

Charles W. Pierce

Pioneer Life
in Southeast
Florida

Edited by
Donald Walter Curl



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Frontispiece: *East side of Lake Worth about 1880*

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Designed by Mary Lipson
Manufactured in the United States of America

*Dedicated to the men and women
who pioneered the Palm Beach area*

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Foreword

There are two reasons for the pleasure I take in writing this foreword to *Pioneer Life in Southeast Florida*. One is to recognize a most excellent piece of Florida history and the other is to acknowledge a debt. Permit me to satisfy the debt first.

When I came to Florida in 1934 I heard almost immediately about the mail carriers who in the eighties and early nineties walked the mail barefoot along the beach from the Jupiter - Palm Beach - Hypoluxo area to Miami. Charles William Pierce, the author of this book, was one of those who walked what was called "The Barefoot Route." I began taking notes about the general subject and continued to put them down until 1940. Only then, after the death of Charles W. Pierce in 1939, so that I never met him, could I spend most of a year doing the necessary research in depth on the subject in order to write my novel. I visited every library from Coconut Grove to Jacksonville and talked with nearly one hundred pioneers along the coast, including the only real barefoot mailman I could find at that date still living, the late Dan McCarley of Lantana.

Among the pioneer families I talked with was that of the

late Charles Leon Pierce, son of Charles William Pierce. Chuck, as he was affectionately known to many along the coast, most generously showed me part of the manuscript of a book his father had written, *Pioneer Life in Southeast Florida*. Reading this gave me much additional insight into the spirit of the times that ultimately went into my novel, *The Barefoot Mailman*.

Following another year to write the book, I looked over the list of sources and the nearly one hundred people who had helped me with the background material and decided it was far too long to include in the acknowledgments. Reading such a long list would have been meaningless to the general reader, and mentioning one would necessitate mentioning them all.

It is only now that my thanks to all can appear in print, in a rather extraordinarily appropriate place, in this foreword. Thus my debt, at least in part, is being paid, though belatedly and unfortunately in postmortem fashion to some members of the Pierce family.

The entire manuscript Charles William Pierce wrote ran to some 690 pages, or over 200,000 words, much too long for publication. Professor Donald W. Curl, chairman of the department of history of Florida Atlantic University at Boca Raton, Florida, has edited the manuscript to its present size.

Curl has accomplished this without interfering with the main and pertinent parts of the original. An editor must be a very good editor not to give way to the easy temptation to rewrite, correct, and change what he is editing to conform with his own designs, usually to the detriment of the quality and truth of the basic material. Professor Curl did not give way to this temptation, but, to the benefit of the story and local history, respected the words of the author and his way of expressing himself.

That estimable and exceptional man, Judge James R. Knott, president for many years of the Palm Beach County

Historical Association and still the mainspring of the association, was the guiding force in getting this book published. He worked for half a dozen years toward this end, quietly and diplomatically programming steps from behind the scenes, as is his usual modest but effective method. The book would have not been published at this time, and perhaps never, without Jim Knott's efforts.

The result is an account of insouciant charm in depicting what the so-called "Gold Coast" of Florida was like in its pioneer days. The fact that Charles Pierce was not a professional author is an added attraction for a work of this nature, for pretension of style and slickness of manner would have spoiled the appeal of the story. His simple and straightforward manner of telling it reflects the culture and happenings of a more innocent time.

Pioneer Life in Southeast Florida brings to life the country, its people, its flora, its then profuse fauna, and the busy events of the times. It is a definitive source book and an integral part of the archives of Florida. It is the only full-length book account of the southeast coast devoted entirely to the time of early settlement. Other books deal with small areas such as Palm Beach, Fort Lauderdale, and parts of the Miami area. This one tells of the entire southeast length of the Florida coast, and to anyone interested in the area's civilized beginnings, it is a must.

Its period was the seminal one for its locale, depicting the arrival of the Pierce family to settle in Florida in 1872 and going on to 1893 when Henry Flagler extended his railroad to the Palm Beaches after building the year before the great Royal Poinciana Hotel in Palm Beach. In these twenty-three years the section changed from being a virtually uninhabited wilderness to a sophisticated, socially smart place with electricity, elevators, telephones, gourmet dining, and more private railroad cars bringing their millionaire owners than ever seen in any other place at any time.

The general flavor of the story is perhaps epitomized by a

delightful political note in reference to the Lake Worth region: "At election time in 1872 the lake had only one inhabitant, and the politicians of Miami . . . were not interested in obtaining the vote from that section."

Charles Pierce, Florida pioneer, lives in this book. He lives also in another manner. When painting six murals on the subject of the barefoot mailman, Steven Dohanos used Pierce as a model, and thus Pierce can be seen still walking the route in the murals that are on the walls of the United States Post Office in West Palm Beach.

Theodore Pratt

Preface

In the summer of 1966 Judge James R. Knott of the Palm Beach County Historical Association asked me to edit the Pierce manuscript for publication. The manuscript, written in the late 1920s and early 1930s, is a memoir of pioneer days along the shores of Lake Worth. The author, Charles William Pierce, had come to what would later be Palm Beach County with his parents and an uncle in 1872 when he was eight years old. The first part of his account tells of the time when he was still a young boy and is based on diaries written by his mother and later destroyed. The second part is based on his own records, his memory of events, and his historical research.

Judge Knott, the late Professor Rembert Patrick, and Professor Samuel Proctor of the University of Florida had all read the manuscript and thought it had historical value, but recommended that it be considerably cut from its 698 typed manuscript pages before publication. My problem was to reduce the manuscript to a manageable size while retaining both its historical worth and the style of its author.

On my first reading, two decisions were quickly made. In

that section of the manuscript based on Mrs. Pierce's diaries, Charles Pierce had used the third person singular. In the latter half of the work he had used the first person singular. To provide a sense of greater unity to the manuscript, I decided to make Pierce the narrator throughout the text. Second, Pierce repeated some stories several times and I felt that it was quite reasonable to delete all repetitions.

It was also evident on first reading that the manuscript's greatest value was to be found in Pierce's descriptions of actual pioneer life on the southeastern Florida coast, an experience not duplicated anywhere else in the United States. In his manuscript Pierce detailed the process of house construction from the salvaging of timber on the beach to the drying of palmetto fronds for the roof; the necessity to exist on the bounty of the land in a country foreign to most of the early settlers; inventing makeshifts such as charred yams soaked in water to produce a substitute for coffee; the hardships of travel in a land of soft sand crisscrossed by swamps and rivers; and the transportation found only by beachwalking or in sailboats propelled by their "wings of the wind." He also wrote of the changes that came to this section as more and more people arrived and brought the trappings of civilization with them.

Equally important were his descriptions of the other settlers: who they were, where they had come from, and why they had decided to make Florida their home. These included the men and women who founded local dynasties as well as those who remained for a year or two and then disappeared from the scene.

Finally, Pierce witnessed many of the events of importance in the history of this section. He was on hand when the coconuts from the *Providentia* were distributed and saw them grow into the trees that gave Palm Beach its name; he was one of the first men to search Hillsborough* Inlet after

*Editor's Note: Throughout his manuscript, Pierce spelled Hillsboro as Hillsborough.

the disappearance of Ed Hamilton, the "Barefoot Mailman," and was himself a mail carrier on what must have been the United States Postal Service's most unusual route; and he watched the arrival of Henry M. Flagler and his Florida East Coast Railroad. His interest in history led him to seek out men whose stories were even more interesting than his own.

Pierce was extremely fond of hunting and sailing and dwelled on various experiences in the woods and on the ocean in the manuscript. While I have retained those stories that seemed general in their interest and that illustrated various aspects of pioneer life, I have omitted accounts of many of his hunting trips and sea voyages that all little to the picture of the settlers' existence. I have also deleted many of the purely autobiographical details and the sections that were speculative in content. An illustration of the latter is the author's conjecture as to how certain sand dunes had been constructed by Indians as a haven during periods of flooding.

Perhaps the greatest problem of the manuscript was found in its rambling style. In deciding how best to prepare it for publication I felt I had several options open to me. I could rewrite and in effect create my own history from Pierce's research, but while this method offered a convenient solution to the problem, I felt that if the document were to retain its historical value, it would have to remain in the author's style. Nonetheless, in cutting over half of its pages, I was forced to do a great deal of rewriting. My final decision was to rewrite only when absolutely necessary for continuity or clarity, and then, whenever possible, to use the same words and phrases as Pierce. Although punctuation and spelling have been modernized, the end result is not a polished manuscript. Pierce himself was taught to read and write by his mother (there were no schools on the lake when he was a child) and his style reflects his lack of formal education. I feel, though, that I have retained the flavor of Pierce's work and have presented a true picture of his recreation of the early pioneer years in southeastern Florida.

The work of preparing this volume for publication would have been impossible without the exceedingly generous assistance I have received from many. Judge James R. Knott and Mrs. Henry J. Burkhardt of West Palm Beach read the entire manuscript several times and made many helpful suggestions. Professors Charlton W. Tebeau and Gilbert L. Voss of the University of Miami both added important documentation to the text. Professor Voss, a nephew of Charles Pierce, was of particular service in filling in long-lost first names and initials of individuals mentioned in the manuscript, and he supplied the information for the notes that are signed G.L.V. Lieutenant Jonathan B. Smith, USN, supplied much important technical and historical information on sailing ships. Mrs. Charles W. Pierce contributed memories of her husband that were invaluable. Finally, Miss Delores Jenkins and Mrs. Charles Spangler, through their patient and understanding clerical assistance and typing, made it possible to complete this volume.

Introduction

Charles William Pierce was born in Waukegan, Illinois, on July 16, 1864. His father was Hannibal Dillingham Pierce, a native of Fayette, Maine, who married Charles' mother, Margretta Moore, a prairie school teacher, after having been shipwrecked on the shores of Lake Michigan. Hannibal Pierce was a romantic adventurer from whom no doubt Charles inherited the love of adventure and far off places that endured throughout his life. At sixteen, Hannibal had run away to sea, and in the years that followed he had sailed on the Black Ball clipper ship the *James Baines*, had worked the gold fields of Australia, gone whaling in the South Seas, was wrecked on the Florida Keys, served as a scout in the Indian wars in the West, and fought in the northern army as a cavalryman in the Civil War. Sailing, hunting, salvaging, and exploring came naturally to his son.

Margretta Moore was an intelligent, well-educated, and refined young woman with a strong love for books and a penchant for writing. She passed these qualities on to her children. Somewhat frail in health, she nonetheless possessed that courage and fortitude so richly endowed in early pioneer women and accompanied her husband into the

tropical wilderness with hardly a backward look at the town and city life she left behind her.

Charles was little more than an infant when the family moved from Waukegan to Chicago. Shortly thereafter, due to the illness of Mrs. Pierce's brother, William Moore, the family decided to move to Florida. A large sloop twenty-eight feet in length, the *Fairy Belle*, was purchased, refurbished, outfitted, and ready for launching when the Chicago fire broke out in 1871. While the Pierces and Moores were not burned out, the waterfront was ravaged by the flames. Miraculously, it seemed, the *Fairy Belle* was spared. To escape the desolation of Chicago after the fire, the starting date was set ahead and within days the family and Will Moore set out down the Illinois River for the Mississippi and their final destination, Florida.

Seen through the eyes of a seven-year-old boy, this was the "Great Adventure." The *Fairy Belle* was frozen in the ice for the winter in a friendly cove of the river. In the spring with the first thaw they were on their way again, into the Mississippi, past New Orleans, and finally into the Gulf of Mexico. Under full sail now, in midsummer they reached Cedar Keys, where they were warned by the inhabitants not to try to sail around the peninsula during the hurricane season.

After a family consultation, the *Fairy Belle* was sold, and amid the bustle of the still prosperous port of Cedar Keys they boarded a train of the Florida Railroad and finally arrived at Jacksonville. A few weeks later they were attempting to make a home of a deserted cabin in the midst of an orange grove on Indian River at Ankona Heights south of Fort Pierce. Tragedy hit them there in a fire of unknown origin that burned them out of all their possessions. At the height of misfortune they were rescued by the offer to Captain Pierce of the position of assistant keeper at Jupiter Light under the head keeper, Captain Armour. It is at Jupiter Light that my uncle's narrative begins as published

here. The story of life in south Florida from 1872 to 1893 is best told in his own words.

Charles received no formal classroom education. His mother, however, did not let her children, now two with the birth of a daughter, Lillie Elder, go uneducated. The long evenings were spent in learning to read and write and do arithmetic. Geography came easily and informally from Charles' father, who told of Europe, Africa, Australia, the South Sea Islands and their inhabitants in stories and language never forgotten in Charles' lifetime. This was supplemented later by a profusely illustrated geography rescued from a wreck ashore on the beach.

The Pierce family relatives in the state of Maine were well-known members of the state's literary circle. An uncle, Thomas Pierce, was the editor of a famous young peoples' magazine of the era, and his wife, Viola, contributed stories and articles to it and other northern publications. From them, by steamer, schooner, and finally sailing skiff, came magazines, school books, and other supplies for the young people who were undoubtedly thought to be in danger of growing up as savages in the tropical jungle.

Mrs. Pierce was an inveterate diarist, and her son early acquired the habit of keeping journals of his hunting and cruising activities. Hunting journals of his early adventures, written on hand-ruled paper and hand sewn, are still in the possession of the family, while Charles' account of his cruise on the *Bonton* to the Ten Thousand Islands was published a few years ago in *Tequesta*, the journal of the Historical Association of Southern Florida. The crayon and pencil sketches illustrating scenes from this cruise are among the treasured mementos of the writer.

When in his early teens, two new families arrived on Lake Worth, the Browns and the Bartrams. Both were well-educated families, and the Browns possessed a library that was large even by present day standards. Into this library Charles was welcomed, and here he made the lasting

acquaintance of Frederick Marryat, Thomas Reid, H. Rider Haggard, Jules Verne, and Charles Dickens. In later years quotes from *A Trip to the Moon*, *A Journey to the Center of the Earth*, or *Allan Quatermain* were frequently interjected into conversation and were commonplace in the family. From the Bartrams he began his readings in natural history, particularly ornithology and botany, which were of consuming interest until his death.

The present narrative recounts many of his interests between 1872 and 1893, including his service as the first road commissioner for what is now Palm Beach County, sitting for his steam pilot's license, and his brief tenure as assistant postmaster at Hypoluxo. Boating had been his chief interest until his thirty-first year when, in 1895, he opened a branch of his father's store in Boynton, now Boynton Beach, and married Yallahs Lizette Wallack in Lemon City and brought her back to live in Boynton. Their only son, Charles Leon Pierce, was born on October 22, 1896. Known far and wide in south Florida as "Chuck" Pierce, he was the first boy born in the town of Boynton.

In 1901 Charles W. Pierce became postmaster at Boynton, a position he held until 1903. Flagler was then building the Overseas Extension, as the railroad through the Keys was called, from Homestead to Key West. Pilots and engineers were needed for the big Mississippi River stern-wheelers used to transport men, equipment, and supplies through the shallow waters of the Hawk Channel, Florida Bay, and adjacent areas. Charles Pierce and his brother-in-law, Frederick C. Voss, a steam engineer, joined many other boatmen from Lake Worth and Indian River, including Steve Bravo and Tony Canova, in the Flagler fleet. Charles was pilot on the steamer *Wanderer* and Fred engineer on the *Peerless*. Both went through the great hurricane of 1906 in which Mrs. Pierce and Chuck, having come down to the Keys to visit Charles, nearly lost their lives in the wreck of one of the steamers, the *St. Lucie*. The story of their rescue

and the heroic efforts of Captain Bravo in saving the lives of his crew and passengers made headlines in newspapers as far away as New York.

In 1908 Mr. Pierce returned to Boynton and was appointed postmaster for the second time, a position that he held for thirty-two years, remaining active until two or three days before his death, July 10, 1939, at the age of seventy-five.

He was an active member of both the community in which he lived and of Palm Beach County. He was a member of Holy Trinity Episcopal Church in West Palm Beach and a member and past master of the Boynton Masonic Lodge. For a number of years he was vice-president of the Boynton Chamber of Commerce and president and later chairman of the board of the Bank of Boynton.

His first wife having died, in 1924 Charles Pierce married Ethel Sims, daughter of Eli Sims of Jupiter. The Sims were pioneers of the Palm Beaches but moved to Jupiter in 1895. It was through the cooperation and encouragement of his wife that Charles began to put his notes into manuscript form.

For fourteen years the Pierce home on Ocean Avenue was a center of cultural activity for the community. It was from this period that I best remember my uncle, a small, slim, clear featured man with a small moustache, addicted to Havana cigars, quick spoken, and a witty and brilliant conversationalist. Seated at his old-fashioned rolltop desk downtown in his office, or on a leisurely Sunday afternoon or evening resting in his Morris chair amidst his books in his home, he entertained friends and visitors with his accounts of early life in south Florida; verified historical questions for inquiring reporters; identified plants, fruits, and animals for neighbors; or spent endless hours writing. Before the weather bureau became as efficient as it is today, on the approach of a hurricane the telephone rang continuously as newspapermen, strangers, and friends called to consult him

and his barometers on the probable course of the threatening storm. With a weather wisdom developed at sea and from long acquaintance with the subject, his hurricane predictions had an accuracy that was almost uncanny and was the envy of the local weather bureau office.

Reading was a favorite pastime, and his library was filled with natural history volumes, especially ornithology, African explorations, history, astronomy (he was an amateur astronomer and had a first class telescope), general science, and case after case of novels—Verne, Marryat, Reid, Henty, Dickens, Robertson, and later writers, as well as the classics. These were books to delight the heart of a ten to fifteen year old who, visiting every Sunday after church, went home each week with, besides the regular books, two *National Geographic* magazines under his arm and the admonition “Now don’t forget, you must read them, not just look at the pictures, or you can’t exchange them next week.”

From the late 1920s onward, writing became his chief avocation. He contributed numerous articles on early pioneer history to the *Palm Beach Post* and other newspapers and at last began his memoirs, which he called “On the Wings of the Wind.” His method of writing and his vivid firsthand style of recollection merit some comment, as the manuscript was compiled some forty to sixty years after the events recorded.

As source material he had his mother’s diaries written from the time they left Chicago until the country became settled. To supplement these were his own diaries and hunting and cruising logs, many of them detailed and illustrated. Numerous short handwritten or typed notes filled a closet and spilled over into his writing area. Newspaper clippings and old editions of the *Palm Beach Sun* accumulated along with many letters on points of interest, names, and dates written in request for information from other participants in the early days. Letters and diaries of

friends were freely loaned, and then came interviews, arguments, and discussions with the participants in the events.

As the book finally began to take shape, every chapter, in fact almost every page, was discussed in detail with his sister, Lillie Pierce Voss. These discussions took place on Sunday afternoon visits that became as regular as the inevitable Sunday morning church attendance. Each event was argued out with my mother and recourse made to her notes and clippings, which also filled several large volumes. Not until unanimity was reached within the memories of all the participants was the chapter laid away as finished. In the meantime he was called upon by numerous organizations for talks about the early days in Lake Worth. In 1932 and 1933 he was president of the Lake Worth Pioneers Association, comprised of the original pioneers of the area between the years 1872-1893.

The work was finally finished. It was, however, still a



Charles Pierce at his desk

rough draft needing strong rewriting and editing. Mr. Pierce was now seventy-five and not too well. "Lillie," he told his sister on one of his last visits, "I know it has to be rewritten but I just can't do it. I am too tired." A few months later he passed away, his memoirs finished but unpublished.

The events portrayed in this book are indelibly impressed upon my mind, not from reading the manuscript but in hearing the stories from the lips of my mother and from my uncle, whose soft voice rendered them so exciting to an attentive and interested youngster. As I read his words over again recently, I could almost hear his voice and the occasional creak of the old Morris chair, see once again the dimly lit library, and smell the familiar fragrance of his old Havana cigars. I hope that in the reading some of the atmosphere, the excitement of the times, and the enchantment of early Florida will be passed on to you, the reader.

Gilbert L. Voss

Pioneer Life in Southeast Florida

1. A New Life in Florida

Soon after coming to Florida in 1872 to settle on an orange grove on the Indian River, fire destroyed all of my family's possessions, and my father, Hannibal Dillingham Pierce, accepted a job as assistant keeper of the Jupiter Lighthouse. The Jupiter Lighthouse had been built many years before at a time when the Seminole Indians often went on the warpath unexpectedly and were not to be trusted at any time. The tower was of red brick, two towers in fact, one within the other, with an open air space of two feet between them. The entrance door and the stairway were made of heavy cast iron, bullet proof and fire proof. The dwelling was made of coquina rock with walls two feet thick, strong enough to stand an Indian siege or a hurricane. The house had two apartments of four rooms each and was a story and a half high. A wide porch extended around the north, east, and south sides. Standing on a high bank on the Loxahatchee, it afforded a commanding view of the river, the inlet, and the ocean, three-quarters of a mile to the eastward. Mother said it was a little bit of heaven living in such a nice place so soon after our experience in the wilds and hammocks of Indian River.



Jupiter Lighthouse in the 1880s, photographed by assistant lighthouse keeper Spencer

Father's work at the lighthouse was not hard, but particular and exacting in every detail. An hour before sundown the keeper and his two assistants would go up in the tower, taking with them enough lard oil to last the big

lamp throughout the night. Each evening the outside of the lantern and the glass prisms of the great lens were cleaned with Spanish white and spirits of wine and carefully wiped and polished. Then the clock mechanism that turned the lens was wound, started, and timed to a second so that the flash, varied by fixed lights, would be in the exact time allotted to the Jupiter Lighthouse. This work was usually finished some fifteen or twenty minutes before sundown, the time for lighting the big lamp, and while waiting for darkness, the men would go out onto the balcony for a breath of fresh air and to view the scenery spread out before them for many miles in all directions.

One afternoon, as the men were making ready to go up in the tower for their evening's routine, I asked if I might go also; I wanted to see what the inside of a lighthouse looked like. As usual, after the work was finished inside, all hands went out on the balcony to wait for sundown. Gazing around in wonder at the panorama spread out in all directions, I saw far to the south something white and glimmering through the green of trees on the distant horizon. Captain Armour told me that it was the northern end of Lake Worth, a large lake, some twenty-two miles long and in some places more than a mile wide. He added that no one lived there now, though a German named Lang and his wife had lived there for some time during the Civil War.¹

We had been living at the lighthouse about a month by the first week of October 1872. There had not been an opportunity to renew our stock of clothing, so sadly depleted by the fire, except by donation from the people at the lighthouse. Mother, when talking about the condition of our wardrobe, said she wished some ship would throw overboard a few cases of dry goods when passing Jupiter.

That night the wind blew a stiff breeze from the east, and white combing breakers rolled in onto the beach three or four deep. It was father's watch first in the tower; at

midnight he would call Carlin to take his place until sunrise. It was Captain Armour's all night in. The following night Armour would stand first watch and Carlin would have his all night in.

About eleven o'clock father came down and told Captain Armour that there was a steamer in the breakers near the inlet. Armour, knowing father was new to the country, thought he was mistaken and answered that since the inspector was due about this time it was probably his boat.

Father went back on watch, but he soon returned with the news that it was not the inspector's boat but a large steamship in distress. He said the ship was broadside on the beach and that he could see the seas breaking over her. On hearing this, Armour jumped out of bed to see for himself.

One look was enough to convince him that it was a large steamship in the breakers, just a little south of the inlet. The heavy seas were coming in from the northeast, and the ship, although pounding on the bottom, was slowly working to the southward. As it was now twelve o'clock and time to change watch they called Carlin, and providing themselves with a lighted lantern and an axe, they hoisted sail on the captain's dinghy and started for the inlet.

When the sun rose, Carlin came down from the light, ate a hurried breakfast, and then left for the inlet, leaving no one at the lighthouse but the three women and the children. At about nine o'clock I was running around the porch when I glanced towards the point where Lake Worth Creek comes into the Loxahatchee and saw a long dark canoe come out from behind the point and head toward the lighthouse dock. As I stared at it, another came into sight, and another, until there were seven canoes loaded with people and coming straight for the lighthouse landing.

As I ran back to where the women were sitting, I cried, "Mama, mama! There's a lot of boats full of people coming from up the river." The women jumped up and ran around to the front porch. After one look Mrs. Armour exclaimed,



Margretta Moore Pierce



*Hannibal Dillingham Pierce
in 1863*

“Oh goodness, they are Indians! Oh, I wish the men were here.”

As if in answer to the wish, we now saw sail going up on Carlin's boat, the *Sea Gull*, down at the inlet. The *Sea Gull* had the wind and tide in her favor, while the Indians had both against them and were moving slowly under paddles. Soon it became apparent to the frightened women and children standing in a huddle on the porch that the *Sea Gull* would reach the landing before the Indians, and she did round up to the dock a little in advance of the leading canoe.

It was not until then that we noticed the passengers of the *Sea Gull*. In addition to the men from the lighthouse, there was another man, two women, and a small girl. Mrs. Libby, her seven-year-old daughter, and the young man, a Jewish merchant of New Orleans, were passengers from the ship; the other young woman was the ship's stewardess. The



Charles William Pierce at four

captain and crew remained on the beach near the wreck where they prepared to stand by until picked up by some passing steamer.

The wrecked steamer's name was the *Victor*, one of the Mallory Line from New York, bound for New Orleans.² When the ship was off Jupiter the night before, she had broken her shaft, and the propeller had fallen back against the rudder, jamming it. The hole made by the broken shaft was so large that water rushing through in a torrent threatened to sink the ship. Thirty-two new blankets were stuffed into this hole and the leak was temporarily stopped, but then the officers of the ship became afraid the blankets would not hold the water in check for any length of time, and so they slipped her cable and the steamer drifted on shore.

The captain was afraid that his old ship would not hold together in the pounding sea, and was anxious to get all on shore before she broke up. When daybreak came, the men from the lighthouse saw that the crew of the ship was trying to float a line to shore. The captain was afraid to trust any of his crew to the oars of the lifeboats, but wanted a cable so that they might pull themselves to land. Those on shore found a large timber and sank one end deep in the sand. To this post they could fasten the cable from the ship.

Meantime the men on the ship tied a small line to a lifebuoy and were trying to float it to shore. There was a strong current that carried their float to the south but not to the beach. For nearly two hours their attempts resulted in failure. At last a big comber caught the float as it landed in the water and carried it well inshore; another big sea following carried it close to the beach, and the men from the lighthouse waded in up to their armpits and got hold of it. The three men hauled the heavy cable to the post and made it fast, and then the small boats from the steamer were pulled to land.

When the shipwrecked people walked up to the house from the dock, they were closely followed by the whole crowd of Indians; each Indian appeared to have his entire family with him, for about half were squaws and there were many piccaninnies, as the Seminoles call their children. They never used the word papoose, and it is very doubtful if they knew what it meant.

The Indians remained for about an hour, but then, all of a sudden, they started for their canoes, the squaws and piccaninnies trailing along behind. They went up Lake Worth Creek for a short distance and made camp, prepared to stay until there was nothing more to be picked from the wreck.

The third night after the steamer went on the beach the wind commenced to blow hard from the east and a big sea was soon rolling in onshore. The next day, as the tide

started in, the old ship commenced to break up. The lighthouse men went down to the beach right after breakfast, as they knew the steamer would not last long in that sea, and they wished to be on hand when the wreckage started coming onshore.

Father returned at half past eleven, but Captain Armour and Carlin remained, busy picking up the goods that came piling in on the beach. While father was at dinner, I went to look down the river to see if there was anything to report. The tide was coming in on a full flood and the water was full of wreckage of all kinds that had washed in through the inlet. On the east side of the dock a dry goods box and a big Saratoga trunk had grounded, and barrels and boxes of every description were floating by me. I flew back to the house and between gasps told father what I had seen. Forgetting his hunger, he jumped up from the table and ran to the landing. Seeing that the box and trunk were not likely to float away, he turned his attention to the things going upriver on the top of the tide.

He pushed out in Captain Armour's little catboat, *Kate*, after some of the stuff that was floating toward the Indian camp. At the moment of pushing away from the dock an immense box came floating past. He got a line fastened to it and hauled it onshore. This carton, when opened later, was found to contain fifty men's suits.

After landing the big box he saw two Indians trying to get a large container into their canoe. He sculled up alongside and told them it belonged to him; they gave it up without protest or hesitation as there were too many other things floating in the river to waste any time disputing the ownership of any one particular box. In telling of the incident later, father said he knew as soon as he came near that it was a sewing machine and that the Indians would not know what to do with it if he let them keep it. As he had suspected, it was a Wheeler and Wilson machine and mother used it for many years.

The large box and trunk that landed close to the dock were hauled up on shore and opened. The box contained bolts of bleached and unbleached muslin of fine quality, a lot of very colorful ribbons with broad horizontal stripes, and two large books. The trunk was full of very cheap valises made of some kind of patent leather.

When the Indians arrived at Jupiter they were dressed in regular Seminole style with fancy colored shirts that reached to their knees. Some of them also wore brown tanned buckskin leggins and large turbans made from red and black checked shawls that they folded and wound around their heads to form a flat top and bottom. Within a week or so after the breaking up of the *Victor* they came to the lighthouse decked out in white shirts and vests. As the white man's shirt was not nearly as long as the regular Indian shirt their new dress left quite a length of bare leg showing.

The squaws never changed their native style of long skirt reaching to the ground and a narrow cape around shoulders and arms, topped by a heavy load of beads around the neck. Their hair was banged over the forehead and the balance coiled in a high knot on the crown of the head.

Several hundred bottles of extract of perfumes were brought to the lighthouse and divided between the three families, also ten one-hundred-pound kegs of the best creamery butter. One keg was opened and kept on the back porch for the use of all the cooks in the three families. The butter was covered with a strong brine and kept perfectly good to the last bit. The other nine kegs were buried beneath a large bay tree and kept sweet until used up more than a year later.

Among the vast quantities of goods that washed ashore and drifted up the river were many cases of Plantation Bitters, put up in quart bottles made to represent a log cabin. There was more whisky than bitters in the stuff and it allowed the Indians many a big drunk.

One night, Big Tommy, who was by far the largest and had the fiercest expression of all the Seminoles, came to the lighthouse after all had gone to bed. He was already quite drunk and was looking for more bitters. Captain Armour told him we did not have any *wyomie* (whiskey) and kept repeating, "You go back to camp, Tommy, not got *wyomie*."

Finally Tommy decided his quest was useless and he went back to his canoe. It was a calm moonlight night and the tide was running upriver. Tommy lay down in the bottom of the canoe and commenced to sing. As he drifted upriver his voice became fainter and fainter and peace and quiet returned to the lighthouse.

About a week or so after the steamer broke up, the wind stopped and the ocean became calm as a lake. The next day a steamer came along and picked up the stranded crew and passengers. Not long after the shipwrecked people had departed and while the Indians were occasionally finding a case of Plantation Bitters, two men from upriver, known only as Sim S. and Jim R., arrived at Jupiter on a prospecting trip. After a detailed description of the wreck by the lighthouse people, supplemented with the information that the Indians had recently found a case of bitters and were on a big drunk, they immediately left for the Indian camp, intending to join the spree.

While under the benign influence of Plantation Bitters, Charlie Tiger told Jim that Big Tommy was one of the band of Indians who had killed the Shives family on Mosquito Lagoon. Of course, Jim could not keep this startling information to himself but had to tell one of the Indians what Charlie Tiger had said. There was consternation and fear among the Indians when it became known that Charlie Tiger had disclosed Big Tommy's secret of his participation in the massacre. They were both angry and frightened. Angry at Charlie Tiger, and scared of what the white men might do when it became known in Washington.

The drinking in the Indian camp had ceased because of lack of bitters, so Jim and Sim returned to the lighthouse, and five or six of the elders from the Indian camp came with them. On their arrival at the lighthouse the Indians asked for Captain Armour and told him what Charlie Tiger had disclosed to Jim about Big Tommy. They begged and pleaded with him not to tell "Big Chief" at Washington. They admitted the story was true, but as they said, "It was a long time ago. Many moons have passed; now Injun good friend to white man. No want to fight anymore. No tell 'Big Chief' in Washington."

Captain Armour assured them he would not tell "Big Chief" in Washington, and that everything between the white men and Indians would be all right, "no fight anymore." He had to repeat it over and over again before they were satisfied that the story of Big Tommy's perfidy would go no farther, that "Big Chief" in Washington would never hear the tale.

When the Indians returned to their camp they held a trial. Charlie Tiger was condemned to life banishment from the tribe and was branded by cutting off the lobe of one ear. Years later he became known among the white people as "Crop-Eared Charlie."

After the Indians had left, Captain Armour told the story of the Shives family. A man, whose name no one seems to have heard, was living on Mosquito Lagoon, a few miles south of New Smyrna, then a very small settlement of two or three families. One day this settler went hunting. He came upon a fine turkey gobbler and was taking aim at it when an Indian rose up in front of him and shot the turkey. This made the settler so angry he turned his rifle on the Indian and killed him. Knowing that he had committed an atrocious act and that it would bring quick retribution by the Indians, he immediately left the country never to return.

Sometime later a man named Shives, with his wife and

grown daughter, moved into the house vacated by the Indian killer. The Indians had discovered the dead Indian and had vowed vengeance on the man living in that house. They came upon the Shives family and without waiting to investigate or ask if Shives were the man they were after, they killed all three and then made off into the woods, leaving no trace behind except the dead bodies. A few days later a party of white men came along on their way to Indian River. They found the bodies of Mrs. Shives and her daughter hanging over the rail of their boat and Mr. Shives' body near the ashes of the house.

The few people living on that part of the coast were greatly stirred up over this killing. They were certain it was the work of Indians, yet there was nothing to prove it, and the Indians professed entire ignorance of the subject. After a time the matter was dropped and the killings remained a mystery until the drunken orgy in the Indian camp at Jupiter.

Big Tommy looked the part of a savage Indian. He was more than six feet tall and must have weighed at least two-hundred and fifty pounds. He had a very fierce expression and was seldom seen to smile. After the Jupiter affair Big Tommy was closely watched, but from that time on he was never known to act in any way than as a good Indian should.

After everything from the wrecked ship had been either picked up or washed away, the Indians resumed their interrupted trip to Sand Point. When they arrived, the people there had their first news of the wreck at Jupiter, more than six weeks after it happened.

One afternoon near the first of December, Colonel Henry T. Titus of Sand Point came sailing in and tied up at the lighthouse dock. He had with him William N. Lanehart and Lanehart's son, Howell, a lad of eight years. They said they were on their way to Lake Worth for a load of crabwood, a certain sort of very close-grained wood that was extremely

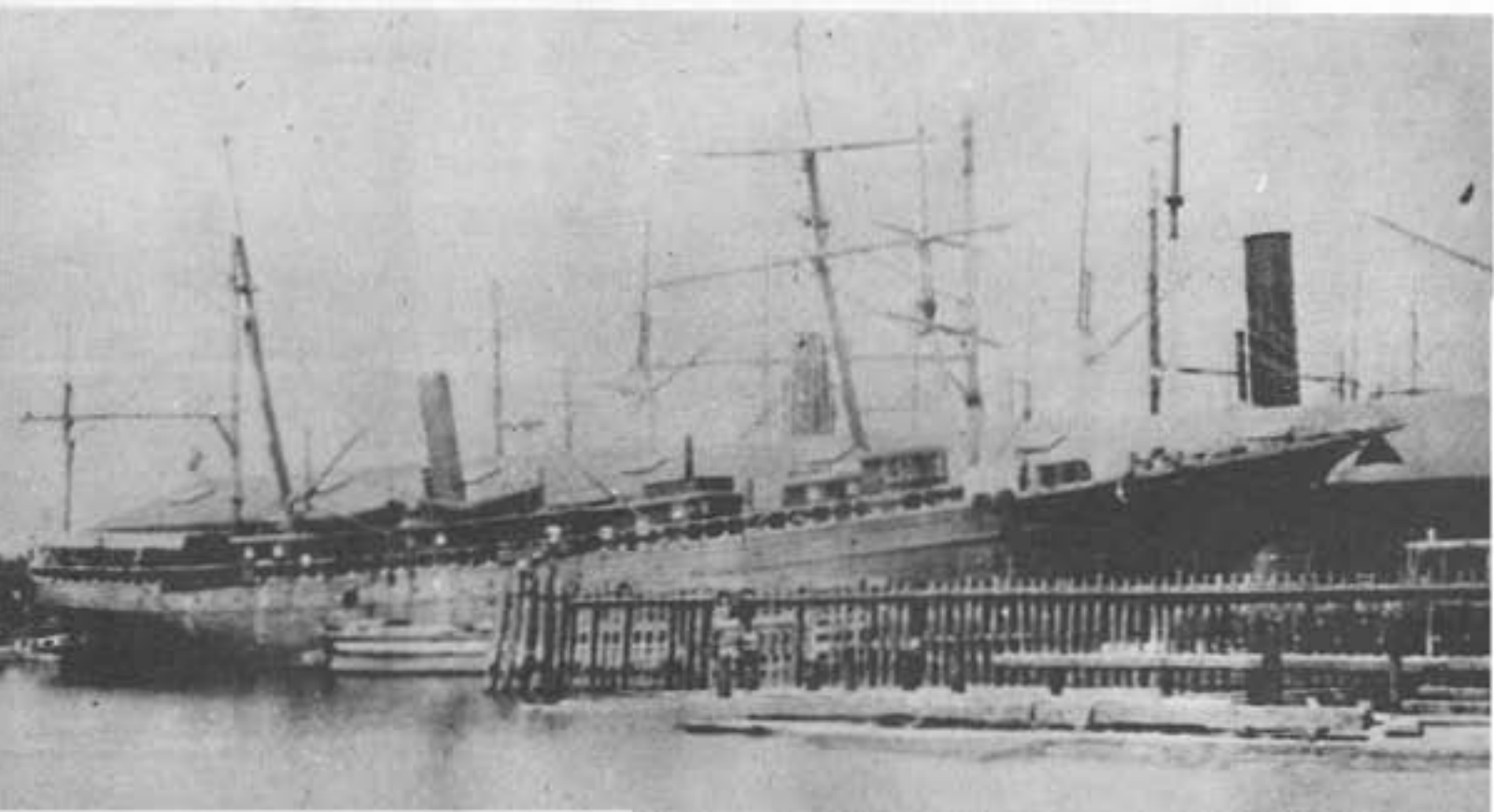
hard and not found in any of the hammocks north of the lake. They used this wood in making fancy walking canes and cuff buttons.

When the colonel returned from the lake with his load of crabwood some ten days later, he reported a settler on Lake Worth, an old sailor known as Charlie Moore. He had arrived from Miami in his sloop *Cruiser* and had taken possession of the Lang place.

In December of 1872 Uncle Will joined us at Jupiter. He had found a job in Jacksonville and had not made the trip down the coast with the rest of my family. When the weather turned cold in Jacksonville he had contracted chills and had come to Jupiter, as he said, "to get rid of the blamed ague."

An examination of the wreck of the *Victor* showed there was still a lot of cargo in the bottom of the hold, held there by a mass of wire rigging and the iron parts of the ship. As soon as the sea was smooth enough the men of the lighthouse decided to investigate. About the first thing they located was a large hogshead. They had a premonition that the hogshead contained something of value, so they attacked its iron hoops with a crowbar, and after cutting the top hoops they stove in the head. Much to their surprise, a fifty-gallon barrel popped up from the hogshead and floated

Steamer Victor



high on the water. This barrel contained French cognac of first quality.

There had been so many interesting events taking place for some weeks after the wreck that no one had thought about our food supplies. It was only when nearly everything in the shape of food had given out that we realized our situation. Captain Armour decided he would make the trip to Sand Point for the needed supplies, and while waiting his return, the Carlin and Pierce families were short on rations.

We had, of course, plenty of good butter. We also had a full barrel of flour furnished by the lighthouse department yearly a year earlier, but it had been standing on the back porch all those months. It was now alive with weevils and worms and was sour and musty. Bread made from it was unfit to eat, so we made biscuits in which a generous amount of butter was used. This partly killed the musty flavor and baking soda corrected most of the sourness. Still, they were not what one might call good biscuits.

The sugar and canned milk had been used up long before Captain Armour started for the store, but we had cane syrup and used it in place of sugar to sweeten our coffee. Coffee was another article furnished by the Lighthouse Board. On hand was a whole sack of green bean Rio that had to be roasted and then ground in a hand coffeemill before it could be used. As can be imagined, there was great rejoicing when the *Sea Gull* came sailing in with a load of supplies that included a barrel of Heckers' self-rising flour, two cases of Borden's condensed milk, and plenty of sugar.

Pleasures and pastimes were few and far between at Jupiter in the years of 1872 and 1873. The men had a fairly good time deer hunting, going out once or twice a week; sometimes up the Loxahatchee in the vicinity of old Fort Jupiter, or up Lake Worth Creek to the sand hills near the coast, and sometimes to the flatwoods on the west side of the creek. Fishing was much too common to be considered a recreation and was only indulged in when fish were needed as food.

