

History
of
BREVARD COUNTY
Volume 1

BY
JERRELL H. SHOFNER



BREVARD COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Copyright © 1995
by Brevard County Historical Commission

All rights reserved.

No part of this book may be reproduced in any form or
by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying,
recording or by any information storage and retrieval system,
without permission in writing from the publisher.

Library of Congress Card Catalog Number
95-079892

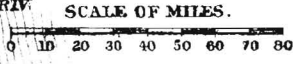
ISBN
0-9646660-0-6

Designed and produced by richworks • Stuart, Florida
Printed by Southeastern Printing Co., Inc. • Stuart, Florida

CONTENTS

Acknowledgements	<i>vii</i>
Foreword	<i>ix</i>
1 The Land and Its Original Inhabitants	10
2 Florida and the European Struggle for the New World	20
3 Territorial Florida and the Second Seminole War	32
4 The Armed Occupation Colony and More Indians	44
5 Florida Statehood and the Origins of Brevard County	58
6 The Era of Civil War and Reconstruction, 1861–1880	68
7 A Developing Riverine Community, 1865–1880	82
8 Transportation and Communication in Early Brevard	98
9 Towns, Villages and Settlements in Late 19th Century Brevard	118
10 Indian River Society and Social Affairs	152
11 A Diversified Economy	178
12 Politics and Public Affairs, 1880–1905	200
13 Politics, Progress, Work and Play, 1905–1920	218
14 Old Towns, New Towns, Developers and Dipper Dredges	240
Bibliography	257
Index	261

COUNTY MAP OF FLORIDA



A DEVELOPING RIVERINE COMMUNITY, 1865 – 1880

Permanent settlers and winter visitors transformed the county from a sprawling cattle range to a string of settlements bound together by the waters of the Indian River Lagoon. Population rose from 300 in 1865 to 1,497 in 1880.



The sender of this postcard from Sand Point (Titusville) wrote, "This is the only street in this wonderful city." (Photo courtesy Doug Hendriksen)

The Civil War stimulated the post-1865 growth of Brevard County in at least two ways. On the one hand, the political and social unrest in northern Florida and the neighboring ex-Confederate states after the war caused many Southerners to seek new homes. On the other, the Civil War had brought prosperity and wealth to a large number of Northerners who were thus enabled to think of vacation homes in warmer climates. Both groups learned of the vast open lands and favorable climate of central and southern Florida through such reports as the one circulated after Colonel George F Thompson made his tour on behalf of the Freedmen's Bureau in 1865-1866. Some of the more adventurous



Above and left: Dr. and Mrs. William Wittfeld developed beautiful gardens and groves at Fairland on Honeymoon Lake. (Photos courtesy Margaret Peterson and Mrs. J. M. Field, Brevard County Historical Commission Archives)

individuals from both sides decided to brave the physical isolation and lack of transportation and visit the Indian River country. Some came as permanent settlers and others as winter visitors. Though their numbers were small at first, they eventually transformed the county from a nearly empty, sprawling cattle range to a string of settlements bound together by the waters of the Indian River lagoon.

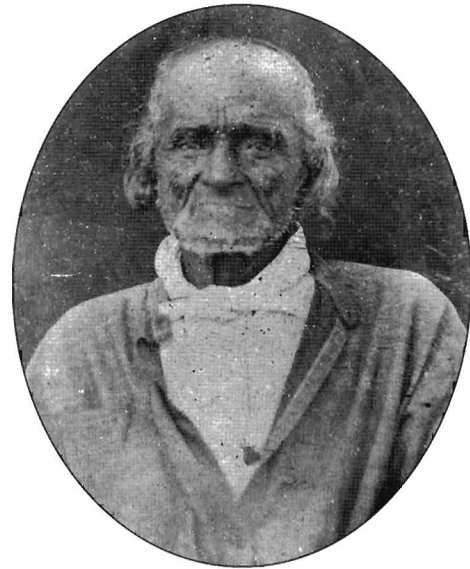
Most of the first settlers reached the Indian River region by way of the St. Johns River from Jacksonville or Palatka to Enterprise or Lake Harney. From those points they travelled by a rough wagon road to the coast or, if the

water was sufficient, by shallow draft boat up the St. Johns to Salt Lake and then overland for about six miles. Either way was difficult. In the first few years, these settlers were also obliged to travel to Enterprise for whatever supplies they required. As more people arrived, a few stores appeared along the river and trade boats were visiting some of the more remote locations by the latter 1870s, but satisfactory transportation had to await the railroads in the mid-1880s.

Having lived in the county briefly before the war, Dr. William Wittfeld returned with his brother in 1866 to find that the homesteads they had started were no longer available for settlement. It was probably fortunate for Wittfeld who chose a new homestead on the southern end of Merritt Island. There he built and cultivated Fairland which ultimately became one of the famed showplaces along the river. Douglas Dummett continued to cultivate his grove on the northern end of the island and employed several people there. One of them was a black man named Andrew Jackson who had survived a shipwreck on the

nearby coast and spent the rest of his life in Brevard County. Jackson married Dummett's mixed-blood daughter and eventually developed a fine grove of his own. He became a substantial grove owner and shipped oranges from his place for nearly fifty years. William E. Futch had a home and grove on the site of old Fort Ann in 1868. J. Sykes lived nearby. Both Mills Burnham, the lighthouse keeper, and his son-in-law, Henry Wilson, were still tending their groves near Cape Canaveral. Wilson soon became a mail contractor for the route between New Smyrna and Fort Pierce. He carried the mail from the latter point by boat to the Haulover, crossed it on foot, and continued in another boat which he kept there. T. J. Carlisle settled in 1865 at the place which became LaGrange. John M. Feaster came from South Carolina about a year later. They were joined about 1867 by T. J. Cockshutt and Jacob N. Feaster.

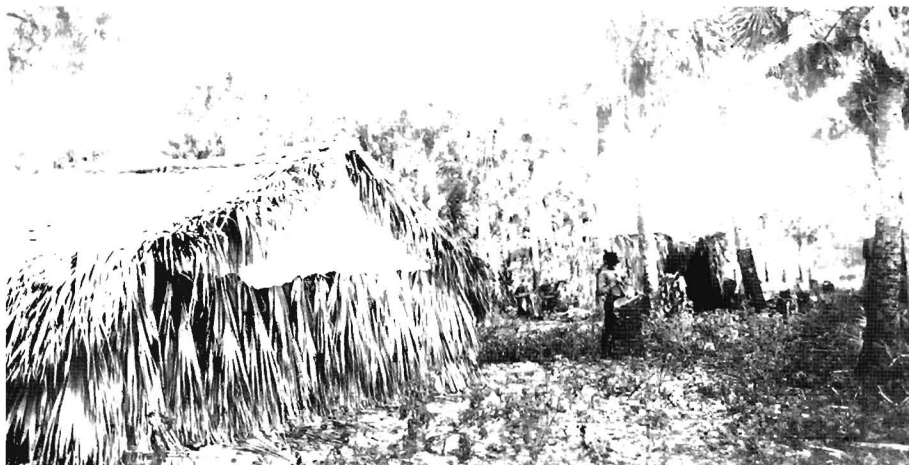
Albert and Lawrence Faber came in 1866 to the area which became Sharpes. William H. Sharpe, who gave his name to the place, arrived in 1868. John Wesley Joyner left Jefferson County in 1866 and brought his family to Dixon's Point not far from Sharpes. He shortly moved to Titusville and the southern part of that town was for a time known as



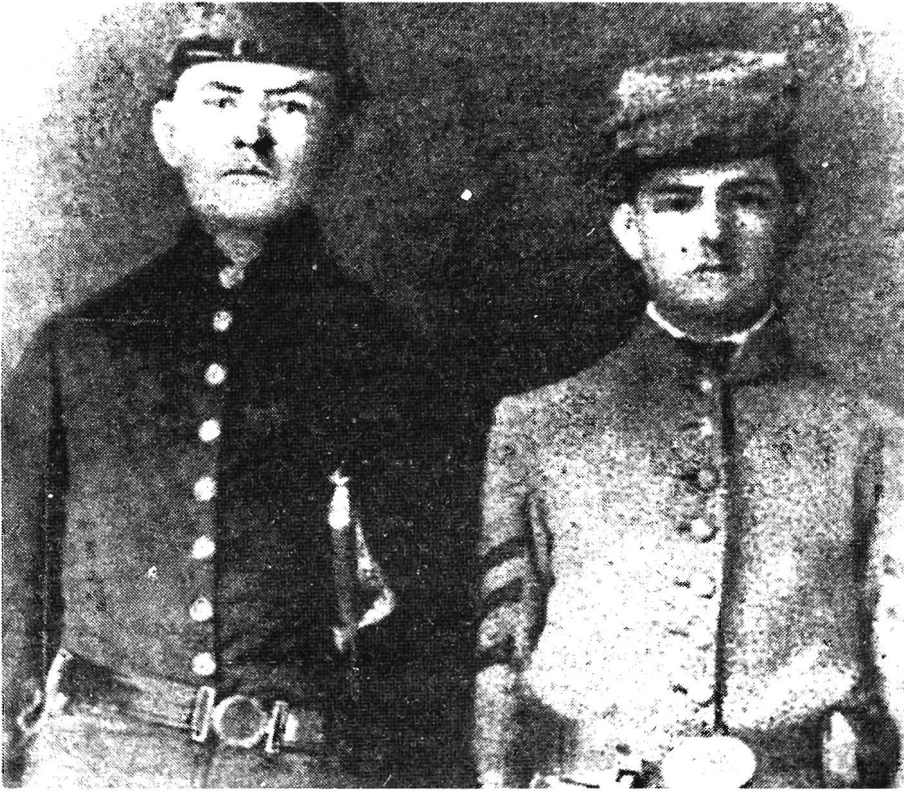
John Quincy was one of many former slaves who moved to Brevard after the Civil War. He delivered mail by boat along the Indian River and maintained close ties with his former owners, the Stewarts. (Photo courtesy Jim Ball)

Joynerville. Dixon's Point was named for Robert Dixon who moved his family there from Kentucky in 1869. Israel Stewart moved to the area which later became Bonaventure in 1866. John Quincy and A. A. Stewart arrived about two years later. Benjamin C. Willard came to City Point in 1868

and eventually settled at Cocoa where he ran a store. Gardner S., R. A., and Thomas Hardee settled in 1868 near Rockledge. They were soon joined by A. L. Hatch, H. S. Williams, R. C. May and M. Delannoy. Cephas B. Magruder set out a grove and then brought his family from Georgia in 1870. Rockledge was taking shape as a progressive community by 1875. Joseph E. Gruber and his wife arrived from South Carolina in 1868 and settled at Sand Point. Other South Carolinians who came in the early years were the Sams and LaRoche families. Five of the LaRoche brothers



Israel Stewart and members of his family began moving from Hamilton County, Florida, to Brevard in 1866. This palmetto thatched house was built by his son Alexander at Bonaventure about 1868. (Photo courtesy Jim Ball)



Brothers John Robert and Samuel Joseph Field of Macon, Georgia served in the Confederate Army. They arrived on Merritt Island at the place which became Indianola in 1866. (Photo courtesy Clyde Field)

lived for a time at the Narrows and Johns Island is named for one of them, but both families finally settled at Courtenay on Merritt Island. Phineas D. Wesson came from Rhode Island in 1870 and lived near Salt Lake until he purchased a grove from Mills Burnham on the Banana River. John R. and Samuel Field arrived on Merritt Island at the place which became Indianola in 1866. Their neighbor, William R. Sanders, arrived a year later, accompanied by his three brothers.²

There had been a post office at Sand Point just before the Civil War. It was reestablished in 1869 with John P. Harvey as postmaster.³ Having arrived at Sand Point about 1867, Henry T. Titus would eventually lend his name to the growing town and become its most memorable citizen. Confined to a wheel chair for several years before his death in 1881, Titus was widely known for his promotional

stories about the future of Brevard County, the loaded rifle which lay in his lap as he surveyed his holdings from the veranda of his hotel, and the tall stories which he told with gusto and obvious relish.

Although he gave his stories appropriate embellishment, they were derived from his own career as a soldier of fortune and professional Southerner. Titus had first come to national attention in 1851 when he raised a force of Floridians to assist the filibusterer, Narciso Lopez, in his third attempt to free Cuba from Spanish control. In the fall of that year he set out from the St. Johns River in the *Pampero* with arms and ammunition and about 75 men. When news reached him that Lopez had been captured and executed, Titus headed back to the St. Johns with a United States vessel in

hot pursuit but he managed to unload his cargo before he was arrested. He was brought to trial but United States authorities were unable to disprove his assertion that he had merely been on a pleasure excursion. Titus was next heard from when he went to Kansas to help make that territory into a slave state. He was with the proslavery force which attacked and burned much of Lawrence, Kansas, an act which enraged John Brown. Brown retaliated by executing five proslavery settlers and setting off a two-year period of violence which earned the territory the name of "Bleeding Kansas." Titus was captured by the abolitionist forces and eventually freed in a prisoner exchange. His wife and friends described his actions in the battle as heroic while his adversaries had other things to say. Whatever the case in Kansas, Titus was not yet finished.⁴

In early 1857 he arrived in Nicaragua with about 100

men and offered his services to William Walker, another American filibusterer, who had set himself up as president of that central American state. His military feats there served only to anger both William Walker and his own followers. Titus boarded a vessel in Panama which was sailing for San Francisco. He was not heard from again until the Civil War began. During that conflagration he was active in providing the Confederate army with supplies as well as freight service.⁵

Titus next made news in 1866 in Jacksonville where he was brought into court for assaulting a Union man during a heated discussion. Titus told the mayor's court "I had a political discussion with this fellow...he used some language that did not suit me and I knocked him in the head with my stick."⁶

At the time of this incident, Titus was engaged with Dr. John Westcott and several New York investors in a fishing venture at New Smyrna. As the New York and Indian River Preserving Company, they were employing ten men to catch fish, turtles, and oysters.⁷

While Titus was at New Smyrna rumors began circulating that enterprising Southerners were kidnapping freed blacks and taking them to Cuba where they were being sold back into slavery. Perhaps because of his flamboyant reputation, Titus was frequently mentioned as one of the persons so engaged. Lieutenant D. M. Hammond of the Freedmen's Bureau was detailed to investigate the activities at New Smyrna. Hammond found the fishing business at a standstill because the company's ship had been wrecked and he concluded that there was nothing to indicate a kidnapping operation there "except for the previous character of Titus, the commander of the fishing party."⁸

After the New Smyrna venture failed, Titus may have engaged in another fishing venture which took him to Sand Point. A company formed in Liverpool, England, and known as the Florida Provision Company acquired a 73 acre tract there in 1867. Its purpose was to establish a



Eliza A. Field, wife of John R. Field, was faced with life in an isolated new settlement at Indianola. (Photo courtesy Clyde Field)

cannery for turtle, fish, oysters, meats, fruits, and vegetables. The products were to be preserved in hermetically sealed cans which was the same process that Titus had used at New Smyrna. The venture was unsuccessful, but the firm deeded its land at Sand Point to Mary E. Titus (Mrs. Henry T Titus) in June 1868. With the establishment



THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

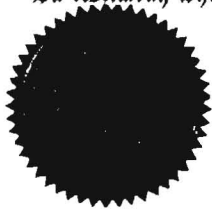
To all to whom these presents shall come, Greeting:

Homestead Certificate No. 614
APPLICATION 3247

Whereas There has been deposited in the General Land Office of the United States a Certificate of the Register of the Land Office at Titusville, Florida, whereby it appears that, pursuant to the Act of Congress approved 20th May, 1862, "To secure Homesteads to actual Settlers on the Public Domain," and the acts supplemental thereto, the claim of Israel M. Stewart has been established and duly consummated, in conformity to law, for the tract of land described in the application and returned to the General Land Office by the Surveyor General, to-wit: a certain tract of land situated in the County of Brevard, State of Florida, containing six and six-tenths acres, more or less, according to the Official Plat of the Survey of the said Land, returned to the General Land Office by the Surveyor General.

