

## CHAPTER VII

### FEDERAL ADMINISTRATION

There is, of course, a long history of Federal administration of Seminole affairs previous to the removal west of the Mississippi with which this survey has no concern.

#### SECTION 1. FEDERAL ACTION PREVIOUS TO 1891

In the year 1872 rumors of an impending outbreak induced the Commissioner of Indian Affairs to send an agent to Florida. He found that the Seminoles "were peaceable and lived together by themselves."

In 1875 the commissioner urged that public lands be set aside for the Seminoles while there were still good lands to be had, "to save them from the fate of the Mission Indians of California." Nothing was done.

In 1879 Capt. H. R. Pratt, a noted Indian educator, was detailed to investigate "with a view to the institution of such measures as might lead to the civilization of the Florida Seminole." Capt. F. A. Hendry, of La Belle, took him among the camps and introduced him to the head men in the Cypress. The Indians declined all offers, and Pratt reported that nothing could be accomplished.

The publication of the MacCauley report in 1884 reawakened an interest in the Seminoles and perhaps caused a twinge or two of conscience. Congress that same year appropriated \$6,000 to "enable the Seminoles in Florida to obtain homesteads upon the public lands of Florida, and to establish themselves thereon," but when an agent was sent to help the Indians take advantage of the act it was found that the hammocks they were cultivating were owned either by the State or by improvement companies.

In 1886 another Federal agent was sent to look up suitable public lands; he could find none. In that same year, on the suggestion of the governor, the Commissioner of Indian Affairs recommended that the Federal Government should purchase lands from the State.

In 1888 Miss Lily Pierpont, of Winter Haven, Fla., was appointed Seminole agent. Unable to accomplish anything, she resigned the next year. Nor could her successor in office make any headway. The commissioner now reported that he could do nothing unless authorized to purchase lands from the State. Year after year Congress appropriated \$6,000 for the Seminoles; year after year the appropriation reverted to the Treasury, unused.

#### SECTION 2. THE ADMINISTRATION OF DOCTOR BRECHT

With the initiation of the Immokalee experiment by Mrs. Quinton in 1891, the modern period in Seminole administration may be said to have begun. Of the 400 acres selected by the Women's National

Indian Association, 80 were sold to the United States, and Dr. J. E. Brecht was appointed Seminole agent.

In those days Fort Myers was the last outpost of civilization. Immokalee lay 40 miles to the southeast over as bad a trail as the world tolerates. The site was chosen because of its great elevation—in a region of swamps so flat that water is often in doubt which way to run, Immokalee stands full 20 feet higher than the mission at Glade Cross, and 20 feet in Florida makes a mountain. Note well that the nearest permanent Indian camps were from 20 to 40 miles from this location.

*Elevations above sea level*

[Bench marks established by Department of Agriculture]

Bench mark No.	Location and description	Elevation
1	Fort Myers, corner of Heitman's grocery.....	Feet
4	Travers House, 300 feet north of pens.....	7.68
5	Immokalee Road, east of Kennedy Carson house.....	25.43
6	Immokalee, 100 feet northwest of schoolhouse.....	24.90
7	Glade Cross Road, one-half mile west of Leaning Oak.....	38.07
8	Rocky Lake, west side.....	26.54
9	Glade Cross Mission, south side of hammock.....	24.65
10	Brown's store, edge of boat trail.....	17.86
		17.25

The Indian Service is not often served by a finer type of man than Doctor Brecht. He was a physician. He was a humanitarian. He was helped by a wife whose heart was in the work 100 per cent. These two devoted souls knew not the meaning of race prejudice; when Indians came to Immokalee they sat at Doctor Brecht's table as honored guests. When he went among them in their camps, he treated the sick and furnished medicines gratis and usually out of his own pocket. The Government started him out in truly handsome style with a sawmill, farming implements, 10 mules and a wagon, 10 oxen and a cart, 2 logging carts. When the millhouse, planing mill, and a large quantity of shingles went up in smoke in October, 1892, the loss was made good immediately. The mission alongside this governmental establishment kept a small store to supply the Indians at cost, buying their skins and venison to prevent the Seminoles from being cheated by traders.

Here was a set-up with every promise in the world of success. What were the results?