On Sunday afternoon when the weather was fine, the women and children would be sailed to the inlet or to the rocks up Indian River, where they would spend two or three hours gathering shells. This was their only break from the daily grind of household duties.

Indians were frequent visitors at the light at all times. They would bring fresh venison, honey, or buckskin to swap for such stores of food as the people of the light could spare. They had one set price and never varied it, ten cents a pound for venison and one dollar for a buckskin.

One day in midwinter Jesse Malden and his wife, who were from a small town in Georgia, came in from upriver in a small sailboat and landed at the lighthouse dock. Malden was not interested in locating a permanent home, just in having a good time in the wilderness, making his living with his gun. Hearing from Captain Armour of Lake Worth and the quantities of game to be found there, Malden was determined to investigate.

A few days after the departure of the Maldens another boat came to the light. This was a small sharpie of about twenty feet in length sailed by H. F. Hammon, an Ohioan who was going to Lake Worth. Will Lanehart of Sand Point had told him about the lake.

A week or so later a third boat landed at the lighthouse dock. W. M. Butler, a Virginian, was the owner and captain. Butler was collecting skeletons of birds and animals found in Florida for a Professor Ward of the University of Rochester. Butler did not remain at Jupiter many days, for he too had heard of the game country to the south and wanted to get there as soon as possible to fill Professor Ward's order in the shortest time and with the least effort. Butler did not fancy going to sea in his little boat, so he started for the lake by the sawgrass route. By this route one went up Lake Worth Creek, passed a series of rapids, traveled through sawgrass, and finally hauled the boat across a portage, or haulover, made by the Indians into the lake.

After the sailing of Butler, no word came back to the

people at Jupiter of the lake's newest settlers until the return of Hammon, who was on his way north for the summer. He was loud in his praise of the lake and its fine hammock lands ready for the homesteader. He said he was going by Gainesville, where the United States Land Office was located, and enter his claim on his way home. As it turned out, Hammon did not go by Gainesville, but went straight home and entered his claim from there by mail. His was the first homestead entry on Lake Worth; my father's was the second.

Hammon had with him on this trip a long, narrow, round bottom rowboat known as a "Whitehall." He used this boat as a tender to his sailboat, and now wished to sell it. After some dickering, Uncle Will bought it to rig as a sailboat. A mast, boom, and gaff, mainsail and jib were made for the boat. She was christened the *Nellie* and when all was ready Uncle Will sailed to Lake Worth to join Butler in his bone collecting business.

In the meantime, all the talk about the beauties and wonders of Lake Worth, and of its rich hammock lands open to the homesteader, caused father to change his mind about locating a new home. He was afraid if he waited too long all the best homesteads would be taken, so sometime in midsummer he announced his intention of giving up his lighthouse job in October and moving to Lake Worth. In preparation for this move he slooprigged the lifeboat saved from the wreck of the steamer and named it the *Victor*. He also built a twelve-foot skiff of white pine cabin lumber saved from the wreck. This skiff was to be used as a tender to the *Victor*. The *Victor* was not built as a sailboat and was without centerboard or deep keel. In consequence she was a very poor sailor on the wind, but with a fair wind she could show her heels to most boats of her size then on the river.

One day in the following October, the *Victor* was loaded with our goods, sail was hoisted, and we were off by way of the creek and sawgrass route for Lake Worth. It was folly on

father's part to start out on a voyage of this kind without finding out more about the route he had elected to follow. Sailing the *Victor* came quickly to an end, for when we arrived at the mouth of Lake Worth Creek, not more than half a mile from our starting point, we found the southeast wind blowing straight down the creek and dead ahead. So sail was lowered, father got into the skiff, and by hard rowing towed the *Victor* to the next bend where the wind was fair for a short distance; then he had to start the towing business again.

As father was anxious to reach an old Indian campground before sundown, there was no time to waste. He kept plugging along, towing the large boat up head wind reaches, hoisting sail for a few minutes rest in the fair wind reaches. The Indian campground was said to be located near the rapids at the head of the creek. Beyond the rapids was a great swamp overgrown with a dense mass of tall sawgrass. Now father had never been up the creek as far as the Indian camp, and only knew of it from what others had told him, so it was an exploring expedition into an unknown country; everything was new and strange, and although we had been in Florida for more than a year, we had not encountered any country like this before.

The sun was setting when we arrived at the old campground. It was located on the west bank of the creek and was about four feet above the water. This campground had been used by the Indians for so many years that it was perfectly clean of any wild growth. Camp was made by setting up a fly tent that was open at both ends and under the sides. It was cool and airy, a little too much so in a driving rain. Father planned to camp here a few days while he explored the creeks and channels in the big swamp beyond the rapids.

He soon found that above the rapids there were many channels running in a southerly direction, but that none of them were wide enough for the *Victor* to navigate. More-

over, he was unable to determine which of the channels led to the haulover.

Late one afternoon he returned from an extensive trip into the swamp soaking wet, having been caught in a heavy rain out in the sawgrass. He decided it was quite impossible to get the *Victor* through the sawgrass without help. The only answer seemed to be to take the skiff to Butler's place on the lake. Mother and I could then wait there while Uncle Will returned with father to bring the *Victor* to the lake.

We were up early the next morning, making preparations for the start, though the weather was not encouraging. The wind was coming in fitful gusts from the southeast while the sky had a yellowish hazy overcast and small white scuds were rushing along before the increasing wind.

Our preparations for the trip in the skiff were limited in the extreme. Mother took only a piece of fat pork, some tea, a little syrup, and a bottle of that good cognac. With this poor camping outfit we started out hunting our way as we went along and with food for only one meal. It was a very foolish piece of business, but we had no idea of what we were up against or the distance we had to travel. Late in the afternoon we were still in the middle of the swamp with no prospect of reaching even a piece of high land before night. The sky was a dead black in all directions and it was spitting rain. We did not have coats or even a quilt or blanket to keep us warm and protect us from the thin but driving rain. We realized our situation was serious as night approached, for we then knew we were seeing our first Florida hurricane.

After pushing around for some time we found a gator trail leading toward high land to the east. This very narrow channel had been made by alligators going to land where on bright days they would sleep in the warm sun. The skiff was much wider than the largest gator and it took the hardest pushing to force her through the narrow trail. Once there, the gator crawl was not an encouraging prospect for a

night's rest. It was only a very small spot and the ground was only an inch or two above the water and consequently very wet.

Father soon had cleared with his axe a place that was large enough for boat and campfire. A fire was started and mother cooked our supper of fat pork with syrup and a cup of tea. After this less than hearty meal father turned the boat up on edge away from the wind. Then he cut a lot of palmetto fans and spread them on the ground under the boat for a bed. Bad as the situation was, I was soon sound asleep, but there was no sleep for father and mother that night as the edge of the boat had to be held down in that howling wind.

The hurricane, which must have been of small diameter, moved rapidly on to the north and west. At daylight there was a wonderful change in the weather; the clouds vanished, and after the sun rose all nature seemed to be smiling and basking in the bright sunlight. A gentle wind blew from the northwest, cool and pleasant.

Father left camp shortly after daylight, going through the woods to the south, looking for the haulover. When he returned he had good news, the mysterious and long sought haulover had been found. It was a broad open road from swamp to lake, used by the Indians for ages past.

Hauling the skiff over this three-hundred-yard trail to the lake presented a problem. There was nothing to use for rollers or skids. The Indians used the stalks of the wild pawpaw as skids on which to slide their canoes. The very thin, hard, outer bark of the pawpaw stalk peels off leaving a juicy undersurface over which a boat or canoe glides easily. At this haulover, however, there were no pawpaws.

Father decided that the only way to get his boat over the haulover was by "main strength." On coming to this decision he took the boat's painter over his shoulder and pulled. Every twenty or thirty feet he was compelled to rest a few minutes. This violent exertion was particularly hard

on him since he had had very little to eat in the past twenty-four hours and not a wink of sleep.

As there was no way in which mother or I could assist in snaking the *Fly* along the trail, we walked on ahead to the lake end of the trail. We were at once struck by the peculiar color of the lake water. At first sight we thought it muddy, caused by the hurricane; its color was a sort of cream or old ivory. On closer examination we saw it was not muddy; it seemed to be naturally opaque. Some years later it was found that this particular coloring was caused by the small amount of salt water that was mixed with the fresh water of the lake. The inlet was small and shallow and admitted only a small quantity of ocean water each day. As there were no fresh water streams emptying into the lake, only a seepage through the west shore from the swamps, the mixture of fresh and salt water was kept at an even grade, hence the color.

By one o'clock the *Fly* was afloat in the strange waters of this lonely lake, and we were on the last lap of our journey for food and shelter. By this time the wind had changed to north and was blowing a fine breeze, helping us along on our way down the lake. About two-thirty, while still some distance away, we sighted the inlet and a few minutes later a house. We knew this was the Malden home because it was the only one on this part of the lake.

The Maldens were greatly surprised to see us so soon after the storm. Malden said he didn't see how we made such quick time coming from Jupiter.

"Quick time!" exclaimed father. "We left Jupiter about a week ago. Hope you don't call that quick time."

"Where were you in the hurricane?" asked Malden.

"A little more than halfway between the rapids and the haulover. We spent the night at the shore end of a gator crawl with nothing to eat except a small piece of very fat pork," was father's answer.

When Mrs. Malden heard this she hustled around the stove and in a few minutes she had a good meal set out before us.

A couple of days later we went on to Charlie Moore's cabin, which was about two miles south of the inlet. This place had been built by the lake's first settler, the German Lang. Lang was a gardener and horticulturist who had come to Indian River around 1860 to make a home. After the war broke out and the state started drafting its manpower, Lang and his wife moved to Lake Worth, which was at that time the most isolated place on the Atlantic coast of North America, so that he would not be forced to fight against the Union.

When Lake Worth was first discovered, it was fresh water and had been so for a great many years. On an old map made sometime about 1830 or 1833 it was labeled "large fresh water lake." Sometime late in the fall of 1866, Michael Sears and his son George made a voyage from Biscayne Bay to Indian River in a small schooner. There were no inlets between Boca Raton and Jupiter when they sailed up the coast, but on their return, some weeks later and after a period of heavy rain, they saw a broad stream of dark, fresh water pouring out through an opening in the beach ridge about ten miles south of Jupiter.

They at once decided to do some exploring. Passing through the new opening they sailed out onto the broad waters of what appeared to be a large lake. To the north they could see the end of the lake some five or six miles distant, but to the south it extended far beyond their vision; as the wind was from the northeast, they headed their schooner south.

When they had sailed a little more than a mile they saw a small house in the clearing on the east side of the lake. When they landed a white man came from the log cabin to meet them. He said his name was Lang, and after a few

minutes conversation, he asked how the war was coming along.

"War?" exclaimed Mr. Sears, "What war?"

"Why the War Between the States, of course," said Lang.

He was much surprised when informed that the fighting had ended more than a year before. The next day the Sears continued their voyage down the coast to Biscayne Bay. Several days later the Langs moved back to the Indian River region and finally located on Ten Mile Creek, a tributary of the St. Lucie River. So the lake remained in solitude, little thought of and still less known until the coming of Charlie Moore, in November 1872, some six years later. Now with the advent of the Pierce family the lake had a population of eight.

2. Lake Worth

On the following day we continued our trip down the lake. Our progress was slow and we had every opportunity to observe the landscape. To the north of the inlet there was only a narrow hammock-covered ridge between the lake and the ocean beach. On the lake side of this ridge was a thin sandy shore covered with a thick growth of the usual bunchgrass. To the south of the inlet the shore was very different; it was sandy at the water's edge and backed by a dense mass of vines. Back of the vines rose a number of shell mounds that were believed to have been made by prehistoric Indians.

Some distance to the south the shoreline changed to a bold rocky front and the land rose sharply to a high ridge covered with large mastic, gumbo-limbo, and wild fig trees in an undergrowth of dense jungle. Between this ridge and the beach hammock was a swamp some two or three hundred yards wide. This swamp extended for five or six miles south of the inlet and ended in a bay of the lake.

A hundred yards or so south of the bay was a long low narrow island that was later called "Long Cabbage Island." South of this island were two or three small islets, and

close-by was a fair sized tree-covered island. Beyond this was a number of rather small grass covered islands.

South of this group we could see to the high hammock of the island where W. M. Butler and Uncle Will lived. As we were passing the last small island we noticed the change in the woods on the west shore of the lake. From the haulover the growth had been spruce pine, scrub oak, and saw palmetto with two or three small hammocks of bay and palmetto trees, but from this point south there were large pine trees, tall and straight, reaching as far as the eye could see.

The entire shoreline of the island where we expected to find Uncle Will was covered with a thick heavy growth of tall bunchgrass; along the water's edge it was rocky, and in some places the rocks projected up some two feet or more. When we were near the middle of the island, which was nearly three miles long, we saw Butler's flat-bottom catboat and Uncle Will's sloop, *Nellie*.¹

While we were all gathered around the campfire that night it was decided that as soon as the wind got around to the southeast, Uncle Will and father would take the *Victor* back to Jupiter and sail her to the lake on the ocean with the first west wind. It was not expected that they would have to wait long, for at that time of the year the wind would go from southeast to west in a very few days. Mother and I were to remain with Butler. His "mansion" was small, ten by twelve, and built of 4 by 9 planks set up edgewise and spiked together box fashion. The roof was made of palmetto fronds. Butler had a tent that he now put up as a sleeping apartment for himself while company occupied his house.

Some five or six days later, the *Victor* and *Nellie* came sailing in before a brisk northwest wind. Everything on board the *Victor* was found to be in good condition in spite of the hurricane and the neglect of her owner. After the *Victor's* cargo was unloaded, work was commenced on our



Will H. Moore, Margretta M. Pierce's youngest brother

house. A piece of ground was cleared in the hammock on the south end of the main ridge of the island, about half a mile south of Butler's and a hundred yards or so north of the extreme southern end of this ridge; then the ocean beach was combed for timber to make the house frame. This part of the job took some time and plenty of hard labor, for the timbers had to be hauled over the beach ridge to the lake and then rafted across to the homestead.

Father said he was going to build a house that a hurricane would not blow down, and he did exactly that. The corner posts were 10 by 12 and extended into holes cut out of solid rock two feet deep; the plate and sills were 6 by 9 and the studding 4 by 4. Plates and sills were mortised into the big corner posts, their ends fastened together with bolts drawn tight with nuts; they would never pull apart while the timber remained solid. Board lumber was rather scarce on the beach and some time was spent in collecting enough for the attic floor, which was finished first and enclosed with palmetto fans. Shingles were not shipped on sailing vessels

at that time and so none were found on the beach. Palmetto fans made a good roof but had to be replaced every two or three years. It was a dry and cool house, but there were others who liked the palmetto leaves also. Roaches, lizards, and small snakes all made their homes in them, fortunately not many snakes but plenty of roaches and lizards of all sizes and kinds. When the attic was enclosed and wooden shutters made for the gable windows we moved in and up.

When combing the beach for lumber, many useful articles were found. The beach was still strewn with the wreckage of the large number of ships that went down along this coast in the hurricane of August 1870. Quantities of copper and brass in bolts, nails, and sheet form were found that could be traded in at the store at Sand Point for anything in stock; the store owner gave ten cents a pound for brass and fifteen for copper. I obtained my first school slate in trade for a copper bolt found on the beach. This junk metal was the bank on which the first settlers drew for their food, clothes, and ammunition for their guns.

A week or so after we moved into our new house a party of two Indian men and three squaws landed at Butler's and made camp a short distance east of the house. The men went deer hunting in the pinewoods on the west shore, leaving the squaws to keep camp. Mother asked one of them what the Indian name of the lake was. She answered "Hypoluxo," and when asked what the name meant said, "Water all around, no get out." She meant, evidently, that it was a landlocked lake, without inlet or outlet. When the men returned that afternoon Mother told them what the old squaw had said was the Indian name of the lake. Butler suggested we call our island Hypoluxo. We all agreed it was a good name, but then the question of spelling arose. Butler said "hypo" was the best and only way, as if spelled "hipo" everyone would call it "Hippoluxo." "Hypoluxo" was agreed upon and so it has remained for all time, Hypoluxo Island.²

It was at about this time that father found a partly stove-in boat on the beach. She was short and chunky, twelve feet long and four feet wide, and had been rigged with a lateen sail, with a mast step in the middle. She was so short and dumpy we named her *Dolly Varden*, but always called her *Dolly*. A few hours work repaired the damage by the sea and fitted with a sail she proved a good sailor. The *Victor* was laid up and never used as a sailboat again. Mother and I made our first voyage on the Atlantic in the *Dolly* when on a trip to Jupiter. The *Dolly* had but one fault; her bows were so bluff that when there was any sea at all, she would send showers of spray over her passengers. Tarpaulins had to be used when sailing in a fresh breeze.

Sometime about the first of December 1873, H. F. Hammon and Will Lanehart arrived and commenced building a house on Hammon's homestead. This house was built in the beach hammock, about three miles south of Charlie Moore's house.

Charlie Moore invited us to come to his place for our first Christmas dinner on the lake. He had a fine large possum he had been fattening on sweet potatoes for more than a month, and he asked mother to bring her Dutch oven and bake some of her celebrated biscuits. Thus on the day before Christmas we boarded the *Dolly* and sailed up to Charlie Moore's. It was the custom at that time when going any place to carry along bedding and mosquito bars and at night to make a bed on the floor of the house visited. There were no bedsteads or cots on the lake; some people had homemade bunks, but others always used the floor.

Christmas Day came in bright and clear. Shortly after breakfast preparations for the big dinner commenced. To Charlie Moore fell the work of killing and dressing the possum. He claimed he could cook a possum in a way that would make one's mouth water just to look at it, and he proved as good as his word. A big hardwood fire was started to make coals for the two Dutch ovens. Charlie Moore's

oven was a large one and he filled it full of possum banked around with sweet potatoes and covered with thin strips of fat bacon. The oven was placed over a small bed of live coals with a few coals placed on top of it to keep it hot. Moore said he wanted the possum to cook slow and sure.

While the big dinner was cooking, father, Uncle Will, and I stood around and watched the proceedings, getting more and more hungry as the time went by. We were not disappointed when called to sit at the table. There were many good things, such as Mother's biscuits and the finest cane syrup one ever ate. This syrup was made by Captain Miles O. Burnham of Cape Canaveral. For dessert we had prickly pear pie. Perhaps other types of pie might taste better, but most certainly none could compare in appearance with this pie's gorgeous color. The *pièce de résistance* of course, was the roasted possum, and all agreed it had a fine flavor, not unlike young pig. Yet for all its tastiness, mother said she preferred turkey.

About the first of February, Butler told us he was going to bring his wife and little daughter Mary to live with him on the island. Up to this time Butler had never mentioned his family and we had supposed he was a bachelor. We were surprised to learn he was married, but it was good news for mother for now she would have a woman nearby to visit. Mrs. Malden at the inlet was too far away for frequent visits; it meant a journey of two or three days when mother went to call on her, and, besides, the whole family had to go along.

Butler said his wife was living with her family in Volusia County on the banks of the Tomoka River. He departed in his little sailboat and returned in about a month with his wife and little three-year-old daughter. Mother was delighted to have a woman neighbor and soon there was a well-worn trail between the Pierce and Butler homesteads.

The morning glory fields of Hypoluxo Island were then a wonderful sight, especially in the early morning when

thousands of the purple and red flowers were in full bloom. There were acres and acres of them reaching for nearly a mile along the western side of the island hammock. Here and there in the fields a wild custard apple and clumps of wild pawpaw would be covered with the flowering vines of moonflower, wild peas, or morning glories making veritable natural arbors. At the north end of the island was another half-mile stretch of a parklike field of morning glories and moonflower vines. On a moonlight night it was a wondrous sight to look upon the great clusters of snow-white moonflowers gleaming in the pale light.

In the spring of 1874 two men stayed with us for several months and before they left made me a gift of a shotgun, a single-barrel fourteen-gauge with a thirty-six inch barrel. It had an old style breech; that is, the cap tube was on a plug that screwed into the side of the breech in the same manner as a converted flintlock. When the gun was loaded the powder had to turn a sharp angle to reach the cap tube. About half the time it did not do this, especially if loaded in a hurry. In these cases it would either misfire or hang fire. When there was a hang fire, the cap would snap and about the time the gun was removed from the shoulder it would go off, shooting the charge into the air. Father said he thought the barrel of this gun was made from a piece of gas pipe and perhaps it was. Since this gun was so unsatisfactory, I was particularly happy when Captain Armour gave me a double-barrel shotgun that I soon learned to load. Almost any day after that I could be found hunting along the shore of the big island or around the three islands lying southeast of my home.

White and blue herons were plentiful around these islands at all seasons of the year. White ibis, pink curlew, and occasionally a limpkin could be seen feeding along the shore.³ There were also many bear and deer. The east shore of the island was a low, open, sandy beach and in some places quite wide. The beach was covered with shallow holes

where bears had been digging for water. Everytime a bear wanted a drink he would dig a new hole. In the winter ducks came in thousands, mostly bluebills.⁴

When Captain Armour learned that I was using the gun he had given me, he said he would pay twenty-five cents each for all the plumes I could collect. On the captain's next visit to the island I had a large cracker box full of white and blue heron plumes ready for him. I took my pay for the plumes in such ammunition as powder, shot, and caps.

Turtle season was another very important time of the year for the first settlers of the lake as turtle eggs were an important item of their food supply. May, June, and part of July was nesting time for such sea turtles as loggerhead, green turtle, hawksbill, from which the tortoise shell of commerce is obtained, and the giant of them all, the trunkback, or leatherback as they are sometimes called, which has a shell covered with a black skin that looks like leather.

The turtle eggs were used in many ways to help out the settlers' food supply. They were boiled, scrambled, put into pancakes, cake, and egg bread, but they were never fried since the white of a turtle egg will not cook hard. The turtles were also used for food. The meat was good, something like poor beef when cooked properly. It was also in turtle egg season that bears were easiest to kill. They would walk the beach at night searching for turtle egg nests. Although the bears were very fond of the eggs, they became quite thin on a steady diet of them.

It was an easy matter to kill a bear in turtle season. All a hunter had to do was to take up a position in the grass a few feet back from the open beach, sit down and make himself as inconspicuous as possible, and wait for the bear to come along. Moonlight nights were considered the best time to "sit for bear."

One afternoon in the latter part of May, Uncle Will said he was going over to the beach to sit for bear. I pleaded

with him to take me along, and although he protested, he finally gave in and said, "All right, you can go, but I'll bet you will get enough of it if we do see a bear."

The moon was full that night and was about an hour high when we arrived on the beach. After walking down the sand for three or four hundred yards we sat in a patch of sea oats about ten feet back from the open beach and waited for the expected bear. After sitting there for nearly an hour listening to the swash of the waves on the shore and the sighing of the wind in the tall sea oats, my courage began to "ooze."

Suddenly Uncle Will turned and whispered, "Here he comes." The bear was ambling along with a kind of swinging rolling gait; his big black head kept turning from side to side, smelling for turtle nests. I had a strong desire to jump up and run away, but instead I sat quite still, watching the bear come towards us. When the bear was not more than twenty feet away, Uncle Will fired at him. The bear stopped and fell over apparently lifeless; then he turned and started straight at us, climbing the ridge and dragging his hind parts. Uncle Will sprang to his feet, loading and firing as fast as he could while I was dancing up and down behind him screaming at the top of my voice. I was scared nearly crazy and was sure the bear was going to eat us right there.

Uncle Will had only five cartridges with him. When he fired the fifth and last cartridge right in the bear's face, it turned and dragged itself down to the ocean and swam out of sight. As the bear disappeared in the water, Uncle Will said to me, "You go home and bring me some more cartridges while I stay here and watch for the bear to come on shore."

I flatly refused to go up that beach alone in the middle of the night. He saw it was useless to argue, and so we started for home together. When we arrived home I went straight to bed, but Uncle Will filled his pockets with cartridges and returned to hunt for the wounded animal. On his way to the

scene of the conflict he came upon a large turtle making a nest in the sand. He turned her on her back and a little farther on found the trail of the bear where it had dragged itself into the hammock. As he did not like the idea of following a badly wounded bear into a dark jungle after midnight, he came home to wait for daylight. After breakfast the next morning, father went with him to the beach. They killed the turtle and finished killing the bear and brought them both home. There was fresh meat aplenty and some to spare at the Pierce homestead that day.

Throughout the summer of 1874 the daily life of the pioneer settlers on Lake Worth was most primitive. None of the doors and windows of our houses had screens to keep out the swarms of mosquitoes and sand flies, and for some time our home did not have wooden shutters to keep out the wind and the rain. Light would attract the mosquitoes, so we spent our evenings after supper sitting in the dark and talking of friends and neighbors we had left in Waukegan, Illinois. In the middle of the room a smoke pot poured forth volumes of rank fumes that at least kept out a portion of the hungry mosquitoes that were so eager to get at us to satisfy their bloody appetites.

Sometime late that summer an old Florida cracker known only as Dr. Talbot was added to the little settlement on the island. Butler brought him to the lake on one of his trips from Sand Point and he lived with the Butlers for nearly a year. He never did a thing to help earn his board, but just sat around day after day and ate his three meals. Once in a while he would shoulder his gun and go hunting, but he generally came home empty-handed. He was a doctor in name only and his neighbors often wondered how he acquired the title; his chief accomplishment was to sit around and talk. He was about sixty years of age, short and stocky, wore a full beard, and had a glass eye.

In the late summer of 1874, another stranger walked up the beach from the south and stopped at our homestead.

This was a Mexican named Frank Lopez. He was a jolly, good-natured fellow, always laughing, and many times had a joke to tell on himself. He lived around the lake about three years and was known to all as Mexico Frank. He had a wonderful imagination and used to tell some big stories of his experiences. While at our house, Frank paid for his board and lodging by a little work clearing hammock, but most every afternoon about three o'clock, he would knock off work and go hunting. Sometime in the winter of 1877 Mexico Frank sailed away in his cranky sloop and was never seen again.

In the latter part of December Mason M. Dwight and H. P. Dye stopped at the Butlers. Dwight was looking for a location for a new home. Before leaving he decided on a site about a quarter of a mile south of Charlie Moore's on the east side of the lake. In Jacksonville he chartered the schooner *Rover* and loaded her with everything necessary to build a large house. In addition he had provisions for a year and a large quantity of citrus trees, flowering shrubs, plants, and vines. As the inlet was too shallow for the *Rover* to navigate, she was anchored outside and Dwight hurried around the lake to obtain men and boats for unloading. They had three or four days of calm weather and the schooner's cargo was transferred to land without delay.

Transportation of all this stuff down the lake to the homesite was next in order. Tents were erected in hastily cleared spots in the hammock to store the perishable part of the cargo. When the building was well underway, trails were cut through the hammock to plant the fruit trees. Mr. Dwight's plan was to plant the trees as quickly as possible and clean out the intervening bushes when the rush was over. The whole idea was rather crazy, but it worked.

The house was large and well furnished, but it had a palmetto roof. Will Lanehart was in charge of the construction, but he was unable to say why palmetto leaves had been used instead of shingles.

There were four in the Dwight family, Mason, his wife, his three-year-old son Theodore, and his father. The elder Dwight was a cultured gentleman, a retired minister. It was learned later that he furnished the funds for their adventure in the wilds of southern Florida.

When their home was finished, Mrs. Dwight decided she had to have a cook, so her husband made a trip to Fort Pierce and returned with a young woman named Mary Drawdy. Miss Mary remained with the Dwights for only a short time. The Dwights' second cook was a widow named Wilder. Mrs. Wilder had two grown children living with her, Abner, sixteen, and Eliza, eighteen.

It was about this time that the elder Dwight proposed that the settlers organize an agricultural society. He said the Department of Agriculture in Washington would send free seeds for experimental plantings and thus a society might be of great benefit to the settlers. A meeting was held that organized the ~~the~~ Lake Worth Agricultural and Horticultural Society. A notice of the group's founding was sent to the Department of Agriculture. Some weeks later the seeds began to come from Washington. A few garden seeds were sent that were quite useful, but then for more than a year all we received were two-pound bags of wheat, rye, barley, oats, and clover seeds. These seeds were useless to the members of the society since these crops would not grow in south Florida.

At the second meeting of the society the topic was the question of better transportation. Father and Will Lanehart were appointed a committee of two to explore the north end of the lake to see if there were a shorter or better passage for a boat to get through to Jupiter than by the old Indian route through the sawgrass swamp. If they had stopped to consider they would have known that if there had been a better way the Indians would have used it. The exploration proved Little Lake Worth to be landlocked on all sides except to the south, and so the only way to get to

Jupiter in a boat was by the old Indian route or on the ocean.

When father and Lanehart reported at the next meeting of the society, they were given the job of marking the channel through the sawgrass from the haulover to the rapids at the head of Lake Worth Creek. They did their job well; each stake had a marker in the shape of a long white piece of cloth tied at its top. Yet they made one mistake that caused their work to become useless in the course of the next year. The poles were cut from bushes found growing along the way. These poles took root and in a few months were fine green bushes like thousands of others in the swamp.

In the early part of the summer of 1876, a man known only as Farrel located a homestead claim just north of Hypoluxo Island on the beach ridge, about two miles north of our home. Farrel was accompanied by Joseph Blake of Rhode Island. Farrel cleaned up a spot in the hammock and built a palmetto shack just north of a number of large shell mounds. A trail was cut through the hammock to the ocean beach, and for many years this path was called the Farrel Trail. Joe Blake lived in a tent close to Farrel's palmetto shack.

Farrel did not stay on his place very long at a time. While he was off on his numerous trips, Joe Blake, who had been a railroad man, would get in his skiff and row the two miles to visit with my family. He told us of the time when he was a conductor and how he fell under the train and lost a leg. Now he was hobbling around on a cork leg and it was a very poor thing to depend on in the woods and jungles around the lake.

Every few days he would come in Farrel's little skiff for a visit with us. One day he complained of the distance and father suggested he move his camp to one of the three small islands southeast of our home. Father thought these islands were in his homestead, and he said he would give the larger

island to Blake if he would make it his home. Blake accepted the offer and since that time the island has been known as Blake Island.

One day that summer Blake was in a patch of long-spined cactus when the strap that held his cork leg in place broke, causing him to fall in that spiny mass. He had to crawl through the cactus on his hands and knees all the way back to his boat. After he had repaired the strap he came to our house and said he had had enough of trying to be a pioneer settler. He secured passage on the first boat going upriver to Sand Point, where he met and married a widow and lived in that locality for the balance of his life.

After Blake's departure Farrel returned to remain permanently on his homestead. One day sometime later, Father found the lonely man quite sick and insisted on his moving to our home until he became able to care for himself. Farrel had a stomach condition, which was most likely cancer. He could eat nothing but soup. He asked me if I would kill birds for his soup, and said I could use his gun and skiff and that he would furnish the ammunition. This arrangement greatly pleased me as I could leave my work in the garden and go out with my gun. I never failed to bring back the birds for Farrel's soup. After a week or so he became so sick father thought it best to take him to Sand Point to the nearest doctor. He died a few weeks later.

Sometime in January 1875, Captain Armour entered a homestead claim at the south end of the lake. This homestead took in the hammock on the southeast corner of the lake and extended from the beach to across the marsh on the west. Shortly after filing his claim he sent two men to clear some land and to construct a house. Captain Armour instructed the men to go to the beach for the lumber they needed. The sides and roofs were, of course, covered with palmetto fans.

In the fall of 1875 my uncle, Robert B. Moore of Chicago, came to spend the winter with us. His health

suffered during the winter in the "Windy City," and it was thought a season in sunny Florida would benefit him. He was fine company for me, and we had big times together cruising around the lake in the *Dolly* and combing the beaches for coconuts and wreckage from the sea. Shortly after my Uncle Rob's arrival from Chicago, Roy Chapman, a young man from Brooklyn, came to our house and asked to be taken on as a regular boarder for the balance of the winter. Chapman had been a member of Henry Ward Beecher's choir but contracted some kind of throat trouble. He had come to the lake in the hope of finding a cure. It might be well to say right here than when he returned to Brooklyn, some two years later, he had entirely recovered his health.

The summer of 1875 was the Dwight family's first experience with tropical heat and insect life and the many drawbacks of pioneering in this faraway place. Mrs. Dwight did not like it at all and she suddenly realized that her son Theodore would be of school age in two or three years and that there were no schools in this part of the country. The upshot of the matter was that the men of the Dwight family agreed to give up the life of pioneers on Lake Worth and go back north. They left the lake in December of that year, leaving their place in charge of Mrs. Dwight's nephew.

When it became known for certain the Dwights were leaving and the widow Wilder would be out of a job, Charlie Moore saw the opportunity to obtain a housekeeper and cook, so he proposed to her and she accepted. They were married by the elder Mr. Dwight before he left the lake. After Mrs. Wilder's marriage to Charlie Moore, her son and daughter came to live with them.

In February 1876, Mason Dwight returned to the lake for a short visit to see how the nephew was getting along as caretaker. Dwight had with him on this visit an Englishman named Cecil Upton. Upton selected several acres situated at the southwest corner of the lake at the south end, which by

some "hook or crook" had been made state land. He stopped off at the Land Office in Gainesville to make his purchase on his way back to Louisiana where he taught in a colored school. He did not come to live on the land until more than thirty years later.

It was in the summer of 1875 that Mrs. Butler persuaded her husband to take her home to dear old Volusia County for a visit to her family. They never returned and Butler never saw his prophecies of Lake Worth's future come true.

In the winter of 1876 the United States Life Saving Services started the building of Houses of Refuge for shipwrecked sailors. Bethel Creek House of Refuge Number 1 and Gilbert's Bar House of Refuge Number 2 had been finished, and in February the contractor commenced building Number 3, some five miles down the beach from the haulover at the south end of Lake Worth. The Service was building five of these Houses of Refuge on the lower east coast. Fort Lauderdale Number 4 was located four miles north of New River Inlet and Biscayne Bay Number 5 some seven miles north of Norris Cut, an inlet on Biscayne Bay.

The government built these Houses of Refuge because at the time the entire east coast was a "howling wilderness." In fact, with the exception of the very few settlers on Biscayne Bay and Lake Worth, and they were sixty miles apart, the coastline was unchanged from the time Ponce de Leon discovered it. Sailors wrecked along this unsettled coast had little chance to leave it except on vessels passing on the sea, and they were in danger of starvation if they failed to salvage food from their wrecked ships. A case of this kind happened in the hurricane of October 1873. A ship was wrecked about halfway between Biscayne Bay and New River. She went to pieces when she hit the beach and though all the crew landed safely, they were unable to find any food cast up by the waves, and the only water they could find was in the salt marsh back of the beach ridge. Their lifeboats had been lost and they did not know in

which direction there might be a human habitation. Their only hope was to signal a passing steamer, but the weather remained unfavorable, the sea rough, and no steamer came near enough to see the small piece of canvas waving from the end of a spar erected on the beach.

For the first two days plenty of fish were washed up by the big seas of the hurricane, but there was no way of keeping them and a few days later when the sailors were found by a man who had walked up the beach from Biscayne Bay, they were half starved and existing on spoiled fish.

The story of their hardships and near death was told in the New York newspapers, and when brought to the attention of the government, Sumner I. Kimball, superintendent of the Life Saving Service, ordered the immediate construction of the five Houses of Refuge.

The station south of Lake Worth was known as Orange Grove Number 3, taking its name from a grove of wild sour oranges that were growing there on the edge of the freshwater swamp. The Indians had a haulover and camp near this grove and it was known to some of the historians of the Seminole War as the Orange Grove Haulover. The station was built about a quarter of a mile north of the grove and on the flat east of the regular beach ridge.⁵

When word came to the island of the work going on at the grove, the workmen having been landed there from a large schooner, father made it his business to get acquainted with the superintendent of construction and the contractor. He made frequent visits while the station was under construction for he wanted the position of keeper when it was finished. One day he mentioned the subject to the lieutenant in charge and was told he could have the job, but that he would have to move into the house as soon as it was completed. Supplies for the station would be furnished by the government, but the lieutenant could not say how many months it would be before they arrived. Meantime, the house had to have a keeper.

3. Orange Grove House of Refuge

The Orange Grove House of Refuge was finished in the latter part of April 1876. The keys to the new house were handed to father with instructions to move in as soon as possible so that the building might have proper care. We decided to make the move about the first of May, or as near that time as sea and weather would permit. The condition of the seas had to be reckoned as there was a five-mile trip on the ocean that had to be made in small boats.

About this time another beach tramp arrived at our homestead and asked to stay with us for a time. His name was Frank Small and father hired him to help move us to the station at Orange Grove.

On the first of May wind and weather were favorable and so we made a start by loading the household goods into the *Dolly* and the skiff, *Fly*. Then we sailed them to the haulover at the foot of the lake where they were unloaded and the boats hauled over to the beach. There was a lot of work entailed in this transportation and it was after dark when the call came to knock off for supper. There had been a gentle wind from the south all day, but it went with the

sun, and soon the sea was as smooth as a pond. After a hurried supper the *Dolly* was launched and anchored near shore and Frank held the stern of the boat while father loaded our goods on board. The skiff was then filled with the balance of the household effects and made fast to the *Dolly*. Finally father carried mother and me to the boat and placed us onboard dry-shod.

The moon was shining brightly and there was not a breath of wind on the glassy surface of the sea. I asked father how he was going to move us without wind. He answered that Frank and he would track the boats to the station. A track line was fastened forward in such a manner that it would lead over the bluff of the bow. I was told to take the tiller of the *Dolly* and keep her straight on her course. With the shore end of the line over their shoulders, father and Frank commenced pulling the boats down the beach toward the station.

It was about midnight when the boats were run on the beach and unloaded; then before anything else could be done, the boats had to be hauled high upon the shore out of the reach of the waves of the incoming tide, for the tide was not more than half up when we landed. As there was no sign of rain, in fact not a cloud in sight, our goods were left on the beach until morning. Sleep was what we all wanted, so carrying a few supplies to the dark and silent house we made our beds on the floor.

We were up at sunrise the next morning and eager to inspect our new home. The houses of refuge were built to withstand storms and hurricanes. The foundation was framework of 8 by 8 timber placed some three or four feet deep in the ground; onto this framework were mortised 8 by 8 posts that in turn were mortised into the sills and held there by large wooden pins. The roof extended over the porches on each side of the building; 6 by 6 posts supported the plates along the porches, and each post had 6 by 6 braces mortised into post and plates and held by large



Orange Grove House of Refuge at Delray Beach

wooden pins. The porch at the north end was enclosed for a kitchen and supplied with a fireplace and brick chimney. This fireplace proved a source of much trouble later on; it smoked badly when there was a strong wind from the northwest or north as the chimney was too short for a proper draft.

All of these houses were built exactly alike, and all of the keepers used the four rooms on the ground floor in the same order as we did. The south room was a bedroom and the next was always used as a living room; the next was a dining room and then the kitchen. North of the kitchen was the cistern, built in the ground and made of brick. Eave troughs led from the house to this cistern, which was the only water supply furnished by the government. The shingles were new unseasoned cypress and when we arrived the cistern was full of water from this new roof. It was brown in color, bitter, and with a strong cypress flavor, more like medicine than drinking water.

The house, which had a second story dormitory for shipwrecked sailors, was built on a broad flat that ran back from the open sand beach to the higher ridge behind the

house. This ridge was found along the entire east coast of Florida. At the Orange Grove it was covered with a thick growth of saw palmetto. The flat was covered with sea oats and scattered bunches of stunted seagrape and cocoplum. This flat extended north two and one-half miles and ended at the caves; to the south it stretched for nearly four miles and ended at the northern end of Boca Raton hammock.¹ To the west, commencing at the foot of the palmetto covered ridge, was a deep swamp of tall sawgrass with numerous small channels turning about its eastern side. The morass was about half a mile wide and extended from Lake Worth to Boca Raton; west of it were pinewoods reaching back as far as one could see.

During the two months after our arrival, bear and deer were seen frequently just about sundown on the flat some distance from the house. The deer were feeding and the bear hunting for turtle eggs. When the bears passed the house they would always go to the leeward or back if the wind was from the sea, but if the wind was west they would walk straight down the beach in front of the house. They seemed to know that men lived there and by passing to leeward could tell by the scent their distance from danger.

Father made a gunrack and fastened it on the south wall of the dining room. This rack was to hold what he called "our arsenal," which consisted of four guns; two twelve-gauge, one ten- and one fourteen-gauge shotguns, all muzzle loaders. They were kept loaded at all times ready for instant use.

One evening just after sundown we saw a yearling bear coming down the beach from the north, and as the wind was from the east we knew it would pass back of the house, about twenty feet from the building. Father and I stood on the cistern and waited for the bear to come within range of our guns. Father was quivering with excitement when he saw the bear turn from the beach and come almost straight to us.

