

THE TRUTH ABOUT COLLIER COUNTY.

Barron Collier has owned Deep Lake Grove and Railway in
1921.

He bought the G. W. Storter and R. B. Storter property
at Everglade the first of November 1921.

Hence he has had his development? under way a little over
two years.

The latter part of 1921 he had consummated his purchase contract
of a little over 6000 000 acres from the Southern States Land and
Timber Co. and the Empire Land Co. which is a little over sixteen
months ago.

In Feb. 1922 he bought his location for his hunting and fishing
camp from Mrs. J. M. Barfield.

At Everglade he has purchased practically all the individually
owned property down to five individual owners of real estate within a
radius of two miles, and at Caxambas he has bought out, is in process
of buying, or has attempted to buy every property (Real Estate), these
are the two locations of his mercantile businesses and he has no
competition at either of these points having purchased all competing
businesses.

Mrs. J. M. Barfield operates his Caxambas Hotel and is
associated with him in preserving and canning fruits and jellies,
Capt. Geo. W. Storter is one of his Superintendents at Everglade, Mr.
G. B. Eubanks one of his former competitors in the mercantile business
whom he has since bought out is now in Tallahassee, E. E. Damkohler
owning boats employed by Mr. Collier is also in Tallahassee as is Mr.
G. E. Rawls and a Mr. Watson from whom he is trying to buy certain
real estate owned by them at Caxambas, Capt. Maynard now employed
by Mr. Collier is also in Tallahassee in addition to a number of his
New York Office force, all of whom are agitating or advocating the
creation of Collier County.

Although there are only 18 voters at Everglade (9 actually
residing at that point, the other 9 living on islands from three to
fifteen miles from Everglade), there being no voters, owners of real
estate living or residing on Deep Lake Railway (which is really a
very bad tram-road with ties placed on top of the ground without
grade almost its entire length and several townsites marked on the map
presented to the committee of the House of Representatives) there is
not a single residence or any improvements or development between
Deep Lake Terminal on Allen River to Deep Lake Grove, which is by the way
is a grove that was once 200 acres and is in a very much run down
condition at this time, as a matter of comparison a ten acre grove
planted at Bonita Springs at the same time as Deep Lake Grove was
planted has produced more boxes of fruit than has the 200 acre Deep
Lake Grove both of these groves planted some twelve or thirteen years
ago, this ~~is~~ is the location that Barron Collier has the audacity to
ask the Legislature to name as the County Seat on the strength of a
petition signed by about five hundred people who are, or were visitors
at Everglade, workmen (some negroes) and guests, boatmen and migratory
visitors few of whom are even in the State of Florida at this time,
his petition was also signed by certain people at Caxambas, a majority
of whom have since expressed their desire that this county be not
created, at Caxambas and adjacent islands there are thirty-seven
voters and there are not fifteen individual owners of property except
Mr. Collier at or near Caxambas (on the petition were names of residents
at Immokalee which settlement was voted to go in proposed Hendry
County) the eighteen voters at Everglade and the approximate eighteen

or twenty voters at Caxambas and about the same number at Marco, a total of not over seventy legal citizens (only a small part of whom own real estate) are the only legal authorities except Mr. Collier within or without the State of Florida who request the Legislature of Florida to create Collier County, or rather the signers of the petition are telling you that Mr. Collier should have a County for the reason that they have either sold their property to him or they expect to do so,

While Barron Collier has contracted to buy something like 550,000 acres of land at a gross cost to him of a little over a million dollars and it is a fact that he has made certain partial payments on this acreage it is a further established fact that he does not own fifteen thousand acres of land nor anything like that acreage in proposed Collier County which is not encumbered by a mortgage in approximately two-thirds of the purchase price in other words, stating the matter in a different way he has not completed actually paying for over 250,000 worth of real estate within the boundaries of the County which he has asked you to create for his sole benefit, and the people who think he deserves this county have less than a total tax value of \$40,000.00 on the tax books of Lee County, Florida.

The Empire Land Co. owning about 300,000 acres of land in Lee County indorse his ownership of the County because they feel secure in the fact that the major part of this county will become a game preserve under a plan no doubt already formed and that they will be able to secure annually a fair interest on their present investment and the taxes thereon and that the natural increase of land value and more especially the sure increase of timber value will be more than profitable to them in a county which they can have controlled.

The same reasoning applies to Burton and Swartz, except that any reasoning man can understand that this firm would not indorse any plan that would drain their cypress timber land because it would destroy the value of the timber, consequently they must have a very decisive knowledge that no drainage will be done as has been promised by Mr. Collier. They KNOW they need have no fear.

The Consolidated Land Co. give endorsement to Collier County because they own a large amount of timber and naturally want to hold this timber as a part of a low-tax-value game preserve.

The above are Mr. Collier's claims and endorsements for a new County.

In his two years ownership in Southern Lee County he has not built a single mile of hard surface road, has not made a single permanent improvement except some addition to several houses and the building of a half dozen more and the location of a 2 X 4 sawmill on the Allen River and digging a channel 6 feet deep, 30 feet wide a distance of about one and one-third mile so that light draft boats can haul the fruit from Deep Lake Grove and his yacht get up to the Rod and Gun Club owned by him at Everglade.

He has purchased about \$100,00.00 worth of second-hand boats and as has been said before has not built a single mile of roads nor has he graded or surfaced his tram-road.