Now know ye, That there is, therefore, granted by the United States unto the said Israel M. Stewart the tract of Land above described: To have and to hold the said tract of Land, with the appurtenances thereof, unto the said Israel M. Stewart and to his heirs and assigns forever.

In testimony whereof, J. H. Grant President of the United States of America, have caused these letters to be made Patent, and the Seal of the General Land Office to be hereunto affixed.



Given under my hand, at the City of Washington, the 1st day of July, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and 85, and of the Independence of the United States the 35th.

BY THE PRESIDENT: U. S. Grant By J. J. Case, Secretary.

Israel M. Stewart, Recorder of the General Land Office.

Recorded. Vol. 76 Page 76

Homestead certificate given to Israel M. Stewart signed by President U. S. Grant and dated July 1, 1875. (Courtesy Jim Ball)

of a post office the following year, Sand Point was on its way to becoming Titusville.⁹

John W. Joyner had already relocated to Sand Point when Titus arrived and James Peckham came shortly afterward. Joyner subsequently opened a store in partnership with P. E. Wager. Titus not only offered supplies and general merchandise in his own store, but also had an extensive liquor inventory in connection with his hotel. Other early settlers of Titusville included Daniel O'Hara, John Simonson, William B. Hatter, W. H. Churchill, and Albert Becker. B. Einig started a small sawmill soon after his arrival. Andrew Gibson was the first black man to settle at Titusville. He came about 1870 and opened a barber shop which was the only such facility available to local residents for many years. Gibson also ran a restaurant and

became one of the leaders of the black community which became known as Colored Town in later years. When Henry Maxwell arrived in 1880, he found a black population of about 13 already there. Some of the others were Dick Wright, Ned Gibson, and Betsy Thomas.¹⁰

Nearby LaGrange was a viable community which slightly preceded Sand Point. The Roberts family had settled just north of the Carlisles after the war ended. The first church in Brevard County was erected at LaGrange in 1869. Adhemar Brady started a store in the 1870s and a post office was opened in 1880. The settlement was then described as about 40 miles from Enterprise and about three miles from Titusville. The nearest post office on the north was Oak Hill, some 16 miles away. Frank Smith was the mail contractor and W. S. Norwood was the

subcontractor. John P. Harvey was the proposed postmaster for the village which was estimated to encompass about 175 people. Harvey had also been the first postmaster at Sand Point.¹¹

Casper Neil Mims arrived in 1876 and settled at the place north of LaGrange which soon became Mims. He recalled that there then were no roads except for a dirt affair to Enterprise over which a wagon travelled bi-weekly to carry produce to market and return with supplies. Most of Mims' visiting, like that of his neighbors along the river was done by sailboat. He later opened the first dry goods and grocery store at the town which bore his name.¹²

John Houston had settled at what became Eau Gallie just before the Civil War. Known at first as Arlington, the place was named Eau Gallie at least as early as 1871 when a post office was established there. Houston became the first postmaster. He was joined by a few families in the early 1870s, among whom were John and Andrew Chauncey from Jefferson County. Alexander Hodgson was also an early settler.¹³

The prime mover of Eau Gallie, however, was William Henry Gleason, who first purchased land there in 1869, although he did not settle there for a number of years. After a brief and turbulent term as lieutenant governor in 1868, Gleason turned his considerable abilities and energies to the promotion and development of peninsular Florida. His work with the Southern Inland Navigation and Improvement Company will be discussed in another chapter, but it was through his drainage plans in connection with that company that he acquired thousands of acres of raw land including much of the area between Eau Gallie and Melbourne. Gleason spent several years in Dade County where he and his partner, William H. Hunt, promoted the development of the area and also exercised extensive political influence. He was interested in opening an inland waterway from Biscayne Bay to the Halifax River as a part of his work with the Southern Inland Navigation and Improvement Company. He expected by this

undertaking to drain about three million acres of land and make it available for sale and settlement, but he also intended to connect the waterway with the St. Johns River at Lake Washington and make Eau Gallie accessible as well.¹⁴

With his plans for a canal from Lake Washington to Eau Gallie and title to large tracts of land there, Gleason saw opportunity when the state decided to open an agricultural college. The Morrill Act of 1862 (popularly known as the Land Grant College Act) made available to the states 30,000 acres of land for each member of their Congressional delegations to be used for establishing a college. After Florida was restored to the Union, its allotment of 90,000 acres became available. A college was incorporated in 1872 although no site was then selected. While still a member of the legislature from Dade County, Gleason proposed location of the incipient agricultural college at Eau Gallie. Noting that Florida was the only semi-tropical state in the nation, he argued that the west bank of the Indian River was an ideal location for botanical experiments with tropical plants because:

The air south of Cape Canaveral is soft and balmy, and vegetation assumes immediately a tropical character...I think that Eau Gallie is the most eligible for the College, all things taken into consideration. Biscayne Bay is more tropical, and the only objection to it is its inaccessibility. Eau Gallie is about 40 miles south of Cape Canaveral, and is as far north as the college can be located and have the advantage of a semi-tropical climate.

Before anyone noted that Eau Gallie was almost as inaccessible as Biscayne Bay, Gleason called attention to his plans for a canal from Lake Washington to the site.¹⁵ In the spring of 1875, Governor Marcellus L. Stearns, John P. Varnum, and Dr. W. W. Hicks were named a committee to select a site for the college. Accompanied by Gleason, Stearns and Hicks visited Eau Gallie in April and

subsequently recommended locating the college there. Gleason's offer of 2,320 acres of land supplemented by the offer of another 1,000 from W. R. Anno probably aided them in their choice.¹⁶

Varnum was made superintendent of construction of the college and by 1876 he had completed a two-story building with ten rooms and a hall, a two-room dormitory, and several outbuildings. Coquina from the immediate area was the basic construction material. The college never opened, probably because the Republicans were

two miles wide. He offered a free lot to each of the first 20 people who built houses there. He also announced that he had another 16,000 acres of raw land for sale near Eau Gallie and Melbourne.¹⁷

When Eau Gallie got its post office in 1871 it was the only one between Sand Point, about 40 miles to the north, and St. Lucie, 53 miles to the south. Gleason obtained the mail contract in 1875 for the route between Titusville and Eau Gallie, but it is not likely that he delivered the mail himself. He did not move from Biscayne Bay to

Eau Gallie until 1883 and even then he maintained his law offices in Jacksonville.¹⁸

Hunters had been using Crane Creek as a route to the interior for several years before the first settlers of Melbourne arrived in the mid-1870s. First to arrive were three black men, Peter Wright, Wright Brothers, and Balaam Allen. Richard W. Goode brought his family from Chicago in early 1877 and Cornthwaite J. Hector came shortly afterward. A few others settled in the area and Melbourne was named in 1880 when a post office was established in Hector's general store.¹⁹

E. B. Arnold, who settled at the site of Malabar in 1873, was one of the few who lived along the river south of Melbourne before 1880. Another was August Park, a German immigrant who came to the Sebastian area in the 1860s. Gottlob Kroegel, another German immigrant, settled at Barker's Bluff. A post office was opened at St. Lucie in 1868 with James Smith as the first postmaster. Alexander Bell came from Hamilton County in 1871 to join the handful of people who were already living near the Indian River Inlet and Fort Pierce.



Hunters had been using Crane Creek as a route to the interior for several years before the first settlers of Melbourne arrived in the mid-1870's. (Photo Brevard County Historical Commission Archives)

ousted from control of the state in early 1877 and Gleason lost his legislative seat at the same time. The 1877 legislature authorized the new school trustees to relocate the institution which opened in the early 1880s at Lake City. The buildings were converted into the Granada Hotel a few years later. Gleason tried other ways of attracting settlers to Eau Gallie. About 1880 he published a broadside describing the fine natural harbor situated about 40 miles south of Titusville at a point where the river was



Gottlob Kroegel built his home on Barker's Bluff, site of an early trading post and an earlier Indian mound. His daughter-in-law, Ila Lawson Kroegel, stands under the large oak atop the mound. (Photo by Rodney Kroegel, Brevard County Historical Commission Archives)

C. B. Magruder wrote in the 1870s that "It seems generally not known that there are families scattered all along from Sand Point to Fort Capron, houses in many places less than half a mile apart." He did not add that there were also places where houses were much farther than half a mile apart.²⁰

Although the territory west of the St. Johns extending to Fort Bassinger near the western boundary of the county remained the center of the range cattle industry, several cattlemen were moving closer to the coast. Archibald Hendry came in 1872 and a few years later Reuben Carlton

began ranging cattle near Fort Pierce. Francis M. Platt was herding near Melbourne by 1878.²¹

Emily Lagow arrived with her family about 1876. It was at her father's place near Fort Pierce that Benjamin Hogg landed his trade boat in 1879. The Lagows welcomed Hogg, his wife and four children who remained there for several days until cattlemen and Indians from the interior had had time to come to the coast and trade with Hogg. He soon opened a store nearby which was eventually purchased and operated by P. P. Cobb. First Hogg, and then both Cobb and Alexander Bell engaged in a steady



Gottlob Kroegel (1837 - 1923) (Photo courtesy Rodney Kroegel, Brevard County Historical Commission Archives)

trade with the Indians who brought their pelts and hides to exchange for supplies.²²

Several of the first post-Civil War settlers and a number of the visitors, left accounts of the difficult travel facilities into Brevard County. Perhaps none had more reason to deal with the adversities of the region than Confederate Secretary of War John C. Breckinridge who chose that route to escape the fallen Confederacy while his colleague, Secretary of State Judah P Benjamin, chose a westerly route through Tampa Bay. Breckinridge reached the St. Johns via Madison to Lake George. He and his guide, John Taylor Wood, went up the river to Enterprise and then overland to the Indian River, hauling a boat all the way. Complaining of swarms of flies and maddening "chiggers," Breckinridge is said to have been unimpressed with both the land and the people. "I never saw such people...This is awful country," he was quoted as saying. Nevertheless, he reached the Atlantic Ocean and eventually landed in Cuba. The people to whom he so

disparagingly referred, must have been few in 1865, but, as has been shown in the preceding paragraphs, a trickle of immigrants were braving the difficult transportation routes and the adversities of the frontier to join them.²³

Nancy Dixon recalled that in 1869, "we had no transportation," except that T W. Lund came as far as Lake Harney or Salt Lake every three to six months in his light draft vessel. On a trip in 1872, Charles Hallock found that he could travel from Jacksonville to Enterprise by steamer for \$12 and that it cost about six dollars more to go to Salt Lake. From that point it was about six miles to Indian River, "the great game section " Writing in 1874, John L. Edwards saw it a little differently. He reached Salt Lake by steamer from Jacksonville and then went by stage the remaining six miles to Sand Point. There, he found "a comfortable house...kept for visitors," but he concluded that "you are now as far south as pleasure seekers need go."²⁴ The majority of visitors seem to have agreed with Hallock rather than Edwards and overcame the difficulties of travel in order to enjoy the outdoors with its excellent hunting and fishing many miles south of Titusville.

On one of his visits to the Indian River, Hallock set out from New Smyrna and crossed the Haulover by way of the canal which was then half a mile long, from seven to twelve feet wide, and only about 12 inches deep. His party spent the night at Andrew Jackson's place which was described as "the neatest little orange grove on the river." He next described the buildings of the Aurantia Grove about seven miles from the Haulover which had been laid out – and eventually abandoned – by Bliss and Company of New York. After a delay in calm water, Hallock and his party arrived at LaGrange, where there was a store and a small boarding house. From there they went on about two miles to Titusville, "the northernmost of the four post-offices on the river." It was ostensibly served by a weekly mail, which "really arrives and leaves with the wind." Titusville, according to Hallock, was "only noteworthy as a point of the arrival and departure for more interesting

points on the river" and owed "all of its present prosperity to the indefatigable energy of its proprietor, Colonel H. T. Titus." Boatmen and guides could be hired there for any point on the lagoon or the interior. He recommended James Stewart, captain of the *Blonde*, or Jim Russell, who had lived on the river for more than 20 years. On the way south, Hallock passed Gardner Hardee's grove of "three-year-old trees" which he described as the finest he had seen. Jim Russell guided the party through the Narrows and called attention to Pelican Island on the way. Russell took them to Fort Pierce, from which point they set out for a visit to Lake Okeechobee.²⁵

Hallock was favorably impressed with the Indian River region, but he thought its proper development depended on either a railroad southward to Lake Harney, which he regarded as the head of navigation on the St. Johns or a new canal to Mosquito Lagoon enabling light draft steamers to ply between the Indian River and Jacksonville. He believed the railroad to be the more feasible. He also recommended a small steamer on the Indian River and three good hotels, one at the head of the river, one midway, and one near the southern end. With these improvements, "this delightful climate might be enjoyed by the thousands now kept away by the difficulties attending transportation and lack of accommodations. The present route, via Salt Lake, is very tedious, and uncomfortably long."²⁶