The bear did not appear to notice us but ambled along as

if there were no reason to be alarmed; most likely he did not see us. He was within fifty feet of us when father gave the word to fire. The bear went down at the first discharge of the two guns, but to make sure, we fired our remaining loads into the kicking animal. That finished him, and he was quite dead when we walked up to examine him. The bear was young and tender and furnished excellent steaks for a day or so, but because of the hot weather, the balance had to be salted down. Father treated it in the same manner as corned beef.

After the first of June father sent Frank Small to Fort Pierce to get Aunt Betsy, an old Negro woman who had befriended us during our first days in Florida. Father wanted her to keep house and do the cooking for the family as mother was not well. Ten days later Frank came sailing in with Aunt Betsy and her four-year-old granddaughter Liz.

In the latter part of May, about three weeks after our arrival at the station, I went back to the homestead on the island for a visit with Roy Chapman who had stayed on by himself after the departure of my family. Chapman, no doubt, found it lonely and perhaps was glad for my company. My visit extended over two days and nights and on the morning of the third day I returned to the station where I was informed that there had been visitors in my absence. Three men from Jacksonville, David E. Brown and E. N. "Cap" Dimick, had walked down from the haulover and remained overnight.² They were looking the country over with the idea of making their home on the lake. Brown expected to buy the Dwight house and the Dimicks had located homesteads on the east side of the lake south of the Dwight place.

In June 1876, Brown arrived on the lake with his family, coming by ocean schooner from Jacksonville. His family included three sons: Jarvis, seventeen; Roswell, twelve; and Ned, eight; and two daughters: Lida, ten; and Anna, eighteen, who was in school in St. Louis.

The Browns brought a large quantity of groceries and

sold them to those in need, so father sent Frank Small in the *Dolly* to buy some supplies. When Frank returned he told me about the boys and the girl in the family. I was most anxious to meet them for I had not seen a boy or girl older than four in the three years I had lived on the lake, and those three years seemed very long. Frank soon found himself quite unable to answer half of my questions.

In July father engaged Mrs. Charlie Moore as a nurse for mother. Her son, Abner Wilder, came with her and agreed to stay as long as there was need of his mother's services. Since there was no longer anything for Frank Small to do he left and was never heard of again by anyone on the lake.

Ab and I spent most of our spare time, and there was plenty of it at the Orange Grove House, deer hunting. One afternoon, it was the fifteenth of August, we went hunting to the south. About two miles from home we jumped a deer in high palmetto and Ab killed it with the first shot. We carried the carcass back home and hung it in the boat house. While we were dressing it father came to the door and told me I had a baby sister. The new baby was named Lillie Elder.³ The next night while we were at supper mother was taken suddenly very ill. Hearing an unusual noise in her bedroom, father rushed in to find her in convulsions. All night she remained in that condition and no one knew what to do.

At the break of day father started Ab up the beach to see if Mrs. Brown would come and help us. Ab had to walk seventeen miles to the Brown home, so it would be twelve hours at the very best before any aid could be expected. There was nothing we could do meantime but wait anxiously and hope for the best.

Then again, the coming of Mrs. Brown was very uncertain; the five-mile walk down the ocean beach was most difficult for anyone not used to walking on the soft sand of the coast. Mrs. Brown was a middle-aged woman at that time; she had lived in the city all of her life and had never

walked any distance on soft sand. Although the Pierce and Brown families were strangers to each other, there was a bond between us. We were pioneers, and a pioneer's call for help was never turned down. Mrs. Brown would come if possible, of that we were quite certain.

Mother's condition remained the same throughout the day, neither better or worse; as a matter of fact, she could not have been any worse and lived. About five o'clock in the afternoon I saw three small black objects come into view away up to the northward on the shore. Within half an hour, Mr. and Mrs. Brown and Ab arrived. Mrs. Brown went at once to the sickroom and gave mother a medicine that put her to sleep in a few minutes. Mother slept all night and when she awoke in the morning she was again in her right mind, and from then on she improved slowly but surely.

Mrs. Brown remained at the station until all danger to mother was over. In the meantime she thought of something that she had forgotten to bring and asked Ab to go and get it for her. Then turning to me she said, "You had better go with Ab and get acquainted with my boys. They will be glad to see you."

I went with Ab as Mrs. Brown suggested. As we neared the little hammock that was called the halfway mark between Hypoluxo Island and the settlement up the lake, we saw a camp on the lakeshore and three persons moving around a tent. It was Billie Addison and the two older Brown boys, and they invited us to come to shore to inspect their camp and visit for a few minutes. The three older boys seated themselves in front of the tent and talked "hunt." The smaller boy, who appeared about my age, seated himself on the rail of the skiff near the bow. I took this as a hint that he wanted to get acquainted with me, so I sat on the rail near the stern of the boat. The Brown boy, whose name was Roswell, but who was called Ros by his brothers and sisters, asked me if I liked camping. I said I did, and then proceeded to tell of my three-year camping experience

around the lake. This was how we became acquainted, an acquaintance and friendship that lasted for many years.

We spent the night at Charlie Moore's and stopped at the Browns' the next morning. When we arrived at the house of refuge early in the afternoon, mother was much improved. In fact, mother was so much better a few days later that Aunt Betsy was sent back to her home on Indian River. Ab made the trip in the *Dolly*, and when he returned he carried his mother and Mrs. Brown to their homes up the lake. Mrs. Moore sent her daughter, Liza, to the station to do the housework until mother fully recovered her health.

Just before her departure from the station, Mrs. Brown invited mother, the baby, and me to come to her house for a long visit. It was agreed that as soon as mother was able, all in the family except father would visit the Brown's.

In September 1876, mother was well enough to stand the trip and so leaving father to his lonesome job, the rest of the family enjoyed a stay at the Brown homestead. At the Brown home there was something doing every day, or one might say every hour. We would wade the marsh on the trail to the ocean beach and there gather sea grapes and cocoplums, or wander up and down the sandy shore of the Atlantic hunting seashells. Every afternoon we would go in bathing, either in the ocean or in the lake, and at night after supper Mrs. Brown would read to us for two hours.

Shortly after our arrival Mr. Brown prepared for a trip to Sand Point to meet his daughter Anna and bring her to their Lake Worth home. Anna had been at college when the family migrated to the lake. Brown engaged Ab as skipper and pilot for the trip and sailed away one bright sunny morning in his sloop, *Little Hannah*. While at Sand Point he sold or traded *Little Hannah* and bought a new boat that was somewhat larger than the sloop; it was also a round bottom boat, a regular modeled craft.

The Browns had a most tiresome return trip down the Indian River, meeting head winds and at times no wind at

all. At Jupiter they found the sea too rough for them to go outside, so they prepared for an indefinite delay in their voyage to Lake Worth. It chanced, however, that another traveler on his way to the lake in a small boat happened along a few days later. He was taking the sawgrass route, and Brown engaged passage for himself and daughter with this party, leaving Ab with the sailboat to wait for a west wind and smooth sea. This was a frightening trip for Anna, who knew only city life. They eventually arrived at the Brown homestead, sunburned and very tired from their long exposure to a tropical sun and their continuous fight with mosquitoes and sandflies. Some days later Ab came sailing in with the new boat, which, after careful inspection by all of the family, was named *Gwendolin*.

About this time father found his food supply running low. Leaving Chapman in charge of the station he started to the store at Sand Point in his little sailboat *Dolly*, stopping overnight to see us at the Browns and going on the next day by way of the sawgrass route. About a week after his departure the wind came in fresh from the northwest and the weather turned quite cool. This caused some comment by the new settlers; it appeared to them that summer had gone and winter was at hand a month ahead of time. Had they been weather wise they would have looked with suspicion on this sudden change in October, one of the hurricane months.

That afternoon a strange boat was sighted coming down the lake filled with men, women, and children. When they landed it was found that they were the long expected Dimick families, the men of which had come with Mr. Brown to the lake early in the summer. Now they had returned with their wives and children, prepared to remain and make their home on the lake. They had chartered the schooner *Rover* in Jacksonville to bring them to the lake together with a load of building material, household goods, and provisions. The schooner was at anchor outside of the

inlet, and they had to land their goods with the small boat. They intended to raft the lumber through the surf into the inlet. This required a smooth sea and calm weather, and prospects of fair weather were good for a day or two.

Of course, the Browns took the new people in and did their best to make them comfortable. In those days no one was refused board and lodging when in need, but in this particular case it took quite a lot of planning to arrange the sleeping of the whole party. Every bed was already in use. There were seven in the Brown family and two Pierces, not to mention the baby. Then there was Mrs. Cap Dimick and baby Belle, Mrs. Frank Dimick and three children, Gene, age seven, Lella, six, and baby Rena; thirteen in all not counting the babies. The Dimick men returned to the schooner in order to be on hand for the unloading first thing in the morning. I don't remember how she did it, but Mrs. Brown found a place for all of us to sleep that night.

The good weather continued for the next two or three days and the *Rover* was quickly unloaded. She sailed at once for her home port as her captain did not like to tempt providence by remaining too long on this coast in the month of October. There had been no hurricanes for the past three years, which made it all the more likely that one was due.

The next important move was to take care of the household goods and provisions that were piled up on the north point of the inlet without shelter of any kind except a few tarpaulins. Every available man and boat was put to work bringing them to the Brown home where the furniture was piled upon the west porch. Then the lumber was rafted down from the inlet. This was a slow and difficult job as the raft could be moved only when the wind was fair. Meantime, the three men were at work clearing a place on which to build the first house of the Dimick colony. They had selected a location nearly a mile south of the Browns.

It was about this time that the rest of the Dimick and

Geer Family arrived, coming by the way of Indian River in a small sailboat. In this party were Mr. and Mrs. M. W. Dimick, father and mother of Frank and Cap Dimick, and Mr. and Mrs. Albert Geer. Mrs. Geer was a sister of Frank and Cap Dimick, and Mrs. Frank and Mrs. Cap Dimick were sisters of Albert Geer; the children were thus cousins both ways.

We had thought the Brown house was full before, now there was no doubt, but the capacity of the house had not yet been taxed to its limit, for some days later two more came to it for shelter. One morning a few days later it was noticed by everyone that the weather looked stormy. The wind was blowing hard from the northeast, the sky was overcast, and heavy dark clouds were flying wildly overhead. This was very suspicious at this time of the year, but all in the house, except mother and me, were new to the country and its storms and did not pay much attention.

About three o'clock that afternoon father came sailing in from Sand Point. As soon as he landed he called the men together and asked them to help him haul his boat high upon shore for he said, "We are going to have a hurricane tonight, in fact it is almost one right now." He advised them to haul all of their boats high on the shore beyond reach of the waves. His advice was quickly followed, and everything that might be damaged by rain was carried to the house and stowed away.

By seven o'clock that night it was blowing a hurricane. A gust would roar through the trees striking the east side of the house with a bang, and when you thought the house could not stand another minute of it, it would ease just a little for a minute or so and then another howling roar of wind just a little harder than before would hit the building. There was a continuous flashing of vivid lightning, but the thunder could not be heard in the terrific roar of the wind and water. The air was almost solid with driving rain mixed with water from the sea and blown like smoke far inland

with a force like the nozzle of a fire hose under heavy pressure. The rain did not fall to the ground but was driven in a horizontal line with a power that only a violent hurricane can give. On the side of the house facing the wind, the pressure was so great that the water could not run down but was forced in through the lap of the siding.

A wide hall extended through the house from west to east and had double doors, with the upper half of glass, at each end. After supper the six families and William H. Gleason of Biscayne Bay, who had stopped on his way home, congregated in this hall to watch the progress of the hurricane and to be ready to vacate if the house showed indications of going over. There were twenty-five of us counting the three babies, by far the largest number of white people that had ever been brought together on Lake Worth, and under almost any other circumstances it would have been a jolly party. All were trying to boost each other's courage by laughing at the storm or making jokes. Cap Dimick said, "Well, folks, I have always said I am not afraid of the house blowing down as long as the trees stand." I was standing close to the glass doors at the west end of the hall. Every few minutes I would take a peek to see what was going on outside. Just as Dimick spoke, I saw the large mastic trees in the front yard were flat on the ground.

The trees in question were from two to three feet in diameter, taller than any other trees in this part of the hammock, and, with the exception of some banyans, were the largest on the lake. With their wide spreading branches they had, no doubt, been hundreds of years in attaining their present size. Cutting out the surrounding bushes and small trees let the wind get a full sweep at them and caused their downfall. This was a better explanation than to say this was the worst storm to strike the coast in several hundred years. It was bad enough without any embellishments.

Around two o'clock in the morning the wind made a sudden shift to the southeast. Father told the anxious watchers they might as well go to bed and get some sleep as there was now no danger of the hurricane increasing in violence. The center of the storm had passed to the south and west.

All in the house were up at daybreak, anxious to see what damage the hurricane had done in the darkness of the night. A scene of desolation met our gaze. The trees were completely stripped of their foliage and small branches were lying flat on the ground. In the front yard the new settlers' furniture was scattered far and wide, blown from the front porch in the night while the wind was at its height.

The wind was now blowing from south-southwest, still pretty hard, but not hard enough to call it a hurricane. We were all anxious to get to the beach to see the ocean. Then too, there might have been wrecks along the coast and sailors in need of help, though it must be confessed, our minds were more on what we might pick up than on aiding shipwrecked men.

After a hearty breakfast quite a number started for the ocean through the swamp and hammock. The swamp to the east of the house was now almost a lake; in ordinary times the water in the trail was not more than an inch or so deep in the worst places. Now it was waist deep on most of the party, and little Ned had to struggle through water nearly neck deep.

We were all too excited to mind the mud and water, and so plunged on until we reached the other side. As we came out upon the beach we saw a wonderful sight. For the first time we viewed the ocean when it was not blue but a yellow muddy color like the Mississippi River in a flood. And such seas, we could see rollers as far out as a mile from shore commence to mount up higher and higher, at last to curve over and come down with a mighty roar that would make the earth quake where we stood. As the great roll curved

over, a quantity of air would be confined underneath the falling tons of water to burst through a second later, blowing columns of spray high into the air.

We searched up and down the shore for wreckage, expecting to find almost anything, but the beach was clean and nothing had washed up except fish of every size, kind, and color imaginable. About a mile to the northward we found a large porpoise and near it a jewfish that must have weighed close to 800 pounds. We carried home a fine lot of fish, mostly red snapper, but fish were the only thing the hurricane had cast upon the shore.

All the rest of that day the wind continued to blow hard, but kept hauling more to the westward so that by the morning of the second day it was coming from the west and the ocean was calm and peaceful once more. The boats were again launched in the waters of the lake and father departed for the station, intending to return and move us back home within a week or so. A few days later a hard northeaster commenced blowing and did not stop for about two weeks.

A few days after the hurricane Will Lanehart called at the Browns'. He had been to the head of the lake and had killed a flamingo while there. He gave it to Anna Brown who was delighted with its beautiful plumage of crimson and deep pink. It was the first and only flamingo ever seen on Lake Worth; it was supposed to have been blown over from the Bahamas by the hurricane.

Sometime about the first of November father came to return us to the House of Refuge. He had plenty to tell of what the hurricane did while he was away from the station, and of the things washed ashore after the storm. Chapman had given him a graphic description of the storm and of his thoughts and feelings all alone in the big house while the tempest raged outside. A calf sperm whale had been cast upon the beach near the station, and now he had more whale oil than he could find use for, and he had gathered

five barrels of fine seashells of every kind and description that were washing up on every high tide.

When I heard father telling of all those things that had happened, I was anxious to get back home and see for myself. For the time being I forgot how lonesome I would be down there with only father and mother for company. When we arrived at the station the shells were there as father had said. In the following days I picked up many handsome ones, but it soon became an old story with no one to share the pleasure of the finds.

Shortly after we returned to the station a young man from Cass City, Michigan, came to live with us until he could locate a homestead. His name was Dexter Hubel.⁴

A few days later father went to have a look at our home on the island and see how Chapman was getting along. He was surprised to find that Chapman had company. Frank Andrews, a former business partner from Brooklyn, had come to spend the winter in the hope it would restore his health. He was in such poor condition at this time that father urged him to come to the station. Andrews accepted the invitation and for a few days thereafter was quite sick; then under the influence of both ocean breezes and good food he improved rapidly and a week later was again enjoying normal health.

Near the last of November, father had to make a trip to Biscayne Bay to see W. H. Hunt, then superintendent of the Houses of Refuge, on some business concerning the Life Saving Service. He got Andrews and Dexter Hubel to stay at the station while he made this trip. The morning after father left the wind was blowing a gale from the northwest and it grew cold very fast. We did not have a thermometer to tell us how cold it actually got, but we knew it was below freezing because water in a pail on the back porch froze solid. We spent most of the next three days sitting around the smoky fireplace, trying to keep warm. The wind blew a

sixty-mile gale from the northwest, coming so fast from the frozen Midwest that there was not much time for it to warm up on its journey southward.

On the third day of the cold spell, which was Thanksgiving Day, 1876, I decided to brave the cold and see if I could kill some ducks to help out with dinner. There were two little ponds in the swamp about a mile south of the station where ducks might be found at times. Father had put the rowboat there so that I might have a chance to hunt.

Taking the old ten-gauge from the gunrack and slinging my powder flask and shotpouch over my shoulder, I started on a duck hunt in that freezing wind. When I arrived at the ponds I found them empty of any kind of game. We would have to eat canned corn beef at our Thanksgiving dinner instead of roast duck.

I was getting very cold by this time so I turned the boat around to push her back to the landing place. I was following the deepest water, but at a sharp turn between two lumps of mud, the boat stuck. I was using a long pole with a block end against a lump of mud, when, laying back on the pole, I pushed with all the strength I could muster. When pushing with all my strength, the pole slipped off the lump and over I went into the icy water.

I did not waste any time in getting back into the boat and bringing her to a resting place; then up the beach for a mile against a hard cold wind. I was cold enough when my clothes were dry, now I felt as if I were covered with ice. On my way home I saw a wild goose fly overhead, but I was too cold and dispirited to even attempt a shot; I was sorry afterwards that I let it go by, for I never saw another in Florida.

The next morning the blizzard had gone and it was real Florida weather again, but the damage had been done by the extreme cold. All the leaves on bushes and trees of the beach ridge hammock had been killed, and, as we found out

a few days later, many thousands of fish in Lake Worth had also died from the cold.

When the wind swung around to the west again, father came sailing home from Biscayne Bay. He brought with him the skin of a four-foot crocodile he had found numbed by the cold on the shore of Indian Creek near the House of Refuge Number 5. It was almost lifeless from the cold and he had killed it with a stick.⁵

Billie Addison had spent most of the previous summer on the lake at Charlie Moore's. Billie's father was a cattleman on the west coast. After the hurricane Billie went home, but returning in December he said his father wanted him to see if he could locate a good cattle range along this coast. Billie knew there might be a good range in the woods far in to the west, but, as far as anyone knew, there was no way to get there. He made up a party to explore the country west of the Hillsborough River, its inlet located some sixteen miles south of the House of Refuge.

Billie persuaded Dexter Hubel and Frank Andrews to go with him on this exploring expedition and borrowed our little boat *Dolly*. Dexter was not new to the woods, having worked in the forests of Michigan as a lumberman, but Frank Andrews was a city boy, born and reared in Brooklyn, and he had never been in the wilds of an unsettled country until he came to Lake Worth.

They started on this trip sometime in December and were gone so long that we became worried as week after week went by with no word. One day, however, about five weeks after they had started on their trip, Frank Andrews came walking up the beach from the south. He had left Dexter and Billie with the *Dolly* in Hillsborough Inlet where they had put in because of bad weather. Frank said that he had had enough of exploring in Florida wilds.

It took grit and determination on Frank's part to set forth on that walk of sixteen miles on the soft beach sand. "But I was ready to undertake most anything" he said,

“that would give me a chance to sleep in a real bed and have regular food once more.” He then told us of the many haps and mishaps, but mostly mishaps, that occurred on this trip into the unknown woods of the Hillsborough. At the start of their trip the explorers made the Hillsborough Inlet in good time and were able to sail up the river about a mile. There they made camp and prepared for a long tramp to the west and south through woods that at that time had never been seen by white men. Each man carried his bedding and enough food for three or four days in a roll over his shoulder. They intended to be back at the boat within three days at the most, and they could not carry food for a longer time as it made their load too heavy.

Leaving the camp early the next morning they made their way in a westerly direction through woods and swamps, wading ponds and tramping over spruce pine ridges until at last they were stopped by a dense cypress swamp that extended to the north and south as far as they could see. It was near sundown when they arrived on the edge of this swamp so they made camp for the night. When Frank removed his shoes he found his feet covered with blisters and raw spots caused by walking through miles of mud and water. They decided Frank should remain in camp the next day to give his feet a chance to heal while Billie and Dexter would scout over the surrounding country. Though they hunted throughout most of the following day, nothing suitable for a cattle range could be found.

The next morning Frank said he was again ready for the trail, and they started, as they supposed, traveling south. They followed this direction for the entire day, camping at night on the edge of a deep pond surrounded on three sides by a heavy growth of rank saw palmetto. There was not a great deal of preparation needed to make camp. The main thing was a good supply of fat lightwood for the campfire, enough to keep a big fire going all night. They considered the fire a necessity in that wild place where varmints had

not learned to be afraid of man. A large supply of fat pine was collected, enough to last the night; then they had supper. After the meal was finished there was nothing left for breakfast.

They had expected to help out their supply of grub by killing game, but so far they had not shot anything. They had only one gun, a double-barreled muzzle-loading shotgun, and Frank had insisted on carrying it. New to the great outdoors, he was a little afraid of what they might come upon and liked the feel of a gun in his hands. He was not much of a marksman and up to this time had missed every shot.

Although very tired and worn by their hard day's tramp through unknown woods and swamps, sleep did not come quickly since they were worried about what the morrow might bring. Then, too, the noises of the night on every hand made Frank nervous. He was almost asleep when his ear caught the sound of a long drawn wail far to the southwest; it sounded almost human. He raised up suddenly and called out, "Billie, what is that?" "That," answered Billie, "was a panther away back in the cypress; go to sleep; he will not bother us while the fire burns, and besides he is hardly likely to come near us for he is at least half a mile from our camp." Billie was an old hand in the Florida woods and swamps and the cry of a panther did not disturb him in the least. Frank, seeing Billie so indifferent, rolled up in his blanket again and was soon sound asleep.

Nothing eventful happened to this little band of adventurers during the night. When the fire burned low, first Billie and then Dexter got up and piled on more wood. At last daylight came and the sun shining over the tops of the eastern woods woke the boys from a sound but troubled sleep. A drink from the pond, blankets rolled up, and they were off, going straight toward the rising sun.

After about an hour, they came out of the swamp and onto a high spruce pine ridge where the walking was easy

compared to the swamps they had just passed through. The woods were fairly open, and they could pick their way between the bunches of oak scrub and saw palmetto. After passing through this they came to tall pine timber, and as they walked out into the more open woods, they saw ahead of them, about half a mile distant, a strip of hammock reaching north and south as far as they could see. Over the top of this hammock they saw palmetto trees growing in the beach hammock about two miles farther on. Billie said that all they had to do was to follow the edge of the swamp in a northerly direction for a few miles, and they would find their boat and camp on the Hillsborough River.

They worked their way back to the high pine ridge and wearily walked north. About three o'clock in the afternoon they arrived at the river and half an hour later reached the boat where they found all as they had left it. They were not long in starting a fire and cooking dinner.

When they awoke the next morning there was a fine west wind blowing and the sea was very smooth, so they started for Miami, some thirty-eight miles down the coast. They made a good run and sailed through Norris Cut into Biscayne Bay just at dark. They never did say just why they made that trip to Biscayne Bay. Perhaps it was Dexter's idea to start a hog ranch, and he went there to buy his first pigs; anyway they sailed down the bay to a place known as the "Hunting Ground." Billie's uncle, John Addison, lived there, and Dexter bought a pair of pigs.⁶

The day they started on their return trip there was a fine breeze blowing from the southeast, and the *Dolly* made good time up the sunlit bay to Miami, where they intended to stop and buy some supplies at William B. Brickell's store. Brickell's dock was inside the river some hundred feet back from the bay, so when they came sailing in they had to jibe their sail in order to enter the river.⁷ Unless a sailor understands his business, jibing in a small boat in a fresh breeze can be dangerous. Frank was sailing the *Dolly*, and as

they turned into the river the sail started to jibe, so he called out, "Catch the boom, Hubel!" Hubel caught the boom as directed, but instead of letting go again as Frank expected, he held on with all his might and over went the boat, spilling all its load into the Miami River: men, pigs, and everything. Fortunately, some men on shore happened to be watching them come in and hurried to their rescue in a rowboat and picked up some of their cargo as it floated away downstream. Of course, everything water would damage was ruined, and the pigs were drowned.

Frank said when he told Dexter to catch the boom he did not expect him to hold it until the boat capsized; he only wanted him to check its rush to the other side. For many years after that, whenever a boat started to jibe, someone would be sure to sing out, "Catch the boom, Hubel."

One afternoon in February 1877 when the weather was a little squally but there was not much wind and only a moderate sea on shore, father called us to look at two sailing vessels that were nearly together about ten miles southeast of the station. They were only under enough sail to give them steerage way; the rest of their sails were neatly clewed and furled. One was a large full-rigged ship, the other a bark. We were at a loss to understand the situation regarding the vessels. After talking it over for some time, varied by peeps at them through the spyglass, father advanced the opinion they were planning to run the ships ashore some time during the night. As night closed the view, they were in about the same position as when we first sighted them.

First thing in the morning, father called me to get up and "see a sight worth looking at." I jumped out of bed and ran to the front door where father was standing; in front of the station was a large bark, the same one no doubt we had been watching the day before. She was headed southeast and had every stitch of canvas set; the stern was in the first line of breakers. The wind was very light from the

southwest and evidently the bark was not minding her helm, for when I came to look at her, they took in the mizzen gaff topsail and lowered the mizzen peak; then she slowly worked her way offshore. A little later the wind breezed up and she was soon out of sight to the northeast.

Father said he thought that daylight had come upon them too quickly and they had found themselves in front of a Life Saving Service house, so they sailed away to try running ashore in another place where there would be no one to see them do it. After the bark was safely offshore father thought of the other ship and wondered what had become of her. Going upstairs with the spyglass he looked to the south and saw the masts of the ship sticking up above Boca Raton point. She had run onshore near Hillsborough Inlet, with sails neatly furled on her yards.

Father walked down to the wreck; it was a part of his duty as keeper of the station to investigate and see if any assistance was desired by the officers and crew of the wrecked vessel. She was the Norwegian ship *Protector* of a thousand tons register, loaded with large square timber. She was hard aground beyond the breakers in ordinary weather and not in any danger of breaking up except in a storm.

The captain said they would remain on board as long as the weather was good or until taken off by some passing steamer; this took place the very next day. A few days later wreckers came from Key West and stripped the ship of her sails and rigging; her cargo of timber, 14 by 14 stuff, was not worth the labor to salvage it.

One cool morning in February father announced his intention to visit the island. He said he wanted to see how the place was coming along under the management of Chapman and his chum Frank Andrews. This was his excuse for this day's absence from his post of duty. Mother thought differently about the matter; she said, "You know very well the place is all right. This is just an excuse to go

somewhere that you may see some men to talk to." Father did not answer; he merely smiled and departed.

About three o'clock that afternoon I was on the east porch working on a model of a ship and mother was in her bedroom when around the corner of the porch came two Indians, Big Tommy in the lead. They were barefoot and made no sound as they walked; they merely looked at me without saying a word and went in at the front door. I jumped up and followed close behind them. I was just a little frightened by their actions; besides, I knew Big Tommy only too well, remembering how ugly he had been when full of Plantation Bitters a few years before.

I intended to slip in behind the Indians and get into the dining room where five guns were resting on the rack, all loaded and ready for use. The Indians did not have their rifles with them and the Indian following Big Tommy did not have any weapons in sight. Big Tommy, however, had enough for both; he was carrying in his right hand a machete, a large Spanish knife with a blade nearly two feet long and about two inches wide.

As the Indians stepped into the living room, mother was just passing on her way to the kitchen. Big Tommy stepped up behind her and the first she knew of his presence was when he placed the big knife over her arm and asked, "You got any more, you want to swap?" When she saw the big Indian holding that enormous knife against her arm she nearly collapsed with fright. On second thought though, she understood what Big Tommy wanted. She had a red and black shawl around her shoulders; Tommy liked it, and wanted one to make a new turban to wear on dress occasions. He told her he would swap venison for it. Mother had no difficulty in making him understand it was the only one she had and that she needed it to keep her warm on cold days.

In the meantime, I had edged over to the door of the

room where the guns were kept and was now standing within a few feet of the gunrack. If they started anything or made a suspicious move, I would have a gun in my hands in an instant, but they did not start anything. On the contrary, they behaved themselves very nicely and asked a few questions. When they found that "Pierce," as they called father, was not at home and would not be there for several hours, they arose and said "*I epus*" (I go) and went back into the woods to the west.

When father returned at dark that night we had a wild story to tell of the visit of Big Tommy and his companion and of how scared we were at first, and of how nice the Indians acted when they found that he was not at home. I was even then confident that I could have killed both Indians if they had started anything.

After the subject of the Indians' visit had been disposed of, father had news to tell. A family named Bradley from Chicago had come to live on the lake. The Bradleys were staying in the Malden house at the inlet. As Malden had been appointed keeper of the Gilbert's Bar House of Refuge, the Bradleys found a house ready-made for them when they arrived. There were three children in the family. Louis, age nine; Guy, seven; and a four-year-old girl named Flora. The Bradleys had located first at Lake Maitland, Florida, and later moved to Turkey Creek on the Indian River where Mr. Bradley met a man returning from Lake Worth. This man told Bradley the lake was a veritable tropical paradise, so the Bradleys loaded their household goods into their small schooner and sailed south.

About the first of April a stranger walked into the station; he turned out to be E. R. Bradley, the new settler. He said he was planning to make a home near the south end of the lake and as it would be some time before he could collect enough lumber from the beach to build a house, he requested permission to use our house on the island until his

was finished. Of course he got the permission, provided Chapman and Andrews would agree to share the place with his family. He had already seen to this by stopping at the island on his way down the beach. Chapman was planning to leave for his home in Brooklyn in a month and Frank Andrews was only too glad to have company after his friend's departure. It was thought at the time by those who understood the situation, that the sweet potato fields on the island had a great deal to do with Bradley's desire to live there. Since the summer of 1873 Butler, father, and Uncle Will had been planting fields of sweet potatoes on the island. Even after the crop had been harvested these fields kept growing from the rooted vines and sprouts of potatoes too small to use.

In the winter of 1873-1874 Uncle Will planted a number of hills of Indian pumpkin, a small orange colored pumpkin grown by the Seminoles. He planted these little pumpkins on the north end of the island where the ground was covered with a thick growth of wild morning glories. Ten years later pumpkins were gathered from vines that were growing in this same field of morning glories; the pumpkins had never been replanted, they had seeded themselves and kept on growing from year to year. So it appeared to Bradley that Hypoluxo Island was a good place to live when food ran short.

In April 1877, father decided to resign his job as keeper of the House of Refuge and return to the island. An annual salary of four hundred dollars was not much of an inducement to live in such an isolated place. He said he would move us back to the island about the first of May, but that he would have to remain in charge of the station until a new keeper came to take his place. Plans were made and household goods packed and ready to move when the wind and sea were right for the five-mile trip on the ocean. Father had transformed the *Dolly* by making her three feet

longer, and I was anxious to see how she would act under sail since there had not been an opportunity to try her sailing qualities since the remodeling.

One afternoon near the end of April, I was working in the garden behind the ridge west of the house. I was thinking it was about time to call it a day, when father appeared on the edge of the clearing and called, "Boy, come here." I looked up, very much surprised at father's tone and manner. It looked like there was trouble in store for me, yet I could not remember anything for which I could be called to account. Walking over to father I asked in a rather weak voice what he wanted. Father grabbed me by the shoulder and said in a stern manner, "You come to the house, I'll show you what's the matter." I was astonished at father's actions, but I humbly trotted along beside him. He led me to the house where Ros Brown waited, laughing heartily at the joke just played upon me.

When Ros walked out on the porch, he had a bundle on his back, shoes slung over his shoulders by their laces, his trousers rolled up to his knees and was, of course, barefoot, a typical beach tramp of the time. He said he had come to spend a week and had brought his gun in the hope of killing a deer or perhaps taking part in a bear hunt.

It was now the time of the year when turtles crawled out upon the beach to deposit their eggs in the warm sand, and bear were now walking the beach at night, searching for turtle eggs. Ros and I got the idea of killing a bear by moonlight, but our courage was not strong enough to induce us to actually do it. Throughout the day we would plan to go that night, but when darkness came we would lose our courage.

Finally father said that he had a scheme whereby we could kill a bear and at the same time remain home safe in bed. His plan was to rig up a set gun on the beach where the bear walked regularly every night. It was a dangerous thing to do, for if a man should happen to come along and run

against the trip line, he would be killed. As beach tramps were very rare at the time, father said he would risk it once or twice and rigged up his old shotgun. One barrel was loaded with buckshot and the other with ball. The gun was fastened to a board and this board nailed to two stakes driven into the ground. A piece of strong fishline led back from the triggers to a small pulley, then forward to a stake about twenty feet in front of the gun. When anything walked against this line the strain would pull back on the triggers of the gun and fire it. Just at dark that night the gun was set about a mile south of the station. No one in the station had a good night's sleep; we were all worried about what might happen at the set gun.

After an early breakfast next morning we hurried down the beach, anxious to see what might have happened in the night. A bear had been shot, and all around in front of the gun the sand was torn up and covered with blood, but the bear was gone. A plain trail led back into the saw palmetto on the ridge, but in the thick hammock we lost it. At first we thought the bear must have climbed a tree, and so we scanned all trees large enough to sustain a bear of its evident size and weight, but to no avail; the bear could not be found.

The next night the gun was set as before, only a little nearer the station. In the morning we visited the gun and found much the same condition as the day before. A bear had walked into the trip line and fired both barrels into its side at a distance of not more than ten feet from the muzzle of the gun, but the bear had gone off leaving a trail of blood leading to the west. We followed it over the beach ridge and then lost it in the open woods. Again we had to return home emptyhanded, quite disgusted with Florida bears in general and this method of hunting them in particular.

A few days after the last episode with the bear, Ros and I were awakened by father, who said the wind was light from the southwest and the sea smooth so it was a good day to

move. It did not take us long to load the *Dolly* and less time to see that she would not hold more than two-thirds of the things we had down on the beach ready for transportation, so the little lifeboat was run out of the boathouse and launched to carry the leftovers from the *Dolly's* cargo. At last all was ready to sail. Father, mother, and baby led the expedition in the *Dolly* with the little lifeboat with Ros and me as sailors in tow.

In about an hour's time we arrived at the haulover where the two boats were beached and then unloaded and hauled up out of the reach of the sea. Then the real work commenced; the work of carrying everything over to the lake. Not having planks and rollers we were compelled to use the Indian method of spreading stalks of pawpaw to slide the boat overland to the lake. About two hours after beaching the boats, the *Dolly* was floating on the waters of Lake Worth and ready to sail the two miles to the old homestead. The first thing I did after landing on the island was to make the acquaintance of the two Bradley boys, Louis and Guy.

4. Back on the Lake

We found the first night in our old home on the island rather crowded. The house was eighteen by twenty feet with one room downstairs and an attic above. The five Bradleys had the attic as a bedroom while my family, Ros, Andrews, and Chapman, seven in all, made our beds on the floor downstairs. Our kitchen was the whole outdoors; a pile of rocks waist high and about four feet square was the fireplace, or, more properly speaking, the cooking place. In fine weather it was all right, but in a hard rain the cooking had to wait.

The next day Chapman and Andrews pitched a tent to use for sleeping quarters on the north side of the house, and father returned to his lonely job at the station. Ros continued his visit for two days more, then returned home in the boat that carried Chapman back north to Brooklyn.

Up to this time all the people on the lake had believed Frank Andrews was unmarried; they had never questioned him about the matter, but took it for granted as he never mentioned the subject in any way. He had recently purchased a piece of land from Uncle Will, who was at the time one of the assistant keepers of the Jupiter Light. Frank

hired Bradley to help him clear a building site in the dense hammock growing on his newly acquired land, and then gave out the information that he was going to build a house. After the land was cleared, they went over to the pinewoods to get the sills and plates for the new house, cutting down big pine trees and then hewing them square. The shingles, siding, and flooring were coming from Jacksonville by schooner. The Dimicks and Geers had chartered a schooner to bring lumber and other supplies and Frank Andrews' lumber order helped to make up her load.

One day Andrews said he just had to take time from his house building to catch up with his correspondence. There was but one table in the house, the dining table, a homemade affair that was sturdy but not handsome. Mother told Frank he could have entire possession of the table until noon, when he would have to vacate until after dinner. A few minutes later she noticed a letter on the table addressed to Mrs. Frank Andrews, Brooklyn, New York. This was his way of informing us he was married and his reason for building a house.

About the first of August the house was nearly finished, so well advanced in fact, he decided to move in and do his own cooking once more; he had been boarding with the Bradleys since Chapman's departure. Some three years previous to this, Uncle Will had started a house on his homestead. With father's help he had erected a frame the same size as our house, but he had not finished it. Bradley asked permission to enclose this frame with palmetto fans and live there until he could build on his own homestead. Uncle Will was only too glad to have the frame enclosed and in use. With the help of Frank Andrews, the Bradleys soon had a new home.

Father was not relieved as keeper of the House of Refuge until January 1, 1878. Stephen N. Andrews, a small and rather thin Englishman from London, was the new keeper; a young man about twenty-one years of age and a typical



The Pierce home on Hypoluxo Island was built in 1876 from lumber and driftwood salvaged from the beach. H. D. Pierce is leaning against the doorway on the right

“cockney,” he had blue eyes, curly side whiskers, and the habit of many London people of misplacing his “h’s.” He was a genuine good fellow and a great talker.

Sometime near the first of November of that year, the Bradleys moved to Uncle Will’s homestead near the north end of the island, and shortly afterwards Rose Bradley was born. A week later Bradley departed for Sand Point to renew their food supply. He returned home in a new boat, having traded his schooner for a twenty foot clinker-built sloop called *Nautilus*. A man named Michael Merkel returned with him. He was a German, but was French by birth because he was born in Alsace–Lorraine when it was French territory. He had lived in the United States since he

was a small boy and had come to Florida from Chicago. He ate his meals with the Bradleys and slept on board the *Nautilus* for about two weeks. In the meantime he was looking the country over and at last decided to locate on Lake Osborn, a large freshwater lake one and three-quarters of a mile west of Lake Worth. He built a very small palmetto shack on the south side of a large bay running eastward from the main body of the lake and nearly due west of Uncle Will's place.

Merkel's first shack was of the most primitive type. It was made by placing pine and spruce poles on the ground and bringing them together at the top, tent fashion; these were covered with saw palmetto leaves for rainproofing. The shack was just large enough for his bed. Merkel contracted with Will Lanehart for a fifteen-foot skiff to be delivered at his place on Lake Osborn. The contract price was twenty-five dollars. When Louie Bradley and I learned of the building of this boat for use on Lake Osborn, we at once commenced to plan hunting and exploring trips into the vast swamp surrounding the lake and to the unknown woods to the west.

Up to this time no one from the settlements on Lake Worth had crossed this swamp to the woods beyond, nor had anyone explored any of this great morass since no one had a boat in those waters and its exploration was quite impossible without one. When the boat was finished, Hammon and Lanehart brought it to the Bradleys and the neighbors were called to assist in transporting it to the freshwater lake. When the boat was afloat on Lake Osborn, Will Lanehart collected his money and started for home. Louie and I, however, waited until the men had departed and then approached Merkel about the loan of his boat. He said he would be glad to let us use his boat at anytime, provided he did not need it himself.

We borrowed the boat from time to time for short trips

on Saturdays. On one of these short trips we found a creek near the south end of the lake that led off in a westerly direction into the open marsh to the west. We could see that the way to the distant woods farther west was open to us by this creek route, and since alligators were so numerous along its banks we named it "Alligator Creek."

After many one-day trips to the lake it became evident that more time was absolutely necessary if we were ever to reach those very mysterious woods. Finally we obtained Merkel's consent to use his boat for two days and made preparations accordingly, taking along food for four meals and a blanket apiece. Guy went along on this particular trip although he was too young to be of any use except as company.

It was the first of spring and herons were in full plume so we loaded our guns with small shot. Plumes were worth twenty-five cents each. At the edge of the woods our boat was stopped by thick grass so we started wading towards the pines a short distance beyond. As we passed near a very small island, a deer jumped out and ran for the timber. We fired at it but it was too far for the birdshot to take effect. Without thinking of the chance of coming upon more large game, we reloaded with birdshot and went on. At the edge of the woods we looked to the northward and saw three large bucks feeding in a shallow pond about three hundred yards distant.

