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*Florida, Land of Change* (1941)

A one-volume history of Florida from its discovery to the present.

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*The St. Johns*, with James Branch Cabell, in the  
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The story of the St. Johns River of Florida.

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A history of the large inland area of South Florida encircling  
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The Florida East Coast: its unfoldment as a region.

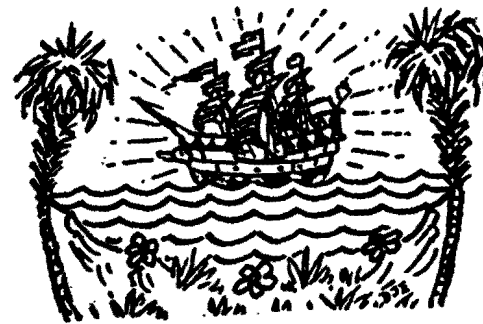
# Florida's GOLDEN SANDS

By

ALFRED JACKSON HANNA

and

KATHRYN ABBEY HANNA



MAPS AND DECORATIONS

BY DON J. EMERY

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This was true of the Benéts of St. Augustine. Pedro Benét, known as King Benét because of his political power, kept a small grocery store and grogshop. To anyone opposing him was always given the warning, "take care of Pedro Benét." It was said of him that he bequeathed to his descendants "a fine tradition of integrity, enterprise and achievement." One of his sons, Stephen Vincent, had the distinction of being the first appointee from Florida to West Point. He continued in the United States Army after Florida seceded and attained the rank of brigadier general. Other children of King Benét favored the Confederacy. When peace was restored, General Benét visited his family in St. Augustine. Aside from the joy of reunion, the visit had its unpleasant moments. Again the warning, "take care of Pedro Benét" was pertinent; he never forgot the slights to his son. Many years later St. Augustine and the literary world acclaimed the genius of a second Stephen Benét, grandson of the Union general. Again King Benét had won.



## Chapter 12

### *A Man of Uncertain Destiny*

COLONEL HENRY T. TITUS (1815-1881), who gave his name to Titusville on the Florida East Coast, was a soldier of fortune about whom controversy and conflict always gathered.

All accounts picture Titus as a handsome, commanding mountain of a man in physique, in words, in action. He was also described as a "swaggering braggart." His enterprises covered a wide area of both geography and character. He recruited an expedition from the upper East Coast of Florida to support Narciso Lopez in that patriot's attempt to free Cuba. Five years later he helped make Kansas bloody. From there, he drifted to Nicaragua, where, under the flag of filibuster William Walker, he attacked a fortress Lord Nelson had captured. During the Civil War, he supplied goods to the Confederacy with profit to himself and possibly to the Richmond government. Finally in the 1860's his restless feet led him to his last and most abiding venture. This was the founding of the town which eventually bore his name; there he conducted one of the best hotels and fanciest saloons on that long coastal strip from Fernandina to Key West.

In his latter years, muscular rheumatism confined Colonel Titus to a wheel chair, but it had no effect on his spirit. Propelled by his Negro body servant, he dominated the life of Titusville as the Emperor Titus ruled Rome; and to the guests of the Titus House, who occasionally included British nobility, he recounted many an adventurous

escapade of life in the raw. These tales lost nothing in the telling as, with dark eyes flashing, the colonel demonstrated his admirably diversified command of action-producing vituperative nouns and adjectives. He was as full of sprightly reminiscences as King Solomon was of proverbs.

The colonel's method of enforcing his will was no less direct than that of the Roman Emperor; relatively his enemies were no less in number. For the major part of each day he sat in his wheel chair on the veranda of the Titus House with a loaded rifle across his knees, prepared to mete out punishment to those transgressors who might be so indiscreet as to stray within the confines of his authority, the boundaries of which were marked by the range of his rifle. Few who saw him, even in his declining years, ever forgot him.

Titus made his first appearance in the pages of recorded history in August of 1850, when, at the age of thirty-five, he was called from Philadelphia to New York for a consultation with the Revolutionist Narciso Lopez, who then was enlisting recruits, chiefly Southerners, for expeditions to help free Cuba from Spanish control. General Lopez engaged Titus as a recruiting officer to operate in the Jacksonville area. Presumably Titus received funds from Lopez to cover the expenses involved and then proceeded southward to carry out his instructions.

