

MESSAGE OF GOV. A. W. GILCHRIST TO THE FLORIDA STATE
LEGISLATURE, 1911—EXTRACTS RELATIVE TO RECLAMATION
OF EVERGLADES.

EXECUTIVE OFFICE,
Tallahassee, Fla., April 4, 1911.

Gentlemen of the Legislature of the State of Florida:

Your attention is invited to the following report of the secretary to the Trustees of the Internal Improvement Fund, dated March 25, 1911. The introductory words are omitted:

REPORT.

The dredge *Everglades* began work July 4, 1906, and excavated 915,156 cubic yards of material of all kinds and moved 6.52 miles on the North New River Canal to January 1, 1909 (beginning of present administration).

The dredge *Okeechobee* began work on the 1st of April, 1907, and excavated 759,865 cubic yards of material of all kinds and moved 6.72 miles on the North New River Canal to January 1, 1909.

The total cost of constructing the dredges *Everglades* and *Okeechobee* and operating these dredges to January 1, 1909, was \$275,374.59. The amount expended on construction of the dredges *Caloosahatchee* and *Miami* up to January 1, 1909, was \$31,577.80, making a total expenditure of cost of construction of dredges and excavation of canals from the beginning of work to January 1, 1909, of \$306,952.39. Deducting the amount received for the dredges *Everglades* and *Okeechobee*, \$60,000, and the proportionate amount received for the dredges *Caloosahatchee* and *Miami*, \$28,050, when these dredges were sold to the Furst-Clark Construction Co., makes a total of \$88,050 received from the sale of dredges, leaving the sum of \$218,542.39 actually expended in drainage operations from the beginning of the work until the 1st day of January, 1909, at a cost of 13.1 cents per cubic yard.

OPERATIONS FROM JANUARY 1, 1909, TO JULY 1, 1910.

The dredge *Everglades* excavated 436,901 cubic yards of material of all kinds and moved 4.67 miles in the North New River Canal. This dredge was taken off the work on May 29, 1909, for repairs and was not placed back at work until the 1st of January, 1910.

(NOTE BY THE GOVERNOR.—The dredge *Everglades* was practically ruined, owing to the failure to use dynamite in rock excavations, the entire strain being thrown upon the dredge. The repairs cost \$33,550.88. It was sold to the Furst-Clark Construction Co. for \$35,000, about the cost of repairing the same. In my opinion 50 per cent or more of this entire amount should be charged against the previous administration, thereby increasing the cost of excavation under the same and diminishing the said cost under the present administration.)

The dredge *Okeechobee* excavated 667,278 cubic yards of material of all kinds and moved 6.92 miles in the South New River Canal.

The dredge *Miami* began work in May, 1909, and excavated 481,355 cubic yards of material of all kinds, four-fifths of which was rock, and moved 4.25 miles in the Miami Canal.

The dredge *Caloosahatchee* began work in July, 1909, in the Caloosahatchee River and was engaged the entire period in deepening, straightening, and in some instances widening the Caloosahatchee River, and excavated 418,819 cubic yards of material of all kinds.

The total cost of completing the construction of the dredges *Caloosahatchee* and *Miami*, repairing the *Everglades*, and operating the entire force of dredges was \$307,533.06. Of this total expense \$33,550.88 was expended in repairing the *Everglades*. Deducting this amount and the proportion of the \$85,000 received from the sale of the *Caloosahatchee* and *Miami* to the Furst-Clark Construction Co., \$56,950, from the total expenditures during this period leaves the sum of \$217,032.18 expended in actual operations, at a cost of 10.8 cents per cubic yard of excavation.

OPERATIONS FROM JULY 1, 1910, TO MARCH, 1911.