We had no way of drawing the loads in our guns, but we wanted to kill one of those deer since we realized venison would be good with our dry biscuits at supper. Finally I decided to drop three buckshot in each barrel and wad it down on top of the birdshot. After fixing our loads we sneaked along until we had a large island between us and the deer. When we reached the island we dropped down on our hands and knees and carefully crawled through the hammock until we came to the other side where we expected to

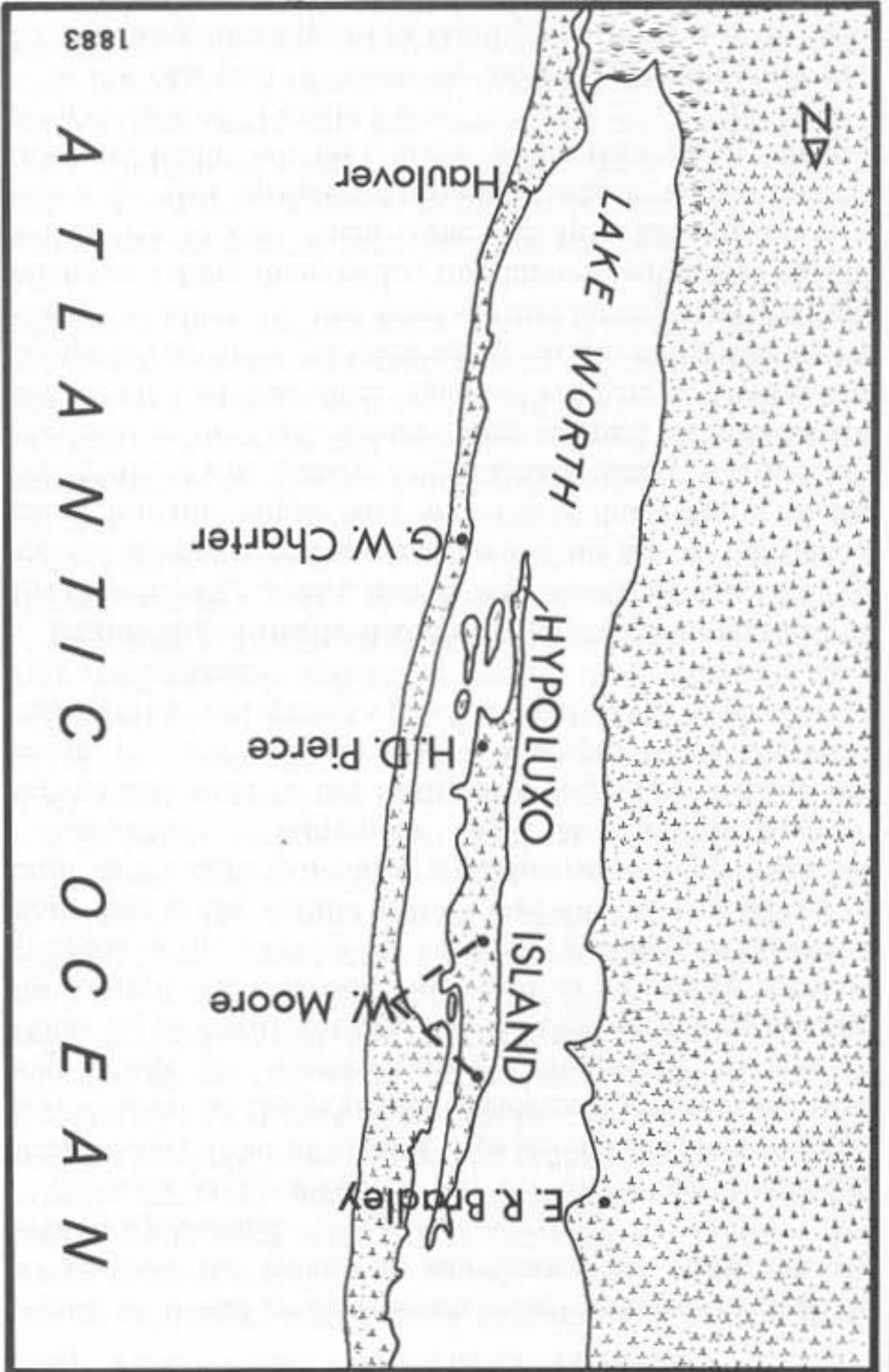
see the deer within easy range. I rose slowly to my feet and scanned the pond carefully from end to end, but there was nothing in sight; the deer had vanished.

When I finished raving over the incident, we decided it was time to think about a campsite. I had noticed a high piece of ground on an island on our way across the lake, and we decided to investigate it. It was pitch dark when we landed, and we had to feel our way from the boat to the campsite, which was even better than we expected. The top of the hill was quite open with only a few scattered small scrub oaks. The ground was covered with a nice carpet of pine straw. Some very large spruce were growing over the top of the hill, and nearby to the north we found plenty of good lightwood for the campfire. This spot was so much better than any other found later that we made it our regular camp for many years.

Another new settler arrived on the lake about the time Merkel placed his boat on Lake Osborn. Benjamin Lanehart, a cousin of Will Lanehart, came to Lake Worth intending to make it his home for the balance of his life. He located on the west side of the lake about a mile south of Cap Dimick's home. He built a palmetto shack, cleared part of the hammock, and planted sweet potatoes and pumpkins, the staple crops of the early settlers. In the meantime he had Will Lanehart build a small flat-bottom sailboat that he soon learned to manage quite well. Ben Lanehart was an old man when he arrived on the lake. Tall and very thin, a straggling grey beard covered his face and his nose was high and thin with a decided slant to the left. He soon became known to all as "Uncle Ben," and everyone liked the kindly old man.

Few settlers around the lake at this time had a dock for a boat landing; they would simply anchor their boats in water not more than knee deep, pull off their shoes, roll up their trousers to keep them from getting wet, step overboard, and wade ashore. Uncle Ben ordinarily did not wear shoes, so when he started out on a visit around the lake, his first act

HYPOLUXO ISLAND



ATLANTIC OCEAN

1883

would be to roll up his trousers as high as they would go; he never took the trouble to roll them down again until he arrived back home.

As soon as he mastered the art of sailing, Uncle Ben became very fond of making trips around the lake, stopping a few hours at the principal homesteads to exchange news and gossip. He would invariably commence his visit by filling his pipe with cut plug. He did this by holding the pipe by its reed stem between his teeth as he rubbed the hard tobacco in the palm of his left hand; standing on his brown bony legs in the middle of the room with his trousers rolled clear to his crotch, he made a picture never to be forgotten.

Sometime in November 1877, Mrs. Frank Andrews arrived and went to live in the new home her husband had ready for her. It was not a fine place but was very comfortable and quite as good as most of the homes on the lake at that time.

Dexter Hubel finally decided to locate his homestead on the beach ridge about half a mile south of the lake. He cleared a small plot for a garden and on top of the ridge a place for the house that was to be built from lumber collected on the beach. Exceptionally good weather had prevailed in the Gulf Stream during the past six months and no vessels had lost their loads of lumber, so Dexter was compelled to defer his building operations while waiting for stormy weather. He had been writing home to his family in Michigan telling them of his fine homestead and of how he would like to have them come and help him make a new home in this wonderful country where it was always summer. It did not take many such letters to give them a genuine case of "Florida Fever."

In the first part of November of 1877, Dexter received a letter telling him the entire family was on its way to Lake Worth. The mail service at that time was very uncertain. The mail came down the river to the St. Lucie Post Office once a week by sailboat, but from there, which was fifty miles

north of Jupiter, to the lake, the mail was carried by anyone that happened to come along. Sometimes months would pass without a boat going to the lake, leaving the settlers isolated from the outside world. By the time Dexter received the letter telling of the coming of his family, it was time for their arrival, and they arrived the next afternoon. It was a very large group. In the family were his mother and father, his sister, her husband and baby, and five other sisters and three brothers.

Their first night was spent at our homestead, and there was quite a time finding floor space for all of the family at bedtime. Dexter obtained permission to use the Armour house until they could build their own, but this house was small and there was barely room for them to sleep. Their living was mostly out of doors, on the beach or in the woods. The weather was fine, so it was no hardship and they enjoyed every minute of the day, but the beds were hard and red bugs kept them busy scratching at night.

Two weeks after Dexter's family arrived the men were all at work on the beach collecting lumber for their new home, and the women and girls were busy in and around the Armour house, when Mrs. Hubel saw a fire had started near where they had been cooking. The women and girls got everything out of the house, but they could only stand and watch it burn to the ground; that did not take long as the house was covered with dry palmetto fans that burned like thin paper.

When the men and boys returned from work and found their home a smouldering heap of ashes, they got busy and did their best to provide a shelter. Dexter brought his sisters and the baby to our house, and his father, mother, and brothers built a palmetto lean-to shack to shelter their household goods. Next day word was sent up to the settlement that the Hubel family was homeless, and help was needed to build their new house. Every man and boy that could be spared answered the call. Work commenced

early one morning and by sundown that night the house was finished, a good substantial building that stood the wear and tear of time and hurricanes.

In the summer of 1877 a meeting of the settlers was called to work out some plan to either improve the inlet or to dig a new one. The old inlet was becoming quite a nuisance; it was continually closing when most needed, and the settlers were tired of having to open it every few months. At its best, it was too shoal for boats of any size to enter. At the meeting it was the consensus of opinion that the cause of the inlet's frequent closing was its unprotected situation. It always closed when there was a heavy ground swell from the north; high seas washed off the north point of the channel and filled up the opening. A committee was appointed to look into the situation and report the week following.

About a mile north of the inlet was a point extending for some distance into the sea beyond low-water mark. The end of this point was a mass of high boulders known as the "Black Rocks." The beach ridge was quite narrow for a distance of two or three hundred yards south of the point. The committee reported that the best place to cut the new inlet was close to the rocks so that they would form a natural jetty. The committee's report was accepted, but the main drawback was the size of the job in question. The ridge was no less than twenty feet in height and covered with a heavy growth of hammock trees and jungle, and the distance from water to water was not less than three hundred feet. With only shovels, hoes, and wheelbarrows at their command, it was indeed a Herculean task, but these settlers were not the kind of men to be daunted by hard work. The call went out for men that could do a day's work or more to assemble at the site of the proposed inlet and commence digging through to the sea.

Nineteen workers reported for duty and with stout hearts and strong arms they went at it. Men who had such luxuries

as tents brought them along with their camping outfits, while others not so fortunate built shacks of poles covered with palmetto fans. After sleeping quarters, cooking places, and a supply of firewood had been prepared, they commenced digging.

First the axemen cleared a wide space through the hammock while others hauled away the trunks and branches of the trees. Another gang grubbed out the hard stumps of bunchgrass that were growing from the lakeshore to the hammock edge. After some days of steady hard work the clearing was completed, and then with shovel and wheelbarrows the removal of the sand commenced. It was slow hard work, but after a few days it began to look as if it could be finished, and the men had visions of a permanent deep inlet with vessels of good size sailing in and out the year around.

After some weeks of work, the inlet was ready to open when the sea was smooth and at low tide; then, the last few feet of sand would be quickly removed and the lake water started through to the ocean. It would be up to the wash of water rushing through the ditch to cut the inlet to the required depth and width.

When wind, sea, and tide were favorable, the last few feet of sand was quickly dug out and "all hands and the cook" went into the cut with hoes and shovels, pushing sand and water along on their journey to the Atlantic. The water of the lake was at a high stage giving a good fall to the sea, and at bedtime there was a strong flow through the cut. Everyone was sitting around the campfire, just before turning in for the night, when someone said, "Wouldn't it be funny if the banks started cutting so fast during the night that our camp tumbled into the cut?" This was considered a joke since everyone knew the tents and shacks were located far enough from the ditch to prevent any such accident, but Cap Dimick had a habit of talking in his sleep at times, and the gradually widening inlet caused him to

dream the camp actually did fall into the cut. In the excitement of his dream he shouted at the top of his voice, "Run, boys, run! She's washing in!" With these shouted words he jumped out of bed and bolted into the scrub back of the camp. The entire camp was roused by Cap's yells and each man sought safety from the raging torrent of the inlet in what to him seemed the quickest and shortest way. One man even plunged through the back wall of his tent. When the men had bunched together out in the bushes of the hammock, Cap Dimick awoke and wanted to know why everyone was standing in the dark.

By the next night the inlet was a certainty as water poured through in great volume, making it wider and deeper every hour. For a number of years after it was opened, it was the best fishing place on the coast.

The first decade of our life in Florida was truly the era of pioneering. Up to 1882 the manner of living, with a few exceptions, was most primitive. The gun, fishline, net, and the ocean beach were the sources from which we obtained our food and whatever else we needed. The ocean beach was our treasure chest that supplied us with articles of trade at the store in Sand Point. When supplies were running short, a settler would spend a week or so on the beach collecting old metal. It was not hard to gather four or five hundred pounds in a week of beachcombing. Sometimes the trip to the store was delayed too long; then the family left on the homestead would have to live off the fat of the land. On one particular occasion my family lived for two weeks on palmetto cabbage (the heart of the cabbage palmetto at the top), fish, Indian pumpkin, and wild game. In these cases many were the substitutes used to help along the lack of real food. Tea was made from the dried green leaves of the wild coffee plant found growing in the hammocks. It proved quite wholesome and a fair substitute, but the makeshift for coffee proved better. Mother discovered it and her "coffee" proved very popular on the lake. It was made by cutting

sweet potatoes into small chunks, baking them in an oven to a crisp, dark brown, and then grinding them in a coffee mill. The brew looked exactly like coffee and tasted fairly good, very much like Postum cereal.

In the second year of the lake settlement, sweet potatoes became very plentiful, and since there was no way to ship them we had to eat what we could. They were baked, stewed, fried, and sometimes eaten raw. When baked, mashed, and mixed with flour and baked again they were used as bread. Sometimes the potatoes were grated when raw, then mixed with a little salt and baked; this was called potato pone. Of course, in season we had turtle eggs as another important addition to our menu.

Early one morning father saw a party of hunters camped on the west shore of the lake across from our landing. After breakfast he crossed the lake to see who they were and took me along. When we landed and introduced ourselves, we found the group consisted of a Dr. J. A. Henshall and four young men from Kentucky. They had come to Florida on a health trip and were cruising in a little wall-side catboat named *Blue Wing*.

Dr. Henshall and his party camped around the shore of the lake for about a week and the doctor and two of his companions walked the beach to Miami, stopping over at Lauderdale for a visit to the Indian village near the headwaters of New River. In 1884 I called at the George W. Potter homestead and found George Potter hard at work making pen drawings for Dr. Henshall's book, *Camping and Cruising in Florida*, which was an account of his trip in the *Blue Wing* and a later cruise in a schooner named *Rambler* down the east coast.¹ Dr. Henshall in this book gave an accurate description of the country and names of all the people as he found them at that time living on the lake.

William Butler, though an educated man and city raised, was a first class pioneer because of his inventive turn of mind and his mania for exploration and investigation. In the

first six months of his residence on the lake, according to his own words, he did little else but explore and poke into every nook and corner of the territory adjacent to the waters of Lake Worth. He found cannonballs behind shell mounds on the west shore across the lake from the inlet, and, in his estimation, this was proof the approach to the inlet had been guarded by fortifications placed there long ago by pirates or the Spanish. He discovered the burial mounds of prehistoric Indians near the inlet, and he found a small earthen bowl made by the same Indians.

It was Butler's inventive mind that solved our soap problem on Hypoluxo Island. When our soap ran out, Butler suggested making a batch of soft soap by setting up a barrel of hardwood ashes to leach for potash, mixing this potash with fat or grease and boiling until it turned to soap. The only apparent difficulty was finding the fat. The next day Butler went hunting, returning near noon towing a very large alligator behind his boat. He cut the gator open and found it was full of clear white fat, enough to make soap to last six months.

An empty flour barrel was placed upon short legs, then the ashes from the campfires were scraped up and dumped into the barrel. A hole was made in the side of the barrel near the bottom and a pail to catch the lye was placed underneath. A number of pails of water were then poured on top of the ashes. When the pail that was catching the drippings was full, it was poured into a large iron kettle that was the soap works. When the big kettle was nearly full of lyewater, a fire was started under it and the alligator fat added. Butler, who was superintendent of the soap factory, kept the kettle boiling all day and part of the next, but the soap would not make; it just remained a nasty mess of water and grease. He could not understand the problem until he tasted the ashes and found they were salty. We had been burning buttonwood on our campfire, a species of mangrove that grows near the water's edge, and it must have absorbed

the salt from the lake. The ashes were so full of salt that our soap was spoiled.

Some days before I had set fire to a very large dead mastic tree that lay on the south side of the clearing. I told Butler about the ashes from the mastic and how white they were. On examination Butler said he could not detect salt. The leaching barrel was filled with these new ashes and the production of lye was started all over again. Butler went hunting and managed to kill another big fat alligator; this time the soap made and was a staple article in Hypoluxo homes for a number of years.

After the August hurricane of 1870, the great number of wrecks along the coast attracted all the beachcombers in the southern part of the state. Charlie Moore was one of these. One day he was tramping along the beach near the south end of Lake Worth at extreme low tide and the rock reefs along the shore were sticking above the surface of the ocean in many places. Suddenly he saw a large anchor close to the beach, in fact only a foot or so beyond the water's edge, and a few feet away a small cannon. A careful examination disclosed the fact there were three more cannons lying on the rock bottom in a northwesterly direction from the anchor, showing conclusively that a vessel had run onshore headed southwest. From the rather ancient type of anchor and cannons, Charlie Moore decided this was the wreck of a pirate ship.

Several years later our family heard the story of the pirate ship and one afternoon mother suggested that the two of us go over to the beach to investigate. When we came out on the sand we found the tide was very low and the sea as smooth as a pond. We walked down the beach to the south for about a quarter of a mile and there we saw them: four small cannons and a huge anchor, their top sides just out of the water and all covered with long strands of seaweed, coral formations, and soft sandstone. The slight undulation of the sea caused the long festoons of sea growth

attached to these ancient relics to wave back and forth in a most uncanny manner.

That night around the campfire we talked about the very mysterious wreck. Butler maintained that it had been a pirate ship, while father thought it might have been the U.S. sloop of war *Wasp*. He said that about the year 1814 the *Wasp* was cruising in this part of the Atlantic when she captured the British sloop *Frolic* and sent her to port with a prize crew. Then the *Wasp* disappeared and was never seen again. I claimed it could not have been the *Wasp* as she carried eighteen guns. The next day I got out an old history book we had brought from Chicago that had a chapter on Florida. It stated that the first settlement in Florida was at or near the mouth of the St. Johns River. This settlement was made by Jean Ribault and a body of Huguenots. Ribault went to France for supplies and men for his little colony that was named Fort Caroline. When he returned in the fall of 1565 with a fleet of seven vessels, this history stated, "it being the stormy season of the year on this coast, he found himself wrecked on the Florida reefs about three hundred miles south of Fort Caroline." As the old wreck was just three hundred and ten miles south of the St. Johns River, I concluded that it was all that remained of one of Admiral Ribault's seven ships.

One day while hunting I found an ancient flintlock rifle at the bottom of a shallow creek. It had been a fine gun in its day. The front sight was made of silver; the ramrod was spring steel and it had a head of brass that screwed on. The flashpan was also of brass and the flint was still fastened in the hammer. The hammer was at halfcock and the main-spring of the lock was broken, caused no doubt by the strain on it for many years. The wood of the stock was very rotten; one could almost mash it with the fingers, but the metal parts of the gun were in good condition. The water of the creek was always fresh and this no doubt explains why the gun had not rusted. It is possible the old flintlock was

lost by one of the crew of the old ship, which was wrecked not more than a mile to the northeast of where the gun was found.

In the latter part of 1877 Uncle Ben Lanehart planted a crop of sweet potatoes. When the vines were growing he noticed that something was eating them. On investigation he found deer tracks all through his patch. Since the deer were a threat to his entire crop, he crossed the lake to consult his cousin as to the best way to stop the destruction. Will Lanehart's advice was to rig up a set gun. He even volunteered to fix one. After the gun was placed in the potato patch the two men returned to the shack to await developments.

On the same afternoon Jarvis Brown decided he would try fire hunting for deer that night. He had never done this kind of hunting, but Billie Addison and Ab Wilder had given him instructions. The regular way was to fasten a frypan on the end of a pole that was seven or eight feet long; on the front end of this pole a crosspiece was nailed on which the hunter rested his gun when ready to shoot. It was usual for two to go on these fire hunting excursions; one carried the firepan and did the shooting, the other carried a bag of lightwood and kept a fire going in the pan.² Jarvis went alone and of course had to carry his wood in addition to the gun and firepan. He hunted down along the lakeshore and as he neared Uncle Ben's place remembered hearing him complain about the deer eating his potato vines. He made his way up the bank into the northeast corner of the little field having no idea that a deadly set gun was there. Just as he stepped into the field, Will opened the door of the shack and saw the firelight. Will yelled, but he was an instant too late, for while he was calling out Jarvis had walked against the setline and fired the gun. On examination it was found that the young man was not dangerously hit. The top ends of two fingers were shot off, and one buckshot had struck him in the thigh but had not touched the bone.

Will and Uncle Ben were badly scared and carried Jarvis home as quickly as possible. Mrs. Brown was an excellent nurse and she thought that he would soon be well. About ten days later a neighbor called and Mrs. Brown said everything had healed except the shot hole in the thigh that for some reason continued to discharge. A few days later Ab Wilder came to our home with the sad news that Jarvis was dead. The artery in his leg had broken through the shot hole and he had bled to death in minutes. They buried him in a small grove of satinwood trees southeast of the Brown home. Jarvis' death saddened the whole community; he was a fine young fellow. It is perhaps needless to add that the other two boys of the Brown family were never allowed to go fire hunting after their brother's fatal accident.

In the winter of 1876-1877 David Brown attempted the growing of tomatoes for shipment to northern markets in late winter and spring. His main problem was the extremely poor transportation facilities. Small sailboats were the only means of sending produce to the head of the Indian River, where it then had to be hauled by wagon over a soft sand road to a slow-moving steamer that went down the St. Johns to Jacksonville, the railhead of the east coast of Florida. An impossible proposition some claimed, but Brown decided to try. He raised tomatoes of fine quality in goodly numbers, but the experiment was a failure financially; his entire crop was lost by decay in transit.

The other settlers watched Brown's attempt and decided the greatest drawback was the twelve-mile trip to Jupiter Inlet on the ocean. Their boats were too small to make that voyage except in the finest weather. They decided that the sawgrass route could be used in times of rough seas if channel markers were placed along the way. They also decided to build a wooden tramway over the haulover. Alfred Smith, a young man from Indian River, bought the *Cruiser* from Charlie Moore and fitted her up as a freight boat for the sole purpose of hauling the tomato crop up

Indian River and bringing back supplies for the settlers. By this time Sand Point had blossomed out as a real town, now named Titusville after Henry T. Titus. Colonel Titus had built a hotel for the accomodation of winter tourists, who were becoming more numerous each succeeding season.

In November 1878, the call went out for all men able to work to meet at the haulover and be prepared to stay until the tram road was completed. The beach had been combed from one end of the lake to the other for material for the rails and ties for the railroad. The cast iron wheels and axles had been ordered from Jacksonville and were now on hand.

After the tram road was finished, a committee of two was appointed to mark the channel through the sawgrass to Lake Worth Creek. As in 1874, Will Lanehart and father were the men selected for the job. The channels were marked the same as before, a white rag on the end of a pole stuck in the muck. They knew from past experience the poles would take root and grow, but they did not have anything else to use.

Since the summer of 1875 Uncle Will had been employed as an assistant to the keeper of Jupiter Light and had been putting in all of his spare time building a boat. It was his intention to use this boat in the party business. By this time people in the northern states were beginning to discover the hunting, fishing, and cruising in Florida in the winter. Most of the boats on the river in 1875 were so small there was no room on board for cooking or sleeping. When night or mealtime came, they were forced to go ashore. This boat of Uncle Will's was twenty-eight feet long and seven wide, with a large roomy cabin fitted with bunks for sleeping. When the *Bonton*, as he named her, was launched, Uncle Will resigned his position at the Light and came to live with us on Hypoluxo Island.

One morning in February 1878, father and I were at work in our tomato field. The tomatoes were about ready for the first picking and were now getting the last hoeing to

remove the scattered weeds. Suddenly we heard the deep tone of a steamship's whistle. We looked at each other in wonderment until father suggested I run over to the beach and see if there was anything in sight. I was only too ready to accept an excuse to stop work and quickly crossed the lagoon to the beach. When I reached the top of the ridge a steamer hove to and a small boat rowed out to her, evidently containing the crew of a wrecked vessel. The boat was hoisted on board and the steamer got underway down the coast. I quickly returned home and reported to father, who decided there was some kind of wreck and that he was going to investigate in the *Dolly*.

The wreck proved to be the Spanish brig *Providentia*, loaded with coconuts from the island of Trinidad and bound for Cadiz. She was a small craft of only 175 tons; square-rigged forward and a fore-and-aft rigged on the main, sometimes called a brigantine. She had nothing on board but coconuts and the few ship's stores used by the crew: white beans, a queer kind of pea, some salt pork, and a goodly supply of garlic. Spanish vessels always carry wine for the use of the crew, but there was none in evidence when we arrived at the wreck. Hammon and Will Lanehart were there when father arrived. Hammon claimed the captain had given the wreck to him and Lanehart when he left. They said Uncle Ben had been with them since the vessel came onshore, but had gotten "miffed" at something and had gone home that morning. About half an hour after my arrival, the Dimicks and Albert Geer came walking down the beach. Hammon offered everyone but me a drink of agvadente, a kind of rum made in Cuba from sugarcane juice, clear as water and as hot as fire, in fact almost pure alcohol.³ After the drink we went to view the vessel that was lying with her port side right up against the beach; all we had to do was wade through a few inches of water and climb on board. The brig was an old type of sailing vessel and had been steered with a huge tiller managed with blocks

and tackle attached to either side of the ship. Shortly after the departure of the crew, the wind had changed into the east and was blowing a brisk breeze. High seas were breaking over the old brig when the inspection party climbed on board.

There were enough coconuts on board to supply all the settlers with all they could use had they had free access to the cargo, but Hammon and Lanehart had claimed the wreck and they charged two-and-a-half cents each for the nuts. This was cheap enough, but there were some settlers who could not afford to spend any money buying nuts to plant; they needed what money they had to buy food and clothes. Hammon and Lanehart opened their hearts to father after he bought two hundred nuts for himself, two hundred for Cecil Upton, and seven hundred for Captain Armour; they gave him the *Providentia's* longboat. This boat was a heavy built round-bottom boat, twenty feet long and six wide. When father got the boat home, Uncle Will helped him put in a centerboard and half-decking. When rigged with a jib and a leg-o-mutton mainsail she made a pretty good sailboat, and because she was once Spanish and now American, father named her *Creole*.

James Hubel helped to plant the seven-hundred coconuts on Captain Armour's homestead at the foot of the lake. Cap Dimick, Frank Dimick, M. W. Dimick, and Albert Geer bought large quantities of the nuts and planted them all over their homesteads. To them, more than to anyone else, belongs the honor of putting the "Palm" in Palm Beach.

In the early years the settlers on the lake had very irregular mail service. Mail was brought from Sand Point to old Fort Capron once a week by small sailboat. The post office at Fort Capron was known as St. Lucie; James Payne was postmaster. Any mail arriving at this office for Jupiter or Lake Worth would remain there until someone happened to stop on their way south. If the traveler was only going as far as Jupiter, the mail would be left with Captain Armour

at the lighthouse, who would send it on by the first boat going to the lake. No one ever refused to act as mail carrier when coming to the lake, and in every case took great pains to deliver every piece of mail to the addressee, no matter how much time it took. What is more remarkable, in all those five years of this "catch as catch can" mail service, not a paper or letter was lost or failed to be delivered to the rightful owner.

In the latter part of 1878 the people of the lake decided they were entitled to regular service. They petitioned the government to establish a mail route from the St. Lucie Post Office to some place on the lake, giving them mail once a week. The petition asked for the appointment of V. O. Spencer as postmaster and the office to be named Lake Worth. The Post Office Department called for bids on this new mail route, and a little later the post office of Lake Worth was established with Spencer as the postmaster. The mail was carried by small sailboat to Jupiter. From there it was taken eight miles down the beach to a place near the head of the lake known as the Gap; here the mail carrier had a rowboat, with a small sail to use when the wind was fair. It was five miles from the Gap to the post office. If the wind was fair, the trip was a pleasant sail, but if the wind was blowing from the south, the trip was long and tough. The first mail carrier on this route was Ed Capron, a tall, husky, blond young man. Capron carried the mail for quite a long time; then for some reason he lost his mind and had to be taken upstate for treatment. He never returned.⁴

5. Life on the Lake

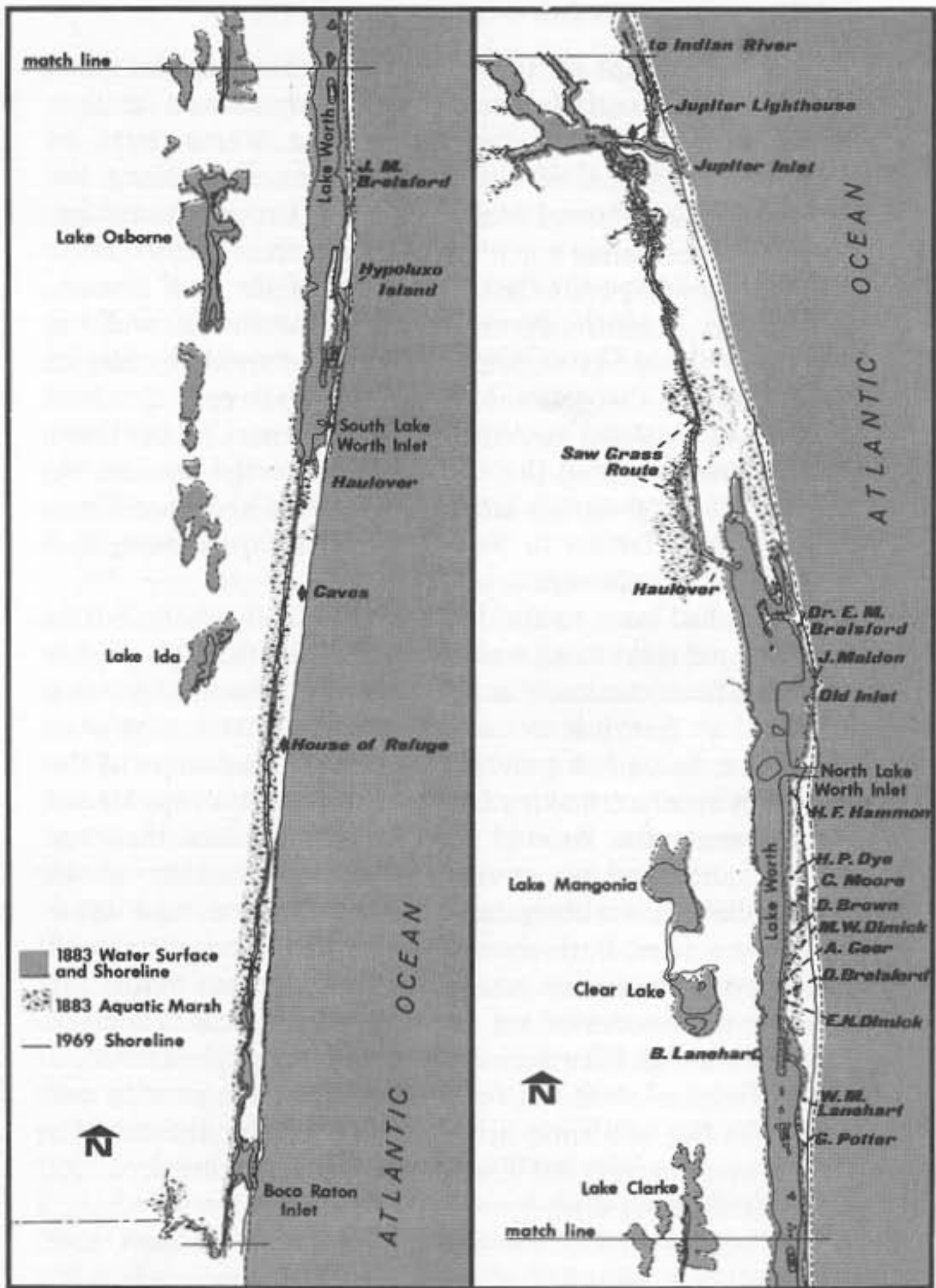
Early in the summer of 1879 a boat came up from the Keys with a load of pineapple slips and sold a few thousand to the settlers. This set off a "pineapple fever" and everyone wanted slips to plant. No one had grown them before, but there was every reason to believe they would do well and become a source of additional income. Uncle Will and father made a trip to Key Largo in August of that year and brought home a boatload of slips and about a hundred ripe pineapples. Six thousand slips were planted on Uncle Will's place and Captain Armour's, five thousand on Robert Moore's, and two thousand each on Upton's and our homestead. All but Upton's were planted on new red hammock land. They did not need any fertilizer on the hammock land and produced the finest apples for four years on the same fields, but then the fields played out. No doubt if we could have fertilized them they would have continued to produce for years, but commercial fertilizer was unavailable.

After the pineapple growing was well underway, someone suggested we raise sugarcane and make our own sugar and syrup. When the cane was about ready to grind the problem

of a mill arose. We did not have the money to buy a mill, but Will Lanehart said he believed he could make one out of wood. He had found a mahogany log on the beach that would be just the thing for the rollers, but he needed help to saw the log and turn the rollers. He first worked the rollers down in the rough with a hand axe, then rigged a crank on one end. One man turned the crank while the other used a chisel like a lathe to bring the roller to a perfect round. Lanehart made the cog wheels from the same mahogany.

At last the mill was finished and ready for a trial. The rollers were as true round as any ever made and strong enough to crush the hardest cane. On the day of the trial, Cap Dimick's old mule, the only thing in the shape of a horse in this end of the country, was hitched to the end of the long beam attached to the drive roller, and three or four stalks of cane were fed to the mill. It worked to perfection; the wooden cogs did their job equal to those of iron. With the success of the mill a new problem arose. We needed a large iron kettle for boiling the cane juice down to syrup. Someone had heard that W. H. Hunt of Biscayne Bay had such a kettle, and a deal was made to trade a lot of young coconut trees for it. Some weeks were necessary to conclude this trade because of the rather inefficient mail system then in operation between the lake and the bay. A letter had to go by way of Jacksonville, Tampa, and Key West, and a good portion of this distance was by small sailboat. The reply had to take the same roundabout way.

Father volunteered to make the trip for the kettle in the *Creole* as she was the only boat wide enough to hold it. He asked me to go along and I asked Ros Brown to join us. We boys were both anxious to see Biscayne Bay. Leaving mother and my sister at the Browns and taking on Ros with his fishing tackle, gun, and bedding, we were off on the seventy-mile trip down the Atlantic coast. Our first run was to Hillsborough Inlet, forty miles south of Lake Worth.



T H E L A K E C O U N T R Y

From Hillsborough on to Biscayne Bay the going was much safer for small craft because of the comparatively shallow water near the land, but from Lake Worth Inlet to Hillsborough the Gulf Stream swept in close along the beach. All southbound boats, even the largest steamships, run in along this coast as close as the depth of water allows, in order to escape the northward flow of the Gulf Stream. There was a gentle breeze from the northeast, and the bluff-bowed old *Creole* labored along at about five miles an hour through the water but not that fast past the land because of the head current. The weather was of the finest and we boys enjoyed this ocean voyage to the utmost. We arrived off Hillsborough late that afternoon and since it was thirteen miles farther to New River Inlet, father thought it best to stop for the night.

Father had been to the Hillsborough Inlet before, but to Ros and me everything was new and rather strange. Across the inlet from our camp in the edge of the hammock was a tall coconut tree; just around a little point farther west were two more, and a few hundred feet up the east shore of the river was another, making four trees in all, their tops loaded with green nuts. Around this first little point the river turned north and ran straight in that direction for about three miles, then a sharp bend cut off our view. Low dense mangroves lined both shores, broken here and there with low growing bushes of cocoplum and seagrape. Across the river to the northwest we could see the mouth of a creek that was about fifty feet wide, and as the tide turned, a heavy flood of dark colored fresh water came pouring out of it. To the south was a long narrow lagoon about half a mile long. The inlet itself was only about two hundred feet across in the widest place and very shallow at low tide.

The sea breeze that came in next morning was fresh from the southeast, almost dead ahead, so there was nothing to do but wait for it to change to a more favorable point. When the tide slackened we poled the *Creole* over to the

north side and climbed the coconut trees for a supply of the nuts, for the milk in the small green nuts tasted much better than the warm stale water in our cask. Climbing a coconut tree is easy if one knows how, and we knew how as well as any South Sea islander. I was the first to climb. Going up the tree I grasped it with the flat of my hands around on the opposite side; then, placing the soles of my feet on each side of the tree, with knees bent in frog fashion, I literally hopped my way to the top. Crawling up among the long fronds, I hooked my arm over one of them, leaving both hands free to cut away the nuts and throw them to the ground. We got enough nuts to furnish us with good drinking water for two or three days, then sailed the *Creole* back to camp.

The next day the wind was still blowing hard from the southeast. After dinner father announced his intention of walking down the beach to the Fort Lauderdale Station and spending the night with the keeper. He told me that if the sea was smooth and wind fair in the morning, to pack up and put to sea. We were to pick him up from the beach. Ros and I were excited to be in sole charge of the camp and also captain and mate of the *Creole* if wind and wave should turn favorable.

The next morning the sea was as smooth as a pond and the wind was blowing in a gentle breeze from the west, an ideal morning for the start. About an hour after sunrise everything was onboard and we got underway with a fair tide out through the inlet. Soon we were sailing south to the deep blue waters of the Atlantic. The wind was light and so we made only about three miles an hour. The great Florida Reef comes to land at Hillsborough Inlet; from there north it skirts the shoreline, cropping out in large hammocks at Boca Raton, Lake Worth Inlet, and Gilbert's Bar. From Hillsborough south it runs nearly due south to Fowey Rocks, but the coastline keeps bearing off to the west, which causes the reef to lay offshore from less than a

quarter of a mile just south of Hillsborough to about five miles at Cape Florida.

About three miles down the coast we spied father coming to meet us. When we came up with him I sailed the *Creole* close into the beach and he crawled on board. Shortly after this the wind changed, coming from south-southeast, and freshened to a brisk breeze. It was now tack for tack, and we made very slow time as the day wore on. By noon the wind was blowing pretty stiff and the sea had become very rough. The *Creole* did some tall jumping and low plunging as she labored along close-hauled on the wind. We arrived at New River Inlet late that afternoon. Sailing inside, we kept on up the river to the landing where the keeper of the station kept his boats. This keeper's name was Washington Jenkins, and he was the first keeper appointed to this station in the summer of 1876. How he and his family managed to content themselves in this most isolated and out-of-the-way place was rather hard to imagine. We landed our camp dunnage and spent the night at the landing that was four miles upriver from the inlet. A narrow crooked stream led out to the north from a bend of the river a short distance beyond the landing, this was known as Hillsborough Creek. One could go by way of that creek to the Hillsborough River in times of high water.

Next morning after breakfast we walked over to the beach and up the shore for about a quarter of a mile to the station that was known as House of Refuge Number 4, Fort Lauderdale. There we visited with the keeper and his family for about an hour. The wind meantime had hauled to the east and as the sea was smooth, we packed up and set sail for the inlet at three o'clock that afternoon, intending to make Biscayne Bay that night.

About half a mile south of Jenkins' landing, New River comes in from the Everglades to the west. A rather narrow but very deep stream, it is said to have a depth of more than sixty feet in places. When it reaches the coast it makes a

sharp turn to the south and runs behind a narrow ridge for a distance of four miles, then enters the ocean sideways; that is, the east bank ends and the river keeps on down the beach for nearly half a mile. The tide was running swiftly down the river and we were soon out on the ocean once more.

The wind kept getting lighter as the day advanced. When darkness came we were nearly twelve miles from Norris Cut, the first inlet into Biscayne Bay. At eight o'clock the wind freshened and black squalls commenced to make up all along to the eastward. Lightning began to play through the squalls, and now and then we could hear the low, heavy rumble of distant thunder. Fortunately the squalls were only making a bluff and none quite reached us, though we were only too glad to come through such a stormy night in safety. About eleven-thirty we could see Norris Cut under the lee bow. As the boat headed in for the inlet I was on the forward deck and acted as pilot. Father had been through this inlet before and knew that the channel was on the north side, but it was up to me to guide him in his steering. Norris Cut was not a very safe place to navigate even in daylight, but it so happened the tide was high and running in, and we made it without touching bottom once. We rounded up to the north bank inside and, without bothering to put up the tent, spread our blankets on the sand, rigged up our mosquito bars, and turned in.

