Meanwhile the schooner sailed for Trinidad and the first load of seed coconuts. By the spring of 1883 the men had planted 38,000 nuts at Miami Beach. They then moved to Cape Florida, planting Biscayne Key. The next location was around what is now 71st Street, after which a planting was started near Boca Raton.

It sounds easy, but it wasn't. The work was so difficult, living conditions so hard, that new gangs of laborers had to be employed every year. And when the little clearings were hacked out and the nuts planted, troubles for the promoters were just beginning. Rabbits and raccoons feast feasted on the tender sprouts of the coconuts as soon as they broke from the shell. Neither guns nor poison seemed to discourage them.

Still, it is probable that/with all the difficulties encountered,/with the lack of money that made it necessary to seek new capital from time to time, the coconut plantation would have been a success eventually. What sealed its doom was a sharp price drop in the price of copra.

Incidentally, Capt. Richard Carney, who was in charge of the first coconut plantation labor crew, later dismantled the portable house that probably was the first residence on Miami Beach, and moved it to Coconut Grove.

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