In other words he has not in the past two years demonstrated his ability nor intention to do a single thing that he now claims (or rather his paid attorney, Mr. R. A. Henderson, Jr., claims) before the House and Senate Committee and that members of the House and Senate have been told by the Hon. W. A. McRae, Commissioner of Agriculture (Mr. Collier has not made a promise to any one) nor will any one be able to get him to make a promise).

Why all this rush? The Legislature meets two years hence.

He has had the contract for fifteen miles of the Tamiami Trail since July 5th, 1922, nearly a year, and there has been \$90,000.00 available for him to spend and he nor his Company have built a single foot of grade during this time. Does this look like he wants the Tamiami Trail? He does not want roads through this country laid out for a wonderful game preserve BUT he has advertised the service of a boat line from Tampa to Useppa (where he has a hotel, The Tarpon Inn) a day-light trip of one day, thence to Caxambas or Everglade (Mrs. Barfield operates his hotel at Caxambas and Capt. Geo. W. Storter or someone else will operate his hotel at Everglade) and thence a third daylight run to Long Key Fish Camp, another stop-over night and thence a 4th daylight run to Miami.

No he is not going to do anything but build a few more stopping places along the coast line of a wonderful game and fish preserve. He has definitely said this is what he is going to do and he did not tell the House Committee who heard him nor did he make them a definite promise of anything, in fact, he evaded every question put to him except he said that he would build the Tamiami Trail from Everglade to Miami and from Everglade to Fort Myers. He did not say when or how nor did he tell the Committee the truth, which is that the Tamiami Trail's location is three miles from Everglade, that it is 80% complete from a standpoint of distance constructed, more than 80% complete from the standpoint of time necessary to complete and fully 80% of the finances either spent or on hand on this Million Dollar project about the entire cost (when he has paid for same) of his total holdings in proposed Collier County.

Instead of trying to get people to settle on his optional land and purchases, he is and has been buying from actual settlers and developers their holdings as fast as he can find money to purchase them.

Suppose he sits down and "hangs his feet over the rails" as he has threatened to do, suppose he can't "control his county" as he has said he would control it and that he gets angry and he and his friends refuse or don't pay their taxes, it would be pretty tough luck in six or seven hundred good citizens of Florida who have invested their all in wonderful homes, beautiful groves, who have mortgaged their lands on the future of this wonderful section from Bonita Springs to Caxambas along which coast he only owns about one mile of coast line where magnificent sand beaches reach the beautiful blue waters of the Gulf of Mexico. Is the Legislature of Florida going to destroy the hopes, dreams and ability of these people to develop a shore line which from the hand of God is one of Florida's most Magnificent sections to give to this one man and his whims or caprice an opportunity to establish a lot of fishing camps along the muddy shore line of the Mangrove swamps between Caxambas and Everglade, a section of Florida that is called "the mosquito hole" which from the shore line to four or more miles there from has three times in the last fifteen years been covered with the waters from the sea to a depth of from three to five feet which shore line will be sure to become under Mr. Collier's plan a retreat for the boot-logger and law-breaker.

WHO COMPLAINS? Over half the residents of Caxambas, such men as T. C. Curry, and Mr. Goldie manager of the W. S. Burnam Clam Factory at that point, all the voters at Henderson Creek, the 77 voters and more than five hundred owners of beautiful properties at Naples, all the voters and owners of land between Naples and Bonita Springs on the blue waters of the Gulf of Mexico, who mortgaged their future in the hope that they would have a voice in what kind of a county government they preferred, and thought best for them, several times more than a majority of the voters of proposed Collier County, many of them owning homes that have cost them from \$1000.00 to \$40,000.00 each. The Naples Improvement Company who have in the past 8 years built, dug or opened more than twelve miles of channel from Gordon's Pass to Naples and from Gordon's Pass to Marco, purchased and paid

for a \$75,000.00 worth of road bond on a thirty per cent tax valuation to construct an automobile road from Fort Myers to Naples, five times more than Barron Collier has done or will ever do, one man at Naples, (John S. Jones) paid three hundred thousand cash and received title in fee without mortgage encumbrance on one piece of property, and owes no mortgage on same now.

Is the Legislature of Florida going to sell five or six hundred people to Barron Collier? Are they going to discourage such men as H. H. Timkens, owner of the Timkens Roller Bearings Co. who has purchased and wants to build a \$50,000.00 home in this new County, but he does not want to live in a one-man county? Is the word and advice of Thomas A. Edison of Orange N. J. and General W. B. Halderman of Louisville, Ky. worth anything to the Legislature of Florida, when they wire and request that this County not be created? When the man who attempts to create this county has as his only reason that he wants to make a game and fish preserve of the 600,000 acres or more of land and water which he has purchased on credit, and established a few hunting and fishing camps, run a boat line from Useppa to Evergladem etc., connecting no doubt with Bimini and Cuba.

From seven to ten thousand people at Fort Myers are protesting against the attitude of their State Senators and Representatives in proposing to create this county and they offer to put the combined resources of the tax value exceeding \$7,000,000.00 behind county bonds to build main arterial highways (The Tamiami Trail) is one of these, ~~but~~ they have built high school buildings at Fort Myers, They pay \$10.00 per month per student for their upkeep while they are attending the highschools at Fort Myers which were built by taxes assessed on the lands at Fort Myers, any student from the furthestmost parts of the county can attend this high school and many have done so.

WHY THIS RUSH?