Before we had finished breakfast next morning the sea breeze came in from the southeast, the usual summer direction, so we hoisted sail and headed up the bay for the home of W. H. Hunt, where we were to deliver the young coconut trees and load the big kettle. We arrived at eleven o'clock at Biscayne, as the post office in Hunt's house was called, and father went ashore to report the arrival of the trees. In a short time he returned and said that Hunt wished us to come to the house and make it our home while we were there. Hunt had a fine library, a large room three sides of which were solid bookcases filled with the finest of

books. I wanted to stay right there and look at every one of them, but that was not possible for there were the coconut trees to unload and the big kettle to move on board.

The next day the kettle was loaded into the *Creole*, and it was some job to move that overgrown washpot that filled the boat from side to side. Then we hoisted sail and started down the bay, arriving at Miami just before sundown. The mouth of the Miami River had a beautiful and tropical aspect to the voyagers on the *Creole*. The north bank from the bay to the old Fort Dallas landing was covered with a dense tropical growth. A row of very tall, slender coconut trees lined the shore, some of them leaning far out over the river; back of these was a mass of guava, lime, lemon, and orange trees and bushes, growing close together like the native jungle.

We tied up to the rocky bank that served as a dock on the north side of the river and cooked supper. After supper we went up to the house for a visit with the Peacock family, which included three sons: Harry, Alfred, and Charles John. The Peacocks were English and had come to Florida from London only two years before. Their two-storied house had been the officers' quarters of old Fort Dallas. It was made of native rock and had a long porch on both floors on two sides. A short distance to the west was a long stone building that had been used as a barracks. The small east room of this building was the courthouse of Dade County while the middle room was used as a store by William Ewan. At this time Ewan was away on a trip to Key West to purchase supplies for his store. The main business he had was trading with the Indians.

We were delayed in Miami for several days by a strong east wind that kicked up too much sea for a boat the size of the *Creole*. One rainy night while we were there an older Indian and a boy of about twelve came to the house and asked if they might spend the night. Another night an Indian brought to the store seven hundred snowy heron

plumes; they gave him twenty-five cents in trade for each plume. On another day we saw an Indian who had light gray eyes; here, too, we first saw Robert Osceola, a direct descendant of Chief Osceola. He was one of the finest looking of all the Seminoles.

Every afternoon about three o'clock Alfred Peacock went sailing on the bay and Ros and I always went with him. One day he sailed us to the "Punch Bowl." This was nothing more or less than a well cut in the rock at the foot of a bluff a few feet back from the bay. Legend had it that in pirate days this was made and used by Black Caesar for a punch bowl. When returning from a successful foray, he and his crew would gather here and make a punch of sugar and rum to drink in celebration. The people of the bay claimed that whoever drank from the punch bowl would be sure to come back.

One evening the east wind died out and remained calm all night; the next morning it breezed up from the south shortly after sunrise, and the day for our departure had arrived at last. With everything on board the *Creole* sailed out of the Miami River and headed for Norris Cut, four miles across the bay. We had had a good time on Biscayne Bay but were getting tired of this long-drawn-out trip. We sailed out into the Gulf Stream to take advantage of its favoring current and at eleven o'clock we passed the Biscayne House of Refuge Number 5. Near one o'clock we passed New River Inlet and a little later the Fort Lauderdale House of Refuge. We arrived off Hillsborough late in the afternoon, and father decided to run inside and spend the night as we still had a forty-mile run to Lake Worth Inlet.

The next morning dawned fair and calm. A light breeze was blowing from off the land and the ocean was as smooth as a millpond. If everything went right we would eat supper at the Browns' that night, and just the thought of it made us happy and cheerful. We arrived at Lake Worth Inlet early in the afternoon and found a strong ebb tide coming out but

with a fresh fair wind we sailed in without difficulty. As our course from the inlet down the lake was south, our fine fair wind up the coast was now dead ahead; nevertheless, we arrived at the Browns' just at sundown.

As the cane mill was too large and cumbersome to move around, it was decided the grinding and syrup making should take place at Lanehart's, so the *Creole* landed the kettle there the next day. A furnace to hold the kettle had been built, a pile of wood cut ready for the fire, and all was in order waiting for the grinding of the cane. Loads of sugarcane were brought to the mill and Cap Dimick hitched his mule to the long beam attached to the drive roller. As the juice came pouring out it was caught in pails and carried to the big kettle; then a fire was started in the fireplace under the kettle and the boiling commenced. Everyone expected a fine quality of syrup, but we were doomed to disappointment. After all the work and worry, to say nothing of the expense, the experiment proved a failure.

The syrup was salty. All the cane had been grown on lowland on the east side of the lake and just west of the beach hammock. Salt had gotten into the land from sea spray driven over the land by hurricanes and severe storms and was taken up from the soil by the growing cane. The more we boiled the syrup the saltier it became. The manufacture had to be given up and was never again attempted.

After the failure of syrup making, we turned our attention more closely to the growing of pineapples, a summer crop. We were striving to attain an income through the long summer months. Because of the labor and time it took to clear the hammock land, the fields were limited in size to an acre or less. We found that when the plants were put into the bare ground, the hearts filled with sand. This problem was solved when someone suggested using a mulch of the coarse bunchgrass that grew along the shore of the lake. This proved very effective but made the care of the

pineapple fields much more difficult since a hoe could no longer be used and weeds had to be pulled by hand.

After the first year, when the plants were better than half grown, a man pulling weeds in the fields had to make special preparations for the work. On each side of every pineapple leaf is a close row of sharp, curved spines. The worker had to have strong canvas gloves to protect his hands, and he generally wore two shirts and two pairs of trousers to protect the rest of his body from the relentless thorns of the plants and from the bite of swarms of mosquitoes that persisted in following him in midsummer.

One day in May 1880 while I was working in Captain Armour's pineapple fields, two men waded to shore and came up to the field to have a look at the plants. They introduced themselves as E. M. and J. H. Brelsford, brothers from Ohio. They were investigating the lake with a view of making it their home. J. H. Brelsford, afterwards known to everyone as "Doc," told me that he had killed a deer on the west shore of the lake on his way down. A few days later we heard that the Brelsford's had bought Frank Dimick's place and that Dimick intended to move to Highlands, North Carolina. While the settlers on the lake were pleased to have new people like the Brelsford's, they were more than sorry to lose such a good neighbor as Frank Dimick.

It was about this time that Cap Dimick decided there was more money in taking care of tourists and fishing parties in the winter season than there was in growing early vegetables for the northern markets. He built an eight-room addition to his home and advertised that he would take "first class

View from Coconut Grove Hotel





*Coconut Grove Hotel, first hotel in Palm Beach,
founded by Cap Dimick*

boarders” for the winter season. His business was a success from the very start, and soon the fame of Cap Dimick’s hotel spread far and wide.

One afternoon I was returning from a trip up the lake and stopped at the Geers’ house. Everard Geer invited me to spend the night and as it was late in the day I accepted the invitation. When Mr. Geer came in there was a stranger with him. He was Allen Heyser, who was helping in the Geer garden and spending his spare time reading law. Sometime later he built and managed the Riviera Hotel, located on the west side of the lake across from the old inlet. After being admitted to the bar, he was elected county judge of Dade County.¹

E. M. Brelsford returned to Ohio and spent the balance of the summer there while Doc Brelsford “kept bach” in the

Frank Dimick home on the lake. That fall Ed returned with his mother and his sister Minnie. The Brelsford's brought the first real music to the lake; Ed played the violin, Doc, the cello, and Minnie, the piano.

Someone suggested a grand get-together on Christmas, 1880, for the settlers on the lake. The suggestion met with general favor; newcomers in particular were much taken with the idea of a picnic out-of-doors on Christmas Day. Word was sent around the lake to attend and bring plenty of good things to eat. For a few days before the event preparations were going on in the kitchens of all the homesteads. Each cook seemed to be trying to out-do the others in the fine quality of her cakes, pies, puddings, salads, biscuits, bread, roast venison, and turkey.

At last the holiday arrived, and the weather man seemed to be in harmony with the Christmas spirit, for the day was beautiful. Cap Dimick's hotel grounds was the spot selected for the picnic as it was about midway on the lake.

By eleven o'clock the entire population, with perhaps one or two exceptions, had arrived at Cap Dimick's. A great table was constructed of boards and sawhorses and the women distributed the good things along its entire length. If the table did not groan under its load it was quite different

Coconut Grove Hotel Landing, 1890



from some of the picnickers when they arose from it nearly an hour later. Before we left the table Cap Dimick announced that there would be a dance in the hotel dining room that night after supper and that the three Brelsforths would furnish the music. This was the first dance on the lake.

The music at the dance inspired me to wish to own and learn to play a violin. About this time father made a trip to Titusville and when he returned brought the news that Alec Carlisle, assistant keeper at Jupiter Lighthouse, had a violin and bow he would sell for six dollars. On hearing this I at once decided that I must have the violin. Unfortunately I had already spent the little I had made plume hunting and there would be no further income from that source until the following spring. Uncle Will, seeing how anxious I was to buy the violin, said I could plant pineapple slips for him if I did not charge too much. I named one dollar per thousand to trim and set but would not agree to set more than six thousand at that price, just enough to buy the violin. The price was so low that Uncle Will told me to go to it. The next day he and father started for Titusville for a supply of groceries, leaving me to look after mother and to plant six thousand pineapple plants. As they were leaving I told Uncle Will to be sure to bring the violin when he returned.

The day after the *Bonton's* departure for Titusville I started preparing the six thousand pineapple plants. I did not know how many slips I could trim and plant in a day or how long it would take to earn the six dollars, but by noon I had trimmed one thousand. After eating my lunch in a hurry, I started setting the plants. This was done by stretching a line over the row where the plants were to be set. This line had little pieces of cloth every eighteen inches. A plant was dropped at every mark on the line; then with a short thick pointed stick called a dibber, the plants were set. By keeping steadily at it the last of the thousand plants were in the ground an hour and a half before sundown. Six

days I labored and on the seventh, I went hunting. Six thousand plants were in the ground and I had earned my violin.

One day shortly after I had finished my pineapple work, the Bradleys came for a visit. I proposed to Louie and Guy that we go to the ocean for a swim. As we were dressing after a big time in the surf I suggested we walk down the beach to the point and see if there was anything in sight down the coast. As we came around the point we could see the coast as far south as Boca Raton and off the beach just beyond the House of Refuge was a ship on shore. I wanted to investigate immediately, but as it was late I knew I had to wait until the next day. Mother, seeing how anxious I was to find out about the wreck, agreed to my going to visit Steve at the House of Refuge the next morning on condition that I return home before dark. This was September 10, 1880.

I was up at daylight next morning, impatient to be off, and right after breakfast I started down the beach on the seven-mile walk to the station. When I arrived I found that Steve did not know much more about the wreck than I did. The vessel was a quarter of a mile off the beach and three miles south of the station. It evidently had a full load or was full of water, perhaps both, and this had caused her to ground so far offshore. Steve said he had walked down abreast of her and looked long and hard through his glasses but could see no signs of life on board. It was a full-rigged bark, but her sails were hanging in streamers and tatters from her yards. Steve said there was nothing we could do as long as the east wind kept up, but he suggested that when the wind shifted to the west, we board her in his little lifeboat. I promised Steve I would be on hand early when the wind went west.

On getting up one morning some two or three days later I saw the wind was blowing a gentle breeze from the west. When I arrived at the station Steve was waiting. It took us

about an hour to sail the three miles to the ship, which was headed nearly south. As we sailed up under her lee we could read her name and home port in large letters across the high, broad stern: *Vanderpalm*, Scaedam, Holland.

We climbed over the rail to the deck, which was a scene of wreckage and desolation. It was evident at first glance that the vessel had been ashore at some other place and had been stripped of everything worth taking, or nearly so. The cargo of large square timber had shifted aft, utterly wrecking the captain's cabin. Now there was nothing left of it but the part above deck. The galley stove and all cooking utensils were gone. Her pump pipes situated amidship were of copper and were standing about three feet above the deck. Evidently some wrecker had tried to move them and had given it up as a bad job. We hitched the *Vanderpalm's* remaining tackle to the pipes and tried to pull them up higher, but they were stuck and could not be moved. Then we used the axe and cut them off at the deck. There were fifty pounds of copper in them, worth seven and a half dollars in Titusville in trade. All that we could find worth taking away were a hundred pounds of lead from the cabin, some wire rigging, and a few pieces of canvas in fair condition.

Our interest had been directed toward the wreck and we had not noticed the time of day or the weather until we were ready to start home. Half a mile from the wreck a storm came down upon us and we had to run into shore and beach the boat. We were soon soaked to the skin and shivering with cold. There was no sign of it letting up, so we started to the station on foot. Nearly two hours later we arrived, cold, wet, and hungry. Steve went straight to the kitchen and soon had a roaring fire in the stove. As I stood at the stove my thoughts turned to mother, all alone on Hypoluxo Island. She would be frightened at her situation and worried about me. At length I told Steve that I would have to go as soon as we had supper as I had promised

mother I would return home before night. Steve said I was crazy even to think of going home on a night like this and told me to go to bed and leave the first thing in the morning.

I finally realized the worth of Steve's advice and went to bed right after supper. The next morning Steve got me up extra early so that I could get home as soon as possible and relieve mother's mind. When I started up the beach that morning the sun was just peeping over the waters of the Gulf Stream. It was a fine morning and looked finer in contrast to the stormy night before, but the ocean was rough. A long, heavy ground swell was rolling in from the northeast and it looked like a hard north or northeast wind would be up later in the day. When I arrived home about nine that morning, mother complained of being sleepy. She said she had not slept a wink all night and that she never knew before there were so many kinds of night birds and animals that made such queer calls and sounds.

Some days later father and Uncle Will returned from their trip to Titusville, bringing with them the much needed supplies and the long looked for violin. Father had also found a case that he bought for the violin. But there was a fly in the ointment; there was only one set of strings on the fiddle. When they broke, as all violin strings will, there were no replacements.

Father was very interested in my story of the wreck, and when the wind changed again to the west he went to help Steve bring the boat home to the station and at the same time have a look on board the *Vanderpalm*. They went down into the vessel's cabin and by feeling around on the floor with their feet they found some dishes, a heavy Dutch knife, two cant hooks, and an ice pick, all of which father brought home. He said there was more to be got on the wreck, such as wire rigging, canvas, and a few odds and ends that we might find use for sometime. There was also one of the rudder pintals that could be removed if a saw were used

to cut the rudder post in two. This pintal was of brass and weighed close to a hundred pounds. Steve sent word to me to come on the next west wind and we would go to the wreck again. When the west wind came I got an early start and arrived at Steve's about half past eight that morning. The tide was low so we turned our attention to salvaging the rudder pintal first as that was the most important item and main reason for this trip. We attacked the rudder post with a hand saw, taking turns as there was no time to lose. The tide was coming up and the job had to be finished before the water rose to the saw cut. It was slow work with the small saw. The post was a foot square, solid white oak. The job was finished just as a wave rose up and wet the saw for the first time. Then a few minutes work with the axe and we had the piece of brass ready to carry on deck and load into the dory. After this we gathered up all the canvas fit to use as well as a number of coils of wire rigging. By late afternoon we were ready to load the dory, but the wind suddenly shifted to the northwest and a heavy ground swell was breaking in big combers on the beach. Steve shook his head and said we would have to leave the boat on the beach again, the same as before. This meant another trip to bring her in. After a few close calls in the surf we finally reached the shore and beached our small boat. Then we started to walk back to the station, where we arrived a little after dark.

The next morning a regular "Blue Norther" was blowing and the ocean was covered with great combing seas. It was apparent at first glance that it would be a week at least before there would be another chance to bring the dory and her load up the coast. Meantime there was plenty of work for me to do at home, so right after breakfast I started up the beach. It certainly looked as if the wind and sea were in league against me on these trips to the *Vanderpalm*.

During this period hunting was a part of every settler's business since a good portion of his food supply was

obtained in this manner, but it was also the chief recreation of the area's males. The boys of the settlement (there were only four of us old enough to be trusted alone on the lake or in the woods) were given a vacation from work about Christmas time and we would spend it on a camp hunt, either at the inlet or at the Indian haulover.

Jesse Malden was the first commercial hunter on the lake. He was closely followed by William Butler, who collected skeletons of birds and animals for the University of Rochester. When these two hunters arrived on the lake there were two nesting places that contained every kind of wading bird known in southern Florida. The first and by far the largest was on an island near the north end of the lake known as "Big Pelican," or Munyon's Island. This island was long and very narrow, with a rock foundation. In the spring of 1874, Big Pelican was covered with nesting birds: herons of all kinds, pelicans, man-of-war birds, cormorants, and water-turkeys. Malden cleaned up this rookery that year. Of course he killed only plume bearing herons, but the continued noise of his gun frightened away all the other birds and they never returned. The herons moved their nesting place to the cypress swamp west of the haulover, and the next year Malden invaded that rookery and cleaned it out.

Abner Wilder was one of the first young settlers to make a record as a hunter in the early settlement. he was a native Floridian and a natural-born hunter. In fact, if a Florida cracker was not a good hunter, he was worthless in all other ways. It was the height of every would-be hunter's ambition to kill a deer, and among the boys living on the lake, this feat was the crowning glory of their young lives. Among the younger boys I was the first to kill a deer, the first to take part in the killing of a bear, and the only one of old or young that could boast of killing a full grown panther.

In the month of May 1878, horseflies were very bad in the woods, and when there was a breeze from the lake the

deer came out on the shore in late afternoon and night to get away from the torment of flies. One afternoon father announced that he was going fire hunting for deer that night along the lakeshore and said he wanted me to go along to carry the lightwood.

Before dark that night we cut up a lot of lightwood into fine splinters so that it would burn more readily; these splinters were put into a crocus sack that I was to carry over my shoulder. Lightwood was not so named because of its weight; it was one of the heaviest woods in Florida but was called lightwood because it was used to make a light before the days of kerosene. I thought the load of lightwood was quite enough to carry so I did not take a gun.

We had not gone more than a quarter of a mile, father walking ahead and I tagging along behind, when we came upon two large buck deer. They stood and looked at us as we walked up to less than a hundred feet from them. Father took careful aim, or at least he appeared to do so, and fired both barrels in quick succession. When the smoke cleared away the two deer were there as before, standing perfectly still. Father quickly loaded both barrels of his gun and fired again. They were not even scared, much less hit by the buckshot, they simply stepped around a little and again stood still. Father started to load again when he discovered he had used all of his powder, so there was nothing to do but turn around and go home, leaving the two deer watching us walk away.

The next morning father said he was going to try the deer hunting again that night. "Well," I chimed in, "if I'd only had the ten-gauge with me last night I would have killed one of them and with one shot at that." So when we started on our fire hunt that night I carried the ten-gauge over my shoulder. This heavy gun in addition to my sack of wood made a burdensome load, but I did not believe I would have to carry it far; I felt quite certain we would find the same two bucks waiting near the place where we saw them the previous night.

Well, it is hard to believe, but we did find the two deer in exactly the same place as before. We walked up until they were in plain view, less than a hundred feet from us. Father raised his gun and fired both barrels at them but never touched them; they never even flinched at the double report of the gun but continued to stand still and look at the light. When father started to load his gun, I hauled the ten-gauge off my back and fired at the largest buck. He doubled up and ran so fast he almost instantly disappeared into the blackness, the other buck following close at his heels. He went so quickly that I didn't have a chance to fire the other barrel. I was sure that I had hit the buck, but father seemed to think that some of the buckshot in the two loads he had just fired at them might have found its mark, though they had given no evidence of it at the time.

We looked for traces of blood, a sure sign that a deer is hit, but we could not see if there was any; the flickering light from our firepan was not strong enough to show such a small object as a spot of blood on the very wet sand of the lakeshore. Father suggested we go home since we couldn't trail the deer. He knew that if we had killed it we would find it nearby in the morning.

After an early breakfast we sailed across the lake and found the deer lying on the open beach. It had run but a short distance. Yet I could not claim it as my first because father had also shot, and there was no way of proving which of us had made the kill.

One afternoon about a week later, father proposed we go deer hunting along the west shore. Walking south along the lake I stayed close to his heels. As we reached the top of a ridge near a deer trail he brought his gun to an aim and fired both barrels. When the smoke of his gun cleared away I had a clear view and saw two deer running gaily away to the west with their white flags flying. I pulled down on one of them, and at the report of the heavy ten-gauge, I had the satisfaction of seeing the deer plung headlong to the ground. We ran as fast as we could to where it fell, fearing it might

recover if we waited to load up, but we soon saw there was no danger of that; it was down to stay. I felt pretty good about the results of this hunt but still was not entirely satisfied. I still wanted to kill a deer all by myself with no one near to see or help. Then I would feel I was a real hunter.

One afternoon I decided to go to the pinewoods on a deer hunt by myself. I was not lucky enough to get within range of any deer before they saw me and ran off into the thick scrub of the ridge, so I gave it up as a bad job and headed back to the boat. As I went out through the trees I saw right before me, not more than a hundred feet away, a great big buck quietly feeding along the shore. It had not seen me when I pulled down on it with the right barrel; it jumped, turned, and started for the bushes. I let drive with the left barrel when it was not more than fifty feet away. It went down with forty-eight buckshots in its body; I had hit it with every shot in the gun.

When I ran up to cut its throat I discovered I did not have a knife with me. The only thing to do was let the deer lie there and go all the way home for a knife. I called myself all manner of names as I tramped along back to the boat. This taught me a lesson, and I never again went into any woods or swamps on a hunting trip without a good knife. By the time I got back to my deer, the blood was set in the meat and it was not as nice as it would have been had I carried a knife. I was pleased just the same to have killed a big deer when hunting alone.

One day in the latter part of January 1879, I crossed the lake to hunt in the woods. It was a fine morning and I felt certain I would find deer out when I reached the hunting grounds. I had learned that deer and all other wildlife liked to come out of their hiding places in fine weather and ramble around looking for food. I landed near a little grove of cabbage palms and followed my usual path through the woods. Carefully and silently I made my way through the

trees, but much to my disappointment I did not see a living thing except for a few Florida jays and woodpeckers. The ground was fairly cut up with deer tracks, but for some unexplained reason the deer seemed to have left that part of the woods.

As I passed between two small saw palmettos, my leg struck one of the dry leaves. This caused a slight rattle that sounded rather loud in the silent woods. I stopped and when I happened to glance to the southeast I saw the head of a big wildcat sticking up out of the palmettos. There was nothing in sight but the head, and it was looking straight at me. I wasn't sure what to do. If I shot the wildcat the noise of the gun would scare every deer in the woods, but then I thought that it would be better to take home the skin of a wildcat than to go back emptyhanded. Having come to this decision I very slowly raised my gun, drew a sight on the cat's head, and fired.

At the report of the gun the head went out of sight in the palmettos and I could tell by the shaking of the leaves it was running to the northeast. I did not want it to get away so I started running and soon came up to where it had fallen in thick scrub. When I got closer I could hear it gasping and choking, and I knew by the sound it was about dead. I carefully walked around the bushes with the left hammer of my gun at full cock until I saw part of its side; it had a reddish color, exactly like a deer at that season of the year. My first thought was that I had killed a deer when I thought I was shooting at a wildcat, but I at once became suspicious and backed off. Then, quietly approaching it again from the west, I saw a large long tail. Now a Florida wildcat has a short tail not more than eight inches long, and a deer has a tail of about the same length. So when I saw that long tail I knew what I had killed. It was a panther.

Carefully I backed away until the panther was hidden by bushes; then I ran back for about sixty yards, hurriedly loaded my gun with a heavy charge of buckshot, and started

back with both barrels at full cock. When I came close to the panther again, I saw it had not moved and most likely was dead, but I was not taking any chances: I sent a charge of buckshot into the back of its head. It never moved when the shot hit. I went up close and looked it over, then, getting braver, grabbed hold of the tail and dragged it into the open.

At first I was at a loss as to what to do with my prize. It was too heavy to carry on my back, and I was afraid to skin it there for fear its mate might be hanging around someplace near. I then decided I would try to drag it to the lake, which was about a quarter of a mile distant, so I grabbed its tail and started. By dragging for a hundred yards or so and then resting, then another hundred yards, I at last reached the sandy beach of the lake.

My boat was about a mile up the shore and I might have left the panther there and sailed it down—this would have been the least work—but I was proud of my kill and I did not want to leave it alone for one minute, so I waded up the shore towing the panther in the water. At the *Dolly* I had a hard job getting it on board; the *Dolly* had rather high sides and the panther was heavy.

When I arrived at the home landing, father was waiting for me ready to help carry my game to the house. He thought I had a deer and was certainly surprised when he saw the panther. Mother was disappointed when she heard the news; she wanted some fresh venison, and did not appreciate the fact that I had KILLED A PANTHER. I told her that I would rather kill a panther than a dozen deer. She said, "Yes, I suppose you would, but I wanted some fresh meat for dinner. Now you will have to eat salt bacon." I carefully skinned the panther, leaving the feet and head on, and preserved it with arsenic. Sometime later father went to Sand Point and traded the skin for a suit of clothes for me. This was the first suit of store clothes I ever earned and I was very proud.

In October 1879, a hurricane of extreme violence passed up over the Bahama Islands and eastern Gulf Stream. Along the coast of Florida it was of only moderate intensity and did no particular damage, but farther east in the stream and over the islands it was extremely violent. The *Vera Cruz*, a Ward Line ship bound to Havana from New York, ran into the outer edge of the storm fifty or sixty miles off St. Augustine. There was no radio to warn her of the approach of the storm or to tell her in what direction the storm was moving. The captain of the *Vera Cruz* evidently thought the storm would pass to the eastward, in which case he would soon be in the western semicircle and that would give him a fair wind down the coast. He missed his guess, however. The storm center was coming straight for him and before there was a change of wind the ship was close to the center of the hurricane. In the very worst of the storm a monster sea rose up under the steamer and broke her in two. She then plunged to the bottom, forty miles east of Daytona. Large quantities of merchandise floated to the surface and were washed upon the beach.

Captain U. D. Hendrickson had just completed a sharpie of the New Haven type to use as a cargo carrier when the hurricane struck.² The *Illinois*, as he called her, was over forty feet in length and had an eleven-and-a-half foot beam. A few days later a boat came downriver and spread the news of the wreck of the *Vera Cruz* and of the merchandise strewn along the beach near Daytona. Hastily repairing some minor damage to the boat's deck, the captain sailed north and salvaged a quantity of lard in ten-pound pails. On his trip to Hypoluxo Island in November, he had some of this lard on board and gave a ten-pound pail to mother.

I was greatly interested in the new sharpie, the first large one I had seen and the largest boat to come to the lake. Captain Hendrickson said he was going to visit Steve Andrews at the Orange Grove Station and have a look at the wrecked bark *Vanderpalm*. He asked me if I would like to

go as far as the haulover with him. Although it would necessitate a two-mile walk back home on the ocean beach, I was only too ready to have a chance to sail his boat.

The wind was almost blowing a gale from the northeast and coming in hard gusts as we climbed onto the sharpie's deck. When we neared our anchorage at the haulover it became necessary to trim sails and haul on the wind as it was coming in violent puffs over the beach hammock. As we reached the beach we looked to the south expecting to see the *Vanderpalm*, but she was no longer in sight. The air to the south was heavy with mist and spray from the pounding surf. This, we thought, was the reason we could not see the stranded bark. The captain went on to the station and I returned home by the beach. I did not find anything of value on the trip home, but those tremendous seas were worth seeing as they came rolling onto the shore. Three days later Captain Hendrickson stopped at our home on his return up the lake. He told us that the big seas had broken up the *Vanderpalm* and the beach from Boca Raton to Hillsborough Inlet was strewn with the wreckage and big square timbers.

That fall after the hurricane season was over, Captain Hendrickson commenced to make regular trips from the lake to Titusville. All the following winter and spring the *Illinois* was the only transportation the people of the lake had to the outside world.

At this time the ocean beach was a great lumberyard. Heavy timbers such as 4 by 9 planks from twenty to forty feet in length, some 4 by 4 and 6 by 6 and any quantity of big twelve- and fourteen-inch square timber could be found. We combed the beach for more than a week, gathering up and rafting to the island all the planks and small timber we found. After all this lumber had been collected, father decided to build an addition to the house. Since we found no siding he used the 4 by 9 planks for the sides and floor joists and 6 by 6 timbers for the sills and plate. The 4 by 9 was cut in eight-foot lengths, then halved in at top and

bottom to plate and sill. This made a wall four inches thick and at the same time served as studding. The cracks were battened by 1 by 3 strips. The house had tremendous strength; while it was not handsome, it was extremely safe in any storm. After more than fifty years, having passed through many hurricanes, it still stands, the oldest house in Palm Beach County.³

Heretofore we had used palmetto fans for roofs, but they had to be replaced every two or three years. Father said that with all the fine shingle material going to waste on the beach, he did not see why we should continue to use palmetto fans. He obtained a six-foot cross saw, and a froe for riving the shingles. Then he made a shingle horse and a heavy maul to drive the froe in splitting the shingles. It was pretty hard work sawing the big 12 by 12 timbers and I did not appreciate my part of it, but I did my share of the sawing and was glad that father never asked me to split or shave the shingles. The shingle horse was contrived to hold the rough shingle while it was being shaved with a draw knife to the proper thickness and shape. This was slow work but was persisted in until the house was covered with a good shingle roof.

While the plank sides looked all right on the outside, mother did not care for their appearance on the inside. The walls had a rough and weather-beaten look and the cracks, though covered on the outside, were only too much in evidence on the inside. About this time it was reported that a small sawmill had been opened at Daytona. When this word came to the people on the island, father decided he would take a load of planks to the sawmill and have them sawed into 1 by 4 strips to use for paneling. The mill sawed the timber into three-quarter-inch strips, but that was as far as it could go as there was no planer. The paneling still had to be dressed by hand. The work of planing the boards fell to me. Father had done most of the shingle making and now said it was only fair that I do the planing.

Shortly after the paneling job was finished, another vessel

went to pieces somewhere to the south, and her cargo, consisting mostly of spirits of turpentine in five-gallon tins, washed up along Lake Worth beach. We picked up thirty cases of turpentine and one fifty-gallon barrel and two cases of copal varnish. This was the very thing I needed to finish the paneling and it came at the proper time. I gave the rooms two heavy coats, which made them the first on the lake to be finished with varnish.

Father had taken a Spanish cedar timber to Daytona and now used the lumber to build a skiff to be used on Lake Osborn. The skiff was ten feet long and three wide. The skiff was made so small so it could be carried through the woods to the lake. It was painted blue and named *Little Blue*. Louie Bradley and I were the first settlers to use this skiff to find our way to the flatwoods beyond the big swamp. We found the flatwoods a veritable hunter's paradise. The woods were teeming with deer, turkey, brown sandhill cranes, herons, and ibis of every description. White men had never hunted this section before we discovered it. No one had taken the trouble to carry a boat over to the swamp in order to cross to the woods beyond. When we returned with the stories of the wonderful game country west of the swamp, the men up the lake lost no time cutting a trail through the woods to the fresh water and placing a boat there. They too made their way to the distant flatwoods and found it all that we had reported. This trail went through the woods along the path of the present Evernia Street in West Palm Beach.

The fall of 1881 brought two new settlers to Lake Worth, Dr. R. B. Potter and his brother George. They were originally from Ohio but for the past few years had been living on Biscayne Bay. George entered a homestead claim on the beach ridge joining Hammon and Lanehart's place on the south. They lived with Will Lanehart while getting together the material to build a house. Like many of the new settlers, they depended on the ocean beach to furnish

most of the material. While beachcombing for lumber they pitched their tent on the old haulover trail near the foot of the lake. Everard Geer spent a few days with them, just for the fun of camping out. One day during his stay Everard came to my home and asked me to go back to camp with him and spend the night.

After supper we sat around the campfire and talked for a time. Everard, who was scratching in the dirt, found a number of birdshot in the sand. We commenced to dig and soon unearthed a pound or more of the shot. All of it was found in a small place, so it was evident that it had been buried in some sort of a sack, but so many years before that all sign of it had disappeared.

The first pineapples raised by the settlers on the lake spoiled in transit. The first picking was loaded into the *Bonton* in bulk and sailed up to Titusville, where empty barrels were obtained from the storekeeper. The pineapples were then loaded on a wagon and hauled eight miles to Salt Lake, where they were loaded on an old steamship bound to Jacksonville. On this particular trip the old boat broke down and many days passed before she was on her way. By the time she reached Palatka the pineapples were in such bad condition they were unloaded on the Palatka dock and the spoiled fruit thrown into the river.

The next picking from the south end of the lake was only half as large and again was loaded on the *Bonton* for upriver. Uncle Will said he was going to take them to Daytona and sell them if he could, as it was useless shipping them north by way of the St. Johns River. He invited me to make the trip with him. It had been nine years since I had been upriver and of course I accepted the invitation. My uncle, however, had an eye to business, for besides doing the work of a deckhand, I was also required to be the cook and dishwasher.

A rather monotonous trip of three days brought us to the city of Titusville, the old Sand Point. It was not large in any

sense of the word but was quite busy for a place so far removed from civilization. As the county seat of Brevard County, it was the most important town on the lower east coast south of Daytona and north of Key West. Titusville's business houses at this time consisted of three general stores, a hotel, and a saloon. The saloon appeared to be doing more business than all the other concerns combined, but this is what one would expect from a frontier town.

The merchants of Titusville did not care to invest in a cargo of pineapples, so the next day sail was hoisted and the *Bonton* continued on her way to Daytona. Indian River comes to an end about fifteen miles north of Titusville and there is no natural outlet to any other body of water. Mosquito Lagoon extends for some miles to the south on the east of Indian River but originally was also landlocked. Many years ago someone cut a canal from Indian River to Mosquito Lagoon. This allowed a continuous waterway up or down the coast from one head of the Halifax River to Jupiter Inlet. Only light-draft boats could use the canal at the time, but the *Bonton* made it without much trouble. The lagoon was very wide where we entered from the canal, but the north end was filled with numerous small islands. The route between these islands was known as Hillsborough River.

We stopped at Port Orange for about an hour, but as no one there wanted pineapples we sailed on to Daytona. After coming to anchor Uncle Will went ashore to find a customer. He soon returned with the news that he had sold the pineapples to the proprietor of a large store. We unloaded our cargo, bought supplies for the return trip, and immediately got underway on the homeward bound voyage. We anchored that night at McCarthy's place on Mosquito Lagoon and arrived late the next afternoon at Titusville, where we remained for a number of days. We were gone on our voyage a total of fifteen days and had received thirty-six dollars for the crop.

It was about this time that W. H. Hunt, superintendent of the Houses of Refuge, died. After his death the Life Saving Service appointed a Daytona man named Champ H. Spencer superintendent. Spencer started his job by firing most of the original keepers and appointing new men to fill their places. David Brown was made keeper of the Gilbert's Bar House, F. R. Bradley was appointed keeper of the Fort Lauderdale House, and father was made keeper of the Biscayne Bay House.

6. On Biscayne Bay

Father and Bradley chartered Captain Hendrickson's *Illinois* to move our families to our new homes. On our voyage south to the two houses of refuge the ocean was rolling high, and only a few minutes after the boat crossed the turbulent bar of the inlet, all of the Bradley children were deathly seasick. The *Illinois* made splendid time for a boat her size, and late that afternoon we anchored at the Fort Lauderdale station landing. The rest of the day was spent in unloading the Bradleys' household goods and in cleaning up the inside of the cabin. This was not a pleasant task after five seasick kids had been rolling around there for half a day.

We remained there all night as darkness came before all the Bradleys' goods could be landed. The family of the former keeper, Wash Jenkins, was still living in the house. Jenkins was very sick and unable to walk, and he had not made any arrangements for taking care of his family beyond deciding they would move to Biscayne Bay. He asked passage on the *Illinois* as he was anxious to get to the bay for medical attention and to find a house.

By ten o'clock the next morning we had the sick man

aboard and were underway downriver with a fair tide and wind, making record time. After an uneventful run of twenty miles we entered Biscayne Bay through Norris Cut and sailed up to Biscayne, where we landed Jenkins. Father and the captain made a cradle with their hands and carried him up to the Gleasons' house. We then sailed across the bay to the station landing, located behind some mangrove islands at the mouth of Indian Creek, a good-sized body of salt water extending four miles to the south between the bay and ocean. The station was just like the other houses of refuge, as all were built to the same plan. The location of the Biscayne house, however, was an improvement on that of the Orange Grove station. The keeper at Orange Grove had to walk five miles on the beach to reach his boat. Here it was only half a mile from the house to the boat landing. Unfortunately, the nearness of heavy mangrove swamps indicated a bountiful supply of mosquitoes might be expected in midsummer.

"Beautiful Biscayne Bay," as the residents are fond of calling it, is beautiful when seen under favorable conditions on a bright sunny day with its sparkling, crystal clear, blue-green water gently rippling and great snowy clouds floating slowly overhead against the deep blue background of the sky. On the other hand, when its waters are lashed to fury by a hurricane, great masses of inky black storm clouds filled with incessant flashes of vivid lightning and accompanied by deafening crashes of rolling thunder rush madly across the sky. It is grand and awe-inspiring but not beautiful.

The most northern residence on the bay was the E. T. Sturtevant place, located a few hundred feet north of the Gleason home. The Sturtevant family moved back to Cleveland after the death of Mr. Sturtevant, leaving this fine estate in charge of a caretaker.¹ It was quite a showplace at this time, with all kinds of tropical fruits, flowers, and shrubbery growing on the grounds. The Hunt and Gleason place was the Biscayne Post Office, and the end of the mail

route from Key West. The mail from Key West was due each Thursday. If the weather was good the mail schooner arrived on time, but in bad weather she might arrive as much as a week behind schedule.

Next to the Gleasons on the south was the new home of the Barnotts, the former keepers of the house of refuge, and then Dr. Horace P. Potter's place, which was not occupied at the time. To the south was the mouth of Little River, and it was well named for it was nothing more than a creek coming from the Everglades. A short distance southeast of Little River was Bird Key, a sandbar with a few straggling mangroves growing on it and then the home of Dan Clark, an old-time sailor. About two miles south of Bird Key was a point making out into the bay. This point was covered with tall coconut trees, and back of these trees was a large house, the home of Mike Sears and his family. They were French. Back in the woods from the Sears place lived Jailer Sanders and Bill Pent and their families and a young Frenchman named Billie Mattair. Next to the south was the home of Michael Oxer. He was German or Dutch and his wife was Irish and the mother of Mrs. Barnott. Michael Oxer was one of the citizens of the bay whom I never saw in the two years that we lived there. I never had any business at his place, and it did not appear that he ever left it to visit other parts of the bay.

At the mouth of the Miami River was the town of Miami. The Peacocks had moved since my former visit to a place about five miles south that is now known as Coconut Grove. At this time the "grove" was one lonely coconut tree. J. W. Ewan, who was in charge of the lands of the Biscayne Bay Company of Georgia, lived in the old Fort Dallas building with his mother, as did the county clerk. The clerk's name was T. W. Faulkner and he was a southern gentleman of the old school. Like most southern gentlemen of the old days, Faulkner was fond of mint juleps, but no matter how many juleps he imbibed, he was always the perfect gentleman.

On the south side of the river lived the Brickell family,

much the same as they had five years before, but now doing a large trade with the Indians since Mr. Ewan had closed his store. The Brickells were erecting a large building on the point close to the river to take care of the increased business. William H. Benest was still caretaker of the Gilbert place. About three miles up the river the William Wagners lived with their son William and grandson Henry. Nearby were Adam C. Richards, his wife (who was a daughter of the Wagners) and their two children. Farther upriver on the south side, John Adams tried hard to make a home in a poor situation. About a year later a neighbor called at his place to see how he was getting along and found him dead with a discharged shotgun in his hands and part of his head blown off. Another queer fellow that I knew only as Barr lived near the Wagners.

Down the bay about five miles was the next settlement where Johnny Frow and his family, the Pents, and Jack Peacock's family lived. Before we arrived on the bay the Charles Peacock family had built a hotel that was known as the Peacock Inn. Here also lived a Frenchman named James L. Nugent, a well-educated gentleman who spoke the most perfect English.