Late in July of the next year, Titus received secret orders from a special agent of Lopez. On August 2 General Lopez and members of his expedition sailed from New Orleans on the steamer *Pampero*. On August 10 they put in for an hour or two at Key West and by August 12 had made the landing in Cuba. The *Pampero* then returned to Key West for an hour or less, sailed up the East Coast and arrived in the St. Johns River August 31; she reported to the commander in chief of the Lopez expedition from Florida—Colonel Titus.

During the next three days hurried preparations were made. From points on the St. Johns River the *Pampero* was loaded with stores and provisions, a large quantity of arms—consisting of two cannon, two howitzers, between 500 and 600 muskets, about 120 rifles and some 150 cutlasses—ten or fifteen kegs of cartridges, other ammunition, a supply of saddles and about seventy-five men. The *Pampero*, on September 2, steamed out of the St. Johns River up the coast to

one of the islands in the harbor of Savannah. There she took on additional provisions and more recruits. She next returned to the Florida Coast near Fernandina to await the arrival of a supply of coal. Encampment was made on shore, arms distributed, and under Commander in Chief Titus military drills were held. At this juncture the frustrating news arrived that Lopez and some of his American followers in Cuba had been captured and executed as pirates. The Florida expedition immediately collapsed; twenty-five or thirty men under Titus steamed back to Jacksonville.

As the *Pampero* turned from the Atlantic into the St. Johns River on September 8 she was fired on by a pursuer, the United States cutter *Jackson*, which did not, however, follow her up the river. This enabled Titus to unload the cargo before Federal officials overtook the *Pampero* in Dunn's Lake, a tributary of the St. Johns River near Palatka. By order of the collector of the port of Jacksonville the vessel was seized for violating neutrality laws of the United States on the charge that "Henry T. Titus and others fitted out within the limits of the United States the *Pampero* with the intent that she should be employed in the service of . . . the disloyal inhabitants of the island of Cuba to commit hostilities against the subjects and property" of the Spanish Queen, Isabel II.

The trial began in St. Augustine October 11, 1851, one month after a large number of the citizens of that city had held an enthusiastic meeting in support of Cuban independence and had drawn up resolutions of sympathy and help. Star witness at the *Pampero* trial was Colonel Titus, whose testimony as to the expedition's purpose and procedure was undeviatingly vague; when pressed, he must have thrown the courtroom into a roar of amusement when he casually explained that he was "engaged in a pleasure excursion." No punishment for Titus was recorded; the *Pampero* was sold at public auction the following January.

The year following his intended commitment of hostilities against the subjects and property of Queen Isabel II, Titus braced himself, though indirectly, against adversaries nearer at hand. In the spring of this year, 1852, he supplied the state of Florida with forage, quartermaster's stores, ordnance stores and subsistence stores for the militia then in contest with the Seminole Indians. Specifically he sold hay,

axes, tin basins, tin cups, hatchets, ink, jugs, linen, a corn mill, tin pans, frying pans, iron pots, rope, spades, powder, shot, bacon, flour, hard bread, butter biscuits, candles, soap, vinegar, sugar, coffee and pepper. As a means of stimulating public interest in his role of merchant, he announced himself in the Jacksonville *Florida News* of January 1, 1853, as a dealer in "groceries, provisions, liquors, tin ware, hardware, hollow-ware, crockery, furniture, segars, etc."

By 1856, probably before, Colonel Titus had married. Mrs. Titus was Mary, daughter of Edward Hopkins, a wealthy and prominent planter of Darien, Georgia. In 1845 Hopkins moved to Florida and in 1853 settled at Jacksonville. Shortly after this he entered on what was to be a long political career; it included service as a member of the legislature, as mayor of Jacksonville, as collector of customs of that city, and one unsuccessful try for the governorship.

The Hopkins son-in-law, Titus, who even then was known as "Colonel," though no explanation was ever made as to how he acquired the title, came into new prominence April 2, 1856. On that day the Jacksonville *Florida Republican* announced that Titus proposed to leave for Kansas and remarked that "his adaptation by experience, as well as by physical proportions, for a frontier life, warrant us in predicting for him a successful career in that new territory." Mrs. Titus accompanied him.