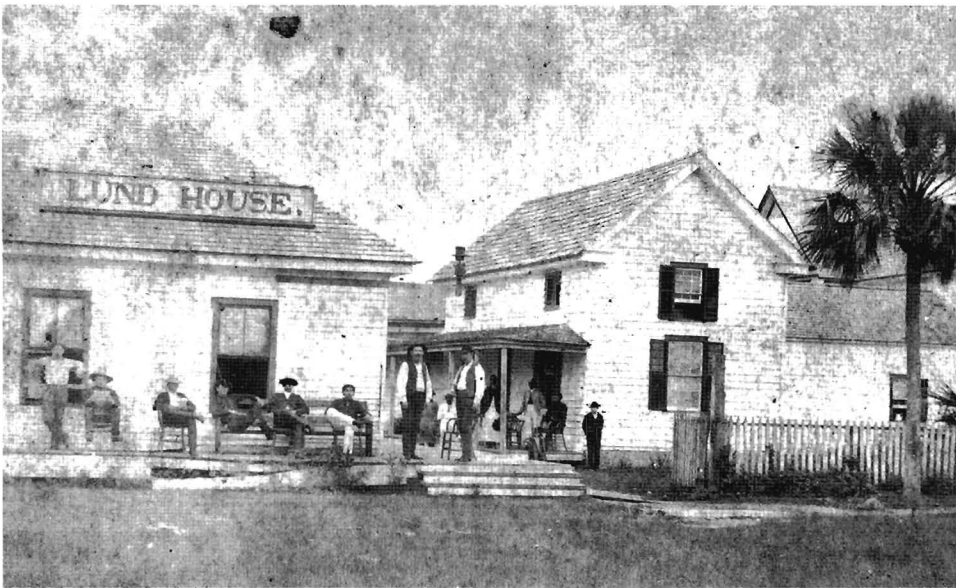
Tedious though it may have been, it was the latter route which brought James A. Henshall on his trip to the Indian River in the late 1870s. On the third day out of Jacksonville, he wrote, Henshall's party left the St. Johns a few miles above Lake Harney and entered Snake Creek, arriving at Salt Lake in late morning. At that point he changed to a "car" which stood several hundred yards from shore in shallow water. The car was on a wooden tramway which ran from Salt Lake to Titusville and was drawn by two mules. The tram was owned and operated by Samuel J. Fox whom Henshall thought was going to extend it to



Settlers engaged in trade with the Seminoles who brought their pelts and hides to exchange for supplies. (Photo courtesy Vera Zimmerman)

Lake Harney, "some twenty miles" away. His reasoning was that such products as oranges, limes, pineapples, bananas, cane syrup, early vegetables, green turtle, oysters, venison, skins, and hides were already being shipped to Jacksonville via Salt Lake, and return cargoes of groceries, provisions, clothing, and household goods were much in demand as settlement of the Indian River country accelerated.²⁷

With a much better appreciation of Titusville than Hallock, Henshall called it "the emporium for the entire country south for a distance of two hundred miles." With the usual complementary notice of Henry Titus, he went



One of two hotels in Titusville, the Lund House was owned by T. W. Lund of the Jacksonville and Salt Lake Line of steamers. (Photo courtesy Robert Hudson, North Brevard Historical Society)

on to describe it as the “distributing and shipping point for Southeast Florida.” There were two hotels, the Titus Hotel and the Lund House, both of which were “good houses.” The latter was owned by T. W. Lund of the Jacksonville and Salt Lake Line of steamers. The Lund House was anticipating the introduction of pleasure boats “in charge of competent skippers, who will take parties of guests on camping and fishing excursions down the river, at no additional expense to the regular per diem rate of the hotel.” Where Mrs. Joseph Gruber had been obliged only a few years earlier to travel to Enterprise for supplies, Henshall reported several stores, including those of Titus and John W. Joyner in Titusville where “grub” could be obtained at reasonable prices. “Self-raising flour, bacon, coffee, sugar, canned goods of every description, and the great Florida staple, hominy, or ‘grits,’” were available at Jacksonville prices. He advised, however, that the hunter would have to bring his ammunition and fishing tackle since those items were unavailable on the river.²⁸ From Titusville, Henshall set out in the *Blue Wing* with a group of youngsters on their way around the tip of Florida to the

Gulf. On the way they fished, explored the interior and shot at everything in sight, including pelicans which were used for target practice.

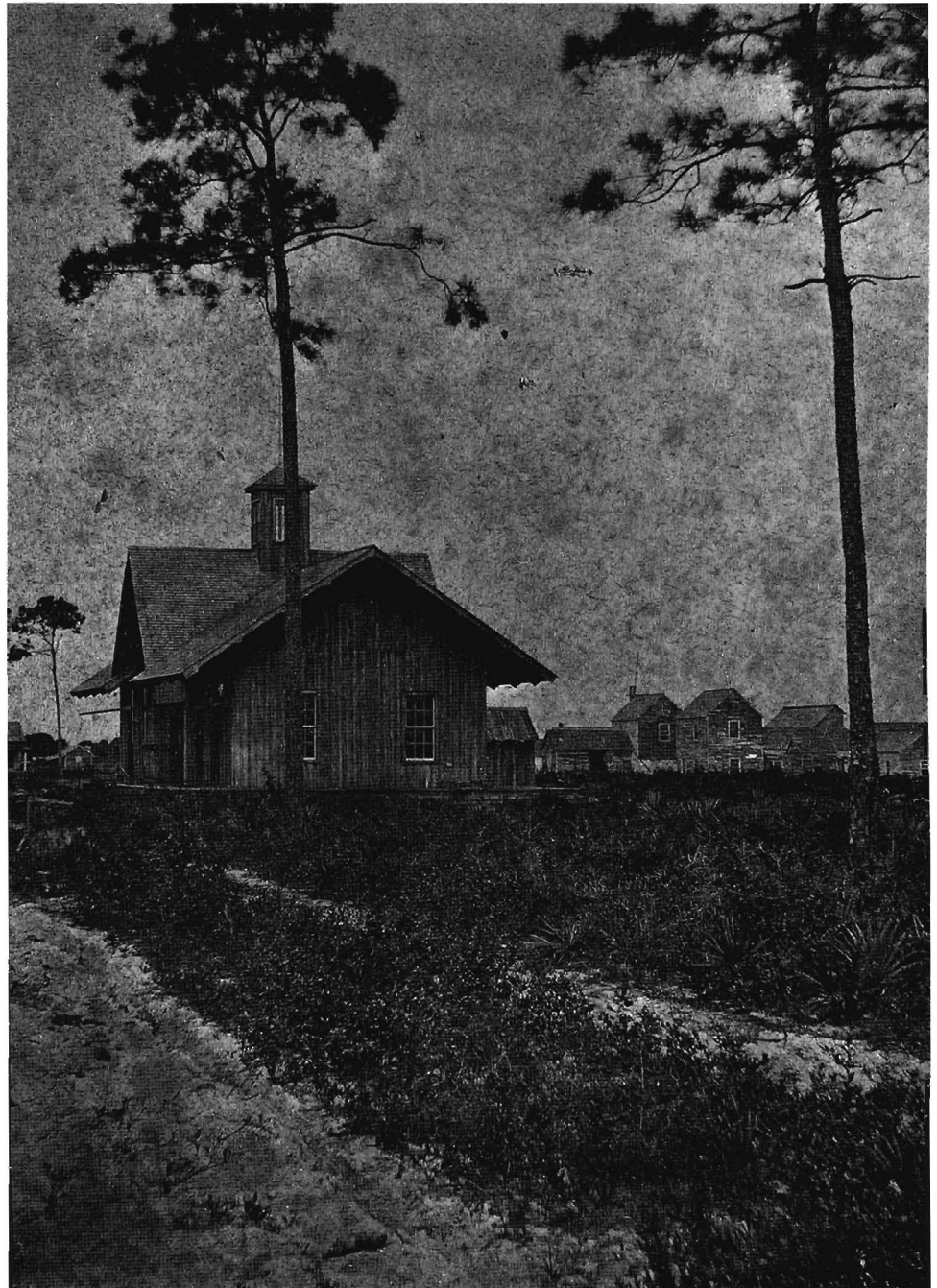
George W. Parsons and his brother reversed the usual trip on the Indian River lagoon. The young New Yorkers had spent several months at Key West and along the Miami River before returning home in a small boat in early 1875. Having made their way on the outside – that is, in the Atlantic Ocean – from Biscayne Bay to Jupiter, they proceeded up the river from that point. At Fort

Pierce they found no one except Alexander Bell and his family. Bell explained that the land around Fort Pierce was poor and the insects made habitation difficult. Bell took his family to the interior during the summer months to avoid the chills and fever. He also grew sugar cane there where he found the soil to be much better than on the coast. At Fort Capron, the Parsons met James Paine who was then operating a boarding house which would accommodate 14 persons. There was also a port of entry there and Paine was collector. Paine told them that there were plans for a small steamer to make regular runs from Sand Point to the Indian River Inlet beginning in 1876. They landed at Barker’s Bluff to ride out a storm. Finding no one there, they pitched a tent for shelter. On March 11, they stopped at John Houston’s place near Eau Gallie and heard the news that Governor Stearns’ party had been there to select the agricultural college site. When told that all of the land between Eau Gallie and Sand Point had been taken up, George Parsons commented that “all I have to say is that they have selected a poor country to come to.” He was equally disdainful of Sand Point – although

the place had been renamed Titusville, it continued to be known by its older name as well – which he thought “a miserable place.” He estimated that about 300 families “at present reside on Indian River and have to fight mosquitoes and insects which are very bad and injure the crops...In fact everything is so different from what I had been led to believe.. no one need ever whisper Indian River to me after this.”²⁹

Parsons was more favorably impressed with Henry Titus who agreed to have the brothers transported to Lake Harney for \$10. He thought this a remarkably low price “as twice that amount besides charge for luggage and passengers is the regular price.” He noted that Titus had some freight to bring back from Lake Harney which probably explained the bargain price. In any event, the Parsons departed Titusville seated in their boat aboard a wagon being pulled by mules.³⁰

Talk of a tram road from Titusville to Lake Harney was quite enthusiastic when Parsons was there in 1875, but it was never built. In fact, the existing line to Salt Lake had apparently fallen into disuse by 1880. A traveller using the pseudonym “Friar Tuck” wrote that he arrived at Salt Lake in 1880 and spoke with W. H. Churchill who was managing the “wooden tram, dignified by the title of railroad, only



A traveller in 1880 described the mule-drawn train from Salt Lake to Titusville as a “wooden tram, dignified by the title of railroad.” (Stereo view, Florida State Archives)

to find that it had not been ‘officially’ open for some time because of repairs in progress.” “For old times sake,” however, Churchill agreed to transport Friar Tuck’s boat and equipment to the Indian River³¹



Visitors and settlers alike enjoyed hunting alligators. These two men have killed an eight and a half footer. (Photo by C. F. Conkling, Brevard County Historical Commission Archives)

Friar Tuck spent the night at the Titus House which he found "as good as any hotel on the St. Johns." From there, he went to St. Lucie where he found the Paine family to be the only inhabitants. One son was the postmaster, another was deputy collector, and the elder Paine was still keeping the boarding house. He found a group of fisherman busy at the inlet. Headed by Silas B. Latham of Connecticut they were catching and shipping fish on weekly runs to Savannah aboard the schooner *Lillian*. While on the river, Friar Tuck was impressed with the services of Frank Strobhar of Eau Gallie and Charles Carlin of Titusville, whom he found to be good guides as well as good boatmen. As was usually the case of hunters who visited the area, Friar Tuck travelled from the Indian River to the St. Johns prairie where he "shot dozens of alligators, pelicans, spoonbills, and anything else that made a target." That kind of hunting was the routine rather than the exception in the early days long before there was much thought of conserving wild game.³²

The idea of a wooden tram road was apparently replaced by plans for a more substantial railroad, more and more of which were being advocated by 1880. In the meantime, the primary avenue of transportation to and from the Indian River country continued to be up the St. Johns to Enterprise or Lake Harney and then either overland by wagon or by way of the river to Salt Lake or Lake Poinsett. T. W. Lund and S. J. Fox, and a few others, made the difficult water voyage. Some of the vessels engaged in the traffic were the *Darlington*, *Wekiva*, *Fox*, *Volusia*, *Marion*, *Osceola*, *Astatula*, and *Waunita*. The *Volusia* was

operated by the Pioneer Line which maintained connections with the Mallory Line at Jacksonville.

Just before he died in 1881, Henry Titus had occasion to undertake one more battle, but this time his weapons were words. The Florida Dispatch Line was then operating out of Jacksonville as a kind of commission merchant for Florida produce on its way to northern markets. It published the Florida Dispatch as an extension of its business and the newspaper served as a clearinghouse for information about the happenings of peninsular Florida. When a visitor to the Malabar area fired off a letter boasting of the superiority of a transportation route from Rockledge by way of Lake Poinsett and disparaging Titusville as a "dreary waste of white sand," the old warrior rose in wrath. In a letter to the Dispatch in August, four days before his death, Titus dismissed the "Knight of the Quill" with an "imbecile nature" and went on to plug his town one more time. Titusville, he declared, was "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.”³³

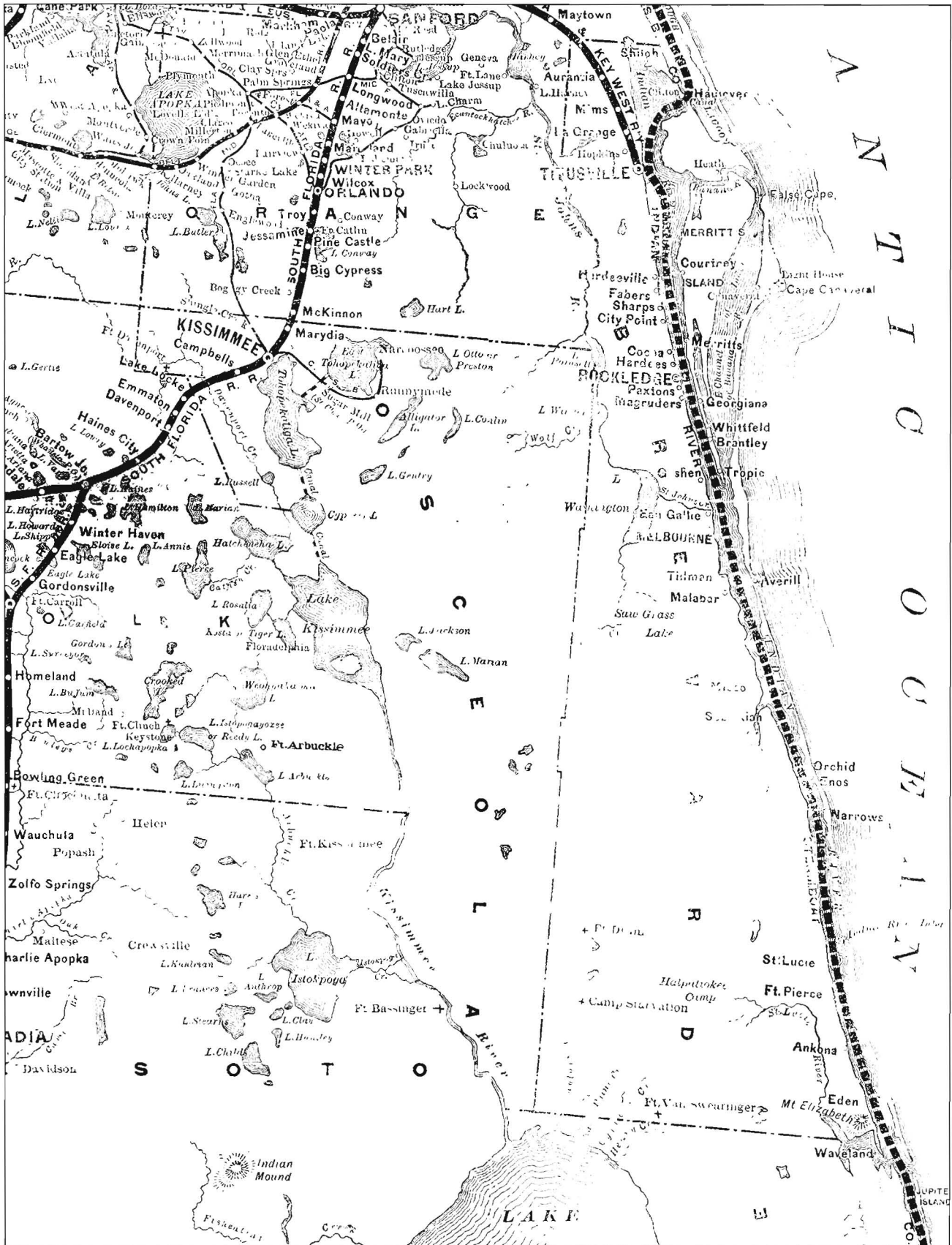
Brevard County had made measurable progress since the end of the Civil War. With the change of county lines in 1879 and removal of the county seat to Titusville, it had begun regular tax collections to the point that its circulating scrip was approaching par value. People were discussing with some reason the possibility of railroad connections with the outside world. Settlers were becoming more numerous along the Indian River lagoon and on Merritt Island. The 1880 census showed a

population of 1,497 in the county. Perhaps more revealing was the fact that 932 people lived east of the St. Johns while only 565 were on the west side. The county realignment of 1879 had reduced the numerical strength of the cattlemen as more and more growers of citrus, pineapples, and vegetables came to the east side of the St. Johns. Although there were still numerous cattle herds on both sides of the river, the census showed that there were about three times as many growers as cattlemen in Brevard County in 1880.³⁴