Curiosity overcame fear to the extent that a few Indians sawed a board at the mill or pulled the whistle cord. Then they went back to the swamps. As Creel put it 10 years after the end of the experiment:

Commodious and comfortable buildings were erected, a sawmill including wood-working machinery was installed, and an agent and a corps of employees sent to the field. The Indians steadily refused to accept any of the freely offered benefits of the school and other material aid, even so far as refusing to accept a board from the mill or a handful of nails from the warehouse.

There is a deal to read between the lines in Doctor Brecht's reports. I dislike asking the reader to pause over ancient history when we have live Indians to deal with. Nevertheless, when many of the best

friends of the Seminole are eager to-day to repeat the Immokalee experiment it is worth while looking into this matter a bit. In 1895 Doctor Brecht wrote:

I am sorry to say progress is much slower than one could wish, but they are not standing still. \* \* \* More of the younger men are putting on citizen's dress. \* \* \* The older Indians are holding back the young men and girls. Many, especially the boys, seem anxious to learn to read, but have not the courage to break away from the influences brought to bear upon them. \* \* \* A young Indian told me lately, "Indian boys work, old Indians kill us," meaning, of course, regular white men's employment.

The plan and expectation was to draw the Indians from their swampy and scattered camps to this better location where they might be grouped more closely and thus more successfully drawn into industrial work, with school facilities, and the making of better homes. For this reason, the first work done by the Government was the furnishing of a sawmill, with the necessary accompaniments and a crew of six employees, for the purpose of erecting the buildings required for the establishment of an Indian industrial school and the attracting of the Indians to this locality by the prospect of remunerative work and the securing of lumber for their homes.

The hope that in this way the Indians might be drawn permanently to this locality was not realized.

It seemed to hurt the good doctor that he was dealing with hunters and not farmers. In 1898 he laments:

No organized school work has been carried on at the station \* \* \* owing chiefly to the fact that there was a greater demand for the products of their hunting, the Indians keeping closely to their hunting grounds and securing ample supplies from the traders.

I am sorry that, owing to their almost entire devotion to hunting, their fields have, to a great extent, been neglected. This, in my opinion, is a backward step on their part. \* \* \* They are discouraged in their field work, not knowing at what time they may be driven away by some white squatter. This is also the case with their raising of hogs, the latter being stolen from them.

There is ample evidence that Doctor Brecht was personally liked by the Seminoles. He attended one green-corn dance as an honored guest and was invited to another; there could be no stronger evidence of their regard for him. As this good man in 1899 prepared to quit his uphill fight and abandon Immokalee he set down his faith in the Seminole.

In conclusion, I would say that, although the efforts of the earlier years of this service to win the Indians to organized school work were not successful, the evidence of the good result of the camp work was sufficient to make us feel that persistent and continued effort in that line would accomplish the desired result, and I have such faith in these Indians as to believe that by a constant mingling among them of earnest workers they would be brought out of their aversion and stolid indifference to education and progress. The very traits of character which make them so independent, self-supporting, and clinging in their devotion to the older Indians help to make them superior to many other tribes, and they are so considered by all who have had any chance of comparing them. And now that the important work of securing for their use the land to which they are entitled is about to be accomplished, I trust renewed effort may be made by the Government for work among them in their camps by a sufficient force of helpers, so that whoever may be in charge may not be hampered in the effort of civilizing and educating them.

### SECTION 3. FEDERAL RESERVATIONS

Doctor Brecht's remark about lands referred to a belated awakening on the part of Congress. Beginning with 1894 it was stipulated that one-half of the annual appropriation of \$6,000 should be used for the purchase of land. Up to the close of fiscal year 1897, Doctor Brecht had located and secured nearly 10,000 acres in what is now

Hendry County. In the fall of 1896 the Secretary of the Interior declared the Everglades to be swamp land, which might be patented to Florida under the swamp acts of 1848-1850. Doctor Brecht at once appealed to the Indian Office to reserve the lands on which the Seminoles were living. The legal advisers of the department decided (in January, 1898) that the only right the Seminoles had was that of occupancy, but that inasmuch as part of the lands could not be classed as "swamp," the department had a right to revise the list of lands granted.

In an effort to save something for the Seminoles, an inspector in the Indian Service, Col. A. J. Duncan, brother-in-law of President McKinley, was sent down in 1898 to look into the whole land question. Through purchases over a long period of years and by President Taft's Executive order of June 28, 1911, some 26,781 acres were ultimately set aside for the Florida Indians. (See Appendix A.)