Unless the colonel's incentive for going differed from that of others who rushed to Kansas after 1854, when that geographic center and crossroads of the nation acquired the status of a territory in preparation for statehood, his purpose was twofold: to acquire rich lands and to participate in the fight to decide whether slavery would be permitted in Kansas when she entered the Union. So bitter was the rivalry between the Northern and Southern factions and so unrestrained the action of new settlers that the contest degenerated into election frauds and border warfare.

Colonel Titus arrived in Kansas about April 1, 1856, with some 1,000 other Floridians and Georgians determined on supporting the proslavery cause. As in Kansas, the halls of Congress in faraway Washington had likewise lost all semblance of order. On May 19-20, Senator Charles Sumner of Massachusetts delivered what he had designed as "the most thorough philippic ever uttered in a legislative

body." Entitled "The Crime Against Kansas," it turned out to be much more than that. On the day following Sumner's speech, about 700 proslavery men attacked Lawrence, Kansas, then regarded by them as a hotbed of abolitionism. The Free-State Hotel was burned, the two newspaper offices were wrecked and much other property was destroyed or stolen. Among the leaders of this mob was Colonel Titus, who allegedly announced, "If ever I come into this place again I will kill every damned Abolitionist in it."

That Lawrence deserved this fate was the opinion even of some Northerners. A Bostonian who had lived in Kansas two years described it as a rendezvous for rogues and horse thieves.

This "Sack of Lawrence" aroused the North and provided the new Republican Party with the issue of "Bleeding Kansas." The anti-slavery element in Kansas was not slow to retaliate. Two nights later John Brown and his followers murdered five proslavery settlers near Dutch Henry's Crossing off Pottawatomie Creek. Later, revenge was visited on Colonel Titus. Meanwhile, he was doing his part as "Colonel of the Second Regiment of the First Brigade of the Southern Division of the Kansas Militia," and also as a landed proprietor.

Wrote an enemy of Titus in the *New York Tribune* of August 23, 1856:

About two weeks ago, Titus took possession of a claim near Lecompton which belonged to a Free-State man named Smith, one of the first settlers in Kansas. In Smith's temporary absence, Titus tore down his house and erected a shanty of his own. When Smith returned he rallied a few of his neighbors and re-erected it, whereupon Titus with a superior number came and ordered him off. Smith refused to go; a fight ensued; Titus and his party triumphed.

This reporter recounted another scandal. He wrote that Titus went to the house of a Mr. Hancock, a Free-State man, one of his neighbors, and was accompanied by a few of the faithful from Lecompton. He demanded pay for some cattle which he had charged Mr. Hancock with having killed. Mr. Hancock protested that he had killed no cattle. Titus then told him that he must pay for them or he would have his life on the spot. The front door of the house was then

closed and Hancock fled. . . . In the meantime they broke open the door, a scuffle ensued between Titus and Mrs. Hancock, during which she disarmed him of his revolver. He promised to leave if she would return his revolver. She did so and he left in time to save himself from the dragoons.

Disaster was soon visited on the Titus household. Mrs. Titus in great distress wrote her father in Jacksonville:

I am in great trouble. I have been obliged to fly from my home to save my life. Our house was surrounded yesterday morning by 500 Abolitionists, our property destroyed and our all taken. . . . I have just learned that my husband is a prisoner at Lawrence. God only knows what they will do with him. I will go to Lawrence tomorrow, if they kill me on the way.

Two days later Mrs. Titus wrote her father:

I have just arrived in Lecompton with my husband. He has been released by an exchange of prisoners. Five hundred men attacked the house, Mr. Titus having only ten men in the house with him at the time the attack was made. He fought them two hours and did not surrender until they had fired six cannon balls into the house. He was shot in the breast . . . the ball still remains in his breast. His right thumb was shot off, besides other slight wounds. The Abolitionists stole everything we had—even my dresses—Mr. Titus is left without shoes or hat. They tore up the floor in order to find me, but I made my escape. . . .

More details about the colonel were added in another letter from Kansas; it read, in part:

After all his men were prisoners wounded in several places, like a lion in his last struggle, Titus leaped upon the foe, and fighting, fell. . . . Titus's bravery commands the admiration of everyone—the enemy say they never saw such a man.