END NOTES

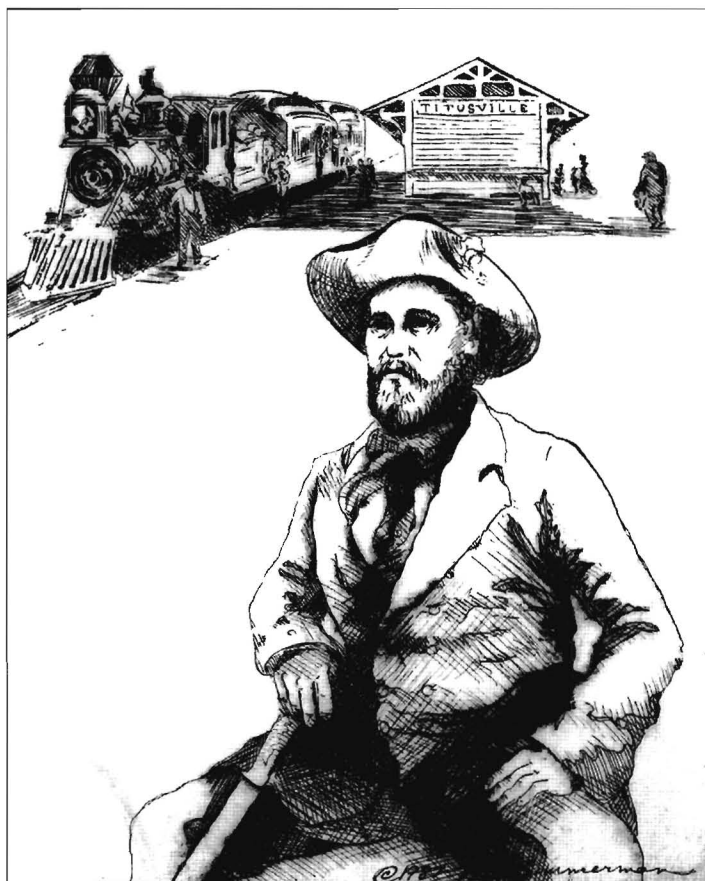
1. Titusville East Coast Advocate, Illustrated Supplement, 1913; Robert Ranson, *East Coast Florida Memoirs, 1837-1886* (Port Salerno, Florida, 1989), passim; Titusville Star Advocate, April 24, 1928; C. J. Maynard, "A Naturalists Trip to Florida," *The American Sportsman*, July 1874; John W. Griffin and James J. Miller, "Cultural Resource Survey of Merritt Island Wildlife Refuge," August 1, 1978.
2. Melbourne Times, August 3, 1877; Letter of Nancy J. Dixon, March 24, 1896, MSS Box 70, P. K. Yonge Library; Titusville East Coast Advocate, Illustrated Supplement, 1913; Titusville Star, March 8, October 4, 1888, February 22, March 29, 1895; Titusville Star Advocate, April 27, 1928, April 25, 1933; Clara Edwards, *History of the Rockledge Presbyterian Church, 1877-1953* (Cocoa, 1953); Brevard County Historical Commission, *Historical Book, 1830-1920* [Hatch Journal], 1870.
3. Post Office Site Locations, Microfilm 1126, Roll 88.
4. Alfred J. Hanna and Kathryn A. Hanna, *Florida's Golden Sands* (Indianapolis and New York, 1950), pp. 172-178.
5. *Ibid.*, pp. 178-182.
6. National Archives, Records Group 105, Records of the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen and Abandoned Lands, Florida, Andrew Mahoney to Charles Mundee, September 2, 1866.
7. Jerrell H. Shofner, *Nor Is It Over Yet: Florida in the Era of Reconstruction, 1863-1877* (Gainesville, 1947), p. 138.
8. National Archives, Record Group 94, Adjutant Generals Office, John G. Foster to G. L. Hartsuff, March 6, 1866; *St. Augustine Examiner*, March 9, 1867.
9. Titusville Star Advocate, May 25, 1934.
10. *Ibid.*, July 2, 1929, January 1, May 1, 1930.
11. Post Office Site Locations, April 5, 1880, M 1126, Roll 88.
12. Titusville Star Advocate, July 1, 1938.
13. *Ibid.*, April 27, 1928. (Site location - June 2, 1871 - Microfilm 1126 Roll 88)
14. Lewis H. Cresse, "A Study of William Henry Gleason: Carpetbagger, Politician, Land Developer." (Unpublished Ph. D. Dissertation, University of South Carolina, 1975), p. 69.
15. Quotation is from Cresse, Gleason, p. 91.
16. George W. Parsons Diary, May 11, 1875, P. K. Yonge Library; Cresse, Gleason, p. 91.
17. William Henry Gleason, *Broadside*, n/d, MSS Box 69, P. K. Yonge Library.
18. Hanna and Hanna, *Florida's Golden Sands*, p. 165; Cresse, Gleason, p. 113.
19. Melbourne Area Chamber of Commerce Centennial Committee, *Melbourne: A Century of Memories*, (Melbourne, 1980), p. 1.
20. Charles Hallock, *Camp Life in Florida* (New York, 1876), p. 110.
21. Kyle S. Van Landingham, *Pictorial History of Saint Lucie County* (Bicentennial Project of Saint Lucie County Historical Society), p. 14; Florida State Archives, Record Group 150, Series 24, J. Q. Stewart to George F. Drew, August 26, 1878. Charlotte Lockwood, 1975, *Florida's Historic I.R. County* (Vero Beach, 1975), p. 5.
22. Emily Lagow Bell, *My Pioneer Days in Florida, 1876-1898* (n. p., n. d.), pp. 29-30.
23. Georgianna Kjerulff, *Tales of Old Brevard* (Melbourne, 1972), p. 27.
24. Hallock, *Camp Life*, p. 71; John L. Edwards, *Gratuitous Guide to Florida, 1874*, Microfilm 1851, P. K. Yonge Library.
25. Hallock, *Camp Life*, pp. 228-231.
26. *Ibid.*, pp. 229-230.
27. James A. Henshall, *Camping and Cruising in Florida* (Cincinnati, 1888), pp. 11-13.
28. *Ibid.*, pp. 12-14.
29. Parsons, Diary, 1875.
30. *Ibid.*
31. *Gazenovia* (New York) Republican, September 2, 1880.
32. *Ibid.*
33. Jacksonville Florida Dispatch, August 3, 1881. Hanna & Hanna, *Golden Sands*, pp. 184-185.
34. FSA, RG 1020, Series 1203, Florida Census, 1880, Population, Agriculture.

Page 82 map: 1870 County Map of Florida by S. Augustus Mitchell, Jr.
(Courtesy Jim Ball)



TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNICATION IN EARLY BREVARD

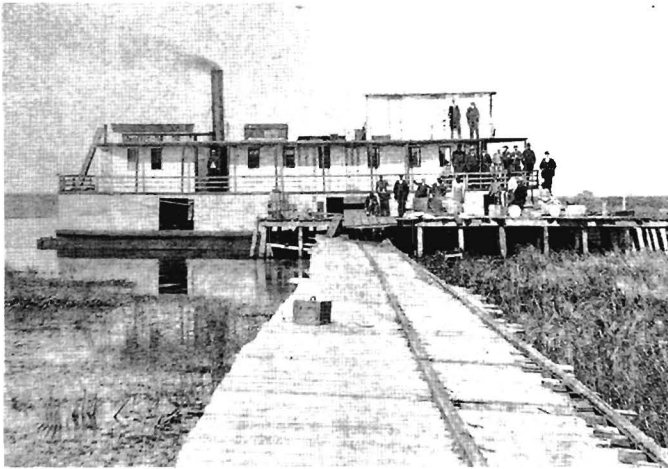
Whether they arrived by wagon or by steamer, travellers endured many experiences which they were quite willing to forego when train travel eventually became available.



Just a few days before his death in 1881, Henry Titus declared that "the Enterprise and Titusville Railroad is a fixed fact" and predicted that it would be completed by the last of the year.

(Etching © Vera Zimmerman 1987)

Railroad fever was strong in Brevard County by 1881. Just a few days before his death, Henry Titus, the county's most enthusiastic advocate, declared that "the Enterprise and Titusville Railroad is a fixed fact" and predicted that it would be completed by the last of the year. He declared with equal confidence that the Coast Canal Company would finish its work on the Haulover Canal and other navigational obstacles in the Indian River with comparable alacrity. "Your transit will soon be perfected and our Indian River country will be a continuous city from Titusville to Eau Gallie," he promised. The Florida Star was more hopeful than optimistic when it noted three months later that seven railroad companies had been



The steamer *Astatula* provided service on the St. Johns River from Lake Poinsett to Sanford where the Rockledge Line connected with the Independent Line for Jacksonville. (Photo courtesy Doug Hendriksen)

organized with Titusville as their termini and “we surely ought to get one out of seven.” Titus had identified the two avenues by which the Indian River country would eventually be connected with the highways of commerce and travel, but the newspaper had also called attention to the difference between boosterism and railroad construction. It was to be several years before a locomotive steamed into Titusville and even longer before the intracoastal waterway could be depended upon by vessels of any size.¹

While grander schemes awaited fruition, people continued to travel to and from the county by the best available means while continuing to try to improve them. W. H. Churchill, who had been operating the tram road from Salt Lake to LaGrange since the mid-1870s, became president of the Indian River Railway and Transportation Company in 1881 with expectations of building a railroad westward to Lake Harney. W. S. Norwood’s hack line was running from Titusville to Enterprise where connections could be made with the DeBary Line. Fare was three dollars to Enterprise and another three from there to Jacksonville. Thomas W. Lund’s Pioneer Line transported passengers and freight from Titusville to Salt Lake by hacks

and wagons where connections were made with vessels bound for Sanford as well as Jacksonville. When his Steamer *Volusia* blew up at the docks in Jacksonville he relied upon the *Wekiva* and the *Fox*, both of which plied the waters of the Indian River as well as the St. Johns at various times. By the mid-1880s Lund was also running the *Fox* as far as Lake Washington during the winter season. W. A. Ostrander’s *Cinderella* and *Duchess* were carrying the mail between Titusville and Lake Worth in 1882, but in 1884 he was also plying between Salt Lake and Enterprise and Sanford with smaller vessels. The Steamer *Osceola*, also no stranger to the Indian River trade, was making bi-weekly trips between Sanford and Salt Lake in 1883. E. H. Rice had a hack and freight service which brought passengers and goods from the Salt Lake landing to Titusville.²

Residents of Rockledge and neighboring settlements were not content with the transportation available by way of the Indian River from Titusville. Some sought a railroad to the county seat while others tried to establish direct connections with Sanford through Lake Poinsett. In early 1882 the Titusville and Rockledge Railroad Company was incorporated by Joseph N. Wilkinson, Gardner S. Hardee, Charles A. Hentz, William H. Sharpe, James D. Spratt, and C. B. Magruder. Another rail line was proposed by I. A. McRory, Minor S. Jones, and A. A. Stewart. Their Indian River and Northern Transportation Company was to run between Rockledge and Lake Poinsett. Neither road was ever built, but passengers and freight were transported between Sanford and Rockledge by way of Lake Poinsett. Gardner Hardee, A. L. Hatch and others built a wharf to navigable water on Lake Poinsett in the late 1870s. Hatch was soon transporting supplies from there to his store at City Point. In 1883 the steamer *Tuskawilla* was running from Lake Poinsett to Sanford where it connected with the Independent Line for Jacksonville. The Rockledge Line offered comparable service aboard its *Astatula* and *Waunita* in 1885. By that time D. W. McQuaig and others were employing 15 teams and wagons to transport passengers

and freight between Rockledge and the lake. As late as 1887 plans were still being made for “a good steel rail tram road across from river to river” to serve Rockledge and Cocoa.³

Whether they arrived by wagon or by steamer from Enterprise and Sanford in the early 1880s, travellers endured many experiences which they were quite willing to forego when train travel eventually became available. Herman Herold complained of his 1884 trip aboard the *Astatula* which, according to him, was filthy and cramped. Arriving at Willard’s dock on Lake Poinsett, he was transferred to a wagon for a “terrible three mile ride” to the Del Monico Hotel at Rockledge. Travel by land could be even more memorable. Arriving by wagon from Enterprise just a few months before the railroad was completed, V. F. Hankins explained why the mail arrived wet. The wagon was crossing a slough when it struck a large alligator. The wagon was upset and mail and passengers were dumped into about 18 inches of water. It was little wonder that the railroad received such enthusiastic support from Brevard County residents.⁴

Traffic on the Indian River itself was often unreliable and sometimes dangerous. Inadequate water in the

Haulover canal, tortuous channels through the Narrows, and the constant difficulty of navigating shallow water so near the unpredictable winds of the Atlantic Ocean presented continuing challenges. But the river offered the best means of transportation and communication and everyone used it. Nearly every settler on the river had a wharf from which small vessels came and went much as automobiles do today. Although scheduled steamer traffic was uncommon until the mid-1880s, mail contractors could be relied upon to keep loose schedules, subject to weather on the river and delays at Enterprise and other points. Although they certainly kept no schedule, a number of trade boats provided a valuable service as well as opportunities for social intercourse for residents along the river.