Another resident of this part of the bay was Sam Rhoads. Some nine or ten years earlier his wife had died, leaving him with a very small baby to care for. Rhoads would not ask for or accept the help of any woman in the care of his child but did all the work himself. The Pent family consisted of three brothers, John, Ned (known as Uncle Ned), and Dad Pent. These three brothers were as different from one another as possible. Ned Pent was the boatbuilder and while some claimed he did not know the figures of a rule or square, he built some fine model boats. A story that was told about him was that someone had died and the family went to Uncle Ned and asked him to build a coffin. Now this to him was rather gruesome. He did not like it and flatly refused at first, but when they furnished him with a

jug of whiskey to brace his nerves he went at it and spent most of the night drinking whiskey and working on the coffin. Unfortunately, by the time the coffin was finished Uncle Ned's ideas became confused and he thought he was building a flat-bottom sailboat. When they visited him in the morning to see how he had made out with his work, there was Uncle Ned fast asleep on the floor beside a well-made coffin fitted with a perfect centerboard.²

A few miles farther down the bay was Snapper Creek and the Snapper Creek hammock. A young man named Charles Seybold lived there. He worked hard to make a home in this hammock. Farther on at what was known as the "hunting grounds" lived John Addison, and beyond him a mile or so to the south at a place later known as Cutler, lived William Fuzzard. He was the last settler to the south on the west side of the bay. Fuzzard was manager for a Boston company that had built a steam starch factory for the making of starch from comtie, or coontie root, a sort of dwarf sago that grows all over the pinewoods on the west side of the bay. This starch and the plant it is made from is called comtie by the Indians who taught the white man its use as food. Gleason said that the proper name for this plant was coontie, but it seems to me that the Indians' name, the one they have known the plant by for hundreds of years before the white man saw it, should be the proper name. The Indians made a stew of all kinds of meat, but mostly venison, and when well cooked they thickened it with comtie and then called it "soffgie."³

At one time the making of starch from the comtie root was the main source of income for most of the settlers on the bay. Those who had a horse or a mule rigged up power mills, but few were fortunate enough to have any power other than their hands and arms. When a man decided to make starch the first operation was to construct the grinding mill. A section of a large tree about eighteen inches long would be dressed to a perfect round, then shoe nails

would be driven in diagonal rows about half an inch apart until the log was covered. About half the length of the nails were left above the surface. These nails were the teeth of the grinder. Then an axle was attached and on the end of it was the crank. The cylinder was then mounted on a box frame above which the hopper was attached. Close beside the grinder was a large tank that was filled by a hand pump. There was also close to the grinder a washing tank to wash the dirt from the comtie roots as they came from the woods. When the roots were washed clean they were dumped into the hopper. Then the grinder was cranked until the roots were ground to a pulp by the rows of shoe nails. Sliding down an inclined board into the large water tank, the ground mass was thoroughly stirred, then drawn off into another tank and left to settle. When the white starch had precipitated to the bottom of the tank, the water, called "redwater" from its color that was caused by tannin in the root, would be run off, the starch shoveled up and placed on cloth-covered frames to dry. When dry it was barreled and shipped to Key West for sale.

When the starch was selling at a decent price, from eight to ten cents a pound, the starch makers had a good living without many days of work a month. At the time we moved to the bay the starch market had busted, the Fuzzard mill had closed down, and Fuzzard was running a small store in the mill building.

Before we moved to Biscayne Bay I had started to build a large canvas canoe for hunting plume birds. The canoe was eighteen feet long, forty inches wide, and eighteen inches deep at bow and stern. My little sloop *Dolly* had been hauled out of the water for nearly two months undergoing repairs. I had been working on her for some time, putting on a new forward deck. There was no time to complete the work on either boat before we left, so I planned to return and put them in shape for the trip to the bay. One day in the early part of January, Louie and Guy Bradley stopped at the station on their way to Brickell's store for groceries. I

told Louie of my plan to walk back to Lake Worth to repair my boats and asked him if he would go with me. He said he would be ready whenever I came by the Lauderdale station.

It was sometime in the latter part of January that I started out one morning on my long walk to Lake Worth, a distance of sixty miles. The route from the bay to Lake Worth was a very difficult proposition as two inlets, New River and Hillsborough, had to be crossed. New River was too wide and deep to wade and too dangerous, because of sharks, to swim. A raft of some sort had to be constructed to cross. Hillsborough could be managed at low tide by wading; one just timed his arrival to meet the low tide.

On my arrival at New River Inlet I found an old piece of wreckage lodged in the mangroves and made the crossing on it with no difficulty. Louie joined me at the Fort Lauderdale House of Refuge and after a two and a half day trip we arrived on the lake. He was sick all the time on this trip and I did not understand just what kind of illness he had. His face was puffed and colorless and his fingernails were blue. He wanted to sleep all the time, and so I did the work on the boats alone.

One afternoon just before dark I heard a loud "hello" from across the lagoon. I saw a man standing on the top of the ridge and waving his hat so I jumped in the skiff and rowed over. It was George Charter, a young man from Vermont who had homesteaded the beach ridge east of the island. His homestead extended from the foot of the lake to the north end of the lagoon, two miles and a quarter long. He called it his shoestring farm. George had walked up from the bay and was on his way to the settlement at the lake. He brought word from Mr. Bradley for Louie to hurry to Lauderdale as his family was out of food. Louie was to go to Miami for supplies. I could not understand why this sudden shortage of food when we had been gone only a little more than a week, and we were not supposed to return in less than two weeks.

We ate a hasty breakfast of flapjacks and coffee next

morning and started off down the beach. It was a fine day for a trip. A fresh wind was blowing from the east and the seas came rolling in three lines deep, their snowy crests gleaming in the bright sunshine. With shoes tied together by their laces and slung over our shoulders, our trousers rolled up to our knees, we made good time down the beach at the water's edge. The wet sand was the hardest and made the best walking. The regular beach walker always went barefooted; it was easier and faster that way.

Just at sundown we stepped upon the porch of the Lauderdale station, very tired and hungry. Louie's folks were glad to see us so soon after sending word of their plight. Supper was ready and waiting for us, though the menu was grits and palmetto cabbage, not much to build up our strength after that long tramp on short rations. We might have packed some of the food we had at the island, but we started in such a hurry that it never occurred to us. We thought of the good flour that we had left behind as we ate our poor supper.

The ocean was extremely rough so we were forced to take an old Indian canoe through the Everglades to the bay. This trip was my first sight of the upper river. It was crooked, kept turning first north, then south, and at no time could we see any distance ahead on account of the bends in the channel. A short way up the river and before we reached the pine timber, we passed a large dense hammock on the north bank. This was known as "Coulee Hammock," noted for the massacre of the Coulee family there by the Seminoles about 1837.⁴

All the land hereabouts was solid rock, and it became evident to me as I looked at it that at some time in the remote past there had been an earthquake that had opened up this fissure from the Glades to the coast, making the channel now called New River. There is a Seminole legend that tells how it happened in one night, hence the name, "New River."⁵

Late in the afternoon we passed beyond the high pine land and came to where the river banks were lined with a thick growth of cypress timber. The cypress drops its foliage in the early fall and stands bare until spring. The trees were thus gaunt and gray, with bare limbs draped in long festoons of Spanish moss swaying back and forth in the afternoon wind.

Just at sundown we arrived at the end of the river. Here the water was pouring from the Everglades through a narrow channel and running so swiftly it taxed our strength to the utmost to paddle the old canoe through. When we reached the still water of the Glades we paused to eat. The extra exertion of pushing up against the rapids had sharpened our appetites to a painful point. We were ravenous and could have eaten boiled owl had there been any, but all we had was a very small loaf of bread that Mrs. Bradley had baked for us. Guy had come with us but had not helped at all. He was sick and lay in the bow of the canoe, sleeping all the time until we stopped. Then he was ready for his share of the supper. I divided the little loaf into three equal parts.

We sat there in the gathering gloom of the night munching our bread and making it last as long as possible. Then after taking a big drink of water, we wearily picked up the oars and started out into the great Everglades by moonlight. As we came into the Glades we noticed a large Indian village on the land a mile or so to the southeast. We could now see a number of campfires burning in the village and hear dogs barking.

The light of a full moon was a great help in finding our way among the maze of islands. Some of them were mere patches of sawgrass, while others were of considerable size and covered with a heavy growth of bushes and trees. Sometimes the moonlight caused us to get stuck. We would see what looked like a clear channel ahead, only to find ourselves a few minutes later firmly stuck in a mudbank. An

inch or two of water looked the same as two or three feet in the moonlight.

About four o'clock in the morning we decided to rest until daylight. We were very tired and sleepy and were not sure just where we were. We managed to sleep a little before the sun rose, but the mosquitoes were bothersome. For some reason, the mosquitoes of the Everglades are most persistent at daybreak. Finally, not being able to take them any longer, I stood up and looked out on small islands, water, and sawgrass for as far as I could see north, south, and west. Far to the east was a dark line of heavy pinewoods. While I was gazing over the vast expanse, the mosquitoes aroused Louie from his troubled sleep. I called to him to stand up and tell me if he could see anything he knew that would give us our location. Pointing to a deep bay in the pine timber to the east and south, he said it was Snake Creek Bight, the entrance to Snake Creek. We were just about six miles too far west.

It was a beautiful morning. Aquatic birds of all kinds could be seen, but they kept a safe distance from us. Thus we did not have an opportunity to shoot any of them for our breakfast and were compelled to go without that much needed meal. Instead, we picked up the poles and headed for Snake Creek Bight. When we arrived at the headwaters of the creek, we still had about fifteen miles to travel before reaching Biscayne station and something to eat.

It was nine o'clock that night when we docked at my home. We were so weak from lack of food that it was all we could do to reach the station without stopping to rest on the way. Fortunately mother had a plentiful supply of food on hand and we were soon hard at work trying to fill that vacuum in our insides.

After breakfast the next morning Louie and Guy departed for Brickell's store at Miami, where they purchased supplies for their folks at Fort Lauderdale. This part of their trip was easy for them as they had the use of our sloop

Creole. They did not return from Miami until after dark so we started on the return trip the next morning. We did not anticipate anything but a pleasant and quick trip back to Lauderdale, as we had the boat loaded with good things to eat and now knew the way. When we reached the Bradley's home three days later we found their grits had given out and for the last two days they had been living on Palmetto cabbage. Without delay we unloaded the canoe and Mrs. Bradley started at once to cook supper.

The next morning Louie and I departed for Hypoluxo to complete our job of fixing up my boats. We stayed overnight with Steve Andrews and reached the island at eleven o'clock the next day. After dinner we rowed up the lake to buy supplies.

The affairs of the little settlement were moving ahead. The schooner *Gazelle*, under the command of Captain H. P. Dye, was making trips to Jacksonville, carrying products to that shipping point, and bringing back supplies of all kinds for the settlers on the lake. The captain had also opened a store, a greatly appreciated innovation since we were no longer forced to make that long trip to Titusville for the necessities of life.

The next day we launched the *Dolly*. Of course she soon filled with water, having been hauled out on land for more than a year, but we felt sure that she only needed a day in the water to swell her seams. After breakfast the following morning we bailed her out and loaded our camp outfit on board. Taking the canoe in tow we sailed for the haulover at the foot of the lake where we camped and waited for a fair wind and a smooth sea.

We awoke one morning a few days later to find the wind blowing from the northwest and the sea fairly smooth. There was quite a good-sized ground swell coming in from the north that gave us trouble in launching the *Dolly* and loading her, but soon we were off down the coast. I had decided to leave the canoe at the Lauderdale station until I

could come back and give it a coat of paint on the outside. Both it and the *Dolly* were leaking so badly that I would not be able to bail them after Louie left me. When we arrived at the station he landed himself and his dunnage in the canoe and I went on to Biscayne Bay in the *Dolly*.

There was plenty of company at the station as Hammon and Lanehart had been hired by the government to repair all the Houses of Refuge on the Florida coast and had started with our home. There were six men on the job, plus Sam, the cook. William Lanehart was the boss carpenter and working under him were two carpenters and two painters. The superintendent of construction, Commodore Van Renssaler Morgan, came from Washington as a representative of the Life Saving Service to see that the repairs on the building were according to specifications.

Hammon would sail in occasionally to bring material or to see how the work was progressing. One day he told me he was going to Lauderdale with a load of supplies and was coming right back. I engaged passage on his boat, *Ina*, so I might bring my canoe to the station.

We sailed over to Miami and spent the rest of the day and that night tied up to Brickell's dock. The wind was blowing from the northeast a little too hard for the *Ina* to attempt to run up the coast. A number of times that afternoon Hammon went to Brickell's store, returning each time laughing and shaking his head. Then he would relate some of the stories Mr. Brickell had been telling him about his wonderful adventures in China, Australia, and New York City. The next morning the wind had moderated and we got underway. The sea was pretty rough and it took all day to beat to windward to New River. We unloaded the next morning, placed my canoe on deck, and returned to the bay that afternoon.

I remained at home for some time and planned a hunting trip with Louie for plume birds. We had talked this trip over coming down the coast in the *Dolly* and decided there

should be some nesting places of plume birds in the Cypress Creek region or perhaps at the head of Snook Creek (Middle River). In the interim I kept busy getting my canoe and camping outfit in condition.

I had brought with me from Lake Worth a large buck's hide and the skin of a wildcat that I had killed sometime before leaving Hypoluxo Island. The hair was removed from the deerskin by soaking it in water mixed with hardwood ashes. Lime would have been better but I did not have any at this time. Red mangrove bark was gathered and the deerskin tanned a rich, dark mahogany. I made a cape from this skin to go around my shoulders. It served two purposes, first to keep the upper part of my body dry in rainy weather, and, second, to protect my shirt from the wear of the gun on my shoulders. Around the bottom edge I made a lot of small holes about an inch apart and tied leather thongs of about a foot in length. These strings had the appearance of a deep fringe around the cape, but they were not for ornament; they were called "tie-ups" and were to be used in place of string or cord whenever needed in the woods. This idea was not original with me; I got it from the Indians and later found the thongs most useful.

The wildcat skin was not tanned. I made a hunting cap from it in the most primitive way. The skin was hard and stiff. I cut out a flat piece the size of the top of my head and two-inch strips for the sides. This strip when sewed onto the flat top made a square joint more useful than handsome. This side strip was cut in such a manner that the tail was left on and, when sewed, it was right in the middle part of the back of the cap. As it was hard and dry, it stuck straight out behind my head. A queer-looking cap, but it served its purpose well in the woods. I killed more than one piece of game that I would never have gotten within range of wearing any other kind of hat.

My canoe was now painted and ready for use. My camping outfit, gun, and ammunition all ready for the

hunting trip to the headwaters of the Snook and the Hillsborough creeks. I had rigged a lateen sail on the canoe and only waited for a day when the weather was right for a run up the coast to New River. On arising one morning I found the condition of wind and sea perfect for my trip and was off about ten o'clock. I kept near the shore, for I did not trust the strength of the thin eight-ounce canvas the canoe was covered with and preferred to stay within swimming distance of the land.

I made the trip without any difficulties, the canoe sailing along over the sea at a good rate of speed. When I arrived at the Bradley boat landing I was distressed to hear that Guy and his oldest sister were very sick from the same mysterious malady that afflicted Wash Jenkins when we moved him to the bay during the fall. Flora, who was about ten years old, died that afternoon only a few minutes after I got there. The workmen engaged in repairing the station made a coffin and she was buried the next day under a wide spreading sea grape tree in the hammock northwest of the house. Guy was swelled up so badly he could not walk; I carried him to the graveside.

This sad incident took all the pleasure out of our lives for the time being, and our hunting trip was deferred for a few days. We started one morning making our way up Hillsborough Creek. We had never been up this creek before and made slow time finding our way through the crooks and turns and shallow water at its upper end. We were near Cypress Creek when we had to stop because of shallow water.

We made camp in the pinewoods on the west side of the marsh, then hunted back in the swamps to the west. We could see many plume birds flying far to the west but could not locate their nesting places. Here I saw far up in the air two scarlet ibis flying west. These were the only scarlet ibis I have ever seen. Two days later we returned to the station without having killed one plume bird. We decided there were too many Indians hunting in that part of the country.

The next morning came in clear with a cool west wind blowing and not a cloud in sight. We determined on a cruise up Snook Creek, so hurriedly ate our breakfast and departed. Late in the afternoon we were far upriver where it became a shallow narrow creek with the bushes growing high and thick on either side and meeting overhead, preventing us from seeing any birds flying over. As night was now coming we had to find a place to camp. The shore was low and swampy, but I cut a trail through the scrub to a patch of ground that was comparatively dry, and we prepared to spend the night by clearing a space large enough for our tent and campfire. Since the floor of the tent was full of humps and stubs of the cut bushes, I piled myrtle on it until I had a covering about two feet thick. This made a soft bed that eliminated the bumps underneath.

While eating breakfast the next morning we decided we had better go home and give up the plume hunting business for this season. Again we blamed the Indians for our lack of success. Immediately after breakfast we packed up and started back downriver. An hour or so after we arrived back at the station, Champ H. Spencer, the superintendent of the Houses of Refuge, came in on an inspection trip. He had George Charter as a boatman. Heretofore Spencer had been making his trips by sailboat on the ocean. This time he was traveling by canoe through the swamps and the Everglades.

Steve Andrews had hauled the canoe from Lake Worth to the Orange Grove House of Refuge, where they launched it in the swamp back of that station. From there they made their way through to Boca Raton and the Hillsborough River, up Cypress Creek to Lettuce Lake, and then across a marsh to Hillsborough Creek. This route would have been quite easy in the fall and winter. In the spring when the water is at its lowest, however, it is impassable unless the boat used is small and light and there is a very strong man to haul it over the mud and shallows. George Charter was such a man.

They had a factory made canoe. It was small and cranky

and with the load they carried, it drew too much water for some of the shallow places they were compelled to pass through. They remained at the station that night, and George said they were going on next day to Biscayne Bay by way of the Everglades. I at once proposed to accompany them as I was ready to return home. George said he would be glad to have me along to show them the way.

We started soon after breakfast the next morning and all went smoothly until we were well into the Glades. Then trouble commenced because of the overloaded canoe. Again and again, the canoe would stop hard and fast on the bottom and George would have to jump overboard and "snake" the boat along to deeper water. The first time it hit bottom Spencer jumped overboard to lighten the load and help push. This did not suit George at all. He told Spencer in a very loud voice to remain in the canoe where he belonged. In a few minutes they hit another shallow spot. George at once stepped overboard and started to haul the canoe over the shallow. When he saw Spencer was getting ready to get out of the canoe he stood still and shouted at the top of his voice, "Sit down! Sit down, I tell you I don't need your help. You stay in the boat." If Spencer would insist on getting out of the canoe, as he did a few times, George would stand and yell at him loud enough to be heard two miles away.

Just before sundown a rain squall came down on us and lasted long enough to wet everything. We were a little over halfway through the Glades when the sun set, forcing us to look for a camping place. The first little island we examined contained just enough ground above water on which to place our beds and campfire. It turned out to be a very uncomfortable camp as the ground was wet and soggy and full of lumps and stumps of dead bushes. There were not enough small green branches of myrtle to build up our beds and we spent a very poor night.

We were up and getting breakfast at the first streaks of

dawn, only too glad to hurry away from this most uncomfortable camp. About an hour later we were in Snake Creek and making fast time with a strong current in our favor. We arrived at Biscayne station early in the afternoon. Spencer and George started on their return trip the next morning and, for a wonder, I did not want to go with them. As a matter of fact, I was quite willing to remain at home for some time.

When I arrived at the station I found that the Gleasons were moving up the coast to Eau Gallie on Indian River. George Hunt, who was the same age as Will Gleason and had been living with them, was making preparations to move to Lake Worth. He owned a small two-masted boat named *Mischief* that he wanted sailed to the lake and asked what I would charge to do the job. The *Mischief* was only twenty feet long, open from stem to stern, and carried about a thousand pounds of rocks stowed away under her floor for ballast. If she should happen to ship a heavy sea she would go to the bottom like the ballast she carried, but I agreed to sail her to the lake for ten dollars. George had a guitar valued at five dollars that I wanted, so he gave me the instrument and an order on Dr. Potter at the lake for the other five.

I waited for good weather and when it came, started out alone. I spent the night at Fort Lauderdale and as Bradley had some business up at the lake he decided to go with me. We started out early in the morning. The wind was blowing a fine breeze from the south-southeast and the sea was smooth. After a quick and uneventful trip we ran into Lake Worth Inlet a little before dark and spent the night at the Geers. Bradley left me here and the next morning I sailed the *Mischief* to Dr. Potter's. The following day I started for home, walking down the beach. The first night I spent with Steve Andrews at the Orange Grove station, the next at Fort Lauderdale, and early the next afternoon I arrived home at the bay.

A group of men of the United States Coast Survey were working along the seaboard from Lake Worth to Biscayne Bay, surveying and charting the coastline and the coastal waters. They had been at this work most of the winter and spring. One group, which was headquartered at Cap Dimick's hotel, had finished the Indian River section to Jupiter the winter before. Another party, using a large schooner at anchor near Miami as their base, was engaged in the survey of Biscayne Bay and its tributaries. The surveyers built tripods along the coast some miles apart for a steamer on the sea to run triangulations.

Father made the acquaintance of the Biscayne Bay crew when it was working near the station. A few days later he visited the schooner. The surveyors had a whaleboat they used for work in very shallow water. One day when the wind was blowing a stiff breeze they tried sailing the whaleboat, but it was too much for her as her planking was only a half-inch thick. The garboard strake split half the length of the boat. The next day father called on them and they gave him the boat. She was twenty-eight feet long, six feet in beam, and planked with half-inch white cedar. Father had her fitted with a set of natural crook timbers, a centerboard built in and decked over, and a cabin added. He then rigged her as a schooner with leg-o'-mutton sails and named her *Bonito*. Uncle Ned Pent did the work.

Sometime during that winter a family from Cleveland named Wallace moved into the Sturtevant home. They had come to the bay because of the oldest son's health. Bruce was about twenty-eight years of age and very sick. The rest of the family included his mother, who was a widow, his brother, Neil, who was sixteen, and his fourteen-year-old sister, Ada. Bruce was so ill that he could hardly walk around the house. He thought the sea air might help him, so father invited him to come and spend a week or so with us. He came a few days later and brought his younger brother.

Neil was good company for me and we had many fine

fishing trips to the reef about two miles offshore. The first time we went out I used the canvas canoe. There was some sea rolling and Neil became quite excited watching the canoe bend and buckle as it passed over the waves. He later became accustomed to the twisting and bending of the canoe in a lumpy sea, but on the first trip he was frightened. That fall the Wallaces moved to Gainesville, where Bruce died.

Early that fall we heard that a company known as Fields and Osborn had bought all the vacant land along the oceanfront from Cape Florida north to Lake Worth and was going to plant it in coconuts. They had a vessel coming from the island of Trinidad with a cargo of nuts for this planting scheme. Sometime about the first of November, E. T. Fields arrived on the bay with a party of about twenty men, a team of mules, a wagon, a number of Jersey surfboats, and a quantity of lumber and large tents for the purpose of building a permanent camp for himself and the men. They built their first camp near the south end of Indian Creek, about four miles south of the station.⁶

With Fields were J. W. Matheson and his wife, a young married couple who came from Staten Island, New York. Fields expected the Mathesons to take care of his camp and mules through the summer following the winter planting. Frank Osborn, son of the senior partner, was also one of the party. Shortly after their arrival father and I went to the camp and got acquainted with Fields, Frank Osborn, and the Mathesons. Fields informed us the schooner *Ada Doan* was on her way with the coconuts to be unloaded along the coast. Since Miami was not a port of entry, father had been appointed as a special inspector by the customhouse at Key West to inspect the unloading of the vessel and to see that only coconuts were landed from the schooner.

When the *Ada Doan* arrived, Fields said he needed me as an oarsman in one of his boats to help with the unloading. He told me to take the bow oar in my boat. Now the bow

oar is not the best position in a surfboat according to my way of thinking. I had to be the first to take my place in going out, also I took the worst of every sea that might happen to break over the bow. It would go the highest on meeting a big breaking sea and plunge the lowest when going down between them. There was only one good thing about that forward sea: when we reached shore I was the first to land.

We arrived alongside the schooner, which was anchored about half a mile from shore, and found another boat was ahead of us. As we had to wait for her to leave before we could load, I went on board to look around. The *Ada Doan* was a flush deck craft, just open low rail along amidship. Part of the schooner's crew were down in the hold throwing the nuts on deck. Others were tossing them to the men in the surfboats alongside who would drop them into the boat. This was kept up until the bottom of the boat was covered with nuts two or three deep. Then the men in the boat would stand aside and let the men on deck throw them into the boat until she was loaded. Then the boat was manned, lines were cast off, and the boat was rowed to shore where she was beached and unloaded. Then the same operation was performed again. It was a slow way to unload a ship, and a hard one at that. I had never used a fifteen-foot oar before and my soft hands were soon badly blistered. All day from early morning until night the work went steadily on. I was extremely tired when the last trip was made that day. My hands were very sore, and there were large blisters on the palms caused by the steady use of that fifteen-foot oar.

The wind increased that night and in the morning the sea was rough, but the work of unloading continued. When dinner came that day I was forced to give up my job on account of the condition of my hands. The catching of nuts at the schooner had broken the blisters in the palms of my hands, and now there were big raw places where the blisters had been. After dinner, which consisted of Irish stew, bread,

butter, and coffee, the regular menu at Field's camp, I returned to the station. I was glad to be home again and give my sore hands a chance to heal.

Father had to stay on board the vessel while it was discharging its cargo, so I was now in charge of the station. There was not much to do except keep a lookout for anything that might appear in sight on the ocean or on the beach. We had to keep the log and enter in it the number of brigs, barks, ships, and steamers that passed each day. We also entered the state of the weather and sea and the direction of the wind. We made barometer and thermometer readings three times a day. The service asked that these records be kept, yet it did not furnish any of the instruments. We happened to have a good barometer that belonged to my uncle and a thermometer of our own, so we kept proper records.

When the schooner was unloaded it sailed away again for Trinidad and another cargo of nuts. While waiting for the first cargo to arrive, Fields had kept his men busy cutting trails through the scrub from the beach back to the mangrove swamp along the bay and creek. These trails were about thirty feet apart. The nuts were planted in these trails and nearly every one sprouted and started to grow. Unfortunately, as soon as the tender sprouts came from the grounds, the rabbits that infested the area found they liked the sprouts better than their former diet of salt sea oats; the result was that there are very few trees growing today that came from the planting of these thousands and thousands of nuts. The following winter another shipload was planted on Virginia Key and on Key Biscayne; the winter after that another cargo was landed along the coast from Boca Raton north to the lower end of Lake Worth. I do not know of any trees growing today that came from this last planting; rabbits ate them all.

In the latter part of the summer of 1884 Bradley resigned his position as keeper of the Fort Lauderdale House of

Refuge and moved his family back to Lake Worth. Jack Peacock was appointed to take his place.

After the excitement attending the coming of the *Ada Doan* and the landing of the cargo of coconuts, life at the station became very monotonous for me and my thoughts turned to my chums, Louie and Guy, and the fine hunting west of Lake Worth. Back in the flatwoods I could see them killing all kinds of deer, turkey, and sandhill cranes. At last I decided to walk up the beach as I had done before. When I arrived at Steve Andrew's I asked him to go to the lake with me and take me to the Bradleys' in his sailboat. This he readily agreed to do, and I landed at their house in time for dinner on the third day from home. The boys were glad to see me and readily fell for my plan to start out at once. We made our plans while eating dinner. Bradley said if we killed a deer he would take it to Palm Beach to sell for us. In the meantime we could return to the woods and continue our hunt. It did not take long to get ready, and in less than an hour after dinner we were on our way.

We used my skiff, *Little Blue*, to take us to Camp Everglades on the edge of the flatwoods. This was a fine camping ground and adjacent to the best hunting to be found in the western flatwoods. There was a palmetto shack at this camp, one we had built some two years before, so when we arrived there were no delays; we simply threw our dunnage into the shack and started for the woods. I stopped just long enough to change my hat for the wildcat skin cap and to put on my deerskin cape with its fringe of leather tie-ups. The boys laughed at my strange attire for a minute or so, but the results of that afternoon's hunt showed what my rig was worth in the woods.

We left camp together and waded from the island to the open woods to the west. When we came to a bunch of little hammock islands in a large slough, I told the boys I was going south through the islands. Louie and Guy said they would follow down on the west side of the slough. On

coming around the south end of the last island, I stopped to take a good look at the country ahead. As my gaze went around to the southeast, I saw two deer lying on a little point to the south. They had not seen me, and I carefully stepped back behind some low bushes.

After looking over the situation from every point, I came to the conclusion that the only chance I had of getting near enough to kill them was to crawl on my hands and knees through the grass and water. I hoped that my catskin cap would fool them into thinking I was only an old coon hunting in the pond for food. When I was about fifty yards from them they saw me, but they just stared while I kept crawling closer. Then one of them became suspicious and stood up to get a better look. When he did that, I knew the time for action had come. I was not more than forty yards away from them. Slowly rising upon my knees, I brought the gun to my shoulder with both barrels cocked and fired at the standing deer; it fell dead. The other sprang to its feet and, swinging the gun around, I pulled the trigger. It too fell dead. Less than an hour in the woods and I had two fine deer.

I could not see any signs of Louie and Guy so I fired our usual signal. When they saw the two deer they were a little disappointed that I hadn't given them more of a chance to do some hunting, for now we had to carry the meat home. We did not take it to the Bradleys' that night. It was late when we reached camp, near sundown, so we had a good supper of tenderloin and liver with flapjacks and tea. The weather was cool and the meat would keep, so there was no reason for us to hurry back to the lake.

The next morning we took our meat to the Bradley home. Bradley was ready to start to Palm Beach and said he would sell the two saddles. The rest of the meat was for the Bradley family. When he returned I was handed eight dollars. We hunted all the rest of that day and part of the next without any success. Since I thought it about time to

go back to Biscayne Bay, we decided to break camp. About a mile from camp on our way home, we met Bradley. He had a stranger with him who was a surveyor for a company that was planning to run a railroad through this part of Florida.

When I returned home I was surprised to find my Uncle Robert Moore and Aunt Ursula. They had come from Chicago by train to Cedar Key, then by steamer to Key West, and finally by the mail schooner to Biscayne Bay. Uncle Robert informed us that he was going to move to Lake Worth, where he expected to spend the balance of his life, and he had brought along Aunt Ursula to select a homesite. He also said it was up to father to find some way to get them to the lake.

Some months before there had been a ship wrecked on the beach near Lake Worth. A great pile of old junk had been salvaged, and Mr. Ewan, who was Deputy United States Marshall, was ordered to take it to Key West to the Salvage Court. He did not relish the idea of a trip up the coast in his little schooner, and when he heard that father had to go to Lake Worth with Uncle Robert and his wife, he saw his chance to evade the trip by offering the use of his schooner and a Negro sailor, provided father would bring the ship's sails and rigging back to Miami for him. Ewan's *Lillian* was a far better and larger seagoing boat than any we had, so father jumped at the offer.

The *Lillian*, though much larger than the *Creole* or the *Bonito*, was none too big for a trip of that kind. She was too large to beach without wrecking her and not large enough to stand very bad weather on the open sea. She was twenty-eight feet long and twelve feet wide and schooner-rigged Key West style.

One morning some days later we started on our trip to the lake. Our party consisted of father, mother, and my sister Lillie; Uncle Robert and Aunt Ursula; John, the Negro sailor; and myself. About four o'clock the next afternoon

we sailed through Lake Worth Inlet into the ever pleasant waters of the lake and tied up at the Geer dock at sundown. Father had promised Uncle Robert six acres of land on Hypoluxo Island, but Aunt Ursula thought the location was too isolated and selected a homesite on the north end of the Geer's land. After they had purchased six acres they departed for Chicago to wind up their affairs.

When we arrived everyone around the lake was busy picking the tomato crop for shipment. Captains U. D. Hendrickson and H. F. Hammon were now making regular trips to Titusville with the tomatoes, peppers, and eggplants grown on the lake. With the improved transportation afforded by their boats, fair returns were being received by the growers. The boats were so constructed that they were able to make the outside run to Jupiter Inlet in much rougher seas than was possible with the smaller craft heretofore used. Alternating trips, they gave the settlers a chance to ship on the average of every ten days. When the weather was good, smaller craft sailed between trips of the larger boats.

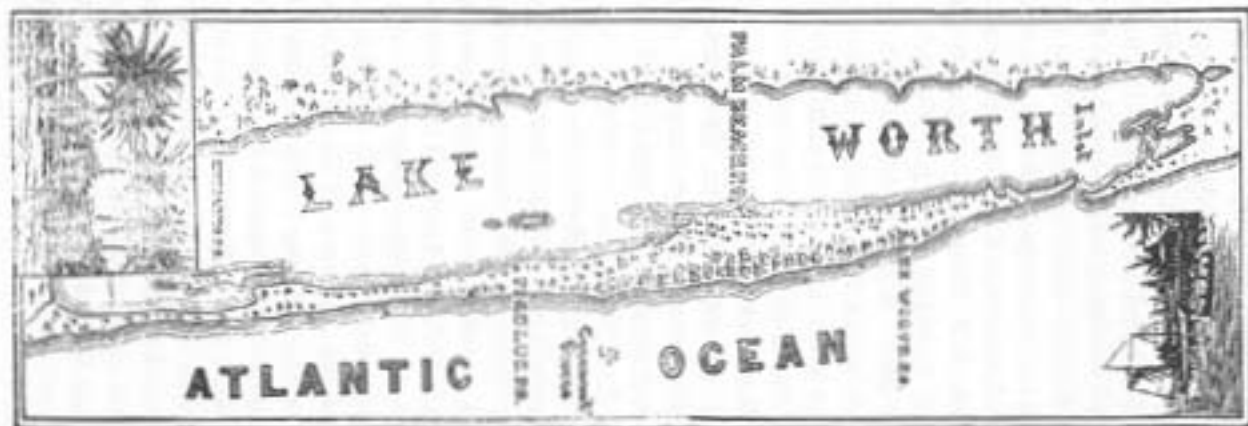
Later that year Captain Hendrickson and the Brelsford brothers went into partnership. They put a large schooner on the run from Lake Worth to Jacksonville, by way of the sea, and started a well-stocked general store at what later became known as Palm Beach. Their vessel, a sharpie-modeled schooner of some sixty feet in length that registered fourteen tons, was named the *Bessie B*. The store was constructed on the end of Brelsford's point, with a dock leading into the building for the schooner.

About this time the people living near the new store thought they were entitled to a post office, as the Lake Worth office was nearly two miles to the north. The government granted their petition to extend the mail route to the south and asked them to name the new office. The Dimick and Geer families had planted many coconuts and now the area was one vast coconut grove, so the name Palm

Palm Beach, Dade County, Florida,

Is situated on the east shore of Lake Worth, lying between the Lake and Atlantic Ocean. The Lake lies parallel with the Ocean Beach; it is about twenty-two miles long, and averages about a mile wide, is connected with the Ocean by an inlet and is not over three-quarters of a mile at any point from the Ocean. It is the most eastern point of Florida, being one hundred miles farther east than Jacksonville, and nearly three hundred miles farther south. The Gulf Stream comes nearer the land here than at any other point, making it the

MOST TROPICAL PART OF THE STATE, AND INSURING THE MOST EVEN TEMPERATURE.



Parties wishing to reach any point on Lake Worth go via Titusville and Indian River

There are a number of large bearing COCONUT GROVES, with a great many young groves coming into bearing. Also all other Tropical fruits, such as Mangoes, Guavas, Sapodillas, Sugar Apples, Alligator Pears, Almonds, Figs, Dates, Pineapples, Bananas, Mamee Apples, Limes, Oranges, Lemons, Citrons, and a great many other Tropical Fruits and Flowering Trees and Plants. A large business is done in Garden Truck each winter.

This is, probably, the best point in Florida for hunting Deer, Turkey, etc., and Fishing in both salt and fresh water. Game and Fish in abundance.

THERE ARE GOOD HOTELS, STORES, ETC.

Map of Palm Beach, showing the locations of the post offices at Hypohuxo, Figulus, Palm Beach, and Lake Worth. From the reverse side of the Brelsford Brothers' letterhead of the 1890s

City was selected. The postal department said they would have to decide on a new name since there was a Palm City in another part of the state. When the residents heard this they chose the name Palm Beach. This name was agreeable to the post office authorities and as soon as the Brelsford store was finished, the office was moved there with E. M. Brelsford as postmaster.

Some time later the Brelsford brothers and Hendrickson dissolved their partnership. The Brelsford retained the *Bessie B.* and the store; Captain Hendrickson his sharpie *Illinois*. Then the captain went north and bought the fifteen-ton light-draft schooner, *Mary B.*, built a store at Lake Worth on his own land, and started a business in competition with the Brelsford. From that time on for a number of years there was a quiet but energetic rivalry between these two important places on the lake. Each had a tourist hotel, a store, and transportation headquarters.

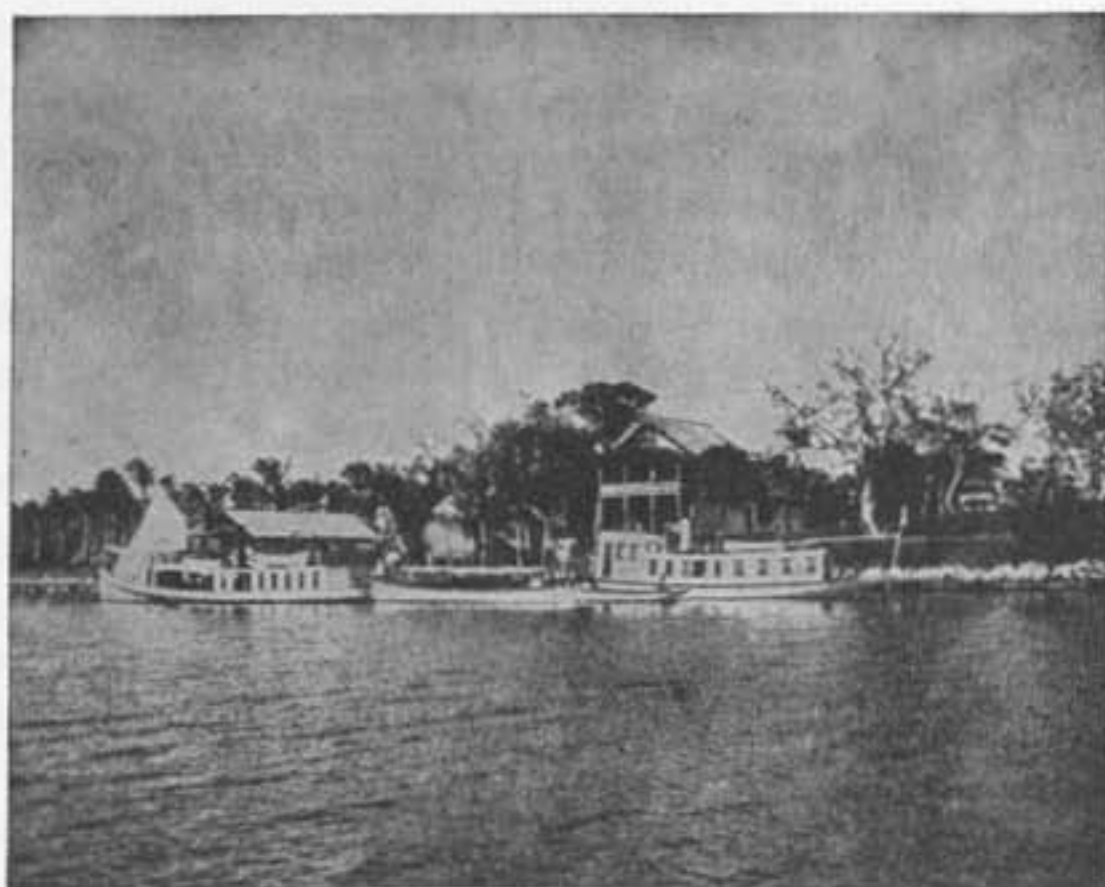
I did not return to the bay with my parents on the *Lillian* but stayed over for a plume hunt with Louie and Guy. When I arrived back at the station a couple of weeks later I found that the Mathesons were living there since Fields and his crew had left for New Jersey. Sometime the previous winter a young man named Charles Lum, who had come from New Jersey, had built a good-sized house about half a mile south of Field's camp. This was the first house built on Miami Beach and, except for the station, the only one on the east side of the bay.

I remained quietly at home for a week or so assiduously practicing on my violin, but one day at dinner I told my folks I was getting tired sitting around everyday with nothing to do and that I was going to the lake. I mentioned that Uncle Robert might have returned and started to build his house. Father liked my idea of a trip for once. Now that we had the *Bonito*, he wanted me to take the *Creole* to the lake and leave her with the Bradleys. He also wanted me to plant a hundred young coconut trees that Fields had given

him from the cargo of the first trip of the *Ada Doan* and that were now sprouted and ready to set out.

So that was how I happened to make a trip up the coast in the *Creole* in the month of June 1884. It turned out to be one of the most eventful and hazardous trips I ever made sailing along the coast. Shortly after leaving the station, squalls began to make up on every hand and the prospects became very dubious. About twelve o'clock a heavy squall came down on me from the east. I was more than a mile from shore and the storm looked wicked, so I cast anchor in sixty feet of water and lowered sail in anticipation of a heavy blow, but it petered out before reaching me. As it cleared up, the wind again breezed up from the southwest. I had hopes of being able to sail straight to Lake Worth Inlet that night; if the wind held as it was I would be certain to be near that inlet by daylight in the morning. Yet I was suspicious of the weather; it had not been acting normally all day and I was afraid of a change of wind to the north or northeast before morning.