Titus did not assay the role of leaping lion, according to an enemy report in the *New York Times* of August 29, 1856. Preliminaries

leading up to the battle were described as follows: "About two o'clock [of the night before the battle] while our force numbering some 300 were moving by moonlight towards Lecompton, the advance guard on horseback were attacked and fired upon by a party of horse thieves about three miles southwest of Lawrence." The free-state men returned the fire and one of the proslavery men

was seen to fall from his horse; the rest fled toward Lecompton. . . .

Our men did not travel far before daylight when they discovered blood in the road . . . and they tracked the same to the house of H. T. Titus . . . who has for weeks past harbored at his house and in a camp nearby, a party of filibusters of whom Titus was the chief. . . .

A charge was made by the free-state cavalry against some tents of the Titus camp, whereupon the proslavery men sought shelter in Titus' log cabin and firing from there killed one and wounded three of the free-state men. The attackers then set up a cannon and fired balls made from lead melted from type of the newspaper presses Titus and his men had destroyed in Lawrence on the preceding May 21.

As these cannon balls "plowed their way through the walls of Titus's cabin" they shrieked, "Surrender to Freedom!" At the end of a half hour, in the course of which Titus had been wounded and two of his men killed, the proslavery men surrendered. Titus was found hiding under the floor, not at all resembling the king of the jungle in a ferocious last struggle.

"Colonel Titus, instead of coming to 'kill Abolitionists' came whiningly, begging of the 'damned Abolitionists' to save his miserable life," reported the triumphant free-staters. With him sixteen prisoners were taken, with some arms and provisions; his cabin, then called "Fort Titus," was burned.

Titus and his men were taken to Lawrence. There John Brown and other fanatics harangued the mob, demanding that the proslavery men be hanged. Cooler heads assumed control of the situation, and in an exchange of prisoners Titus was eventually released. His sword, which was surrendered at the close of the battle, has since been preserved in the museum of the Kansas State Historical Society at Topeka.

Reports of the battle at Fort Titus were widely circulated throughout the country. When on October 2 an account reflecting on the bravery of the erstwhile leaping lion was printed in Jacksonville, Colonel Titus came to the rescue of his bellicosities.

He wrote in the Jacksonville *Florida Republican* of November 5:

It is true that a robber, incendiary, and horse thief who is called Captain Walker, was in command of his fellow thieves at the cowardly and disgraceful assault upon my house. It is true that he and his party robbed me of money, household furniture, and other valuables to the amount of \$12,000. . . . Although I told him that they had shot me in three places, sacked my house, and asked him not to burn it . . . he replied, "God damn you, and God damn your house. Men bring on the hay!" And when it was in flames, he took me dripping with blood from my own wounds, pitched me into an uncovered wagon and dragged me through the blazing sun to their great den of thieves—Lawrence.

While Titus was attempting to correct the newspaper notoriety that had descended on him in Florida, peace was established in Kansas. This was effected by the removal of the proslavery governor, Wilson Shannon, of whom Titus was described as a "bosom friend," and the appointment of John W. Geary as governor of Kansas Territory. The latter made Titus, on September 15, a special aide-de-camp.

Just before Titus' eight months' military career in Kansas came to a close, he was a conspicuous participant in a peaceful gathering. The occasion was the grand opening, early in December 1856, of the Planters' House in Leavenworth, celebrated by a free banquet where 150 guests were seated at a table over 100 feet in length. The high conviviality of this mingling of free-state and proslavery men was due, according to one report, to the opening of the Planters' House Bar early on the morning of the great day so that by the time dinner was served many of the guests were intoxicated. Guests wore one or two revolvers, which on this occasion served as chief decorations and as symbols of life on the frontier.

Colonel Titus left Kansas in December 1856. It was rumored that as the fighting in Kansas ceased the more belligerent ruffians sought other exciting fields of conquest. One such field was Central Amer-

ica, where the "Blue-eyed Man of Destiny," the Tennessean William Walker, after various filibustering experiences, had forced himself into the Presidency of Nicaragua.