These trading vessels were literally travelling stores, selling goods for cash or produce. Stopping at every landing along the river, they traded with single families or groups of people depending upon the population. They sometimes remained at a landing for several days while people came from the interior to buy, sell, or exchange. Most of the traders carried groceries, dry goods, canned goods, clothing and shoes, toilet articles and notions.



The river offered the best means of transportation and communication and everyone used it. Nearly every settler on the river had a wharf from which small vessels came and went. Kroegel dock, Sebastian. (Photo by Paul Kroegel, courtesy Rodney Kroegel, Brevard Historical Commission Archives)



The Steamer *Indian River* maintained a schedule of two round trips weekly from Titusville to Eau Gallie, Melbourne and Sebastian (Photo courtesy Doug Hendriksen)

They also carried penny candy for the children and liquor for the men. Whiskey was also traded to Indians from the interior for otter pelts and deer hides.

Benjamin Hogg, one of the earliest trade boat captains, obtained his supplies from the Bahamas, but most bought their stock at Jacksonville, Daytona, or Titusville. John McLean traded on the river in his sloop *Agnes* for many years beginning about 1880. He operated out of Daytona although he frequently encountered difficulty at the Haulover canal. W. S. Norwood and Company sold goods on the river on the *Osceola*. G. B. Rumph of Titusville operated the *Irene* for several years, but sold it to the Florida Canning Company which continued to trade on the river after 1890. Described as "one of Indian River's business women," a Mrs. Chase had a store boat in the 1890s which sold dry goods and millinery on the river. Some of the other trade boat operators were Alfred Michael, Walter Kitching, and Cornthwaite J. Hector. The *Mary B* was owned by Mary Baird who operated it with

her two sons. There was also the *Norma* with Captain McNeil as master and the *Merchant* owned and operated by the Travis Supply Store of Cocoa. The trade boats provided a valuable service during the late 19th century and were gradually replaced by stores in the river towns which were better supplied as transportation improved after the mid-1880s.⁵

Small steamers such as T. W. Lund's *Pioneer* had been on Indian River waters since the late 1870s, but the first large passenger steamer was W. A. Ostrander's *Cinderella* which arrived in 1882. Too large to navigate the Haulover canal, the *Cinderella*

carried the mail on the Indian River and transferred its cargo to the *Duchess* which operated on the Mosquito Lagoon. Emphasizing the need for an improved inland waterway, the *Cinderella* spent nearly a month in the spring of 1883 struggling over the shoals of the lower Indian River. After a few more equally difficult voyages, the steamer was removed to the St. Johns in November 1883.⁶

Jacob Lorillard of New York City provided a steamer service in the early 1880s with the *Indian River* and the *Haulover*, both of which were 60 feet long and 12 feet wide and too large to pass through the Haulover canal. The *Haulover* operated on the Halifax, meeting the *Indian River* at the Haulover. With C. F. Fischer as master, the *Indian River* hauled both freight and passengers up and down the waterway for which it was named. After the East Coast Line Canal Company opened the canal, both vessels navigated the Indian River for several years. The *Haulover* was removed to the west coast of Florida in the late 1880s, but the *Indian River* remained. For several years it

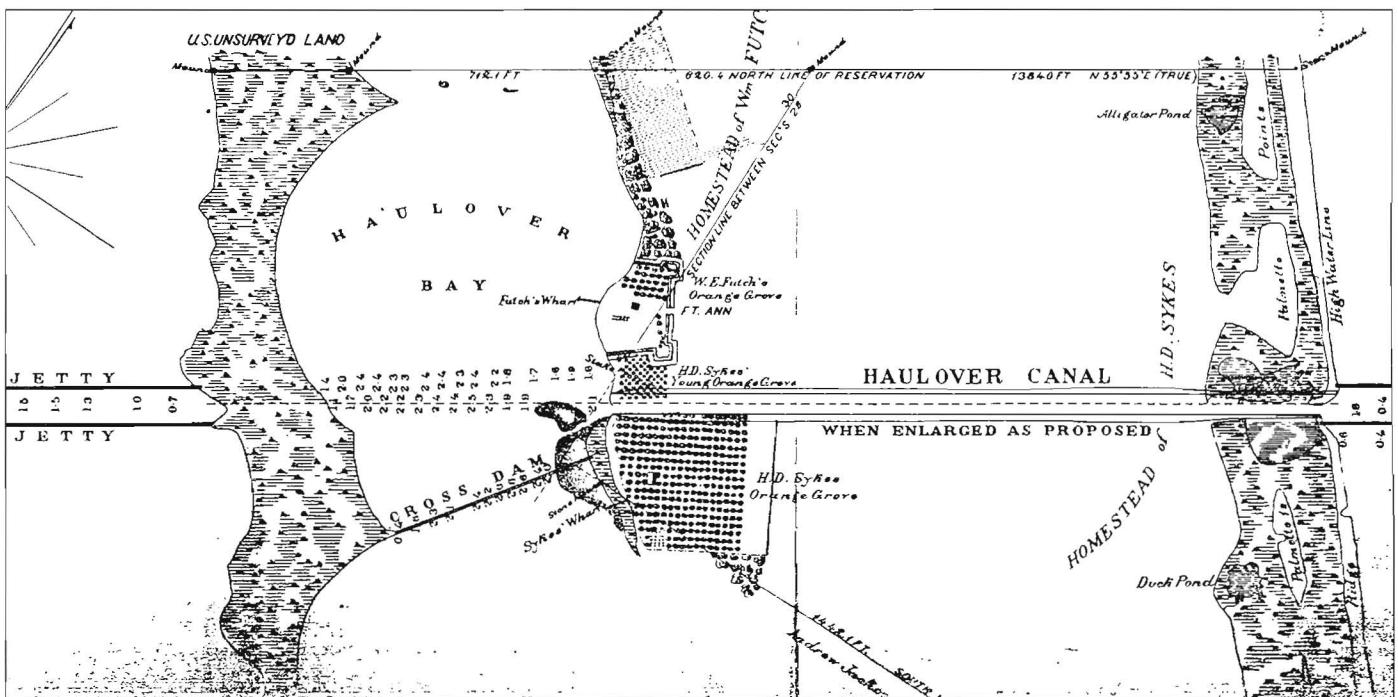
maintained a schedule of two round trips weekly from Titusville to Eau Gallie and Melbourne and, later, Sebastian. In early 1885, the steamer *Ino*, a stern wheeler built on the Halifax River, was brought through the canal after "quite a large amount of excavating." It was to run on the Indian River in connection with another vessel which operated out of New Smyrna. H. Q. Hawley's *Frostline* also plied the Indian River in the 1880s.⁷

There was almost as much enthusiasm for an inland waterway along the east coast as for a railroad. Such a waterway had been envisioned in the 1850s when the Internal Improvement Act was passed and small vessels had crossed the Haulover at the northern end of the Indian River by one means or another for years. During the late 1860s and early 1870s, William Henry Gleason had organized the Southern Inland Waterway and Navigation Company with the ostensible purpose of opening an inland waterway from Jacksonville to Biscayne Bay as well as a canal connecting the upper St. Johns at Lake

Washington with the Indian River at Elbow Creek. Little work was ever done on either of these projects, although Gleason was granted several tracts of state lands for his efforts. Gleason's activities in these matters languished in the mid-1870s, but interest in both waterways continued.⁸

In 1879 several citizens of Titusville and others along the river as far south as Lake Worth formed a company for the purpose of widening the Haulover canal, but they could not raise the necessary funds. The 1879 legislature chartered the Haulover Tram Railroad Company headed by Phineas D. Wesson of Titusville to construct a railroad which would transport river craft from the Mosquito Lagoon to the Indian River and back to facilitate transportation. Although this firm would have been eligible for land grants, it was never able to begin work.⁹

Unable to raise private funds for opening the waterway, citizens turned to Congress. J. F. LeBaron, an engineer who lived at Titusville, reported to that body in 1881 that improvement of the Haulover canal would be beneficial.



J. F. LeBaron, an engineer who lived at Titusville, reported to Congress in 1881 that improvement of the Haulover canal would be beneficial. (Brevard County Historical Commission Archives)

Craft which were then navigating the Indian River were limited to sailboats, sloops, and small schooners, most of which had been built on the river. Five small schooners averaging 40 to 45 feet in length and ten to 14 feet beam were carrying freight and mail through the canal, but they were often subjected to great delays. One schooner was obliged to make its semi-weekly trips on the outside because it was unable to pass through the canal at all. Not only was it difficult to maintain sufficient width and depth of the channel because of the shoals which accumulated at each end, but navigation was also impeded by the current. Usually, the Indian River waters were two or three feet higher than the Mosquito Lagoon with the result that a strong current made it difficult for vessels trying to move against it. LeBaron thought that the canal could be made more adequate to the needs of the citizenry for about \$66,000.¹⁰

Congress did not act on the LeBaron report because the Florida Coast Line Canal and Transportation Company was granted a state charter in August 1881 to build and maintain an intracoastal waterway along the same route. The company began construction in 1883 and eventually received over a million acres of land for completing about 268 miles of canal, but it never really met the conditions of its charter nor were people along the river satisfied with the waterway it ostensibly provided.¹¹

Work on the Haulover canal began in 1885 when the Coast Canal Company brought in a group of Italian laborers to clear the way for the dredges. After completing its work at Oak Hill, the steam dredge *Chester* moved to the Haulover. During 1886 it cleared the old canal and moved on to Grant's Farm where it went to work on a channel east of that island. Complaints about the Haulover Canal continued. Two months after the work there had been completed, E. H. Purdy reported that he had been obliged to leave his *Ripple* at the Haulover because of insufficient water.¹² The steamer *Clara* abandoned its trips on the river because of the growing sandbar. The Titusville newspaper

complained that the canal was filling up rapidly and "the Coast Canal Company seems to have forgotten that the canal needs any attention at all." It argued that the company should not be allowed its land grant. Meanwhile, plans were underway to relocate the canal and the United States Coast Survey recommended a new site about a half mile away. While the company was relocating the canal in the late 1880s, the legislature took up the larger question of the entire intracoastal waterway.¹³

Brevard County's senator, Gardner S. Hardee, chaired a committee which heard complaints and made recommendations for changes to the 1889 legislature. Recognizing the importance of the inland waterway project, the legislature enacted a measure which seemed to satisfy both the company and the inhabitants of the Atlantic coast. The crucial provision was that the company was obliged to complete the entire waterway from St. Augustine to Biscayne Bay within five years. The Cocoa Public Spirit enthusiastically endorsed the "mammoth enterprise" as "the most important public work that has ever been inaugurated" in East Florida. Enthusiasm was enhanced when Senator Hardee announced that George F. Miles of the canal company had contracted with Rittenhouse, Moore and Company of Mobile, Alabama, to begin work immediately.¹⁴

Complaints were raised again in 1892 when the Haulover canal was reportedly closed above Titusville and the lower river was filling up so that "communication with Jupiter and Lake Worth may be cut off at any time." Private parties contracted for a dredge to open up the canal between the Haulover and Mosquito lagoon in 1892 so that the steamer *J. W. Sweeney* could get through. Local individuals, backed by New York capital, were interested in this project so that the *Sweeney* could haul pineapples from Eden to New Smyrna and create competition for the railroad and its steamer line.¹⁵

At about the same time the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers became interested in dredging the waterway.

After about three years of complex negotiations with the Coast Canal Company, the government actually brought its dredge *Suwannee* into the Indian River with a view to opening a channel five feet deep and at least 75 feet wide. A considerable amount of dredging was actually completed, but funds were exhausted before the *Suwannee* finished its task.¹⁶

By 1895, Henry Flagler had invested about \$100,000 in the canal company and had become its president. Its headquarters had been relocated to St. Augustine. George F. Miles was still the general manager and he was still doing dredge work on the southern end of the waterway. Although it is unlikely that Flagler would have allowed the river route to become competitive with his railroad as it was built toward Miami, he had no objection to the formation of the Indian River and Bay Biscayne Inland Navigation Company with A. W. Buie as its Titusville superintendent. Its *St. Augustine* and *St. Sebastian* were advertised as connecting with all trains at Titusville and Rockledge in 1898. By 1905, the Coast Canal Company was claiming a uniform six foot depth all the way from the Haulover to Grant's Farm and its dredge *Florida* was at work opening a comparable channel southward to Jupiter.¹⁷

The company declared its work complete in 1912 and the state turned over the last of its land grant at that time. It went into receivership in 1923, was reorganized for a brief period, and then closed down completely in 1926. The Intracoastal Waterway was ultimately taken over and completed by the Corps of Engineers in the 1930s.¹⁸

Most of the railroad companies mentioned in 1881 by the Titusville newspaper never got beyond the paper



The steamer Frederick DeBary was one of the boats that plied the St. Johns River in the 1880's
(Photo courtesy Jim Ball)

stage. The Sanford and Indian River Railroad which was chartered by an Orlando syndicate did put about 100 men to work grading from Fort Reed toward Lake Jesup in 1882 and the Leesburg and Indian River Railroad company also progressed to the point that it was hiring laborers, but neither of them seem to have laid any track. The most promising undertaking for a railroad to the Indian River originated with the Palatka and Indian River Railroad which began planning for a line to Titusville in 1881. Grading started from Buffalo Bluff in early 1882 for a line which was to run southward along the St. Johns River. This road apparently was acquired by the Jacksonville, Tampa and Key West Railroad which eventually reached Tampa in 1886.¹⁹

With the Jacksonville, Tampa, and Key West road working toward Tampa, plans for a connecting link between Enterprise and Titusville began taking shape in 1883. W. B. Watson who was then managing the DeBary steamship line predicted in January of that year that a road would be completed by way of Lake Harney to Titusville within 18 months. Such a road had Frederick

DeBary's support and he had offered to guarantee the first three years interest on bonds to be issued for that purpose. The Atlantic Coast, St. Johns and Indian River Railroad was chartered in 1883.²⁰

Railroad fever accelerated during the next few months and the Titusville paper reported that real estate was booming all along the river, especially at Titusville and Melbourne. Further encouragement came when W. B. Watson resigned his position with the DeBary-Baya Line and accepted the position of superintendent of the Enterprise to Titusville Railroad. Residents of the Indian River settlements readily formed a subscription committee when the railroad company officials offered to build the road and have locomotives in Titusville by the first of January 1886, if they would subscribe \$30,000 in land or cash. The money was raised almost immediately by enthusiastic citizens of Titusville and LaGrange.²¹

The railroad officials were as good as their word and construction was begun almost immediately with a view to meeting the January 1, 1886, deadline. Three hundred