County	Acres	How obtained
Hendry.....	23,061.72	Government purchases.
Collier.....	80	Government purchases (Immokalee).
Do.....	960	Executive order of 1911.
Martin.....	2,200	Do.
Broward.....	480	Do.
Total.....	26,781.72	

The 80 acres at Immokalee were sold in 1904 pursuant to the act of March 3, 1903 (32 Sta. L., 1024); also a railroad right of way cut 34 acres from the Martin County lands, leaving the present Federal holdings 26,667.72 acres.

#### SECTION 4. REPORT OF F. C. CHURCHILL, 1909

Mr. Frank C. Churchill, inspector in the Indian Service, spent three months in Florida in the spring of 1909. Mr. Stranahan, of Fort Lauderdale, took him to some of the camps.

It was considered best that the Indians should not know that I was in any way connected with the Government, but by patience and the assistance of their friends I met and talked with at least 25 individuals, and the interviews were all in the hope of securing from them some intimation that they would be willing to settle down, have schools, etc. They listened patiently but when it came to a final answer to the direct question: "Don't you think this would be best for the Indians?" the reply was invariably the same, "Me don't know," and the best friends of the Indians that I could find told me that that was about as far as they had been able to induce the Indians to agree in regard to a new life.

It is not claimed that the prevailing sentiment in Florida has ever been friendly to the Seminoles and, beyond a mere handful of persons, they have few friends who would sacrifice the profits they hope to make on their otter skins and other output in carrying out any of their professed friendly relations.

#### CONCLUSION

It must be admitted from a humanitarian standpoint the Seminoles need looking after to the extent that they be induced to settle down before they become a set of roving vagabonds, as they surely will in a few years if developments in Florida continue.

Having considered the question from all sides, I have come to the conclusions—  
First. That it would be a waste of time and money to attempt to establish a school for the Seminoles at present, as I believe it would be impossible to induce them to attend any school in which the Government is known to be interested.

Second. I am satisfied that the purchase of land by the Government was the wisest thing that has been done, and under no circumstances should any part of this land be sold or leased except for the benefit of the Indians, as I am confident that some day they will not only need the land, but that they will be very glad of the privilege of occupying it unmolested.

Third. I see no way of reaching the Indians with civilizing influences except through Bishop Gray's mission, and his progress is quite likely to be slow and at times discouraging.

Fourth. Judging from the past and from all that I can hear of the prevailing sentiment, I see no reason to hope that the State of Florida will undertake to do anything for the relief of the Seminoles.

#### SECTION 5. REPORT OF L. D. CREEL, 1911

In 1911 the Office of Indian Affairs sent down a man with an unusually penetrating mind to look over the whole Seminole situation. No reconsideration of policy in 1930 can afford to disregard the findings of able Special Agent Lorenzo D. Creel:

Whether such reservation should consist of 4 townships, which was once recommended by the bishop, or 40, as urged by Mr. A. W. Dimmock, in an article upon this subject which appeared in the Outlook for February, 1911, the situation remains the same so long as either collecting and keeping the Indians thereon or securing title to enough land to cover the different camps is impossible. Even were it advisable, it would be impossible to collect the Indians and place them on such reservation, except by military force. \* \* \* The physical nature of the region and the character of the Indians renders it impossible to control or exercise any authority over them or to protect them from outside interference. The Indians are now living in their aboriginal way in small groups which are scattered at wide intervals from the northern end of Lake Okeechobee to Cape Sable, on the Gulf of Mexico, and have unrestricted range over an area equal in extent to the States of Connecticut, Rhode Island, and Delaware combined. The physical character of the region as effectively prevents the exercise of official authority and supervision as it embarrassed the military movements in the Seminole wars, and, furthermore, officials would be hampered and powerless to restrain or assist their wards or to protect them from evil influences.

Therefore, a reservation for the purpose of controlling or protecting all, or even a part of, the Seminole Indians in Florida is, and always will be, an impossibility, no matter how desirable it might be thought by their warmest and sincerest friends.

In the case of the Florida Seminoles, as I see it, the Government can only offer him the opportunity to accept what goes with our civilization, as has been frequently done in the past and has also been done in the present case. This can not be forced upon him. He is not a menace to anyone, either in a physical, a business, or a moral way. Nature has set a limit to a great extent beyond which white settlement can invade the region in which he now lives.

