S. H. Johnson as told to Dorothy Jenkins Field, "Reflections on Black History," *Update*, 4 (August 1977): 8-9, 11.

29. Cherry, "What's Next???" 6.

30. Neyland, *Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University*, 200-201; Gwendolyn Cherry, "I Remember," *Miami Times*, December 12, 1974, 6.

31. Cherry, "I Remember," 6.

32. "Miami's Mary Elizabeth Hotel," 13. An advertisement for ticket sales appeared in the *Miami Times* on December 10, 1949, 6.

33. "Sawyer Enterprises Readies 80 Apts.," *Miami Times*, November 26, 1949, 1.

34. *Dade County Environmental Study*, 52; "Sawyer Enterprises," 1; "Times Select Sawyer, Ward, Nickerson as Outstanding Citizens," *Miami Times*, January 28, 1950, 1.

35. "Times Select Sawyer, Ward, Nickerson as Outstanding Citizens," 1; North, "Miamians Mourn," 2.

36. Ibid.

37. Gwendolyn Cherry, "The Harry T. Moore Story," *Miami Times*, December 29, 1977, 6.