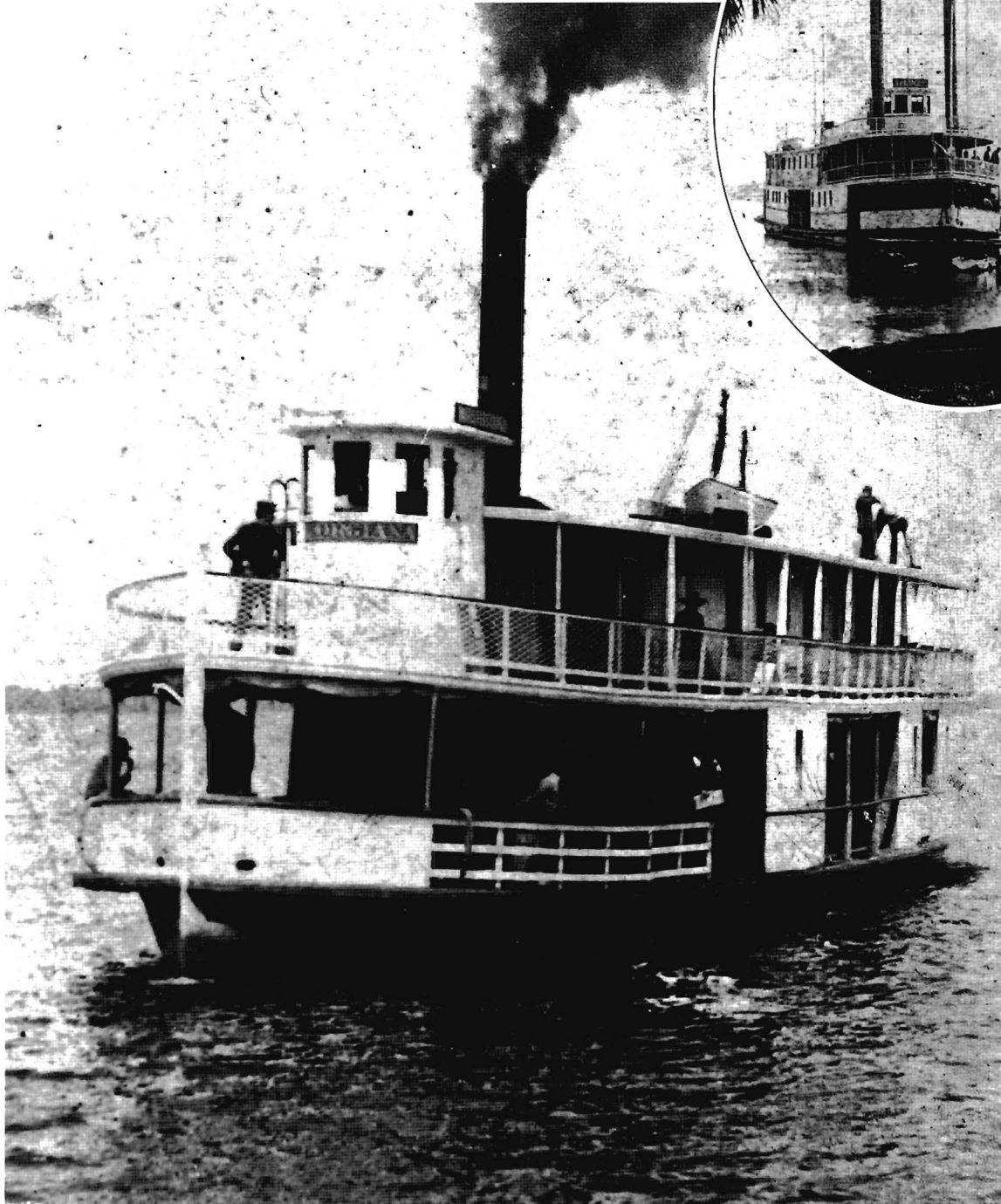
hands were clearing right-of-way, grading, building bridges, and laying track by early summer. When workers became difficult to find, the company offered \$1.25 per day, an incentive which seems to have worked. The Cocoa Indian River Sun enthusiastically reported in late August that grading was completed to within four miles of the LaGrange store. Although there was some concern about the approaching deadline, observers were pleased that track was being laid at the rate of a mile a day. Titusville residents finally heard the whistles of the locomotive as it reached Washington Avenue just in time to meet the deadline. Subscribers were consequently obliged to make good on their \$30,000 worth of pledges. Cannon were fired, an elaborate display of fireworks was set off, and everyone seemed satisfied.²²

In late January the Atlantic Coast, St. Johns, and Indian River Railroad was leased to the Jacksonville, Tampa and Key West Railroad to be operated as a branch of that line. Henry Flagler had about a fifty percent interest in the JTKW RR but he remained a silent partner and eventually

severed his relations with that road. His involvement in Brevard County affairs would come in the 1890s from a different direction. In the meantime, the company built a 1500 foot dock into the Indian River and laid track on it so that the trains could run out over the water to meet the steamers which the company would soon be operating. The long-awaited arrival of the railroad made Titusville the transportation hub of the Indian River country for about a decade and heralded the golden age of Indian River steamboating. The Cocoa Sun approved the good fortune of her neighbor, commenting that "the place has no longer the air of an inland town, but that of a railroad point



The long-awaited arrival of the railroad in 1886 made Titusville the transportation hub of the Indian River country. (Photo courtesy Jim Ball)



Above: The Steamer St. Lucie piloted by Captain C. H. Brock made connections between Titusville, Cocoa, Rockledge and "all intermediate landings from Melbourne to Jupiter" (Photo Florida State Archives)

Left: The Steamer Georgiana was one of the Indian River Steamboat Company's fleet of vessels that plied the Indian River in the 1880's (Photo Florida State Archives)

The hotels are crowded and business looking up.”²³

The waterborne extension of the JTKW RR was the Indian River Steamboat Company which was organized in early 1886. Captains Richard P. Paddison, Steve Bravo, and A. W. Buie were among its best known masters. Paddison was superintendent until 1889 when he was succeeded by W. B. Watson, formerly of the DeBary-Baya Line. Paddison was master of the *Rockledge*, a 136 foot side-wheel steamer, when it was brought from the St. Johns and refitted for the Indian River. Too heavy for the shallow waters of the lagoon, it was eventually sold to E. E. Vail who converted it into a floating hotel at Jupiter Inlet. But, in the meantime, the *Rockledge* was the darling of the Indian River inhabitants for several years. With its home port at Melbourne, the steamer made daily runs between that point and Titusville from 1886 through 1888. Among the other vessels in the IRSB Co. fleet were the *Indian River*, *St. Lucie*, *St. Augustine*, *Sebastian*, *Georgiana*, *S. V. White*, and *Cleo*.²⁴

Partially because demand varied from season to season and partially because some of the vessels were too large to pass through the Narrows, not all of them travelled the entire length of the Indian River, but these vessels effectively extended the reach of the JTKW RR southward to Jupiter. Residents as far south as Melbourne were enabled to reach Jacksonville in a single day where it had previously taken a three-day trip. The Railway Mail Service made the mail much more reliable at least as far as Titusville and the major towns along the river. The steamers stopped at most of the landings on the river, but independent mail contracts continued to be let for some of the tributary routes. The Colegrove Mail Line was given the contract for delivering mail south of Melbourne after 1893.²⁵

The JTKW RR and the IRSB Co. soon extended their services beyond Jupiter to Lake Worth by way of the Jupiter and Lake Worth Railway, popularly known as the Celestial Railroad. Jupiter was only a small village at the time, consisting primarily of a lighthouse and a life saving

station near Jupiter Inlet. Passengers who left the IRSB boats there could go outside to Miami by sailboat or overland by stage coach. The JTKW RR purchased the *Chattahoochee* and kept it at Jupiter as a floating hotel for those transients. Those who chose the inland route could take the 8.5 mile Celestial Railroad, so called because it ran from Jupiter to Juno on Lake Worth. From Juno they went by sailboat to Lantana where twice weekly stage connections were available to Fort Lauderdale.²⁶

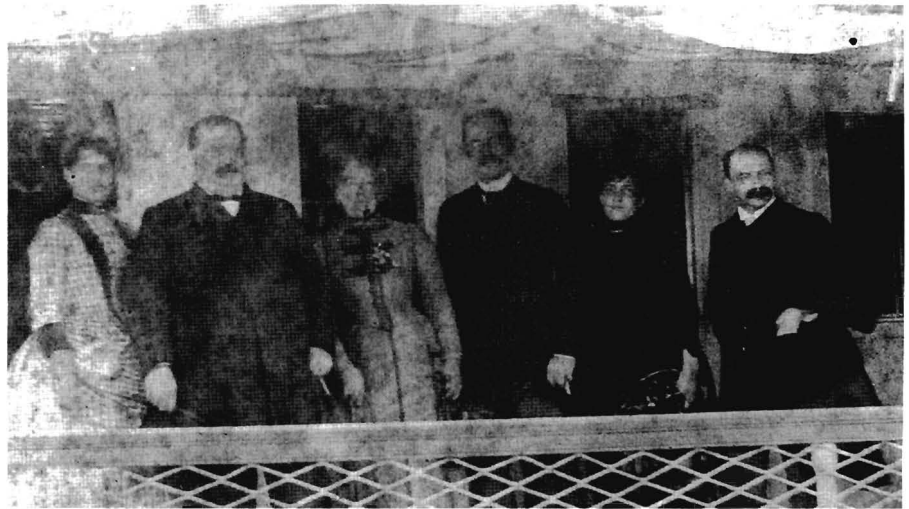
This system served residents along the Atlantic Coast for about a decade after 1886. Several of the larger steamers were quite commodious, offering deck and dining facilities on all of them and staterooms on some. Bands for both listening and dancing were quite common as well. All who could enjoyed at least an occasional trip aboard the river steamers. With very shallow draft, vessels were often poled by the crew through some of the narrower passages, but the compensation was a beautiful view of the waterway with its wildlife and lush vegetation.

With improved transportation, Rockledge's growing reputation as the premiere resort town on the lower east coast was further enhanced. Crowds of visitors left the trains as they pulled onto the railroad dock at Titusville during the winter months. Extra trains were scheduled for the busier seasons and additional steamer trips were added to handle the increased demand. Passengers had stopover privileges at various points along the river and often used them. In January 1891, six trains were running to and from Titusville each day. Direct connections were made with the steamers *St. Lucie* and *St. Sebastian* for Cocoa, Rockledge, Melbourne, and "all intermediate landings from Melbourne to Jupiter." The Titusville newspaper also boasted that there was through train sleeper service to Cincinnati in only 40 hours.²⁷

"The tide of tourists to Indian River is larger than ever before," the Titusville Star declared in 1888. It reported several railroad cars crowded with passengers arriving in Titusville every day "and they don't all immediately return

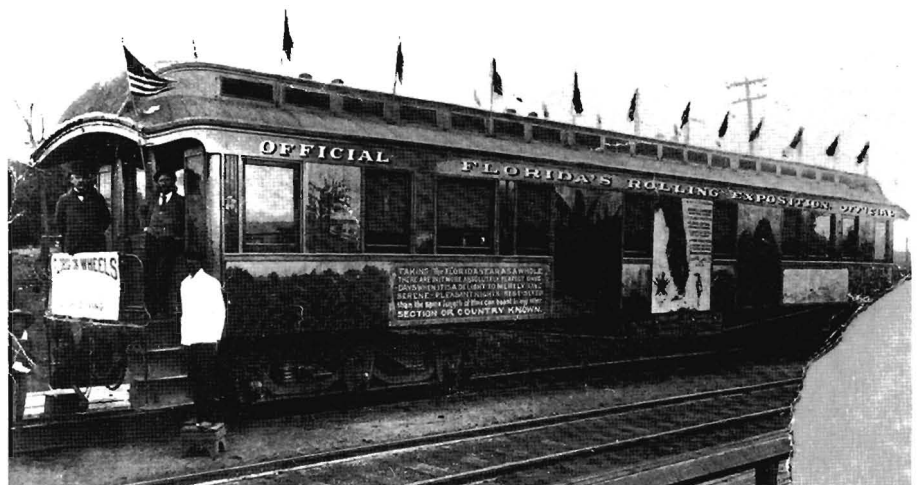
either.” While many visitors traveled as individuals, packaged tours were not uncommon. The Traveling Passengers Association of the United States and Canada organized groups of about 100 each to visit Rockledge as one of the stops on its Florida tour. The first of a series of excursions organized by the Pennsylvania Central Railway arrived in Titusville in early 1888. The round trip from New York to Florida and return, including meals and sleeper facilities and the privilege of remaining twenty days, was \$47.50. Henry Grady, editor of the Atlanta Constitution and renowned spokesman of the New South also brought small groups for “pleasure, hunting and fishing and also feasting on Indian River oranges.” Another kind of tourist travel was exemplified by the steam yacht *Vera* which brought a group from Rochester to enjoy a voyage down the Indian River. Pierre Lorillard, whose family had owned one of the first steamer companies in Brevard County, was one of many wealthy individuals who spent time on the Indian River in their luxury yachts. His *Caiman* always attracted attention when it was tied up at the Titusville city dock.²⁸

Word of the opening of the inland waterway – however incomplete – and the completion of railroad service to Titusville – which became known as the Tropical Trunk Line – spread throughout the nation by many informal means, but it also had official assistance. With the blessing of the State of Florida, Wanton S. Webb outfitted a railroad car with Florida



President Grover Cleveland, his new bride, Frances Folsom Cleveland, visited Brevard in 1888. With them were Secretary of State Thomas A. Bayard, Secretary of War Daniel S. Lamont, Navy Secretary William C. Whitney, and their wives (all of whom are not pictured). (Photo courtesy Jim Ball)

artifacts and scenery which he assembled by visiting many Florida communities, including Titusville, which were served by railroads. He then attached his Rolling Car Exposition to the trains of northern railroads – which were naturally anxious to increase their own passenger traffic – and visited many of the northern cities. He would have his



Wanton S. Webb outfitted a railroad car with Florida artifacts and scenery. Florida's Rolling Exposition visited many northern cities. (Photo courtesy Doug Hendriksen)

car pulled to cities such as Buffalo, Detroit, or Pittsburgh and have it parked on a siding. He then let local residents know that they could come view his Florida car at no cost. Webb reported that those who visited his exhibits in the northern cities in January and February were most impressed.²⁹

One of the most publicized promotions of the Indian River, and especially Rockledge, was the 1888 visit of President Grover Cleveland and his party. The event was planned and staged by state senator Gardner S. Hardee and his Rockledge neighbors. With the president and his new bride were secretary of state Thomas A. Bayard, secretary of war Daniel S. Lamont, navy secretary William C. Whitney, and their wives as well. The party was treated to fine dining and a tour of some of the orange groves. The visit received national news coverage.³⁰