No one would for an instant entertain the thought of attempting to collect the Seminoles from their widely scattered palmetto-covered homes and placing them within the boundaries of a reservation, which would change them from a self-supporting, happy, virtuous, and contented people to everything decidedly the opposite in the attempt to force them to adopt our civilization. The Seminole is not now the uncivilized being which the literature of the present day and his unique and picturesque costume would lead the reader and tourist to believe. I believe that nowhere in the State of Florida could a like number of people be selected at random whose general character would rank higher or be freer from the faults and vices of our civilization.

In this region no sudden and radical change is possible, and in the future, as he has in the past, he will gradually adjust his life to such slight changes as may come, and, although ultimately destined to disappear as a race, yet his disappearance will come from natural causes from which no outside aid will be able to shield him.

Instead of being hostile to the Government on account of past wrongs, he simply resents all attempts from any outside force to interfere with his freedom to follow his Indian life, and will submit to no restrictions and limitations except those which nature puts upon him or such as he has been accustomed to from tradition and ancient tribal law or those which he voluntarily assumes.

If the Everglades are successfully drained, the opportunity to secure employment upon the reclaimed lands will much more than offset the loss of hunting privilege to the Indians and, by affording them a chance to enter regular employment, should have a civilizing and beneficial effect upon them. \* \* \* If the plan is a failure, the situation of the Seminole will be but little affected thereby and, in any event, none will lose their homes by reason of this reclamation work, as is so often stated in newspaper articles touching them and their life.

## SOME OF CREEL'S CONCLUSIONS

That no distress caused by reason of insufficient food now exists in any camp, nor is there any reason to think that such will be the case as long as present conditions prevail, which bid fair to continue indefinitely.

That the so-called fear of and hostility to the white man is a myth.

That the Indians are self-supporting, capable, and self-reliant.

That they are satisfied, happy, and contented with their mode of life and are unanimously in favor of continuing therein.

That they are at peace with such of the white race as they come in contact with, and their white neighbors have no complaints to make.

That the Government has in later years offered them schools and other advantages which have been steadfastly refused. Therefore, the Government is relieved from responsibility.

That, owing to their attitude and the insurmountable obstacles of nature, any attempt to establish an agency for their supervision, or to introduce schools or other civilizing agencies will be not only useless and impracticable at this time but an absolute waste of public money.

## CREEL'S RECOMMENDATIONS

I, therefore, most respectfully recommend:

1. That the lands already purchased for their use and any others which the President may hereafter set aside for their benefit \* \* \* be held for them until the time shall come when such changes in present conditions will have occurred that they may not only be willing but glad to avail themselves of the good offices of the Government and express a desire to be allotted these lands in severalty.

2. That the department do not entirely abandon the field but send an occasional representative there to ascertain whether conditions are materially changing.

3. That the work for the Seminoles in Florida be closed up as soon as possible and the position of special agent abolished.

## SECTION 6. FIRST ADMINISTRATION OF CAPT. L. A. SPENCER

The Office of Indian Affairs did not accept Mr. Creel's recommendation to close up work for the Seminoles in Florida. On March 1, 1913, the Rev. Lucien A. Spencer entered upon his duties as special commissioner, duties which, with the exception of service during the war, were to be his life work from that date until his death out in the Big Cypress in April of the present year.

Here was another man bringing to the administration of Seminole affairs the same idealism, the same devotion which Doctor Brecht had brought to Immokalee 22 years before. Mr. Spencer's interest in Indians was of long standing; he had been a missionary among the Chippewas on the Whisky Bay Reservation in Michigan back in 1897. To accept the Seminole post he relinquished the post of dean of the Episcopal Cathedral in Orlando, Fla., so that his appointment not only grew out of but in a sense carried on the 20 years of work by Bishop Gray.

Mr. Spencer established his headquarters in Miami, from which point he annually visited as many camps as he could reach. Transportation difficulties were terrific. To approach the camps in the Big Cypress it was necessary to take a launch up one of the canals into

Lake Okeechobee, cross the lake, descend the Caloosahatchee to Fort Myers, and then make the long journey inland by ox cart. There was little that could be done beyond proffering the hand of friendship. The Seminoles at first would not even accept medical aid from the Government.

Gradually, however, his persistent and genuine friendliness began to break down their distrust. On the rare occasions when an Indian ran afowl the law, Mr. Spencer was on hand to take the Seminole's part. And within three years he had persuaded several pupils to follow Tony Tommie into the Fort Lauderdale Public School.

If the fall of 1916 Mr. Spencer left for the Mexican border as a chaplain in the Florida National Guard. Until his return in March of 1917 his place was temporarily filled by Inspector W. S. Coleman.