I arrived off Hillsborough just before sundown, sailed close in, and looked at it long and hard. My better judgment told me to go in and wait until morning before attempting the forty-mile run to Lake Worth, and if there had been anyone with me I would have done so, but the place looked so lonesome, wild, and dreary I decided to keep on. Besides, if rainy weather came on and I could not go on for a week or more I would have a most uncomfortable time. I had a feeling in my bones that the fine weather and fair wind would not hold until I reached Lake Worth Inlet. I feared a northeaster was coming down the coast, yet at this time there was nothing in the appearance of the weather that indicated such conditions on the way. If a northeast wind should strike me before I reached the lake I would be compelled to run the boat onto the beach, and that would probably mean her loss. She was by far too heavy for one man to pull up out of the reach of the heavy seas that would follow the first wind of a strong northeaster.



U. D. HENDRICKSON,
General Merchandise.

WHOLESALE OILS, GASOLINES, 76 and 86.

Steamers "Lake Worth" and "Gladys," on Lake Worth.

Schooner regularly between Lake Worth and Jacksonville.

SALT,
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FERTILIZERS.

... LAKE WORTH, FLORIDA. ...

Advertisement showing U. D. Hendrickson's general store with the steamers Lake Worth and Gladys on Lake Worth

Near eleven o'clock I passed the haulover at the south end of the lake. I knew I had exactly eighteen miles yet to sail to the inlet and safety. I had been making around three miles an hour and now with eighteen miles to go, if the wind did not die down I would arrive about six in the morning. If the wind would only come up strong enough to give the boat a speed of five miles an hour I felt certain I would reach the inlet ahead of the storm, but if it did not grow stronger, the chances were against me. The tide would start on the flood at five in the morning and if a northeaster were near it would come in with the tide.

About two o'clock, when I was off Hammon and Lanehart's place, the wind hauled more to the northwest. This caused me to flatten sheets and haul close on the wind in order to hold my course, which at the same time meant some loss of speed. At this time I could discern far away on the horizon in the north and northeast a heavy black storm cloud bank in which vivid and constant flashes of lightning appeared along its entire length. It was too distant to hear the thunder, but I knew only too well what was coming.

At four o'clock the storm struck in full force. I brought the *Creole* into the wind at the first puff from the northeast, hauled down the jib and lowered away the peak of the mainsail, and headed upon the wind close-hauled, still thinking the wind might not come too hard or the sea kick up too quickly for me to make the inlet. The beach would be my last resort, for I now was convinced the *Creole* would be smashed into kindling wood in no time.

A few minutes after I had hauled on the wind I saw that it was all up. The heavy wind knocked the *Creole* on her beam-ends. She lost steerageway and was drifting sideways to the beach entirely out of control. Slacking the main sheet, I got her off before the wind and headed her for the land. There was nothing else to do now and I fully expected the *Creole* would be a total wreck soon after striking the sand. Within a hundred feet of the shore I rounded up and

cast anchor. Then I played out cable until the stern was in shallow water so I could wade to land with my bedding. Crawling back on board, I hauled the anchor to the deck and let the wind drive the *Creole* broadside on the beach. I carried the anchor high upon the shore and planted it firmly in the sand. Then I drove a stake into the sand to hold the stern line. These lines would prevent the return rush of the seas from carrying the boat back into the churn of the breakers where she would soon fill and become a complete wreck.

I was hunting for some timber or planks to place under the boat's keel to prevent her burying in the sand when I heard a new noise above the roar of the wind and the sea. The jib had broken its lashing and run up the stay. Before I could reach the boat another hard gust of wind came and tore the jib into rags.

After a great deal of effort, I finally got three planks in place under the boat. As I went on the beach about five o'clock in the morning and at dead low tide, I saw that I would have to tend the lines and keep the planks under the boat until eleven, when the tide would again commence to fall. The boat would then be safe from pounding seas until the next high tide. I had a comparatively easy time tending the lines and had just finished the third and last shift when I happened to look down the beach to the south. About a half mile away two men were hurrying up the beach toward me.

When they were near enough for me to see their faces I recognized one as Everard Geer. The other, a boy of about fifteen, I did not know. Evie had a broad grin as he approached me and called out that it looked as if I were shipwrecked. I said I was not wrecked as the captain had not yet given up the ship. Then, pointing to his companion, Evie said, "Do you know this fellow?" When I answered that I had never seen him before, Evie laughed and said it was my cousin Rob Moore. It was no wonder I didn't

recognize him. He had only been two years old when I last saw him in May 1871.

After a few minutes spent in asking and answering questions, Evie said we had better hurry back home or we would be late for dinner. Of course he invited me, a poor shipwrecked sailor, to go with them. To this I agreed since not only was there nothing to do at the boat until the next high tide but I was very hungry, not having eaten anything since noon the day before.

I told the boys it would be necessary for me to be on hand at the *Creole* at high tide that night, which would be at midnight. When I had finished explaining the necessity of being on hand to take care of the *Creole*. Evie said he and Rob would bring their tent and help. This plan was agreed upon and we started off down the beach to the Geers.

Here I met for the first time Morris B. "Benson" Lyman. Lyman was boss carpenter in charge of the building of Uncle Robert's new house, well underway at this time. Lyman told me he and his wife had two small sons, Günther and Edgar, and that his father, mother, and brother George were then living in Jacksonville.

Late in the afternoon we returned to the *Creole*, loaded down with camp dunnage. By the time we had the tent up, beds fixed, and wood collected for an all-night fire, it was dark and time for supper. When we had finished eating, I lay back on the sand and all at once felt very sleepy. Turning to the boys, I said that I was depending on them to awaken me at midnight. I had not had one wink of sleep since the night before last and was afraid that once I went to sleep I would not wake up to tend the boat.

When I opened my eyes again the sun was high in the east. Springing to my feet, I looked in the tent and there were my two trusty helpers sound asleep. My boat was heeled over to windward and was full of sand and water. The sea had been washing clean over her at high tide while we slept. I went back to the tent and routed out the boys,

telling them they were a fine pair of helpers in the time of shipwreck. They claimed they had not known a thing from the time they closed their eyes until I called them.

After breakfast, under my directions and with my help, the boys went to work with a will, and it was not long before the old *Creole* was again in shape to stand another high tide without damage. We then retired to our tent and rested until noon when the tide was again at its highest. Although the sea swept clear up to the grass on the ridge, the *Creole* was not disturbed because of the secure blocking we had given her. After lunch we lowered the tent, rolled up our bedding, and packed back to the Geer home, where I remained waiting for the wind to moderate and the sea to calm.

A week later the wind slackened enough that I could make repairs and sail the *Creole* into the lake. It was now ten days since I left the bay and there was no way to send word home of my safe arrival. I would have to walk back by way of the ocean beach to let my parents know that I was yet alive and well. Uncle Robert tried to persuade me to stay and help with the work on his house, but when I told him of my anxiety to let my parents know I was safe, he admitted that perhaps I was right. He exacted a promise from me, however, to return and give him a few weeks' work on the building. He said I had better be earning a little money than sitting around the station, not making a cent.

I gave Mrs. Geer all of the young coconut trees that I was to plant. This I did as a part recompense for the bother and expense I had caused her through the week of my enforced stay at the Geer home. Then I sailed down the lake to the Bradleys where I left my camp outfit. I had intended to leave the *Creole* there with Louie, but when Evie and Rob learned my intentions, they begged me to leave the boat with them. This I was at length foolish enough to do and thus had to walk an extra twelve miles.

When I reached home father was not at all pleased that I

had given the coconuts to Mrs. Geer. Mother said she was only too thankful that I had come out of it all safe and did not care what had become of the coconut trees. There the controversy ended.

Not long after making his inspection trip by canoe, Spencer realized that canoe travel along the lower east coast was not suited to his purpose and bought from Commodore Ralph Munroe his little sharpie, *Skipperee*. The boat was commanded by Joe Jenkins, a Florida boy who had lived most of his life on Biscayne Bay. I had been home but a few days when Spencer arrived on one of his inspection trips. When I told him I wished to go to Lake Worth he said he would be more than glad to land me at Palm Beach in return for my assistance in sailing the sharpie. Of course I was only too happy to accept passage on those terms.

The first job that Uncle Robert gave me when I arrived back on the lake was to help a young man who was at work drilling a well. This well was located close to the kitchen at an angle formed by its junction with the main building and open to the south and east. This location collected all the heat that a Florida August sun could give it. The drill was a solid bar of steel, two inches thick and twenty feet long and weighing close to seventy-five pounds. Our work was to lift this ponderous implement, turn it slightly, and let it drop. Then we were to repeat the operation as quickly as our strength would permit.

At twelve o'clock when we went to dinner, I informed my uncle that he would have to get another man on that drill for the rest of the day as it was too hard a job for me. When I said this, all the men burst out with a hearty laugh. I could not see anything funny and asked what the joke was. Benson Lyman told me that the drilling job had worn out every man on the place, but that the well was now finished. They had measured it after I left and found it deep enough. That afternoon I was put to work painting sash and window frames, and I liked that work far better than drilling wells.

The old settlers in this section claimed a lath and plaster finish could not be used in a house. They said that hurricanes would cause the plaster to crack and fall. There was not a house from Titusville to Biscayne Bay that was plastered except the house of the Jupiter Light keepers, but this was built of stone, which was said to make the difference. Aunt Ursula said her house had to be plastered regardless of what hurricanes might do, and Uncle Robert thought plaster would stand here as well as other places if the work were done properly. Thus the Dellmoore was the first house on Lake Worth finished with lath and plaster. All other houses at that time, and for some years later, were paneled with natural pine.

I had not worked at regular day labor before, and I found I had a hard time keeping steadily at it for ten hours straight in that hot August sun. When Saturday night came I was ready to quit and go back to Biscayne Bay. Uncle Robert wanted me to stay on, but I told him I was satisfied with what I had earned that week and was ready for a change. Even a seventy-mile walk down the beach was a vacation compared to the work around his building.

At the station I found a surprise waiting for me in the shape of a letter from Uncle Will, who was then manager of the Titus House, the largest hotel in Titusville. He asked me to come and get his boat, the *Bonton*, as his work at the hotel made it impossible for him to take care of her. He said I could use her in any way I chose until he needed her again, which might be more than a year hence. This was good news because the *Bonton* was a fairly large sloop with a big cabin.

The *Bonton* was twenty-eight feet long and seven wide, with a cabin fitted with two bunks and a kerosene stove. She had been built by Uncle Will at Jupiter for the party business on Indian River in the winter season. I was very elated to have the use of her for a year or more at no cost to me except her upkeep.

After much deliberation I decided to see if Louie and

Guy would take me to Titusville in their father's sloop *Nautilus*. I felt sure they would, because neither had been on Indian River since their coming to the lake some years before. When I had explained the situation and my needs, Bradley readily agreed to letting the boys take me up the coast.

Hoisting sail on the *Nautilus* the next morning, we headed for the inlet and on our arrival found the tide and sea favorable. We put to sea at once and soon made Jupiter Inlet. As wind and tide were in our favor we did not land at the lighthouse but kept on our way up Indian River. Being anxious to reach Titusville as soon as possible, we did not land or even anchor except for a few hours sleep that night and the next. We arrived at Titusville late in the afternoon of the third day.

The next morning we boarded the *Bonton*, which had been anchored in about two feet of water. Neglected and uncared for, she had sunk as far as the depth of the river would permit and was sitting on the bottom with about eighteen inches of water over the cabin floor. After about an hour's work we had her afloat once more and sailed her around alongside the *Nautilus*. When I took an inventory of the equipment remaining on board, I found there was enough for me to get along on now, but it was quite evident that before starting in the party business I would have to buy many things.

After a quick trip to the lake I started immediately for home. An Irish peddler named Pat Murphy was waiting on Pat Lennon's dock and asked to be taken to Miami. Since I wanted company I was glad to have him along, though his great appetite and irresponsibility made me wish several times that I had left him on the dock at Palm Beach.

In October 1884 occurred the greatest and longest rainfall known on the east coast since its earliest settlement. It poured for eight days and nights without stopping. The whole southern part of the state, with the exception of the

higher land, was inundated. All hollows on the beach ridge east of Indian Creek were full of water.

On the night of the eighth day the rain stopped, and the next day came in bright and clear and the sun shone on a rain-soaked Florida. In the afternoon of that day, when I was on the porch looking out to sea, I caught the glint of something white about four miles to the north. At first I thought it was a sea gull, but when I looked through our old spyglass the flickering white appeared to be whitecaps at the head of a dark body of water rushing down the coast. In less than an hour it was passing the station; in the meantime I had called everyone to come and see the strange sight. A dark mass of fresh water, some hundred feet in width, was rushing along to the south with breaking seas overrunning the blue water in front. It was a strange sight and at first we all wondered where it came from. Father solved the mystery when he said that it was fresh water from New River Inlet. New River was fourteen miles away, yet there was no other solution of the phenomenon. What a mighty volume of water must have been coming out of the inlet, with tremendous velocity, enough to overcome the resistance of wind and sea for so many miles. By night of that day the entire ocean in sight of the station was covered with dark coffee-colored fresh water from New River. There was not a bit of blue water to be seen in any direction; in fact, Biscayne Bay was fresh for nearly a month after the week of rain.

A Frenchman had been living with the Wagners for the past year. He was first brought to our notice by a very serious accident. While loading a shotgun he had caused it to go off, shooting the ramrod and the entire charge through the palm of his right hand. He was hurried to Key West where the doctors cured the wound by taking the bones from three of his fingers and using them to fill the hole in the palm of his hand. Father came from Miami one day and said he had met and talked with the Frenchman,

whose name was Le Chevelier. Le Chevelier, who was a taxidermist and collector of bird skins and plumes, wanted to hire me and the *Bonton* to take him on a long cruise after birds around the Keys and the west coast. The cruise was to start the latter part of April and last most of the summer. I immediately called at the Wagners and closed the deal with Le Chevelier. I also made the acquaintance of Henry Wagner, a boy of seventeen who did all the bird skinning for the Frenchman. I promised to be on hand not later than April fifteenth to start the trip.

It was about this time that father decided to resign his position as keeper of Biscayne station and return to our old home on Hypoluxo Island. I was delighted with his decision for I had never liked living on the bay. The principal reason was the lack of good hunting that I had been used to at Hypoluxo. As father had to inspect the landing of another shipload of coconuts the latter part of the month, it was decided that I should take my mother and sister and most of our household goods in the *Bonton* and go ahead to the lake. Father was to follow in the *Bonito* when his work was finished. I felt this arrangement was a great responsibility on my shoulders. Besides the *Bonton* and the best part of all our household goods, the lives of my mother and sister were in my hands. I was determined on one point, I would not put to sea unless I was sure of good weather. The season was in my favor though, and one February morning we were able to start up the coast.

We had almost reached Lake Worth Inlet after an uneventful trip when we discovered a large steamship approaching from the north. As she came near we could see it would pass us close aboard the starboard side. Of course, I could have kept away, but I was curious to see what she looked like close up and so I held my course. It was a large passenger ship, evidently a stranger to this coast. We guessed it was from Europe bound for New Orleans, where there was an international exposition. Soon she was close aboard,

and she was a whopper for size. Our topmast hardly reached as high as her main deck, where a crowd had collected to gaze at us. Her name was in large gold letters on the bow end *Ramon De Habbas*, evidently a French ship. The *Bonton's* name was on the stern and the people on the ship could not see it until we had passed. There was a man on the afterdeck looking at us with a pair of glasses as we sailed by and as he read the boat's name, there came a sudden change in the crowd of passengers. They started to jump about the deck and wave their hats and handkerchiefs. We could hear a confused sound of voices as they called to us in French. Just then we ran into the swell of the passing ship and for a minute or so I thought the mast would go, so violent were the plunges of the *Bonton* on the sharp, high seas thrown out by the steamship. I was genuinely frightened. When we passed into the smooth sea again I registered a vow never to go so close to a passing steamship when in a comparatively small sailboat.

As we neared the inlet we could see a schooner at anchor inside and a few minutes later recognized her as the *Bessie B*. When we sailed past her, Captain Ed Brelsford, who was standing on her afterdeck, waved to us. The tide was at its peak and still running in, so we did not stop but sailed on to Uncle Robert's dock where we arrived just as darkness settled down.

7. New Settlers and the Barefoot Mailman

I shall never forget our arrival at the old island home. Picture to yourself its condition at the time of our return. The rich soil and the semitropical climate had produced giant weeds, vines of all kinds, and even young trees; these covered the place except for a small area around the house where there was a heavy mat of Bermuda grass. My first act after landing was to get out the scythe and set to work cutting a path from the dock to the house. In the meantime mother opened up the doors and windows and swept out the accumulated dust. When the path was finished we carried the household goods up from the boat and when night put an end to our activities, we were pretty well settled in our old home once more. To my notion the most wonderful thing was that we had been away nearly two years, and yet everything was found exactly as we had left it when we moved to Biscayne Bay.

Several new settlers had come to the Lake, one of whom interested me very much. His name was Charles Lane and he was at that time a member of the Seventh Regiment Band of New York City. He played a slide trombone and was also



Six murals depicting the Barefoot Mailman were painted by Steven Dohanos and are now on the walls of the West Palm Beach Post



Office. Charles Pierce posed for the artist, and the mail carrier in the murals is said to bear a strong resemblance to Pierce

a very fine violinist. He bought a piece of land joining Hendrickson's on the north and built a winter home.

A week or so after our arrival we saw a small smoke fire rising up from the lake end of the haulover trail. Suspecting that father had beached the *Bonito* there and made the smoke to attract my attention, I hoisted sail on the *Bonton* and went to investigate. My surmise was correct. Father preferred hauling the boat over to the lake at his leisure, rather than run the risk of not making the inlet before dark that night.

After the *Bonito* and her cargo had been transported over the haulover and landed at home, I started preparations for my long cruise around the Keys and the Thousand Islands for *Le Chevelier*. I set sail on this cruise March 11, 1885, and returned home on August 12, well and happy but sunburned the color of an Indian after five months in the swamps, on the ocean, and in the bay and gulf.¹

On my return I found a number of important changes had taken place. First and foremost of these was the establishment of a mail route from Palm Beach to Miami by way of the ocean beach. It was called the barefoot route because the mail carrier went barefoot in order to walk at the water's edge where the sand was firmer. Leaving Palm Beach each Monday, the carrier would sail or row his boat to the foot of the lake; from there he would walk five miles on the beach to the Orange Grove station where he would spend the night. The next day it was twenty-five miles straight walking, with one inlet to cross, to the Fort Lauderdale station where he would spend the second night. Continuing on the next day he would row his boat four miles down New River to the inlet, where he again took to the beach for ten miles of soft sand. At Baker's Haulover at the head of Biscayne Bay the carrier kept another boat. This was a rowboat fitted with a sail to use when the wind was fair. When the wind was ahead he used the oars to convey himself to the post office at Miami, twelve miles down the

bay. After spending the night in Miami, he would begin his return trip to Palm Beach the next morning, arriving on Saturday afternoon. All together the route was one hundred and thirty-six miles long, fifty-six miles by small sailboat and rowboat, eighty miles on foot along the beach.

E. R. Bradley was awarded the contract to carry this mail, a round trip each week at six hundred dollars per annum. He and Louie took turns carrying the mail for the next two years. They sold the *Nautilus* and bought a boat they named the *Rosie B.*, a low-built, fast sailing catboat, named for one of the Bradley girls.

Three new settlers had come to Hypoluxo while I was away on my west coast cruise. James W. Porter, Andrew W. Garnett, and James E. "Ed" Hamilton were from Trigg County, Kentucky, and had bought a tract of muck land across the lake from our place. They built a frame house on the lakeshore and were keeping "bach" when I first met them. The house was of frame construction with a palmetto roof. On my return home I found them hard at work, clearing land for the winter crop they proposed to plant.

On my arrival at Miami from the cruise, Le Chevelier said he would not be able to pay me as the remittance he was expecting from Paris had not come. As he thought it might take two or three weeks, I told him I would go home and he could let me know when it came. One day in October I received a letter from him telling me the money had arrived. I went down the beach with Louie, who was the mail carrier that week, and collected my earnings.

On returning home we hauled the *Bonton* out for a good overhauling and painting. The bottom in particular was badly in need of copper paint, as the coat on it was over a year old. I wanted her in good condition for the winter business, though just what that business would be I did not know. I hoped I might pick up a cruising party and wished to have the boat ready for anything that might turn up.

About the time I had the *Bonton* back in the water with

everything in good shape for sailing, I received a letter from Uncle Will asking me to meet him in Titusville at once to bring his new wife and him to Hypoluxo. He was returning from New York state where he had married. This upset my plans, for sooner or later he would want the *Bonton* for his own use and I would have to find something else to do to make a little money. I made the trip to Titusville about the first of November, 1885, and brought the bride and groom to Hypoluxo.

As we were now on the mail route from Palm Beach to Miami, the people of the south end of the lake thought they were entitled to a post office, so they petitioned the government. Their petition was approved and the new office was named Hypoluxo. A. W. Garnett was made postmaster with me as his assistant. A small homemade table in the northeast corner of the Kentucky boys' home on the west side of the lake contained the entire post-office outfit at that time. We thought we were getting up in the world when our mail was brought to us once a week by a paid mail carrier furnished by the Post Office Department.

New settlers arrived in number in the fall of 1885. It seemed to us the outside world had just heard of what the lake had to offer to those who were willing to work. A colony from Pennsylvania settled along the west shore south of the little hammock that marked the halfway point between Hypoluxo and Palm Beach. There were four homesteads taken up by this group. Farther on at a point three miles north of Hypoluxo, Samuel James and his wife took up a homestead.² Next to Bradley's on the north and south of the James', a German named Laubach took up the last available homestead south of Palm Beach on the lakeshore.

Stopping at the Potters one day on my way up the lake I met B. M. "Ben" Potter, the youngest of the Potter family, who had recently come to the lake with his mother and sister. Shortly after Hypoluxo became a post office, another



Scene of Lake Worth about 1890. From left to right, George Gale, Mrs. George Gale, Willie Gale, Nellie Simpson (Mrs. Will Poland), Henry Sanders, Hattie Gale (Mrs. W. H. Sanders)

was established at the Potters' place under the name of Figulus.

In the fall of 1885 and through the next year, there was a rush of homesteaders. L. D. Hillhouse, then a clerk in Brelsford's store, located a claim right across the lake from the store. Joining him on the south was the homestead of I. R. Henry, and between his place and Uncle Ben Lanehart's, Joe Jenkins took up a claim. On the west side of the lake north of Palm Beach, several settlers were making homes. These included the Reverend and Mrs. Elbridge Gale; George A. Gale, his wife, his son Willie, his niece Nellie, and his sister Hattie. Some distance north of the Gales, Allen E. Heyser's father built a home. Next to that on the north was the Hotel Riviera, owned and operated by the younger Heyser. From Riviera north to the head of the lake, a distance of some six or seven miles, no settlement had

been made at this time. For some reason this part of the lake did not appear to have any attraction for newcomers, and, with the exception of the John Sherman place close to the Riviera hotel on the north, no one made a permanent home on the west shore for many years.

Sometime in the first part of December, I made another trip to Titusville in the *Bonton*, my last trip in the boat. Uncle Will and a young man from the Pennsylvania group were my shipmates. On arrival in Titusville we saw a new steamer called the *Indian River* at the city dock. She was making regular round trips to Melbourne each day and was a fair-sized steamer for the river. We also found that the Jacksonville, Tampa, and Key West railroad was building into Titusville from Jacksonville and the people of the city were full of high hopes for the prosperous times ahead. On the return trip we remained at Jupiter for a day waiting on wind and sea and were entertained while there by Kate and Lida Armour with singing and organ music. On the morning of the second day at Jupiter we saw the wind was favorable, so we put to sea and made a quick run to Lake Worth Inlet.

On the trip I met and talked with Captain Miles O. Burnham, keeper of the Canaveral Light.³ Captain Burnham was one of the very first settlers on the Indian River. He came with a colony of forty heads of families in 1843 under the Armed Occupation Act, which specified that if the settler could hold his home by force of arms against attacks of hostile Indians for seven years, the government would give him title to the land. This colony came up the coast on a schooner and landed near the abandoned Fort Capron. While the settlers, who were scattered along the west bank of the river for some ten or fifteen miles, were clearing land and building houses and shacks, Captain Burnham explored up the then unknown river. He discovered another large river, running parallel to Indian River on the east, and because he saw some bananas growing on the east bank, named it Banana River.

Three years after the coming of the settlers, an Indian in a fit of rage killed a trader named Barker who lived at the north end of Indian River Narrows. This trader's store was built on a shell mound that still is known as Barker's Bluff. The killing of Barker created a panic among the settlers, who feared a general uprising of the Indians. They returned to St. Augustine and, with the exception of Captain Burnham, never came back to their settlement. He built a home on the river he had discovered and named, not far inland from the Canaveral Lighthouse, which stood on the beach of Cape Canaveral.⁴ Some time after his return he was made assistant keeper at the lighthouse; later he was appointed keeper. He held that position at the time of his death in 1886 and had been in the lighthouse service longer than any other man on the coast of Florida.

Music for entertainment and recreation developed very slowly among the pioneers of the lake. The first real impetus given to music among the early settlers was the arrival of the Brelsords. On the never-to-be-forgotten night of the first dance at Cap Dimick's, E. M. Brelsford played the violin, Doc Brelsford the cello, and Miss Minnie Brelsford was at the organ that Mrs. Dimick had purchased for her daughter Belle. Listening to the music that night fired the ambitions of Guy Bradley and myself. We both decided we had to learn to play the violin. I had my instrument about a year and could play a few pieces fairly well when Guy's grandfather sent him a violin. He took to it like a duckling takes to water. In just a few weeks we were playing together with Mrs. Bradley accompanying us on her guitar. Louie said he wished he could take part, so I suggested he purchase a cello.

After Louie received his cello we had regular practice three times a week, and when the next dance was announced the "Hypoluxo String Band" was called upon to play. For the rest of the winter we performed at all the dances. Most of our playing had been by ear, but we now

purchased Howes' *Beginners Quadrille Band Book* and started to read the notes. I had heard a cornet in Jacksonville and decided it would be a good addition to our band. About the time I was ready to play the cornet with the other instruments, George R. Lyman joined us as second violin. He was the son of M. K. Lyman, who had moved to the abandoned Pease homestead some years previously.

With the addition of White's *Home Circle Orchestra* and various pieces of sheet music to our collection of quadrille band books, we were able to give the dancing public of the lake a good grade of the dance music that was in vogue at the time. With the addition of the cornet, the guitar was dropped from our organization. Since we were now playing almost entirely by note, Louie did not require the assistance of his mother; besides, the soft tones of the guitar were completely lost when the cornet was playing. A social function in Palm Beach was not considered a success without a dance, and the Hypoluxo String Band was in evidence at the best affairs.

When the Palm Beach Yacht Club erected a clubhouse on the lakeshore a short distance south of the Coconut Grove Hotel, they engaged the band for the opening night and asked for something special in the way of music. I promised to do my best and succeeded in getting together an orchestra of seven pieces. It was by far the best musical organization yet produced on the lower east coast, and the dancers were lavish in their praise of our efforts that night. In our band were: John Cleminson, piccolo; Guy Bradley, first violin; George Lyman, second violin; Louie Bradley, cello; Henry Sanders, bass horn; Will Sanders, piano; and I played the cornet.

The Hypoluxo String Band continued to flourish until the fall of 1892. Our last engagement was playing for a dance in M. B. Lyman's new store, built on the Lyman homestead, where the Lantana Post Office had been established. The Lymans had just bought the schooner

Bessie B. from the Brelsford's, and whenever a man owned and operated a schooner running to Jacksonville, he had to have a store at the south end of the line. Before the partitions were put in he gave a dance as a "housewarming."

The dance was a success and everything appeared to go off in fine shape, but it so happened this was our last appearance as a band. I had been the organizer and leader and it was my interest that had kept the band going; when I stepped out it died.

A man named J. Gingrass, then living at Rockledge on the Indian River, bought all the muck land along the west shore of the lake south of Porter's and Garnett's land. He sent his son-in-law, Tony Canova, with a team of mules and a bunch of Negroes to raise a crop of tomatoes on this very black rich-looking soil.⁵ Tony planted ten acres of this land in tomatoes, but the crop was an almost complete failure. The tomatoes would not grow, and he only shipped forty crates the entire season. The Kentucky boys' crop was also a failure. Cabbage and turnips, however, would grow almost without any attention. Some years later it was discovered that all this land needed was to be sweetened with hardwood ashes. When ashes were used, about a ton to the acre, wonderful crops of tomatoes were produced.

Tony had a sloop named *Arrow* that was the fastest sailboat on Indian River or Lake Worth at the time. For some years the people of Indian River held a May Day picnic at Oleander Point, near Rockledge, and yacht racing was the main feature of the outing. Tony entered the *Arrow* the first two or three years and won easily, beating all others so badly they didn't stand a chance, but then the *Arrow* was barred from the races.

It was about this time that Garnett became weary of his job as postmaster, claiming it interrupted his farm work too much. Whenever the mail carrier came along, and there was no certain time because he had to depend on wind and weather, the postmaster had to be on hand to take care of

the mail. At that time there was one bag called the "way sack." This pouch went into every office on the route and contained all registered mail. Each postmaster had to record these letters, and sign a receipt to the office from which the pouch came, and make out another receipt card to be returned to him from the next office on the route. Sometimes this process took an hour or two, and since Garnett thought the compensation from this very small office was not enough to pay for the time lost from his farm, he turned the office over to me to run as his assistant. The first thing I did was to move the office to my home. I ran the office for the best part of a year. There was very little to do outside of taking care of the registered mail in transit. We had only one mail a week and ten or fifteen minutes time usually would take care of all incoming and outgoing letters. Finally Garnett resigned. Father was appointed in his place in September 1887, but I continued to take care of the office until sometime the following winter when father took entire charge. He continued as postmaster until his death in August 1898.

In the summer of 1887 father bought the *Illinois* from Captain Hendrickson and announced his intention of hauling tomatoes to Titusville. I was to stay home to run the post office and care for the crops on the homestead. I did not have a large acreage planted, but everything grew better than ever before. I succeeded in raising the first Bermuda onions on the lake and some of the largest eggplants ever grown in the area. My tomatoes also did well, but I did not have many planted.

In the fall of 1886 there was considerable excitement on the lower east coast of Florida. George Charter came to our house in great haste one morning and told father that the beach was covered with hundreds of casks of wine. Andrew Garnett and Ed Hamilton happened to be at the house when George reported the wine on the beach. The four of us hurried to the beach, and what a sight met our gaze when

we came out on the shore. One-hundred-gallon casks of Spanish claret lay strewn along the coast, so close together one could have walked for a mile along this part of the beach without once having to step off a cask.⁶

We rolled a cask out of the water and carried it home. We had been told that wine could not be kept in wood containers in south Florida because small weevil-like bugs would bore holes into the casks. Thus father insisted that we find bottles or jugs for the wine. We were hard pushed to find enough containers to hold all one hundred gallons.

We also salvaged three or four fifteen-gallon kegs of Malaga and another wine that was branded "Double Superior," which tasted very sweet and mild but was very strong in alcohol. Just why we did not try to save more than one cask of the claret I never did understand. We could have rolled the casks up on the beach and buried them in the dry sand. I am sure they would have kept in good condition for years.

Where this wine came from is still a mystery. We knew the wine was of Spanish origin because of the brands on the heads of the casks, but there was no other wreckage onshore, nor did we ever hear of any wreck along the coast. We learned afterwards that the beach was strewn with casks from Biscayne Bay to Indian River, but inside of a week they had all disappeared; either covered up in the sand or carried out to sea again.

The excitement of the wine wreck had just cooled a little when we were notified that the first term of Circuit Court of Dade County would be held in Miami and that a number of us had been selected to serve on the Grand Jury. This meant I would have to walk down the beach with the mail carrier in order to have the use of his boats to cross the inlets.

When the day arrived to start on my tramp to the county seat, I had the company of Allen E. Heyser, who was attending court to take his examination for admittance to

the bar, and George Charter and Joe Jenkins, who were fellow jurymen. It was Louie Bradley's trip with the mail. Since we were all trained beach walkers, we did not delay the carrier.

When we arrived at the Lauderdale station, Jack Peacock, who was the keeper, decided to go with us to Miami. He told us many amusing tales about the justices' courts he had attended on the bay at various times and said he wanted to see how a real court would be conducted.

Jack and Louie carried us down New River the next morning in their boats. After walking some distance down the beach beyond the inlet, one of our party began to complain of being thirsty. Louie said that his father had hidden some wine at the seven-mile tripod. When we arrived at the tripod we found the cask and everyone took a drink. We were all very thirsty.

When we arrived in Miami we made arrangements with Mrs. Brickell for board and bed. She charged us two dollars a day, which was rather high for this time. Since the state only paid us two dollars a day, Mrs. Brickell would get all our allowance. The only profit for that long walk was the mileage, but I was doomed to lose even that little extra cash.

We crossed the river and found quite a crowd had congregated around the stone barracks of old Fort Dallas. The court sat in the middle room in the old building. When Judge Broome tried to open court he found that many of the jurymen were absent and that a good portion of those attending were under the influence of the wine from the wreck. This forced him to adjourn until ten o'clock the next morning.

Promptly at ten, court convened with everybody on hand and apparently sober. When the grand jury was lined up, the judge told us of the many things that would disqualify anyone from serving on the jury. Since he did not mention assistant postmasters, I asked him if I was disqualified. He answered in the affirmative.

This action of the judge was hard on me. No doubt he thought I wished to evade jury duty as most men do, but I would have preferred serving and thereby earning my keep. Now I had to lay around and wait for court to adjourn on my own expense. I could not collect my mileage until court was over, and I needed those few dollars very badly now. There were no cases to try and on the third day we were called in to receive our pay. I drew eight dollars and out of this had to pay for my board and lodgings: six dollars to Mrs. Brickell and two dollars to the station keepers. When I reached home, after having walked one hundred and twenty miles, I was completely broke.

About the first of June in 1886, the Brelsford and George Charter asked me to go with them as a witness when they made proof of their homestead claims at Gainesville in the United States Land Office. Conradson, the Norwegian whose place was near Doc's, was also going as a witness. The plan was for the party to go to Jacksonville on the *Bessie B.* and from there take a train to Gainesville.

When we sailed on the forenoon of June 29, our party consisted of Captain Ed and "Doc" Brelsford; Squire Hoagland; a young man who was the nephew of Mrs. Samuel James; Conradson; and myself. Charter was to meet us in Jacksonville. Forty-eight hours after leaving Lake Worth Inlet, I sighted the Pablo Beach Hotel, and an hour or so later we sailed in past the whistling buoy off the St. Johns bar. We tied up at the dock in Jacksonville at the foot of Main Street late that afternoon.

I found the city greatly changed since my last visit in the summer of 1872. At that time Bay Street was a dirt road, the only paving in town was the shell road, a toll road running east from the end of Bay Street. We arrived at Jacksonville July 2, and of course the Fourth was soon at hand. To celebrate, there was a parade down Bay Street with flags flying and bands playing. It was the first band music I had heard since leaving Chicago in 1871.

About a week later we boarded the train for Gainesville.

When we arrived at Waldo around ten the conductor informed us that this was the end of the line for the Jacksonville train and that we would have to spend the night. The next train to Gainesville did not leave until morning, although it was only fourteen miles away. There was no argument; we had to spend the night in Waldo.

When the train pulled into the station the next morning, it proved to be a freight with a passenger coach hooked on behind. We climbed into this car and made ourselves as comfortable as possible under the circumstances. The old coach must have been in use long before the Civil War and was in almost dilapidated condition. The seat covers were worn through in many places, and in the middle of the car was a hole in the floor big enough for a man to fall through if he did not watch his step and jump over it. Despite the gaping hole, the train landed us safely in Gainesville in about an hour.

A hack carried us to the Magnolia House, located in the northern part of town. Gainesville was a rather pretty place with its large oak shade trees, but it was not very large. In fact, its two or three streets were really dirt roads. We spent Sunday night at the Magnolia House but moved the next day to another hotel in the south part of town called the Rochmont. We spent most of Monday in the office of a land attorney, going over the questions we would have to answer in the final proofs of the three homesteads. Tuesday morning we went before the register at the United States Land Office, and final proof was made on the three ocean front homesteads that in later years became noted by the high valuation placed on them.

That night after supper we boarded the train for our return to Jacksonville, and again we had to get off and spend the night at Waldo. Arriving back on the coast, there was a long wait while the schooner was being loaded, and on the sixteenth of the month we were not yet ready to sail. Since this was my twenty-second birthday, I celebrated the



Lillie Elder Pierce at four. The doll is "Nellie Key West," bought in Key West by Uncle Will Moore



Charles W. Pierce at twenty-two

day by having my photograph taken; the first since I was four years old.

Some two or three days later the loading of the schooner was completed and we sailed over the St. Johns bar on to the ocean. The trip north had been completed in record time; the return voyage was one of the longest the *Bessie B.* had ever made. We arrived at Palm Beach after twelve days and nights at sea.

The year 1886 brought many settlers to the lake, the greater portion of whom made it their permanent home. A number of good substantial houses were soon in evidence around the shore, especially in the neighborhoods of the Lake Worth and Palm Beach post offices. At the extreme north end of the settlement lived a Swedish family named Skoag. Their house stood close to a very tall and evidently a very old coconut tree, one of two native coconut trees found growing wild on the lake by the first settlers. The other wild coconut was in the beach hammock near the



Hotel Lake Worth

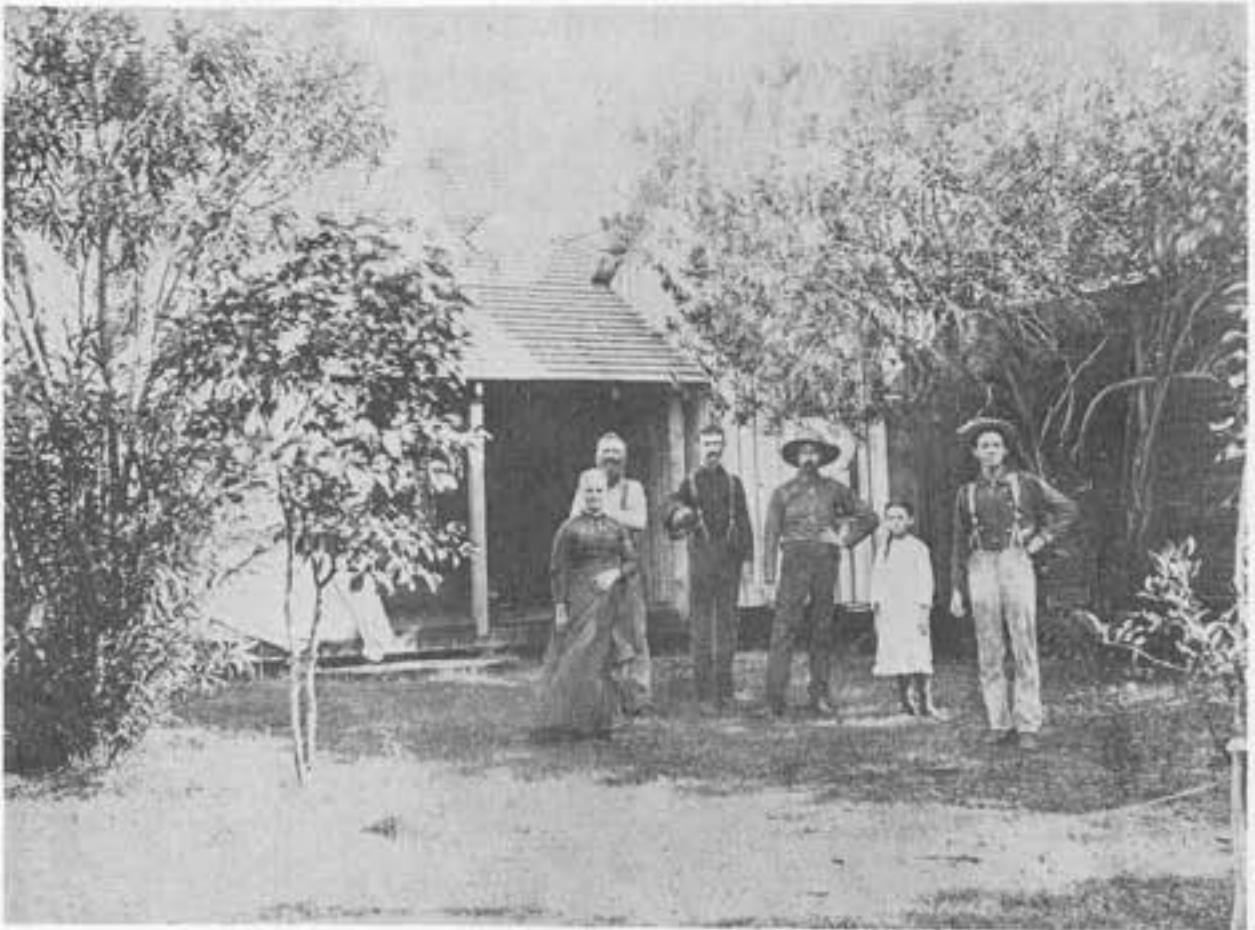
Potter homestead. South of the Skoags were the houses of James McFarland, Pat Lennon, Abner Wilder, J. P. McKenna, Charles Lane, Captain Hendrickson, Captain H. P. Dye (Lake Worth Hotel), J. O. Spencer, Charlie Moore, Squire Hoagland, the Browns, M. W. Dimick, J. J. White, Albert Geer, the Brelsford (post office and store), the Reynolds, Cornelius U. Barton, Cap Dimick (hotel), and at the south end of the line the home of George W. Lainhart.⁷

When the railroad was completed to Titusville, the Indian River Steamboat Company was incorporated and the sidewheel steamer *General Worth* was bought. Her name was changed to *Rockledge* and she was put on the run from Melbourne to Titusville, making daily round trips. The small steamwheeler *S. V. White* was put on the run from Melbourne to Jupiter, down one day and back the next, making three trips a week and carrying the mail.