In June, 1910, a contract was let to the Furst-Clark Construction Co., of Baltimore, Md., to excavate about 184 miles of canal in the Everglades, and they purchased the dredges *Everglades*, *Okeechobee*, *Caloosahatchee*, and *Miami*, paying the sums, respectively, of \$35,000, \$25,000, \$45,000, and \$40,000 for the same, the contract for excavation being 20 cents per cubic yard for rock and 8 cents per cubic yard for excavation of all other character of material. From July 1, 1910, to March 1, 1911, they excavated in the—

	Miles.
North New River Canal.....	5.30
Upper North New River Canal.....	3.72
South New River Canal.....	1.70
Upper South New River Canal.....	6.60
Miami Canal.....	5.00
Hillsboro Canal.....	1.74
Total.....	24.06

SUMMARY.

Number of miles of canal excavated by State to Jan. 1, 1909:	
North New River Canal.....	6.52
South New River Canal.....	6.72
Total.....	13.24

Number of miles of canal excavated by State from Jan. 1, 1909, to July 1, 1910:	
North New River Canal.....	4.67
South New River Canal.....	6.92
Miami Canal.....	4.25
<i>Caloosahatchee</i>	(¹)
Total.....	15.84

Number of miles of canal excavated by Furst-Clark Construction Co.:	
Upper North New River Canal.....	3.72
North New River Canal.....	5.30
Upper South New River Canal.....	6.60
South New River Canal.....	1.70
Miami Canal.....	5.00
Hillsboro Canal.....	1.74
Total.....	24.06

Grand total of mileage of all canals excavated to Mar. 1, 1911..... 53.14

The total length of the canals now being constructed is 205.79, leaving on March 1, 1911, 152.65 miles to be excavated.

The Furst-Clark Construction Co. excavated 2,309,869 cubic yards of material of all kinds from July 1, 1910, to March 1, 1911, at a cost of \$241,148.12, making the cost per cubic yard 10.43 cents. Of this material removed 469,655 cubic yards was rock and 1,840,214 cubic yards was earth and all material other than rock. As the work progresses it shows that the percentage of rock is gradually getting less. For instance, in July, 1910, the cost of excavation per cubic yard was 11.38 cents; in February, 1911, the cost of excavation per cubic yard was only 10.02 cents per cubic yard; and as the work nears Lake Okeechobee it is reasonable to suppose that the percentage of rock will continue to be less, thus further reducing the cost of excavation per cubic yard, making the cost per cubic yard of the entire excavation by the Furst-Clark Construction Co. about 9 cents. As shown above, it cost the State prior to January 1, 1909, 13.01 cents per cubic yard for excavation, and from January 1, 1909, to July 1, 1910, 10.08 cents per cubic yard, and as the work of excavation advanced towards Lake Okeechobee, getting farther and farther from the base of supplies, making it more difficult to get supplies and fuel to the dredges, the cost of excavation per cubic yard would have naturally increased.

¹ It is impossible to estimate the relative number of miles of excavation by the dredge *Caloosahatchee*.

The fact that it is being demonstrated that by contract the cost of excavation per cubic yard will in all probability be about 9 cents, or 1.08 cents per cubic yard less than the lowest figure that the State was able to do the work for, unmistakably demonstrates the economy of letting the contract, to say nothing of the matter of greatly advancing the completion of the work, the contract calling for the completion of same on or before June 25, 1913.

NOTE.—You will notice that in this estimate the cost per cubic yard for excavation for the period ending January 1, 1909, is given as 13.1 cents, and in a report made to the trustees on December 31, 1910, of the cost per cubic yard for excavation during the same period it is given as 12.64, a difference of 0.46 cent per cubic yard. This difference is caused by the fact that in the December estimate interest of \$7,200 is figured on the investment, no interest being included in this estimate. Interest was likewise figured on the investment in the December, 1910, estimate for operations from January 1, 1909, to July 1, 1910, and no interest is figured on the investment for the same period in this estimate, nor is the sum of \$33,550.80, expended in repairing the Everglades, included in the estimate of December, 1910, which accounts for the difference given in the cost per cubic yard between that estimate and this of 0.22 cent for the period ending July 1, 1910.