#### SECTION 7. HENDRY COUNTY RESERVATION

Inasmuch as Mr. Coleman's plan deals entirely with the Hendry County Reservation, a word about these lands is necessary. There are five separate parcels, the largest of which contains 27 sections, or 17,280 acres, lying partly within and partly on the western margin of the Everglades. The four smaller parcels lying to the west are a bit drier, a little better either for crops or for grazing, but inasmuch as they have never entered into Seminole administration to the slightest degree—no one in the Indian Service to-day can even point out their location—I shall speak only of the 17,000-acre tract and mean only that hereafter by the term "Hendry County Reservation."

That part of the reservation lying within the Everglades is typical saw-grass marsh. That bordering the Everglades is prairie broken by hammocks of dense hardwood growth, cypress heads, ponds, and a few islands of slash pine. Water stands from 4 to 6 inches deep over the prairie in the wet season. Nevertheless, this tract is considered good grazing land, capable of pasturing 2,000 head of cattle and a vast number of hogs. Plenty of the hammocks are capable of producing excellent crops of garden truck in the dry season. The hunting is so good that bears and panthers are still a constant menace to hogs.

#### SECTION 8. COLEMAN'S PLAN FOR BENEVOLENT ASSIMILATION

Taking Frank Brown as guide, Mr. Coleman went through the Hendry County Reservation and visited the camp of Billie Ko-nip-ha-tco (he spells it Conepatchie), the same who helped MacCauley, in 1880.

Little Billie is a man 50 years of age, speaks English very well for an Indian, and is about the most progressive and intelligent member of the Big Cypress bands. After exhausting my resources at friendly advances, I talked over fully with him the matter of the Indians moving to the Government reservation for a permanent residence and letting the Government aid them in every way under its benevolent purposes. I told him of what the Government is doing for the Indian in the West, of how the red man there is accepting the supervision and benefactions of the Government, and what great improvement over their present condition the Seminole would derive under the plans for their segregation on the reservations under the protection and care of the Government. Already the Seminoles everywhere have heard of the five Indians at the Fort Lauderdale Public School, and this seems to have made a favorable impression on the minds of those in the jungles, the idea among them being that for the first time the Government is really beginning to do something for these people. (Evidently Mr. Coleman did not know of the Immokalee experiment?) The whites in the

towns are talking of this also, and they have unwittingly helped spread a feeling of pacification and have helped to open the way for the cultivation of these suspicious and resentful Indians.

The Seminoles have all the while feared that there was some scheme for their removal to Oklahoma or somewhere in the West. \* \* \* Not until I fully assured and convinced Little Billie that the Government had no scheme of deportation in mind would he talk freely and discuss frankly the present condition of his people \* \* \*

Confirming my belief that I have made substantial headway with Conepatchie and that he is acting in good faith, \* \* \* he accompanied me about 16 miles through water and the roughest kind of cypress glades and swamps to a temporary camp near the Everglades of his oldest brother, Billie Fewell, an Indian nearly 69 years old, who has heretofore borne the reputation of being among the most implacable and unapproachable of his tribe. It took an entire day, threading our way in water sometimes 16 inches deep. \* \* \*

I made no effort the first night in camp to cultivate the Billie Fewell band, but left that task to our friendly Indian, Little Billie, who talked late into the night with his stern and stubborn brother, long after my driver and self had retired. I could see the solemn council between the brothers and noted on their faces the conflict of spirit in the quiet Indian way as Little Billie in his own way presented to his older brother the plan I had gone over with him for the friendly assimilation on the Government reservation of these most seclusive Big Cypress Indians. \* \* \*

I did not derive any definite statement from Little Billie as to his older brother, Billie Fewell, but the mere fact that this old austere Seminole, who, according to my driver, would never even talk to Commissioner Spencer or communicate in any way with any former Government representative, supped with me and smoked cheroots around our campfire, \* \* \* demonstrated his mellowed condition and his friendly disposition \* \* \*

I find that they would value very much the establishment of a trading point or Government store, their minds turning toward the Government reservation as its natural location, and if such a store were maintained by the Indian Office with a good honest man in charge, it would prove a great convenience and help. Nothing short of a trustworthy and just man should be put in charge \* \* \*. So suspicious and curious are these Indians that an agent, once deceiving them, could never regain their confidence.