Throughout the latter half of 1856 Walker offered special inducements to Southerners to help populate his republic; recruits were also sought for the Nicaraguan Army for which free passage from New Orleans was offered. About the Border Ruffian, as Titus was then called, gathered 100 of his followers in quest of excitement and adventure in Nicaragua; in December 1856, they started down the Mississippi for New Orleans, and some of them, it was said, were running away from trouble at home. The *Memphis Bulletin* on December 24, 1856, reported that Titus and his men had arrived there on the steamer *Northerner*. "Both Colonel Titus and his men have been tried in the Kansas troubles," it said, "and can be relied on as brave soldiers."

The Titus band left New Orleans on the steamer *Texas* on December 28, 1856, and arrived in Nicaragua the following February 4. A correspondent writing from there to the *New York Times* of February 23, 1857, spoke well of Titus:

I must say that from what I had read of the appearance of the Colonel and his men while engaged in a bad cause in Kansas, I was considerably disappointed when I saw them, and learned that the Colonel was the veritable Titus, and that nearly all the men with him had served his cause in Kansas. They must have changed very much and for the better since those days, for I am sure I never saw a finer set of filibusters.

The American President of Nicaragua was not so favorably impressed. He thought that most of the men who had followed Titus were made of better stuff than their leader whose "swaggering air had imposed on many people, and the contest in which he was said to have engaged gave him a sort of newspaper notoriety."

Since Titus refused to serve under any commander, he was commissioned to capture an old fort up the San Juan River held by Costa Ricans, which in 1779 Lord Nelson had captured from the Spanish.

In command of the Costa Rican forces, numbering only thirty, was Captain Cauty, an English soldier of fortune. In the fort was a small

supply of ammunition. Cauty's report of the encounter that ensued on February 12 and 13, 1857, ran as follows:

About mid-day Colonel Titus sent in a flag of truce and modestly demanded an unconditional surrender. I replied that this was impossible without the consent of the Commanding General, and asked for twenty-four hours to get his decision. I went down to the lines of the fortification and took a drink with Colonel Titus. He told me he had a large battery of cannon of great calibre mounted for the attack and that his force consisted of 1,000 men. This appeared so "gassy" that I paid no attention to it, but resolved to resist to the last.

At ten o'clock on Thursday we heard firing in the hills, and loud shouts and vivas for Costa Rica, which we answered, and in half an hour afterwards Captains Alvarez and Ortiz with sixty men came to our succor having driven the enemy from his position at the point of the bayonet. The filibusters fled, throwing away their arms, ammunition and provisions, so that the road for two miles down the river was strewn with them. Fortunately for Colonel Titus a steamboat arrived at the wharf just in time to take them off.

As to the Titus behavior in Nicaragua there was no conflicting testimony.

The enemy statement was less critical than that of Walker's Nicaraguan contingent. All agreed that Titus could have easily taken the fort and its thirty defenders by his attacking force of at least 180; that Titus agreed to a twenty-four-hour truce which enabled the Costa Ricans to rush reinforcements to the scene; and that the sixty Costa Ricans who hurried to the rescue of the fort routed Titus and his much larger force merely by their unexpected and warlike appearance.

Walker declared that Titus retreated in disorder before he even knew the strength of Costa Rican reinforcements. A correspondent declared in the *New York Tribune* of March 21, 1857:

Some attribute Titus's conduct to sheer cowardice, while others affirm that he sold the battle. At all events, it was generally conceded that he was nearly master of the place when he granted the armistice and allowed the messenger to go through his lines to the headquarters of the enemy. Colonel Titus retreated down the river

about twenty miles and encamped upon an island. Here his officers swore they would serve no longer under such a poltroon, and his men vowed that they would shoot him for his cowardice.

On his way out of these difficulties, Titus passed from retreat to arrest. While at San Juan del Norte he found it necessary to enter into an altercation with some English officers whom he enraged by reflecting on the character of Queen Victoria in language "so vile and foul" that he was arrested by them and confined in the hold of their ship "on half rations, very much to the chagrin of the handsome Colonel." As there were no legal grounds for such an arrest, Titus was soon released, whereupon he sought redress from the United States consul. When that official explained that filibusters, by their own unlawful actions, automatically abandoned their rights as citizens, there issued from the rich and inexhaustible Titus vocabulary what was lamely described as a "torrent of personal abuse and insult." For this insult he was taken prisoner by officers of the United States man-of-war *Saratoga*.