The almost euphoric enthusiasm over the new transportation was uninterrupted for about three years, after which some of the natural results of monopoly began to emerge. Since the transportation of pineapples, oranges, and other produce constituted a major source of revenue for the IRSB and JTKW, freight rates were soon being protested by shippers. The Titusville East Coast Advocate joined a growing number of its readers in advocating a competing line which seemed the only means of controlling freight rates. Apparently dissatisfied with the policies of his own company, R. P. Paddison left the IRSB Co. – to be replaced by W. B. Watson – and joined H. J. Tiffin, N. N. Penney, E. S. Wiler, and J. M. Dixon in organizing the East Coast Transportation Company, in 1889. They purchased the steamer *J. W. Sweeney*, a 134 foot vessel which was 34 feet wide and drew 22 inches. Equipped to carry both freight and passengers, the *Sweeney* had staterooms, a fine saloon, and decks equipped for dancing. The vessel became famous on the Indian River for its annual excursion voyages from Titusville to Oleander Point for the famous May Day picnics. But, while passengers were important to the ECT company and

people enjoyed its accommodations, the *Sweeney* was primarily a competitor to the IRSB for freight and passengers. Since that firm had a monopoly of the JTKW facilities at Titusville, the ECT made New Smyrna its home port and it was for that reason that it had the Haulover canal dredged in 1890 beyond the dimensions then provided by the Coast Canal Company. Even so, the *Sweeney* was once stuck for several days in the canal while attempting to pass through with 500 tons of citrus aboard.³¹

Noting that most of the stock of the firm was held by “men who pay taxes in Brevard County,” the East Coast Advocate gave it full support. When the JTKW denied use of its Titusville dock to the ECT on the grounds that it had been leased to the IRSB, the newspaper chided the railroad company for its short-sightedness. It also noted that the JTKW was losing revenue since the *Sweeney* was hauling freight to New Smyrna which could readily have been shipped over the railroad from Titusville. The railroad company also aroused ire by collecting wharfage fees from boatmen who tied up at its dock. The Titusville town council enacted an ordinance prohibiting the practice. When JTKW officials ignored it, the matter was taken before the new railroad commission which ruled that the company could not collect the fees, “regardless of the terms of its lease.” Having lost that battle, the company retaliated by moving its dry docks from Titusville to Eau Gallie.³²

The East Coast Transportation Company was unsuccessful but the IRSB and the JTKW had their own difficulties. The East Coast Advocate reported in late 1892 that “the JTKW RR co. is in the hands of a receiver, but the ECT Co. is in even worse shape, being in the hands of the sheriff, with a \$10,000 execution judgment against it in favor of a Jacksonville bank.”³³

S. F. Gray of Titusville was also unsuccessful with his Titusville, Canaveral and Oak Hill Steamboat Company. Begun in 1891 to operate between those points, the firm lasted until the fall of 1893. That failure brought about a

measure by D. S. Ebersole to “accommodate the people up and down the Banana River” with a steam-powered houseboat running between Canaveral and Lotus “until something better” could replace it.³⁴

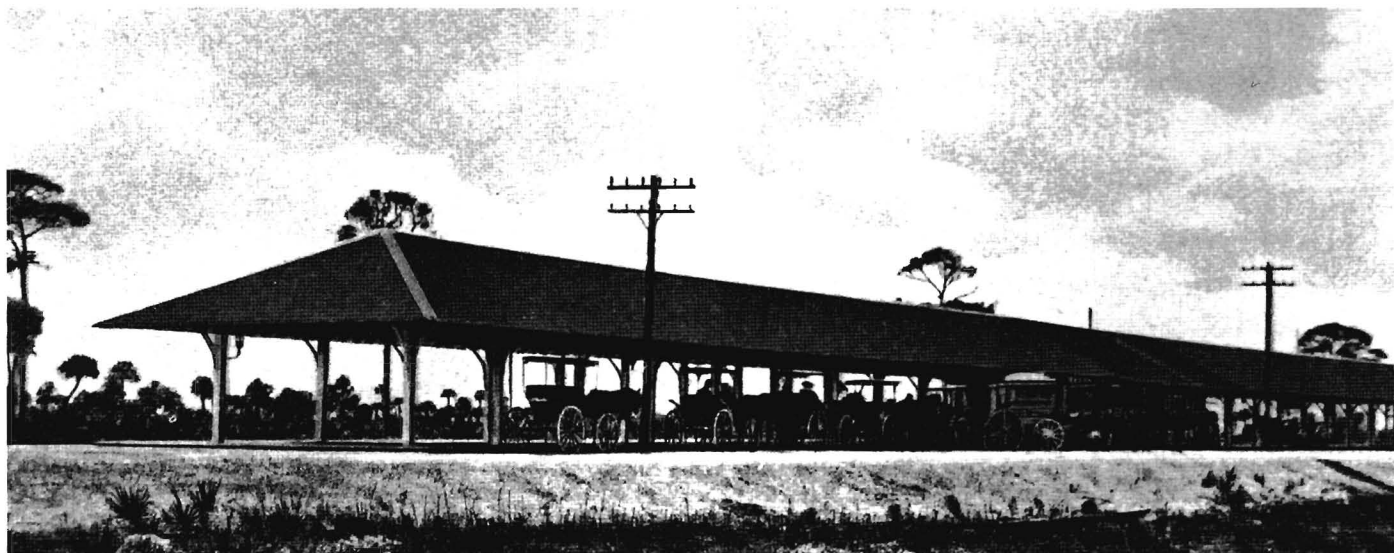
Although both remained in receivership, the JTKW and the IRSB survived for a time. Mason Young was ousted from control of both and was replaced by R. B. Cable of Pennsylvania. An impending sheriff’s sale of the IRSB property was postponed indefinitely. New schedules were announced and the *St. Lucie*, *St. Sebastian*, *St. Augustine*, *Georgiana* and *White* were soon carrying mail, freight, and passengers on the river again, but this time the company’s role was reversed. With Captain A. W. Buie in charge, the steamers were “capturing a good share of the pineapple shipments” and the shippers applauded the IRSB for its competition with new railroad which Henry Flagler had just built down the east coast.³⁵

It was only a brief respite, though. The Flagler road, coupled with the disastrous freezes of late 1894 and early 1895, spelled the death knell of the IRSB. Most of its agencies along the river were closed in April 1895. All that remained was the Titusville office from which the *St. Lucie*

ran twice a week to Sewell’s Point and once a week to Jupiter. The Jupiter to Juno railroad continued for a while and the *St. Augustine* was running on Lake Worth. But even then, the bank was loaning additional funds to the struggling company to pay its crews. The IRSB was liquidated in early 1896 and its vessels were sold. First to go was the *Cleo*. R. P. Paddison bought it for \$50 and also purchased the firm’s dry dock facilities at Eau Gallie. The steamer *White* brought \$500 from a Chicago firm. R. B. Cable, the receiver, apparently took some of the other vessels. Although he lived in Florida only during the winter months, Cable was operating the Indian River and Bay Biscayne Transportation Company with four steamers in 1897.³⁶

The JTKW continued in receivership, but adhered to a new schedule which was coordinated with Flagler’s line. Flagler bought the Titusville to Enterprise branch of the JTKW in 1899 and incorporated it into his Florida East Coast system.³⁷

Even as construction on the Enterprise to Titusville railroad had begun, the Titusville newspaper had noted that “a railroad running parallel with the coast, is what



The first through train from Jacksonville to Rockledge arrived on February 6, 1893. Carriages await passengers at the Rockledge Railway Station (Photo courtesy Doug Hendriksen)



Rockledge was served by a spur track from the main line to the riverfront at the foot of Orange Avenue between the Indian River and Plaza Hotels. In this photo are Roy Packard, OK Key, Morris Weinberg, Vera Packard and Janet Packard. (Photo courtesy Grace Packard Bryant)

we need and will sooner or later have.” Despite his investment in the JTKW company, Henry Flagler moved to provide that road in the early 1890s. Flagler had not built a mile of new track before 1890, but had assembled several existing lines into his Jacksonville, St. Augustine and Halifax Railroad which ran between Jacksonville and Daytona. From 1890 to 1892 his road did a brisk business with steamers operating on the Indian River, leading him to invest in a few small vessels of his own for that trade. People from the Indian River section, especially Rockledge, began trying to convince Flagler to extend his road south of Daytona. Several individuals offered land and other inducements. After pondering the matter for a time, Flagler decided to build southward.³⁸

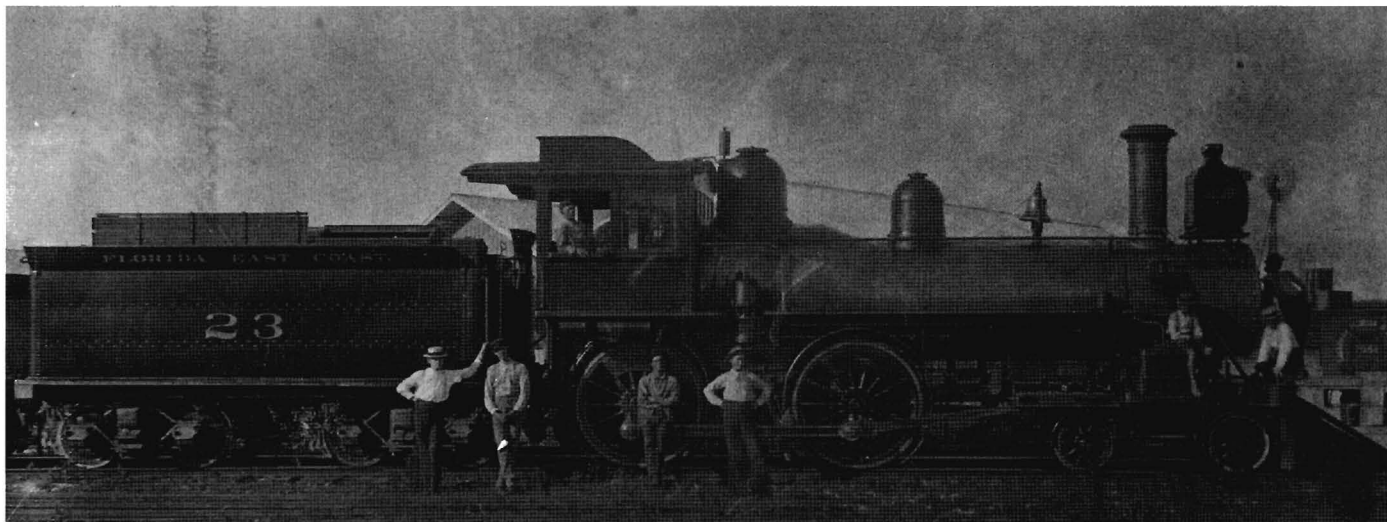
The Halifax and Indian River Railway had been incorporated in 1891

to build from Daytona to Titusville. The Titusville town council had given it a franchise to run tracks on DeSoto Street. In 1892 Flagler incorporated the Florida Coast and Gulf Railway Company and acquired the property and franchises of the Halifax and Indian River company. In October 1892 the name of the Florida and Gulf was changed to the Jacksonville, St. Augustine and Indian River Railway Company, the name which Flagler’s company retained while it was building through Brevard County.³⁹

Flagler’s charter authorized him to build from Daytona to Miami, but one of his biographers declared unequivocally that he had no intention of going farther south than Rockledge when he began construction in 1892. If that is true, he soon



Flagler’s new station at Titusville was to have a ticket office, hotel office, and dining room. (Photo courtesy Grace Packard Bryant)



Flagler reorganized the Jacksonville, St. Augustine and Indian River Railway Company as the Florida East Coast Railroad.

(Photo courtesy Jim Ball)

changed his mind. The JSTA&IR reached Titusville, Cocoa and Rockledge in February, 1893, but his crews were already surveying between Coquina and Eau Gallie in October of the previous year. At that time "The Florida Wizard" was enjoying nothing but praise from Indian River residents and Eau Gallie citizens were congratulated for their generous offers of land and town lots as inducement for him to build to that point.⁴⁰

Flagler arrived at Titusville in December 1892 where he and "a party of his railroad managers" boarded his Silver King for a trip southward to Sewall's Point and back as far as Sharpes where they were able to board the construction train for their return to Titusville. In February it was announced that he would invest \$12,000 in a combined railroad station and hotel. The first floor was to have a ticket office, hotel office, and dining room. The second floor would have accommodations for about 75 guests. The first through train from Jacksonville to Rockledge arrived on Monday afternoon, February 6, 1893. Large crowds hailed the first trains as they arrived at each of the Indian River towns. An exuberant Titusville editor reported that the new railroad had increased travel so much that hotels and boarding houses along the river were unable to

accommodate more than seventy percent of those looking for places to stay. Explaining that "the [Flagler] railroad came upon us too suddenly," he expressed hope that there would be several additional hotels before the next season.⁴¹

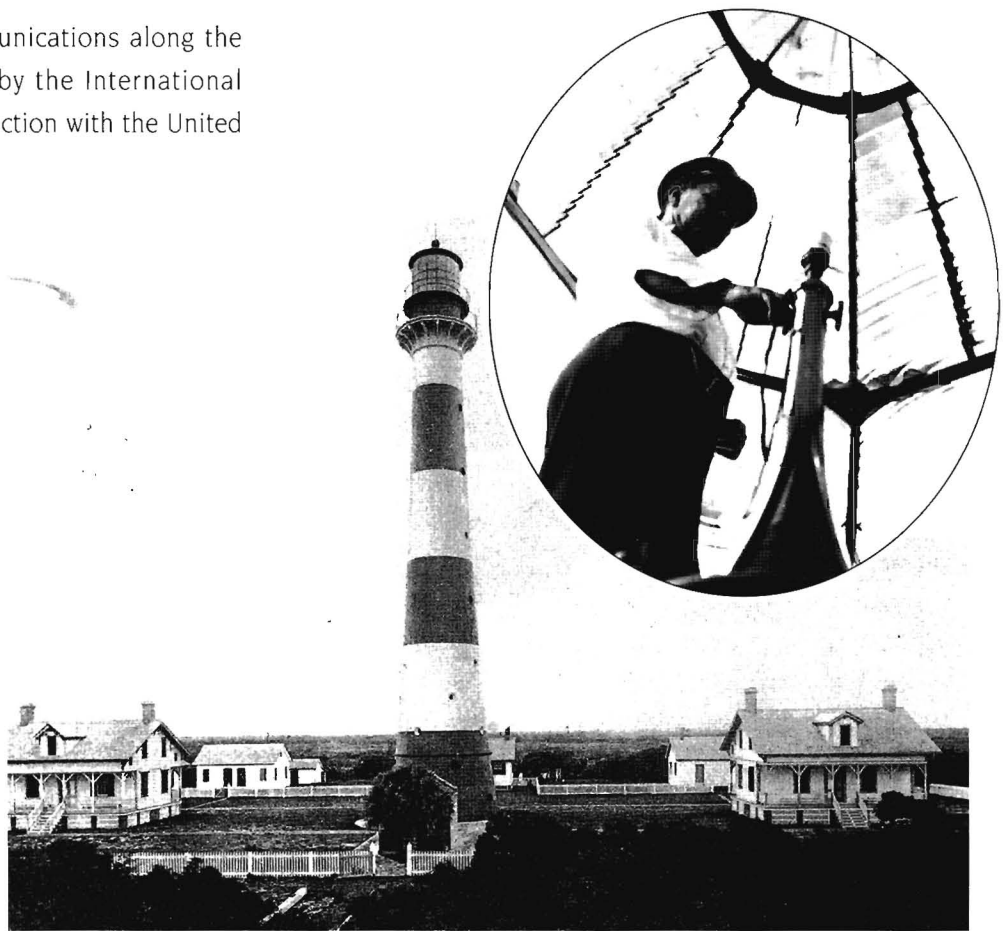
Flagler's actions were acknowledged with enthusiasm and uncritical approval, but they would prove to be mixed blessings. Rockledge was in the early 1890s enjoying a reputation as Florida's southernmost resort community and its hotels were widely applauded. Rockledge citizens were even pleased to boast that theirs was the only town on the new railroad which was served by a spur track from the main line to the river front. But the railroad was extended to Palm Beach in 1894 and to Miami in 1896. Flagler built great hotels at both locations. While he may have intended to make Rockledge the terminus of his railroad it ended up as a stop on the way to the more southerly resort towns and, in the long run, spur tracks proved more easily removed than trunk lines.⁴² But the down side was still in the future when the JSTA&IR was reorganized as the Florida East Coast Railroad and Flagler could say with considerable truth that "my domain begins at Jacksonville."