I, therefore, offer the following outline of a plan as the most practical scheme for their cultivation, education, and general advancement by the Indian Office:

#### COLEMAN'S PLAN FOR HENDRY COUNTY RESERVATION

1. Locate Government headquarters and build a store to buy at top prices and sell at cost to the Indian.
2. A Government farmer.
3. School and hospital, nurse, and doctor.
4. I do not know of a single milk cow employed by a single Indian for the support of their babies or older ones, although they are fond of milk. The only stock they own are hardy steers, which run wild \* \* \*. However, they are fairly good hog raisers, capturing wild hogs and soon domesticating this ferocious animal when they bring him to camp. In fact, with some camps their largest money income in the fall of the year is from fattened hogs which thrive on tender roots, berries, cypress balls, frogs, snakes, snails, and countless worms near the surface. But neither stock or hog raising can ever prosper unless there is afforded some protection for these animals.
5. Fence a large part of the reservation, grazing lands, and best hammocks.
6. Ditching would be necessary.
7. Except for the dim roadway from Fort Myers, via Immokalee, to Brown's store and the Glade Cross, there is no semblance of roads or highways on the reservation, or south of it. Some crude roadways should be thrown up. This could be done with little cost, as the country is level and the sand could easily be thrown up with ordinary road machines on all prairie lands or areas covered by shallow water.
8. No radical change in home structures. \* \* \* They need simple, honest, treatment and human sympathy more than anything else.
9. Only a few could be expected to come at first. For the first time in their history they have tolerated such a suggestion as their segregation on the Govern-



ment reservation; it would be unfortunate to delay. \* \* \* Failure to act, or the postponement of what seems the inevitable solution of this Seminole problem—segregation and a general scheme of benevolent cultivation on the reservation, will be to them another evidence of neglect, or uncertain purpose, and of indifference on behalf of the Government. They will simply distrust any other representations made by successive representatives of the Indian Office.

In all work \* \* \* the Indian should be employed on the same employment basis as the white man, thus affording him a means of support for himself and family, at the same time teaching him the lesson of industry and work as distinct from hunting, trapping, or fishing, wherein they spend much time with often very little results.

#### SECTION 9. ADMINISTRATION OF F. E. BRANDON

Captain Spencer was home in Florida after his service on the Mexican border for but four or five months. When his regiment made ready to take its place in the American Expeditionary Forces, he considered the future in France so uncertain as to make it unfair that he retain his connection with the Indian Service. He resigned in August, 1917.

So that when Mr. Frank E. Brandon was placed in charge of Seminole affairs, his appointment was not regarded as merely temporary. Mr. Brandon arrived in Florida before Captain Spencer left.

If it was Mr. Coleman who first proposed the utilization of the Hendry County Reservation, it was Mr. Brandon who took the first steps toward making the idea effective. He moved the headquarters of the agency from Miami to Fort Myers. The idea of fencing the reservation and stocking it with cattle was approved by Washington, and to begin work Brandon was given the largest appropriation ever made for the Seminoles, some \$20,000, I believe. Wire was purchased and lumber for buildings, and the work just well begun when Captain Spencer returned from the war.

Mr. Brandon generously insisted that Captain Spencer have back his old job.

#### SECTION 10. SECOND ADMINISTRATION OF CAPT. L. A. SPENCER

Captain Spencer resumed his duties as special commissioner in charge of the Seminoles in November, 1919. Before the close of the fiscal year 1920 a fence was completed inclosing 20 sections, 12,800 acres, as a cattle range—more than 20 miles of fence. The eastern boundary is out in the Everglades, but excludes the extreme easternmost tier of sections as altogether too wet. Two sections more, 1,280 acres, were fenced as a hog range. In the extreme northwest corner of the reservation a 4-room dwelling for the caretaker was erected, as well as a small office building, warehouse, garage, stable, and Indian council house. Frank Brown was appointed caretaker at \$900 a year.

And there the matter has rested until this day.

The Government bought a few hogs; the panthers killed 40 in two nights. Not a cow or a steer was ever put on the place by the Indian Service.

Wire for 20 miles of fence hauled in over 80 miles of the worst road in the world. The labor of fencing 14,000 acres. Lumber for a complete set of ranch buildings hauled in over the same 80 miles. The labor of building to what purpose? To afford a home for a "caretaker."

There is nothing in Captain Spencer's reports to indicate that he was not at first whole-heartedly in favor of the plan to stock the range. In 1921 he wrote:

The policy being pursued is to establish an industrial center that will make the Florida Seminoles self-supporting. \* \* \* As soon as the herd is well established, these cattle will be sold to the Indians on the reimbursable plan.