On his release Titus took passage on the *Tennessee* to the Isthmus of Panama. When he reached the present site of Colón there also arrived twenty-four men, formerly under his command, who had sworn vengeance on him. "The valiant Titus went about," reported the *New York Tribune*, of March 21, 1857, "with a loaded revolver in his fist, expecting that his outraged men would really take his life."

After further delays, Titus reached San Juan del Sur on the Pacific side of Nicaragua and joined Walker's forces during the contest before Rivas, in March 1857. Since Walker's aide was ill, Titus talked himself into the job; here again misfortune nipped at his heels. Sent to get information concerning the course of an engagement, Titus, according to Walker, took care not to venture into the enemy's fire, but seized the story of a stray soldier and turned it in to the commander as fact. It was the new aide's bad luck that someone who had actually seen the fighting reported an entirely different series of events. Titus was forthwith fired, but not discouraged; he next wanted a berth in a diplomatic mission to the United States, but the lack of confidence he inspired in Walker denied him this also.

By the latter part of April, the battle for the possession of Rivas

waxed intense and about this time, Walker notes, Titus and several others vanished. He next appeared on board the steamer *Sierra Nevada*, bound for San Francisco. Nothing more was heard of him until the early years of the Civil War.

In Union records of the Civil War it was reported on October 11, 1862, that Colonel Titus, "an able soldier," had crossed the St. Johns River near its mouth and had gone to Tallahassee; it was suspected that his purpose was to get arms for fortifying some point near the Florida East Coast. Four months later he was captured on the Indian River in the role of captain of the *Charm* on board which were four members of the crew and seven passengers; five of these passengers, asserted the report, were trying to escape to Nassau from the Confederate conscript act. What happened to the captured Titus remained a secret.

Confederate records of the war reveal that throughout the years 1861-1864 Titus sold to the Army such supplies as salt beef, pork, bacon and corn meal, as well as services of teams and drivers. One sale on April 20, 1863, appeared considerably unbalanced; for two mules, three wagons, one cart and eight harnesses, Titus was paid \$5,400.

Just when and why Colonel Titus settled permanently on the Indian River is not known. According to one story he was "stranded" there in 1865 and stayed. This final homesite chosen by the colonel in the late 1860's was about 160 miles south of Jacksonville, where a long, sandy point projected into the Indian River. Here he decided to build a city in his own likeness that would bear his name; and in it he built a combined hotel and saloon which to Titusville was, in its own homespun way, what the Colosseum, the great monument of the Emperor Titus, had been to Rome. Here he molded a symbol of his own extraordinary concept of American civilization.

"The Titus Hotel . . . is built on what may be called the tropical style," read one description: "a large main building with two long wings, all one-story high, forming three sides of a square neatly laid out in a garden, and with the rooms opening off of the wide verandas like a row of houses in a city block." The rate in 1875 was three dollars per day. The Titus House later became a part of the Dixie Hotel.

The table at once convinces the guest that he is in a tropical region, the meats being principally oysters, clams, fish, shark steaks, turtle steaks, etc., with many strange and familiar fruits and vegetables, all tropical, and fresh in January.

A source of income closely allied with the hotel was that of the saloon where, according to one report, Titus disposed of "good and bad whiskey to all who came along who had the price." This traffic was somewhat more elegantly described by the colonel in the following advertisement carried in the Titusville *Florida Star* of December 15, 1880: "Dealer in Pure Liquors, imported wines, ales, etc., Old Port and Sherry wines kept expressly for invalids, warranted pure." Nearly all guests, it was reported, suffered from some form of invalidism, particularly the husky sportsmen who embarked on long fishing trips down the Indian River or camped out in the backwoods in search of game.

Along with his liquor advertisement Titus announced that he was a notary public and general agent for an insurance company. Associating personal gain with civic spirit he scolded the community in the *Star* of December 8, 1880, thus: "Is there not manhood left in the people and no interest left for the future prosperity of the town? If there is, investigate the recent fire and bring the guilty to condign punishment."

Another source of income for Titus was derived from the transportation system connecting Titusville with the outside world. As early as 1870, he operated a variety of cracker stagecoach in the shape of teams and wagons sent overland from Sand Point to Salt Lake, a part of the St. Johns. The Titus conveyance, drawn by two mules, plunged through the marshes around Salt Lake to reach passengers and freight on the river steamers. To increase profits and also to provide an outlet for farm produce, the wagons sent over to the St. Johns were loaded with oranges, pineapples, bananas, syrup, vegetables, green turtles, oysters, venison, skins, hides and fish.