Another improvement to communications along the Indian River was being advanced by the International Ocean Telegraph Company in conjunction with the United States Signal Service. Lines were being strung between Jupiter and Titusville by the fall of 1887 when the Signal Service sloop *Magic* passed through the latter town on its way to Jupiter with a load of wire. By the latter part of that year signal offices were operating in several towns between Titusville and Jupiter. The value of this service was emphasized by the *Titusville Star* when it reported that Sergeant William Davis of the Signal Service was moving his office from the end of the long dock to the downtown area where it would be "accessible to all our business men" and only "two minutes walk from the post office." The paper also noted a merging of past and present when it reported that a party of Seminoles had sold some cattle

at Melbourne. Having sold more than they had brought with them, the drovers used the telegraph to alert their tribesmen near St. Lucie to begin another round up and save the time it would have taken them to return to their grazing lands.⁴³

While most of the Indian River area inhabitants were more concerned with intracoastal travel than the open sea, ocean travel was still important to them. The Cape Canaveral lighthouse which had been almost as much a social institution as a navigational aid during the long tenure of Captain Mills Burnham was still serving a useful function in the late 1880s. The configuration of the cape

was such that an identifiable marker was a tremendous aid to seafarers. Cape Canaveral juts out into the ocean in such a way that a shoal is caused to extend from it about eight miles into the ocean. On its southern side, the cape turns southwest, then south, and eventually south-south-east. This configuration created several miles of deep water just south of the cape known as the Canaveral Bight. While the long shoal eastward from the cape was quite hazardous, the deep water in the bight was a relatively safe haven for vessels during storms. The goals of navigators then was to avoid the shallow waters and be able to find the deep water in bad weather. The



In 1894 the Canaveral lighthouse was moved to a sand ridge about a mile inland from its previous location. Inset above: Fresnel lenses were added to the light to intensify the brightness of the kerosene-wick type lamp. (Photos Brevard County Historical Commission Archives)

lighthouse facilitated those goals. In the late 1880s that facility was in danger from serious beach erosion. A half-hearted measure in 1886 had involved shoring up the site with board breastworks and sand bags, but the contractor even at the time expressed doubt that his work "will avail much good. If it should fail the light house will have to be taken down and moved to a more safe and suitable place." Two years later, another project was undertaken. Consisting of a 500 foot seawall and seven jetties extending into the surf, it required 140,000 feet of lumber and an expenditure of \$4,500. At the end of another two years, two engineers investigated the site and recommended that the lighthouse be moved inland about a mile. With an appropriation of \$80,000, the facility was dismantled and moved to a sand ridge about a mile from its previous location from which point it again safely transmitted its signal to passing mariners.⁴⁴

Not every vessel on the high seas was able to find safe haven during the frequent Atlantic storms, and wrecks sometimes brought unexpected supplies to local residents even as they caused disaster for the shippers and their passengers. One of the more famous wrecks was the *LaDonna* which dumped several hundred pairs of women's shoes on the beach to the delight of Brevard County women. Matching up the shoes was most difficult and mismatched foot wear was the style for some time. A considerable amount of construction in the early years was made possible by wrecked lumber vessels which scattered everything from yellow pine to mahogany along the beach. Large quantities of rum and occasional barrels of French brandy were also salvaged by local beachcombers. The *Ioannes*, a Greek vessel beached near Lake Worth in 1884 with a cargo of logwood, parrots and monkeys. The following year, a large steamer bound from Vera Cruz to Boston came ashore near Eden with a cargo of 5,000 bags of sugar. The sixteen crewmen were saved by the keepers of Life Saving Station Number Two. Soon after that, a Spanish ship bound for Cuba was wrecked near Gilbert's

Bar with a load of logwood and molasses. All the crew except one man reached the station at Gilbert's Bar. There were occasional incidents of wrongdoing associated with the wrecks. An insurance investigator came to Merritt Island in 1892 to look into the matter of a cargo of lumber aboard the wrecked schooner *Drisco*. Ostensibly worth \$20,000 it had been sold by the master of the vessel to a party at Georgiana for \$700. The irate insurance man thought this wrong since the vessel was high on the beach so that, not only could the lumber have been saved, but the vessel itself could have been put to sea again. Whatever the nature of individual cases, these wrecks were the reason for the life saving station at Gilbert's Bar and nine other locations between Daytona and Biscayne Bay.⁴⁵

As difficult as it was to obtain suitable water and rail transportation for Brevard County, public roads were even harder to build and maintain. In the early days, people who desired roads simply went before the county commission and asked for a road. If the commission agreed, it appointed a three-member road committee to acquire the right-of-way and lay out the route. There was no public outlay and the resulting roads were quite primitive. After the 1885 constitution was implemented, a state road law was passed requiring all able-bodied adult males to give a certain number of days each year for work on the public roads. The law was singularly unsuccessful and its failure coupled with the increasing demand for decent public roads led to taxes for that purpose, and, finally, to county road departments. But, those were some time in coming. In the meantime, Brevard County inhabitants understandably travelled by boat whenever possible.

One of the earlier common efforts at road building was an 1880 meeting of citizens of Titusville, LaGrange, Mims, and Aurantia to determine the best means of providing a road from Titusville through the Turnbull Hammock to the Volusia County line. Part of that route was eventually covered with shell, but the northern portion was delayed because of the swampy terrain. Examples of county-



By 1895 there was a growing demand for a road to run the entire length of the county along the western bank of the Indian River Indian River Drive at Rockledge. (Photo courtesy Doug Hendriksen)

approved local roads include one in 1891 from the JTKW mile post 147 to the Indian River through the Garvin grant. A. J. Carter, John W. Huntington and A. S. Dickinson were appointed a committee to lay out and open it. Minor Jones, T. J. Cockshutt, and F. A. Chappell were named a committee to “mark out a road” from LaGrange to Titusville in the same year. R. B. Burchfield, John I. Sanders and James M. Brown were made responsible for laying out a road from Georgiana to Tropic in the summer of that year. The \$450 appropriated for opening a road from Fort Pierce to the southern boundary of the county in 1891 was comparatively rare for that early date.⁴⁶

By 1895 there was a growing demand for a road to run the entire length of the county along the western bank of the Indian River. R. B. Burchfield, who had become the county surveyor, was ordered to survey the route and R. A. Hardee was given the responsibility of obtaining the right-of-way.

Authority was secured from the legislature to bond the county for the road, and it was decided that \$150,000 would do the job. The call for a bond election in October 1895 set off a lengthy debate. The residents of Merritt Island were apparently opposed to paying for a road on the mainland. The Titusville newspaper countered that 75 percent of all the taxes in the county were paid by corporations and non-residents and that people living at Titusville, Rockledge, Eau Gallie, Melbourne, Fort Pierce, Ankona, Eden and Jensen paid another 15 percent. The editor felt if those who paid 90 percent of the taxes wanted the road then they should have it. But he suggested that a portion of the money might be used for a good neighborhood road on the island to placate the opposition. The argument failed. Voters of Brevard County rejected the bonding proposal by a vote of 329 against and 285 in favor. The shell road from one end of the county to the other had to wait.⁴⁷

END NOTES

1. Titusville Florida Star, August 2, November 2, 1881.
2. Ibid., January 20, May 11, 1881; April 19, 1882, September 27, 1882, January 4, 11, 1883, February 1, 21, 1884, February 5, 1885, December 1, 1886.
3. Ibid., November 2, 1881, March 1, September 27, 1883, February 5, 19, March 12, 1885; May 19, 1887; Brevard County Historical Commission, History Book, 1830-1920 [Hatch Journal].
4. Herman Herold, Log Book of Travels in the Sunny South, 1884, Mss Box 47, P. K. Yonge Library of Florida History; Tallahassee Floridian, May 7, 1885.
5. Titusville Florida Star, March 8, 15, 1883, February 1, May 1, 1884, July 31, 1889, October 23, November 28, 1890, July 1, 1898; Kyle Van Landingham, Pictorial History of St. Lucie County, 1565-1910 (St. Lucie County Historical Society, n.d.), p. 17; Fred A. Hopwood, Steamboating on the Indian River (Melbourne, 1985), p. 55.
6. Hopwood, Steamboating, p. 8.
7. Tallahassee Floridian, February 10, 1885; Titusville Florida Star, December 26, 1886, February 5, 1909; Hopwood, Steamboating, p. 9.
8. Lewis H. Cresse, "A Study of William Henry Gleason" (Unpublished Ph. D. Dissertation, University of South Carolina, 1975), pp. 69-70, 75-76, 78, 95-96.
9. U. S. Senate, Executive Document No. 33, 47th Cong., 1st Sess., Report of J. F. LeBaron, November 11, 1881
10. Ibid.
11. George E. Buker, Sun, Sand and Water: A History of the Jacksonville District, U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, 1821-1975 (Jacksonville, 1976), pp. 116-117
12. Titusville Florida Star, May 28, June 11, August 6, 1885, September 29, December 1, 1886, April 17, 1887; Tallahassee Floridian, April 15, July 26, 29, 1886, March 10, 1887.
13. Tallahassee Floridian, June 23, July 28, December 15, 1887, July 19, August 16, September 11, 1888.
14. Ibid., June 4, 11, November 5, 1889; Titusville Florida Star, March 21, 1889.
15. Ibid., May 21, 1892.
16. Ibid., April 23, May 21, 1892; Buker, Sun, Sand and Water, p. 120.
17. Titusville Florida Star, February 8, 1895, April 8, June 10, 1898, December 22, 1899, December 8, 1905; Edward N. Akin, Flagler: Rockefeller Partner and Florida Baron (Kent State University, 1988), p. 178.
18. Buker, Sun, Sand and Water, p. 120.
19. Titusville Indian River Star, October 20, 1880; Tallahassee Floridian, January 17, March 31, April 18, July 25, August 15, 1882, May 29, 1883; Titusville Florida Star, June 29, 1881
20. Titusville Florida Star, January 4, February 15, 1883; Tallahassee Floridian, March 27, 1883; Seth Bramson, Speedway to Sunshine, p. 26.
21. Titusville Florida Star, May 1, 1884, April 2, 9, 19, 1885.
22. Tallahassee Floridian, May 14, July 16, 30, August 27, December 10, 1885, January 7, 1886; Titusville Florida Star, October 30, 1885.
23. Tallahassee Floridian, January 28, 1886.
24. Ernest Watson, Indian River Steamboats (1936), Mss in P. K. Yonge Library; Titusville Florida Star, December 26, 1886, July 26, 1888; Tallahassee Floridian, April 29, 1886, August 4, 1887; Hopwood, Steamboating, pp. 12-13, 15; Register and Enrollment of Vessels, Department of Treasury, Record Group, National Archives.
25. Hopwood, Steamboating, p. 12; Titusville Florida Star, March 3, 1893.
26. Tallahassee Floridian, March 15, 1888; Hopwood, Steamboating, p. 11; Federal Writers Project, "Ships and Shipping in Florida, Mss in P. K. Yonge Library.
27. Titusville Florida Star, January 15, 1891.
28. Titusville Florida Star, January 12, 26, 1888; Tallahassee Floridian, February 9, March 8, 1888, January 11, 1895.
29. Titusville Florida Star, July 19, August 18, December 8, 1887
30. Eric Caron, One Hundred Years of Rockledge (Rockledge, 1986), p. 16; Charles A. Hentz Autobiography, Volume 11, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.
31. Hopwood, Steamboating, p. 43; Titusville Florida Star, May 2, 1889, July 17, 1890.
32. Titusville East Coast Advocate, August 29, November 21, 1890, March 6, 1891; Titusville Florida Star, August 17, 21, September 4, 1890.
33. Titusville East Coast Advocate, November 18, December 9, 1892.
34. Ibid., September 8, 1893, August 3, 1894.
35. Titusville Florida Star, January 27, February 3, 10, 1893; June 15, 1894.
36. Titusville Indian River Advocate, July 19, 1895, May 8, 1896, March 26, 1897; Titusville Star Advocate, November 29, 1940; "Timothy Murphy v. Indian River Steamboat Company," September 1895, in Brevard County Miscellaneous Court Records.
37. Titusville Florida Star, February 1, 1895; Titusville Indian River Advocate, April 28, 1899; Seth Bramson, Speedway to Sunshine (Erin, Ontario, 1984), p. 26.
38. Sidney Walter Martin, Florida's Flagler (Athens, Georgia, 1949), p. 137; Bramson, Speedway, pp. 25-27.
39. Martin, Flagler, p. 137; Bramson, Speedway, pp. 25-27; Tallahassee Floridian, June 11, 1885.
40. David Leon Chandler, Henry Flagler (New York, 1986), p. 142; Martin, Flagler, p. 137; Titusville Florida Star, October 28, 1892.
41. Titusville East Coast Advocate, February 10, March 3, 1893; Titusville Florida Star, December 16, 1892, February 17, 1893.
42. Caron, Rockledge, p. 15.
43. Titusville Florida Star, September 8, 1887; Tallahassee Floridian, September 15, November 3, 1887, September 11, 1888, June 4, 1889.
44. Buker, Sun, Sand and Water, p. 191; Tallahassee Floridian, August 19, 1886, May 3, 1888; S. M. Stockslager to Chairman, Light House Board, March 18, 1889, and James G. Green and J. C. Mallory to ibid., February 3, 1891, Light House Site Files, and R. D. Hitchcock to Chairman, Light House Board, Correspondence of Light House Board, Department of Treasury Record Group, National Archives; U. S. House, Executive Document No. 98, 50th Cong., 2nd Sess.
45. Bessie Wilson DuBois, Shipwrecks in the Vicinity of Jupiter Inlet (Lantana, 1975), pp. 8-9; Tallahassee Floridian, December 30, 1884, February 26, November 5, 1885, May 6, 1886, January 16, 1892.
46. Titusville Florida Star, January 12, 1880; Brevard County Commission, Reports, July and August, 1891.
47. Brevard County Commission, Reports, June 1895; Titusville Indian River Advocate, February 15, June 17, August 8, 1895.

*Page 98 Map: Jacksonville, Tampa and Key West System map, 1891
(Brevard County Historical Commission Archives)*