The figures of amount of excavation given in this report are taken from reports submitted by Engineer John W. Newman for the period ending January 1, 1909, by Engineer P. F. Jenkins for the period ending July 1, 1910, and by Engineer J. O. Wright for the period ending March 1, 1911, these engineers being, respectively, in charge of the work during those periods.

Respectfully submitted.

J. C. LUNING, *Secretary.*

The secretary of the Trustees, Mr. W. M. McIntosh, jr., was also chief clerk in the comptroller's office, which position in the comptroller's office rendered it impossible for Mr. McIntosh to give to the position of secretary the time and attention which was necessary. He was offered the position of secretary with the understanding that he was to resign any other position he might have. He declined it. To such position Mr. J. C. Luning was elected in December, 1909. On December 3, 1909, the comptroller, at his own request, was relieved of the duty of treasurer, upon which it was resolved:

That the treasurer of the State of Florida be, and is hereby, declared to be the custodian of all bonds, notes, and securities of every kind belonging to or held as security by the Trustees, etc.

On January 3, 1910, a memorandum of agreement was entered upon by the Trustees and the Board of Drainage Commissioners, hereafter referred to simply as the Trustees, and Richard J. Bolles, and the representatives of certain land companies, and the Florida East Coast Railway Co., by which it was agreed "that the suits of these companies against the drainage commissioners to enjoin the collection of the drainage tax now pending in the Supreme Court of the United States shall be dismissed, each party paying its own cost." "That the land companies shall pay the drainage taxes assessed upon their lands, respectively, for the years 1907-1912, inclusive," etc. The said Richard J. Bolles agreed to pay his taxes in the same manner, and the said Bolles agreed to pay the notes executed by him within the time specified, these said notes having been made payable under the sale to him of December, 1908, so much annually, the last note being payable in 1916. This agreement was to become binding upon the Trustees and the Board of Drainage Commissioners, accepting a bid and entering upon a contract or contracts for the performance of the drainage work herein contemplated. If no such contract was made, then the agreement contemplated a "new conference" among the parties thereto. The location and excavation of 200 miles of

canals or less was determined upon. The Trustees were also to submit to the legislature certain territory subject to tidal overflow and not capable of reclamation and certain lands which were designated as a watershed and reservoir constituting the fresh-water supply of the city of Key West and stations along the Florida east coast extension, the same not being capable of being drained. The governor was to request the legislature to amend the drainage act by eliminating these lands from the drainage district. (See vol. 8, pp. 301-310.) Specific information on this subject will be communicated to you later by special message. On April 2, 1910, the tentative agreement not having been ratified, the trustees declared the agreement abrogated, calling for another conference, which conference was held April 7. The second agreement was practically the same as the former agreement, with the exception that one certain canal which was represented in the first agreement was stricken out of the second. This was the real object of the Trustees in calling the second conference. The following appears in this agreement, referring to said Richard J. Bolles:

And that he will pay all of said notes within two years from date, except a certain note for \$100,000, due January, 1916.

It might be stated here that on March 4, 1911, the said R. J. Bolles appeared before the Trustees in relation to certain business matters and upon the necessity being made known to him, he agreed to pay said note within the time in which the other notes were to be paid. On June 15, 1910, agreeable to certain advertisements, bids were opened for excavation of certain drainage canals in the Everglades. There were several bidders. The Furst-Clark Construction Co. of Baltimore made the lowest and best bid for same, being 8.4 cents per cubic yard for earth excavation and 20.2 cents per cubic yard for rock excavation. A contract was finally let to this company at 8 cents and at 20 cents flat, per cubic yard. These parties agreed to take the dredges owned by the trustees at the price fixed upon by the trustees in the advertisement for bids. Mr. J. O. Wright, chief engineer of drainage, stated:

As the work progresses, the dredges will be going farther and farther from the base of supplies and the cost of operating will increase. The price submitted is probably less than it would cost the State to do the work by owning and operating its own dredges.