The Indians will be encouraged to raise cattle and hogs. Crops are to be planted on a scale sufficiently extensive to provide foodstuffs for home consumption. The industrial center is too remote to make the shipping of anything but livestock impracticable and unprofitable. It is proposed to employ Indian labor exclusively in making improvements at the industrial center in order to provide them with necessary living expenses until such time as their crops and herds will provide an income.

If proper appropriations are provided for this work, I believe it can be made self-supporting within five years.

In 1922 Mr. Spencer wrote:

The industrial station established for the Big Cypress Tribe has been at a standstill for the past year owing to lack of funds.

Many of these Indians are anxious to settle here, but owing to the fact that no funds were available for the purchase of cattle or Indian employment it has been necessary to keep them scattered on their old fields, which they are holding only as squatters.

Owing to the failure of all their crops, it has been necessary to meet famine conditions and we have been hard pressed finding places for them to labor among the whites in order to carry them to the next crop.

Year after year went by and nothing was done. Captain Spencer became opposed to the reimbursable plan; he thought that when a Seminole wanted meat he would shoot the first heifer in sight and would be constantly in trouble. In 1926 the project was definitely abandoned.

Since 1919 no appropriation has been made from which the herds could be purchased, and the necessary upkeep of fences and buildings has absorbed the major part of the meager appropriations, leaving very little for the use and benefit of the Indians.

In January, 1926, at a meeting of several influential members of the tribe, it was proposed to ask the Commissioner of Indian Affairs to abandon this reservation until such time as the Indians could acquire herds of their own. It was also requested that the money thus saved be used for the care of the sick and indigent Indians thereby freeing the young and able-bodied from the care of the sick and helpless so that they might leave the camps and enter the employment of the white farmers and cattlemen.

They maintained that the old Indians would never adopt white customs, but that the younger generation should be self-supporting and would advance more rapidly by living and working among white people than would be possible if they lived in Indian settlements.

At a conference in Washington late in January it was decided to adopt this suggestion of the Indians. The Hendry County Reservation was ordered closed on June 30, 1926.

As a farewell to high hopes, Captain Spencer wrote:

The Indian lands will ultimately be stocked and products of the range will be the leading industry of the Florida Indians. The Indians propose to utilize the ranges as soon as they can acquire a sufficient number of cattle to warrant moving there. They are opposed to going into debt and will not purchase on the reimbursable plan.

The 22,400 acres of grazing lands in Hendry County have been leased for grazing purposes until needed by the Florida Indians. (Acreage should be 23,061.—R. N.)

The lease, which I believe was a grazing permit only, was issued to Mr. C. W. Bartleson, a wholesale grocer in Fort Myers, who agreed to keep fences and buildings in repair, prevent hunting on

the lands, give the Indians all privileges previously enjoyed, and to surrender on demand. Ostensibly Mr. Bartleson wanted the reservation to run cattle; according to the present acting superintendent he never put on a head. At Mr. Bartleson's death early in 1929 the permit was canceled.

It is a pleasure to set down the last chapter in this sorry tale. On March 1 of this year, just before his death, Captain Spencer appointed William Ivey Byrd as caretaker at the munificent salary of \$25 a month. Byrd is a "cracker" who used to be a woods rider for the cattle companies in the days when cattle rustlers were numerous on the Kissimmee prairies. He requested me to get a letter from Washington telling him he is supposed to keep hunters off the reservation at all times. Mr. Marshall, the acting superintendent, a former sergeant of marines, posted the boundaries, visited the reservation several times during the hunting season, and let it be known that there would be no hunting there by white men this fall.

When the newspapers carried the story of how near the deputy sheriff of Broward County came to having his brains blown out when he tried to browbeat his way in with a hunting party, old Sheriff Tippens, of Lee County, sent Byrd a 0.38 revolver and a box of shells as a prize.

Two saddle horses. Day and night. Patrolling 20 miles of fence. Sleeping with rattlesnakes in the palmettoes. Twenty-five dollars a month. William Ivey Byrd, box 31, Immokalee.

#### BROWARD COUNTY RESERVATION

The year 1925 saw Florida in the midst of her real estate boom. Land everywhere was in demand, no land so poor but some speculator could be found to buy it. Even the hammocks on the outskirts of Fort Lauderdale where the east coast Indians camped were wanted by new owners, and once again Seminoles heard the command to move. Where should they go?