One of the colonel's crowning achievements for his community was to help make it in 1880 the county seat of Brevard County. The same year he also joined a committee to raise subscriptions for the improvement of the old haul-over canal connecting Indian River with the



Halifax River. When the county seat was established the population of Titusville was approximately 150. There were two stores but no church and according to tradition, when a circuit rider came along he was accommodated in the jail.

Early in 1881 Colonel Titus pleased his guests and fellow townsmen by improving Washington Avenue in front of the Titus House. He set out a row of palmetto trees and dressed up the roadbed with fresh sawdust. Shortly after this he discontinued his saloon and moved its billiard table into the office of the hotel. By the next summer he completed a 1,200-gallon cistern for the hotel.

To the Titus House came guests from many parts of the North and from Europe; among the latter were members of the English nobility on sporting jaunts, and the Duke and Duchess of Castelluccio of Italy with their servants. One Englishman described the colonel as "so fond of the game of the spider and the fly that he has made everybody his enemy." But this, apparently, did not apply to hotel guests; these he entertained hour after hour as he sat in his wheelchair and, with fierce gestures and piercing eyes, spun highly imaginative yarns of a career that needed explanations rather than embellishments.

One last battle waged by Warrior Titus was in defense of the town he had created. His antagonist was a resident of the lower East Coast, who, writing in the Jacksonville *Florida Dispatch* June 29, 1881, described the trip by wagon from Salt Lake landing to Titusville "over palmetto roots that strained every button until tears stood in their passengers' eyes. Then when Titusville was reached, what a dreary waste of white sand. I felt when I first beheld it I had certainly come to the poorest place on earth."

Roared Colonel Titus in the *Florida Dispatch* of August 3:

This Knight of the Quill as he doubtless sits on the sand hills of Cape Malabar in his vivid imagination of the surroundings has caused his imbecile nature to soar into the "poetical regions" to find material in order to abuse and vilify his neighbors. If the old lady from the West, instead of building a sanitarium on Merritt's Island for the invalid, would erect a home for the reception and education of all such liars and itinerant quill drivers, and provide a "wet nurse" to

keep them out of mischief, she would receive the hearty thanks of every good citizen on Indian River.

Then with boastful faith the colonel added a word for his town:

Titusville is the . . . grand center of all trade and will so continue to be. No slanderous article from any irresponsible person will change or alter its destiny. Her motto is "to live and let live."

Four days after these words appeared in print, on Sunday, August 7, 1881, Colonel Titus died. On the following August 16 the Tallahassee *Floridian* made the following comment: "There are few men more widely known in this State than was the deceased gentleman. Although for the past few years he has suffered much from rheumatism, from the effects of which he was physically crippled, he nevertheless succeeded in accumulating a large property."

Would Titus have approved such commentary at his taking off or would it have precipitated one of his explosions? Did mere property solace him in the end, or the memories of adventure, excitement and the pursuit of glory?

Yulee, Elias. This Confederate official, brother of Senator David L. Yulee, who reported the aid given the blockade-runner *Alvarado* by citizens of Fernandina, was listed incorrectly in *Official Records*, Ser. I, Vol. 1, pp. 347-348, as Captain E. Yuell. This error was corrected in the general index volume. He was at one time a professor at Woodward College and from 1854-1856 served as Receiver of Public Moneys for the Land Office in Washington Territory.

Additional information was received through interviews, correspondence or otherwise from:

Mr. and Mrs. Basil Burnside, H. N. Chipman, Etienne DuPuch, Ethel Freeman, A. E. Fuller, Howell E. Rees.

#### CHAPTER 11—Here Come the Yankees

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#### CHAPTER 14—Halifax River Country

Joe Grotegut, managing editor of the Daytona Beach *News-Journal*, wrote the authors April 18, 1950, that "the Halifax Country, generally, is taken to include the eastern part of Volusia County through which the Halifax River flows. . . . The River divides the Halifax Area into the peninsula and the mainland. . . . The Halifax Area on the mainland is bounded on the north by the Tomoka River, a winding, brackish stream bordered by magnificent jungle growth for most of its course."

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