This contract provides for the excavation of fully 20,000,000 cubic yards, 184 miles of canals; this in addition to the work already done, the same to be completed within three years from July 1, 1910. The Trustees sold for a good price their dredges. Had they continued the work themselves, these would eventually have been so much junk. One of the dredges, the *Everglades*, was repaired, repairs commencing June 21, 1909, costing \$33,550.88, almost as much as a new dredge. The necessity for this heavy repairing was due somewhat to the fact that while operating in rock dynamite was not used, or, if used, very scantily. The strain, therefore, was thrown largely on the dredge. In addition to the cost of excavation being practically the same under the contract, or probably less, the specifications under the contract call for better work than that done under the preceding or under the present administration. This is embraced under specifications as to slopes of the canals, width of the berms, and as to the dumps. These

specifications relate beneficially to the work done and add to the initial expense of the work. In addition to this, the litigation as to the payment of taxes was stopped, the parties agreed to pay the same from 1907 to 1912 inclusive, and R. J. Bolles agreed to make all of his payments within that time, his notes all having been distributed up to and including the year 1916. By the terms of the contract, the 20,000,000 cubic yards are to be excavated within 3 years commencing July 1, 1910. By means of this contract, the work was largely expedited. The work in the Everglades involves the drainage and after drainage, irrigation and transportation. For irrigation and transportation, the trustees are having permanent locks placed in the canals. It is highly probable that railroads will be built on the banks of the canals. The railroads will, of course, pay for the embankment and right of way, eventually diminishing the cost of the canals. There are now employed in the work of excavation 6 dredges. Within the next few months, another dredge will be placed in commission. On March 1, 1911, the dredge *Everglades*, being in the North New River and going toward Lake Okeechobee, was 34 miles from the dredge *Caloosahatchee*, going southeastward toward this dredge. They are approaching each other at the rate of 2½ or 3 miles per month. Within 12 or 13 months it is safe to say that the Atlantic Ocean will be connected by canals with Lake Okeechobee. Lake Okeechobee has already been connected by canal with the Gulf of Mexico. There are numerous little streams also called "rivers" making from the Everglades toward the Atlantic Ocean. The trustees realize the necessity of having these various streams opened up into the Everglades as soon as possible. Many of these are outside of the drainage area. There should be some law passed by which lands to the eastward of the present drainage district should be taxed, in order that the cost of opening up these streams may be borne by the land owners of the property, in more or less close proximity to the same. The opening up of these streams will be beneficial to this property which is now untaxed. Of the lands situated in the Everglades now owned by private individuals much of the same has been sold in small quantities to different individuals. The necessity for prompt reclamation of these lands, in order that they may be more quickly prepared for settlement and cultivation, is quite apparent. Under the preceding administration lands were sold in alternate sections. As laterals will have to be constructed, it is the policy of the present administration to solidify their holdings as much as possible.

On the 19th day of February, 1909, the Trustees completed the purchase of one-half interest of the only outstanding certificated lands, same having been certificated years ago to the Palatka & Indian River Railroad Co., paying therefor for 67,500 acres at the rate of 10 cents per acre. The remaining one-half of the certificates had been purchased by the East Coast Railway Co. Afterwards, upon the advice of W. S. Jennings, attorney, and Attorney General Park Trammell, that one-half purchased by the East Coast Railway Co. was conveyed to said company, said company agreeing to pay up all the drainage taxes. The idea was that the land was either the property of this company or not. If it was, the sooner the title was settled, the better it was for all parties. The East Coast Railway Co. agreed to take the alternate townships instead of the alternate sec-

ions. The
actions for the
was commenced

Very resp

REPORT OF THE
TRUSTEES FOR
EVERGLADES

To the Hon. Pres
Jennings, etc

Sigs: Pursua
committee, beg

Under the p
and inspect the

Everglades no
Improvement

works, the co
contracted po

drained and
any, not con

the number,
and also the

construction,
on any inco

depth of the
to the prese

complete th
contemplate

valuation, a
of value, in

Your cos
New River

examined
been ma

attach to
the variou

of the wa
No. 1, also

Clark Com
1910; also

Constructio
1910; also

Constructio
As to the

will be no h
struction ar

in the lake
when the r

2061 -