In Broward County, besides three scattered forties out in the Everglades, there remained to the Indians a tract of 360 acres lying 4 miles west of Dania. All these reserved parcels had once been Indian camps. The main body of land is a sandy stretch on the eastern margin of the Everglades, most of it high and dry since the canals have lowered the water table. Commercial truck gardens locate on the muck soil east or west of this sandy belt; nevertheless, it is fair for citrus cultivation. It lies at the intersection of two hard-surface roads. To this reservation Mrs. Frank Stranahan, of Fort Lauderdale, with Captain Spencer's approval, persuaded the homeless east coast Indians to migrate.

The same conference in Washington which closed the Hendry County Reservation decided to open Dania as "a camp for sick and indigent Indians." Ten 1-room cottages and a small administration building were erected in 1926, just in time to have them completely demolished in the hurricane of September 18. Within nine months thereafter there had been completed a large administration building containing offices and quarters for two families; an electric pumping plant sufficient for all camp needs; a 4-vehicle garage, ten 2-room Indian cottages, a school building, infirmary with bath, laundry, and toilets.

The 10 cottages were occupied immediately by the Tommies, the Osceolas, and the Jumpers. And in addition Indians occupied two buildings formerly belonging to squatters. From the day the first house was completed the Dania Reservation began to lose its intended character as a refuge for the sick and indigent of the whole tribe, and became to a large degree merely the home of the small east coast group. The sick and indigent of the Big Cypress rarely go near the place.

All activities of the Seminole Agency from 1926 to date have concentrated on the development of Dania. The land was divided into 5-acre tracts, which Indians are permitted to work under occupancy permits; three have availed themselves of the opportunity. Those who want to work are given employment three days a week at \$2.50 for eight hours.

The infirmary is not often used for the sick.

The schoolhouse is equipped with 25 desks. Captain Spencer's daughter, Mrs. Marshall, has been the teacher since 1928. Two sessions are held daily, one in the morning for half a dozen children and two women; another in the evening for two men who are eager to learn to read but too old to make much progress. The school term is six months.

Mr. John Marshall, Captain Spencer's son-in-law, assisted in the construction of the buildings and was then appointed as farmer. He was raised on a farm in North Carolina and knows thoroughly the art of working the land. Thirty-five acres have been cleared and a good start made in planting citrus fruits. Most of Mr. Marshall's time is necessarily spent in emergency services which range all the way from assisting at confinements to burying dead Indians. Since Captain Spencer's death last spring, Mr. Marshall has ably shouldered the responsibilities of acting superintendent without receiving any additional remuneration.

#### MARTIN COUNTY RESERVATION

For agriculture or for stock raising the 2,000 acres reserved in Martin County are far and away the best held for the Seminoles in Florida. The land lies outside the Everglades, just on the eastern margin. Originally it produced a good stand of slash pine. Mr. Henry Savage, of Indian Town, who guided me to this reservation, considers it the best land in that part of the county for general crops; he first learned that it was reserved when he tried to homestead a portion. Mr. L. A. Wall, of Palm City, chairman of the board of county commissioners, knows the land well and agrees that it is good. The Seaboard Air Line passes through the reservation, and a hard surface road extends out from Indian Town to within 4 miles; a dirt road continues on toward Okeechobee.

In 1929 a permit was granted to a lumber company to log this land. Captain Spencer wrote:

The sale of certain dead timber is being negotiated on land held in trust for these Indians in Martin County.

However, all the live timber of any value went along with the dead. Before Captain Spencer moved the agency to Dania, Jim Gopher and Ada Tiger, with her family, lived on the Martin County Reservation. Spencer desired to bring as many as possible under the civiliz-

ing influences of Dania, and tried to persuade these Indians to move down, but certain of the Cow Creek headmen were opposed to education. Captain Spencer wrote in 1927:

The Indian Town camp which I was preparing to move here refused to come on account of the above interference, and I promptly cut off their ration supply. At the end of three weeks of starvation they moved here and placed their children in school.

Since then the Martin County Reservation has been deserted.

Last spring, while accompanying the Federal census enumerator to the Hendry County Reservation, Captain Spencer's car bogged down. Prying it out of the ruts was heavy work. Exhausted, the captain lay down and died. Seminole Indians lost a friend who had roamed these desolate marshes and worked for their welfare for 15 years.