At Jupiter the old government houseboat *Steadfast* was used for a hotel, or rather a stopping place for passengers coming by steamer on their way to Lake Worth. The *Steadfast* had been used on the Indian River to house the surveyors while they were charting the river. A road was cut through the scrub from Jupiter to the head of the lake, but from there on to Palm Beach the road was the open beach along the west shore.

Some kind of regular transportation was still needed from Jupiter south to Palm Beach, so the Brelsford and Cap Dimick organized a hack line to make the connection with the steamer *S. V. White*. The starting of the regular steamboat service on Indian River brought about a complete change in mail contracts in this section. The old star route from Titusville to Fort Capron (now St. Lucie) and from there to Lake Worth and Palm Beach was discontinued. New contracts were made with the Indian River Steamboat Company for daily delivery from Titusville to Melbourne and three times a week delivery from Melbourne to Jupiter. Jupiter now had a post office with Henry Carlin as postmaster.

Captain U. D. Hendrickson of Lake Worth was awarded the contract to carry the mails from Jupiter to Hypoluxo three times a week; of course, he served all the other offices on the lake at the same time. A mule and a wagon were used to haul the mail from Jupiter to the head of the lake. The mail then was taken down the lake by sailboat to the various offices; the mail carrier spent the night at Hypoluxo and returned the next day to Jupiter. Sometime later, before the building of the railroad, a two-mule hack replaced the single wagon. This occurred when the through hack from Jupiter to Palm Beach was discontinued and the steamer *Lake Worth* met the hack at the head of the lake, which now had a post office called Juno. Wilbur Hendrickson, a nephew of U. D. Hendrickson, was the first carrier on this route. Wilbur carried the mail over a longer period of



Pierce family home on Hypoluxo Island, 1886. From left to right: H. D. Pierce, Margretta M. Pierce, A. W. Garnett, Ed Hamilton, Lillie Pierce, Charles Pierce

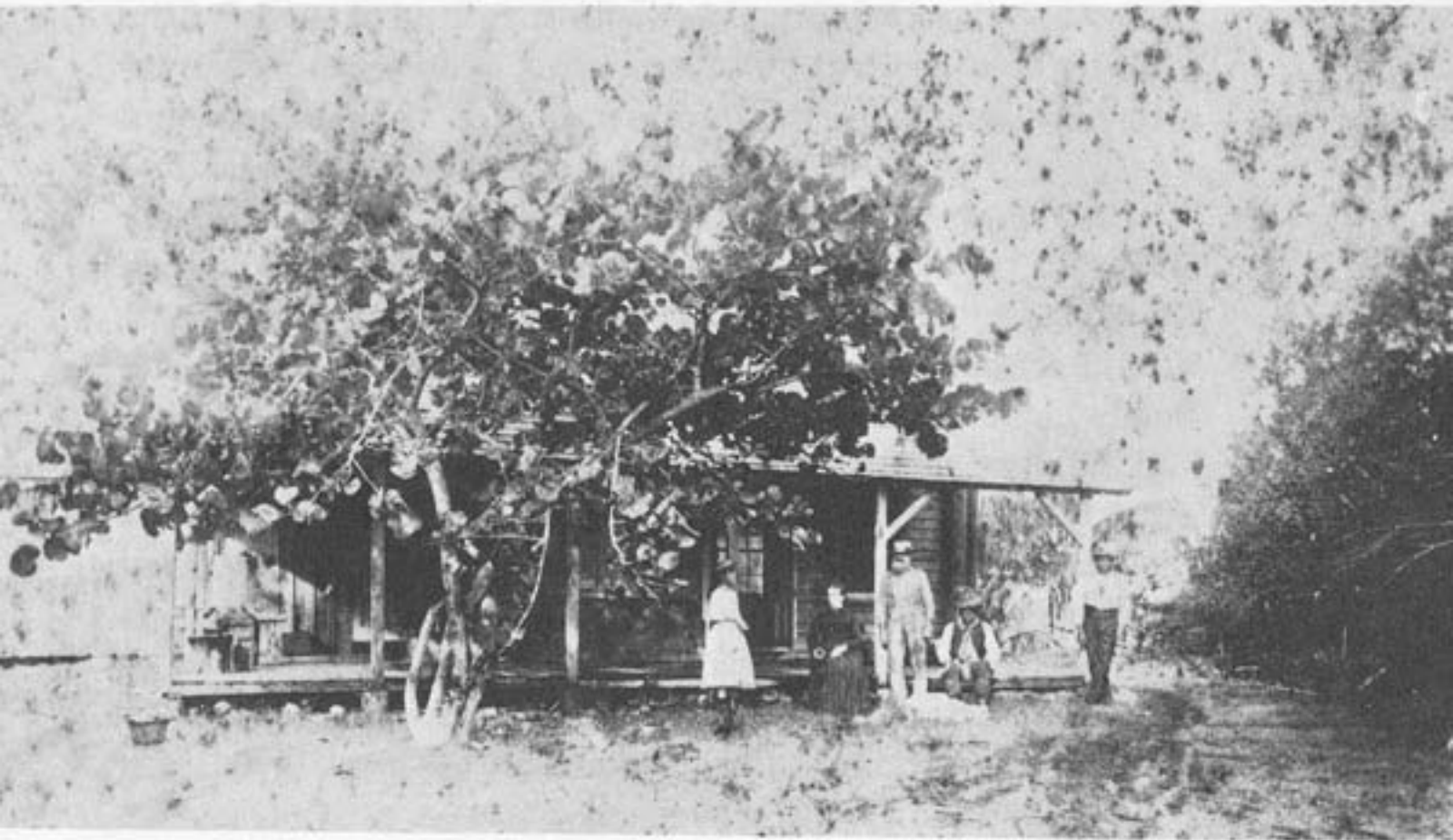
time than any other person, but his uncle, Alvin Hendrickson, was a close second, and a number of others tried their hand at it, George R. Lyman and R. G. Moore among them.

When the first settlers came to the lake they found the woods fairly alive with game. Bears were plentiful in the beach hammock and deer could be found everywhere, as well as wildcats, coon and possum, and an occasional panther. Wild turkeys were also fairly numerous, as were ducks in the winter time; while every known species of heron, crane, curlew, snipe, plover, or, in fact, any other aquatic bird found in Florida could be seen feeding along the lake's shores. Alligators were almost as plentiful in the lake as the fish, and there were some crocodiles and leatherback turtles, conclusive proof the water had been salty for only a short time.

Three or four years after the coming of the first settlers, a

change in the wildlife was apparent to even the casual observer. Bears were first to leave their haunts in the beach hammocks, but by 1886 hardly any deer, herons, or curlews could be found east of the freshwater lakes. Nearly every settler had a gun and knew how to use it in procuring fresh meat. The family that did not have at least one member who could kill deer had to depend on their neighbors for fresh meat or open a can of Armour's roast beef.

It was sometime in the year 1887 that M. K. Lyman came to Hypoluxo and entered a homestead claim on the old Pease place joining the Bradleys on the south. Lyman built his homestead on the south side of the point near its junction with the pinewoods and about a hundred feet from the water's edge. Shortly after his house was completed, Lyman was joined by his wife and youngest son George,



East side of Pierce home on Hypoluxo. From left to right: Lillie Pierce, Margretta M. Pierce, H. D. Pierce with Tommy Jumper and Tommy Lustee, Big Cypress Indians

who was then about eighteen years old. Sometime later the Lyman family was increased by the arrival of the eldest son, Benson, and his family. A few weeks later Lyman's daughter, Lily, came to make her home with them. This made quite an increase in the population of Hypoluxo, which included the entire settlement around the island and the south end of the lake. Eight in the Lyman family, six in the Bradley home; four Pierces; two Kentucky boys, J. W. Porter and Andrew Garnett; George Charter; and William Edwards, who had recently entered a homestead claim in the pinewoods half a mile south of the south end of the lake. He was of Welsh descent and had an enormous red mustache. Twenty people in all and although scattered over a three-mile area, we were considered near neighbors.

Throughout the week everybody was busily engaged with their various tasks, but Sunday was a day for visiting from place to place. Soon this visiting failed to satisfy the younger people and those who had been in the habit of attending church in their former homes. A Sunday school was organized with M. K. Lyman as superintendent and Andrew Garnett as secretary. I was treasurer. My job consisted of taking care of the cash until there was enough on hand to buy some music books. Our Sunday school was on the circuit plan. We started at the Bradleys the first Sunday, then went to the Lymans the next, then my house, and finally ended the circuit at the home of the Kentucky boys. The string band played at our services since most of the places did not have an organ. At my home, with my sister playing the organ along with this ensemble, there was a volume of tone that was certainly fine.

Benson Lyman built a home for himself and family near his father's. About 1890 he started a store there in a building built on a dock over the water. A post office was established when the store opened and was named Lantana. A short time before this a post office had been established at the Potter home, some five miles north of Lantana; this

office was named Figulus. Another, established at the Samuel James' place, was called Jewel. The boys nicknamed that office "Black Diamonds."

The fall of 1887 was extremely stormy. There were no hurricanes, but many squalls and gales accompanied by heavy rains had undulated the lowlands and flooded every river. On Sunday, October 9, the weather cleared with a gentle east wind and bright sunshine. The next day, just before noon, Ed Hamilton arrived with the mail from Palm Beach. The Bradleys had given up the "Barefoot Route" in early summer and Hamilton had taken it over. While waiting for dinner he mentioned to me that he was not feeling well and laughingly called my attention to his "medicine chest," a bottle of Perry Davis pain-killer and a spoon. I suggested he lay over and get Louie Bradley to make the trip, but he said he would be able to continue. After dinner I locked the mail sack and he departed. His plan was to spend the night at the Orange Grove station where Steve Andrews was still the keeper.

Hamilton was due back at the Hypoluxo office at noon on Saturday. When he did not arrive I was not uneasy; I thought that since he was not feeling well he had rested for half a day and would be along around noon on Sunday. About nine o'clock Sunday morning I got into my sailboat and went to the haulover at the foot of the lake to meet him. I waited there until noon, watching the beach to the south, but no one came into sight. Finally I gave up and returned home. I had a premonition that some untoward event had overtaken the carrier. When near my home dock I hailed a passing sailboat and asked the occupants if they would tell George Charter, the mail contractor, that something had happened to Hamilton. Monday noon Charter and a new carrier came with the mail from Palm Beach. Charter was extremely upset about Hamilton's disappearance and stopped only long enough to exchange mail.

Wednesday morning I went to Palm Beach and when I arrived home I was met by my mother and sister, who told me that Hamilton had vanished. The men had found all of Hamilton's possessions, even his underclothes, at Hillsborough Inlet, but there was no trace of him. When Charter returned, the first thing he said was, "Hamilton's gone. Sharks got him, sharks ate him, he tried to swim the inlet and sharks got him." Then he told the details of his search. He and the new carrier spent the night at Steve's and after supper were sitting in the living room of the station talking about the situation.

About eight o'clock they heard a man's voice calling from the beach. They rushed out, thinking it might be Hamilton. As they came from the house they could make out the dark form of a small boat at the water's edge and a man working to get it out of reach of the waves. Running down, they found it was Charles Coman, the keeper of the Lauderdale station. He told them Hamilton had never reached his place on the trip south, but that on Monday, the day before Hamilton was due at Lauderdale, a stranger had come walking down the beach from the north. When he asked him how he crossed at Hillsborough, the man had said a party of hunters with a portable boat had set him across the inlet. Coman said he had a suspicion the man was not telling the truth but had in fact used Hamilton's boat. When the carrier didn't show up he decided to investigate.

At daylight next morning the four men hurriedly tramped the beach towards Hillsborough Inlet, keeping a sharp lookout meantime for signs of Hamilton. They found no trace until they arrived at the inlet and walked around to the place where he kept his boat. Here they found his haversack hanging on the limb of a sea grape tree; in the bag was the mail pouch, his trousers, shirt, and the spoon and bottle of pain-killer. Near the edge of the water were his underclothes, showing he had discarded them when starting to swim the inlet. Everything he had with him was there.

The little settlement of Hypoluxo was shocked at the news of Hamilton's passing as he was a splendid young man and everyone was very fond of him.

The cause of his death bothered me. The indications were only too plain that on his arrival at the inlet he saw his boat on the other side and, without stopping to think of the danger, pulled off his underclothes and plunged into the water. Those not understanding the situation or Hamilton himself, would say that he drowned trying to swim the inlet. I could not believe this. He was only thirty-three at the time, strong and active, six feet tall in his stocking feet and weighing one hundred and eighty pounds; he was an excellent swimmer and well able to take care of himself on land or in the water. The inlet where he attempted to swim was not over two hundred feet wide and was far enough from the ocean that the current was not very strong. Under ordinary circumstances Hamilton could have made it in less than five minutes.

I did not believe the shark theory that others seemed to think settled the matter. It was true that there were sharks along the coast at that time of year, but seldom did the large dangerous variety come in that close to the shore. I at once determined that a search of the inlet must be made without delay, in hopes of finding some part of his remains. If he had drowned, his body would be found for a certainty, and if something ate him we might find some of the larger bones in a careful survey of the inlet. As no time was to be lost, I asked Louie to take me in the *Ibis*.

Louie and I arrived at Hillsborough about three o'clock in the afternoon and made camp on the south point at a place where the mailman used to keep his boat. I told Louie to take the *Ibis* and prowl around upriver and I would walk down the beach to the south for a mile or so. I knew if Hamilton had drowned his body would come onshore somewhere down the beach. I found no trace of our lost friend, but there were numerous tracks of alligators. These

alligators had been carried outside the inlet by the swift ebb tide. They had swum to shore and then crawled over the beach to go back to the river. The long south point of the river was all cut up with their tracks. Behind this south side of the inlet was a long, narrow, and shallow lagoon that in ordinary times contained very little water. Now it was deep enough to hide any number of alligators, even of the largest size. When we sailed into the inlet that afternoon, I called Louie's attention to the great number of alligators; the place was actually swarming with them. We only gave them a passing notice though, as our thoughts were taken up with Hamilton.

Now seeing all those tracks brought my mind back to alligators and their presence in such unusual numbers around the inlet. I had not the least doubt that they played a sinister part in Hamilton's disappearance. Many times I had visited this inlet in the past few years and had never seen more than one or two gators. Now they could be seen everywhere within the inlet, their black ugly heads on the surface of the dark water wherever one might look. As this new thought struck me I turned back towards camp, walking up along the east shore of the lagoon. When about halfway to camp I stopped to scrutinize an object across the lagoon that was at the water's edge on the other side. I had been standing there but a minute or so when a black knobby head of a huge alligator rose to the surface a few yards from me and came as close to me as the depth of the water would permit. I stepped back a few steps until I was sure he could not reach me with a sweep of his tail and we looked at each other for about a minute. I wished I had my rifle, but it had been left at camp. As I started on, Mr. Gator kept right along with me. I began to run for the Winchester. Picking up the rifle on the jump, I turned and ran back at top speed. He must have understood that things were looking bad for him when I ran away, for when I got back he was gone. Louie returned about this time but had nothing to report. His investigation, like mine, had been

fruitless. We made a thorough search the next morning of the creeks and bays near the inlet, but not a trace of Hamilton could be found.

Some years later a cruising party spent a few days in the Hillsborough area and found part of the jawbone of a man that had a gold-filled tooth sticking in it. They found it on the west side of the same lagoon where I met the overly friendly alligator. None of Hamilton's friends, however, could remember if he had any filled teeth. There is no question in my mind that an alligator was the cause of the whole business. There was not a shark in sight any place around the inlet while we were there.

After Hamilton's death a new contract had to be made, and in the meantime the department in Washington decided to make a change in the connecting mail routes. This was done by extending the route from Jupiter on to Hypoluxo. The route was thus shortened by ten miles. This arrangement made it much easier on the mail carrier on the route as he saved at least a half of a day's time.

Andrew Garnett came to me one day and said that he wished to make a bid on the route at the same rate Hamilton had taken it for, six hundred dollars per annum, but hesitated unless I would agree to help him out on the job. He said he did not expect me to make every other trip, but to be ready to take his place in case he could not go. I agreed, and Garnett was awarded the contract.

The mail pouches used by the barefoot mailman were made for this particular route. The regular letter pouches of the post office at that time were made of heavy cowhide. The pouches of this ocean beach route were made of lightweight canvas, about fifteen inches wide and thirty inches long. With just the usual small bundle of letters, this pouch could be rolled into a small bundle and carried in a haversack slung on a strap over the shoulder. The haversack was also used to convey the mailman's trousers and outside shirt on hot days when he wanted to travel light and cool.

While this mail route was in operation there was a

standing joke that everyone liked to tell newcomers, that is, they thought it was a joke until they had to go as foot passengers with the mail carrier. This so-called joke was the charge of five dollars for a passenger on this walking mail route.

The following story of my experiences will illustrate why we thought the fare necessary. Just as I was about ready to start on a trip to Miami, a man I knew only as Bostwick came along and asked if he might go down the beach with me. I said that he could go if he would pay the usual fare of five dollars. He couldn't believe I would charge him five dollars just for the privilege of walking down the beach. I answered that he had a right to walk on the beach when and where he chose at no cost at all, but that I was charging for the time he would cause me to lose waiting for him to rest when he got tired, and for ferrying him across the Hillsborough Inlet, the four miles down New River, and the twelve miles down Biscayne Bay in the boats we had at those places.

When I finished my explanation, Bostwick said he guessed the charge was fair. I told him further that we made it a rule to collect in advance. He said he had left all of his cash in Miami, and that I would have to trust him to pay when we arrived.

The first part of the trip that afternoon was only seven miles and he managed to stay with me, but on going to bed that night he complained of feeling dead tired. On the next day, the first stretch to Hillsborough Inlet, where I planned to eat lunch, was sixteen miles. I had to stop to let Bostwick rest about four times. This made me two hours late in arriving at the inlet. By the time we crossed the inlet I was becoming impatient at the delay this fellow was causing, and after we had landed on the south shore I told him that I was going straight to the station at Lauderdale and he could take as much time as he chose in getting there as long as he made it in time to go on with me the next morning. We had

finished supper at the station when he came plodding up the beach.

The next morning the wind was blowing hard from the south, straight up New River, and the tide was on the full flood. I labored hard at the oars for nearly two hours before we arrived at the inlet. In the meantime Bostwick was reclining on the stern seat, smoking his pipe, and talking while I worked to make headway against wind and tide. The soft and somewhat hilly beach makes the ten-mile walk from New River to Baker's Haulover at the head of Biscayne Bay the worst part of the route. On this ten miles I had to stop twice and wait for my passenger to rest. This continual stopping and starting tired me more than steady walking at my usual gait. When we arrived at the haulover and started down the bay, we again found the tide coming in hard and a strong wind blowing. Of course, Bostwick sat in the stern and rested all of that twelve miles to Miami.

When we landed at Miami, Bostwick started off without saying a word about pay. When I stopped him, he promised to meet me in the morning before I left. I waited for more than an hour the next morning, but he did not show up. In fact, I did not see him again for three years, and then he was broke and could not pay me. Such experiences as this made us afraid to trust any stranger.

The barefoot route was retained for a number of years, with carriers changing as they became tired of the ceaseless walking six days a week throughout the year. A number of men tried it after Garnett and I gave it up. Henry John Burkhardt was the last of the carriers. When he resigned, the mail was sent to Miami by hack line over a route through the woods from Lantana.

8. South Florida Politics

Starting in the late summer of 1887, father commenced regular runs in the *Illinois*, with freight and passengers to Titusville. He carried mostly freight, however, as the steamer *White* was making scheduled trips from Melbourne to Jupiter where a hack carried the tourists over the sandhills to the head of the lake. The *Illinois* took on the average two to three days to make the trip from Jupiter to Titusville. On one trip I made the run in nineteen hours. That was fast sailing, even for the *Illinois*.

In February 1888 father was unable to leave the lake because of a storm, and the one-hundred-and-fifty crates of tomatoes he was carrying ripened and spoiled. He was so disgusted that he told me that I could take charge of the *Illinois*. Thus I made regular trips up Indian River to Titusville for about three years and so earned the title of "Captain Charlie."

After the tourist and tomato season ended, regular trips by the sailboats were discontinued on the Indian River route. The seagoing schooners, the *Bessie B.* and *Mary B.*, sailed the year around from the lake to Jacksonville, but in August 1888 yellow fever broke out in Jacksonville and soon became epidemic. That stopped the two schooners

from entering the port, and the merchandise they would have hauled was shipped to Titusville by train and from there to Palm Beach by sailboats.

Brelsford Brothers' schooner, *Bessie B.*, drew too much water for successful navigation on the Indian River so they contracted with Uncle Will and me to haul their merchandise. Throughout the winter the *Bonton* and the *Illinois* were kept busy keeping up the stock of the Brelsford's store. Captain U. D. Hendrickson's schooner *Mary B.* was of lighter draft than the *Bessie B.* and sailed the river hauling supplies for his store at Lake Worth.

Early in 1889 after a heavy storm and high seas, the Lake Worth Inlet closed. The *Illinois* was the last boat to pass through the old inlet on the final trip I made for the year for Brelsford Brothers. Everyone knew that something had to be done about opening it without delay, since there was no other way of shipping our vegetables or supplying our stores. The wagon road to Jupiter and the steamer from there to Titusville were wholly inadequate to handle the situation. There were not enough mules and wagons in the entire county to do the hauling, and the road from the lake to Jupiter was soft sand. This meant it was impossible to pull a full load over it with a team.

A meeting of the settlers decided that a new inlet would be cut as close to the rocks as possible. When the old inlet had been opened for the first time some eleven years before, it had been cut through the beach ridge close to the Black Rocks. As long as it was near the rocks the inlet was one of the best on the lower east coast, but it kept wearing away on the south bank until at the time of its closing it was nearly a mile south of its original location. This was too far away from the rocks to provide any protection in a heavy ground swell coming in from the north, and so it closed.

I had some work to do on the *Illinois* and was late getting started on the day appointed for the digging to begin. When I arrived I found a wonderful beginning had been made. A

ditch had been dug that was about ten feet wide at the bottom and cut clear through to the ocean side. It was ready to open when the sea was smooth. But fate was against us, or so we thought, for soon after dark a heavy sea commenced to roll in on the beach and about eight o'clock the wind started blowing hard from the northeast.

Everyone was called to help barricade the sea end of the ditch, as the ocean had started to wash away the bank. If this was not stopped, the sea would soon be sweeping through the ditch, ruining all our work. Everyone began hunting pieces of timber, planks, logs, and brush, in fact, anything we could find that would help to build the barricade to keep the sea out.

About nine o'clock the tide turned and there was no further danger until morning. Next morning everyone was up at daylight. After a hasty breakfast we started collecting material to build up our barricade. About nine o'clock the first big comber came rushing up against it. It banked up high and then poured around the corner of the barricade and went rushing down the ditch into the lake, carrying quantities of sand along in its mad rush. In a few minutes another big sea came in and did the same thing. I noticed that the second wave cut down the sand on the south side of the ditch, and I wondered how long it would take these big seas to make an inlet without our help.

In the meantime a gang of men was working on the barricade, trying to keep the sea out of the ditch, and at the same time helping to create an inlet on a grander scale than anyone at that time had dreamed. Less than an hour later the waves were running steadily through an opening into the lake on the south side of the ditch. The barricade concentrated the flow of the sea around the south side of the ditch, where it washed away the ridge until there was a small channel through to the lake. When I sailed home at noon that day, the inlet was more than a hundred yards wide.

Florida was readmitted to the Union in June 1868, but nothing much appears to have been done about organizing local government in Dade County prior to the year 1872, a condition brought about by its almost complete isolation from the rest of the civilized world. The political organization established around Biscayne Bay in 1872 did not extend as far north as Lake Worth until the state and county election in 1874. At election time in 1872 the lake had only one inhabitant, and the politicians of Miami, then extremely few in number, were not interested in obtaining the vote from that section. In the fall of 1874 there were ten or twelve people living on the lake, so a man was dispatched on foot up the beach to establish a voting precinct and name an election board. Our home on Hypoluxo Island, a house then covered with palmetto leaves, was the polling place selected, with Charlie Moore, W. M. Butler, Uncle Will, and father as inspectors of election.

When election day arrived the inspectors were on hand to conduct the election, but only one voter came to cast his ballot. This one voter was the old cracker, Doc Talbot, who had been living with the Butler family on the island for some weeks. Father's old palmetto hat sitting on a homemade table was the ballot box. Ballots were cut from a sheet of writing paper, and the names of the candidates were written in with pencil. In all, five ballots were cast, since the inspectors also voted, and the ballots and returns were enclosed in a used envelope. This was handed to Uncle Will to convey to the county seat, there to be counted by the county commissioners. Uncle Will did not carry the ballot box to Miami for the very good reason that it was father's only hat.¹

In the election of 1876 there were two candidates for the legislature from Dade County. William H. Gleason from Biscayne Bay was educated and well qualified to serve his country, but he had the misfortune to have served as a

Republican lieutenant governor of the state under carpet-bag rule in Reconstruction days. The Democrats met in convention in Miami and nominated John J. "Pig" Brown, a lonely hermit who lived on New River and raised pigs, to oppose Gleason.

It was said that Brown was the most surprised man in the county when informed of his nomination and later of his election. Some of the defeated candidate's friends made up this little verse:

*Brown perhaps may rue the day,
That gave him Gleason's seat,
For Gleason will still resist
And pound away, and prove he
Can't be beat.*

Brown went to Tallahassee, and it is supposed that he took his seat in the legislature and drew his pay. If he did anything more we never heard of it. He disposed of his hogs before he left New River and never returned.

When Dade County was organized, a clerk of the court, a sheriff, and a justice of the peace were appointed to office. Though just what use there was for these peace officers no one knew. Previous to the appointments perfect harmony had prevailed among the settlers of the bay. In most cases they lived so far apart that there was little chance for interference in their daily avocations. As week after week went by and no breaches of the law had occurred, the sheriff and justice put their heads together and decided that something had to be done since their income depended on fees from arrests and trials. The upshot was that charges were concocted and brought against first one and then another of the best and most respected citizens of the bay. The craziest accusations were made against some of the best people, but no one was ever convicted of any of the charges. The sheriff and justice made a little money, however,

enough to encourage them to keep up the good work. Later on, wiser heads got in control and this state of affairs ceased.

Before the fall election of 1888 the Palm Beach Republicans held a meeting and organized a Republican County Committee of three: Charles C. Haight, chairman; George S. Rowley, secretary; and Roswell K. Brown, committeeman. These three men held a convention and nominated a full county ticket, but failed to elect any of their nominees. They came very close to it, however, in the race for county commissioner when their man tied with the regular Democratic candidate. Later in 1896 and again in 1900 this little band of Republicans nominated and elected Dr. R. B. Potter as representative to the legislature. When voting for Dr. Potter, people laid aside all party affiliations and voted for the man.

In the election of 1888 James Wood Davidson, a resident of Palm Beach, was elected county representative. Davidson had a fine personality and was highly educated. The citizens of the lake were jubilant over the result of the election, as Davidson received the vote of every citizen in the north end of the county. We also noticed that the north end of the county had outvoted the Biscayne Bay section by a large majority.

This majority encouraged the leading Democrats of the lake, such as E. N. Dimick, George W. Lainhart, George W. Potter, and Allen E. Heyser, to propose moving the county seat to Lake Worth in the next election. On investigation they found they could not get the vote of the entire upper end of the county for Palm Beach, and since they had to have it in order to carry the election, they agreed to locate the courthouse at Juno, a newly established post office at the north end of the lake. If the courthouse were built at Juno, the people of the upper end of the county could reach it as quickly and as easily as the people of the lake, so the agreement was made. The question of the removal of

A SQUARE DEAL FOR ALL



FOR COUNTY JUDGE
(X) HENRY J. BURKHARDT

Another early settler, Henry J. Burkhardt, as seen in later campaign literature

the county seat came up at the next election, and the north end of the county won the fight by a large majority.

In this election A. F. Quimby was elected county clerk; Allen E. Heyser, county judge; George W. Potter, county surveyor, and George W. Lainhart, county commissioner; all were Lake Worth men. Quimby succeeded T. W. Faulkner of Miami and Lainhart took James W. Porter's place on the board of county commissioners on January 1, 1889.

There had been considerable hard feeling in evidence between the north and south ends of the county in this election and as trouble was expected when the results arrived on Biscayne Bay, Ned Brown, Patrick Lennon, and a

man from New Jersey, all husky young men, were selected to take the election returns to Miami and to assist in removing the more important records for transportation to Juno. Heyser, the county judge-elect, Quimby, the clerk-elect, and Commissioner Porter accompanied the huskies on the walk down the beach.

The Lake Worth delegation had a stormy time at the meeting of the county commissioners when the vote of the county was counted and the results made known. A number of the men from Biscayne Bay openly declared they would not let the records leave Miami and that they would use force if necessary to keep them there. E. L. White, county commissioner from the bay, took the floor and said, "Gentlemen, I am opposed to moving the records just as much as anyone, and I certainly hate to see them go, but Lake Worth and the north end of the county have won in a fair fight by an honest vote of the majority of the citizens of the county. We have got to take our medicine, however much we dislike it, and let the records go."

When Commissioner White finished his little speech, there was a prolonged howl of dissent, followed by cries of "Never!," "Not on your life," and other expressions of anger and disagreement. The controversy continued until late in the afternoon when the larger and more turbulent part of the crowd, many of whom lived some distance up or down the bay, departed. They promised to return early next morning, well armed and prepared to take care of the situation.

These men believed they would be perfectly safe in waiting until the morrow to settle the question. They were sailors enough to know the sea was far too rough for boats to venture upon it, and they thought there was no other way of making off with the records.

After the agitators had departed, the Lake Worth men and a few of the cool headed Miami men met in the clerk's office to decide on their courses of action. A. F. Quimby

had gone upriver and borrowed a big Indian canoe. He now proposed loading the records into the canoe and starting for New River at once, by way of the Glades. He declared that if they could reach the Lauderdale station they would be able to hold the records until help could come from the lake. All agreed that Quimby's plan was the best and should be carried out without delay.

The night was very dark, so there was small danger of anyone seeing them carrying the most important of the records to the canoe, which was then towed to the mouth of Snake Creek. Here Quimby, Porter, and Pat Lennon crawled on board the canoe and headed up the dark channel of the creek.

The next morning the remaining three men of the lake delegation hired a man to take them over the bay, where they started on their long tramp up the beach to their homes. After all the excitement at Miami the day before, they found this walk up the lonely beach rather monotonous and very tiresome.

The three men in the canoe made a quick trip through the Everglades and down New River. At three o'clock in the afternoon they arrived at the station landing. From there they had to carry the heavy records up the beach about half a mile to the house. The keeper was surprised to see the three men coming along loaded down with big books, but he helped with the work, and by four o'clock everything was safely stacked away.

Some fifteen minutes or so was then spent in giving the keeper a history of their adventures and the hazards they had encountered since leaving his place on their mission to Miami. Then one of them happened to look to the south down the beach and see three men coming up the shore at a rapid walk. They were sure they could recognize some of the more turbulent men they had encountered at Miami the day before, so they quickly decided to fight it out in defense of the records. Hurriedly, the lake men carried the

books to the attic and then took up positions at the head of the stairs, ready to repel the attack they expected within a few minutes.

Quimby armed himself with an iron crossbar from one of the sleeping cots. Pat produced his gun but stood back a little out of the range of anyone coming up the stairway. Porter took his stand at the head of the stairs. They were even in numbers now, an advantage over their former situation in Miami. Moreover, their location made it impossible for more than one person to attack them at a time.

The men in the attic were kept in suspense but a few minutes for they soon heard the pounding of bare feet on the porch floor. Then they caught the sound of the keeper talking to the new arrivals in a sharp tone and a few quiet words in answer that were immediately followed by a shout of laughter. The rest of the lake delegation had arrived at the Lauderdale station in time for supper.

That night after supper they decided that since there was now very little danger of anyone following them from Miami, Quimby would remain at the station to guard the records while the rest would go on up the beach the next morning. A boat was then sent to pick up Quimby and the records. Al Field's little house at Juno was used as an office by the clerk until a courthouse could be built to take care of the rapidly increasing county business. The new building was completed the following summer. It was a large, two-story frame structure with the clerk's office, county judge's office, and sheriff's office on the ground floor and one large room the full size of the building on the upper floor. This was the court room, but it was also frequently used for dances.

The first road on the lower east coast of Florida created by white men was the old Military Trail that started at St. Augustine and ended at Fort Dallas on Biscayne Bay. It was made by United States soldiers during the Seminole wars to

connect the various military posts along the coast. The section that passed through the counties of Brevard and Dade was not a road, properly speaking, but a mere blazed trail through the swamps and flatwoods of the backcountry.

In the first fifteen years of settlement on the lower east coast, no thought was given to the subject of roads as a means of transportation. Since everyone traveled by small sailboat or rowboat or walked the ocean beach, there was no need for roads. Before the county seat was moved to Juno, moreover, the county officials living on Biscayne Bay never gave a thought to the idea of a road connecting the bay with the lake. The people living on the bay were within easy distance of the courthouse and saw no need for roads. After the county seat was moved, and following two or three pilgrimages of the bay men to Juno, there arose a howl from the citizens of the south end of the county that a road should be built between the bay and the lake.

About a year after the new courthouse was completed, George Lainhart told me that the county commissioners had appointed a board of road commissioners consisting of four men, and that I had been appointed to this board from his district, which extended from Juno south to the Hillsborough Inlet. The other members of the board were Jimmy Kingsley from Jupiter, Peter Merritt from Lemon City, and a man named Thompson from Coconut Grove. Our job was to put a road through from Juno to Lemon City. He told me that I had been appointed because the commissioners wanted the road located along the best route at the least expense, and they knew that I was familiar with the country from my many hunting trips. He said the other three had been notified of their appointment and that we would organize at the time of the next commissioners' meeting.

On the day before the commissioners' meeting, I sailed up the lake to Palm Beach in the afternoon, intending to spend the night there before going on to Juno the next morning. This was a regular custom for those bound to

Juno. They would spend the night at the Coconut Grove Hotel and go on to Juno on the steamer *Lake Worth* the next morning. I found a number of men gathered in the hotel office that evening, and among them my brother road commissioners from the bay, Peter Merritt and Mr. Thompson. The next morning we went on to Juno where a small room on the ground floor was allotted to us for our office.

We then proceeded to organize our board and at once bumped into a number of difficulties. In the first place, not one of us had any experience in work of this kind and did not know how to begin. I was about twenty years younger than the youngest of the other three men, yet they depended on me to tell them what to do, and when I informed them we would have to have a chairman, they promptly elected me to that position.

Then I said that nominations for a secretary were in order. This was another "poser" for that primitive board. Not one of them would agree to take the job. They gave all manner of excuses, but the principal one was that they were too nervous to write. I was thus forced to act as secretary also.

I had a rather hard time keeping the board on the subject. Every few minutes Jimmy Kingsley would be reminded of something that had happened when he was with Sherman in the Civil War, and we would have to listen to a long story. Then Peter Merritt, who was a bridge builder by trade, would commence to talk of bridges and their construction. I had to continually remind him that the road would have to be planned before we could build the bridges. Thompson never said anything unless asked a question. We had therefore made no progress when the time came for adjournment.

At our second meeting the following month we advertised for bids for a survey and plat of a road from Juno to Lemon City. This was the first advertisement I had ever written and I had to go to George Lainhart for instructions on its wording.

It was also at this meeting that Peter Merritt got in his bridge work. He insisted that I write our specifications for the bridges that would have to be built over Hillsborough River, Cypress Creek, Middle River, Big and Little Snake Creeks, and Little River. Merritt dictated and I wrote it down.

When we arrived at Juno for our third meeting, we found two bids for the road survey awaiting our decision. The first bid opened was from George Potter, who was at that time county surveyor. Potter offered to survey and plat the road from Juno to the Hillsborough River, which was only about half the distance to Lemon City, for four hundred dollars. The other bid was from E. L. White. His offer was three hundred and fifty dollars for the entire distance from Juno to Lemon City. As these were the only bids received, we had no chance for argument or discussion. E. L. White's bid was less than half that of George Potter's, so we awarded him the contract. We knew he had a difficult job, so everyone considered his bid extremely reasonable.

White completed his survey in good time and delivered a plat to the board. Then the county commissioners informed us that the survey would have to be inspected before it was accepted. As the entire road was in Peter Merritt's and my districts, the work of inspection fell to us. I was to go over the survey from Juno to the Hillsborough, a distance of thirty-seven miles through all kinds of scrub, pinewoods, and jungle. Peter Merritt had about the same distance to travel but also had five creeks and rivers to negotiate. When talking over the inspection with the county commissioners it occurred to me that the survey was entirely unnecessary from Juno to Lantana, as boats could make that part of the trip quicker and much easier than horse and wagon through the soft sand. When I brought this to the attention of the commissioners they agreed, and I was instructed to inspect only the survey from Lantana to Hillsborough.

The county commissioners accepted our reports and disbanded the road board. Then the county advertised for

bids for the clearing and grubbing of the road, for building the bridges, and for a ferry boat at New River. The work went on without delay and in a comparatively short time the road was open to travel.

Peter Merritt was the successful bidder on the bridge work. I met him later at Juno, and he told me with a whimsical grin that he had to build the bridges according to the specifications that he had dictated to me while on the board of road commissioners.

When the road was finished, the Post Office Department was notified that there was now a road open from Lantana to Lemon City and so the barefoot route was discontinued. Guy Metcalf, who was publisher of the *Tropical Sun* at Juno, was the successful bidder for the new route. He used two hacks and established a halfway camp at New River. To operate his camp he secured the services of Frank Stranahan, a young man from Melbourne, Florida.²

The camp was composed of a number of large tents put up in a wide circle. At night a large campfire was lighted in the center. Frank Stranahan was the only resident at this camp during its first year. He was general manager, cook, dishwasher, chambermaid, and entertainer for the guests.

The hack from Lantana made the trip to New River in fourteen hours while the Lemon City hack arrived in about seven. Here they exchanged mail and passengers and returned to their starting place the next day. This seems at first like a long time to cover a few miles, but when one considers the soft sand road, so soft the mules never went faster than a slow walk, it was not so bad. The people of Biscayne Bay thought the road a great improvement over walking on the ocean beach.

At this time Dade was by far the largest county in Florida. So very large it was often called the "Great State of Dade." Its north line was just a little south of where the town of Jensen now stands. The south line crossed the north end of Key Largo near the southern end of Biscayne

Bay. The principal settlements were on Lake Worth and Biscayne Bay, though there were small settlements at Waveland, near the north county line; around the mouth of the St. Lucie River; at Jupiter; and on Elliott's Key near the south end of Biscayne Bay.

In 1886 fourteen years had elapsed since the first settlers had arrived. In all that time there had been no attempt to start a school in any part of the county. In the summer of 1886 the heads of families living on the lake decided it was time to act. They took their case to the county commissioners, and it was finally agreed that the county would pay a teacher if the people of the lake would donate the land, build the schoolhouse, and equip it.

That was not much of a concession by the county officials, and perhaps they thought it would settle the



First schoolhouse in Dade County, near Lake Trail, Palm Beach

question until some future time. If so, they did not know the kind of men who lived on Lake Worth. Squire Hoagland and David Brown gave the land, the lumber was bought by subscription and came freight free by schooner from Jacksonville.

In the fall of 1886 the new schoolhouse opened with an enrollment of eight and with Miss Hattie Gale as teacher. If it had not been for the arrival of Eugene, Ella, and Lorena Dimick early in 1886, the opening would not have been possible. The return of the Dimick children was caused by the death of their parents in Highlands, North Carolina, where they had made their home for the past six years.

I walked into the Brelsford's store one day and the clerk told me the astonishing news that Mr. Geer had sold his place for ten thousand dollars and was going back to Michigan. This was by far the largest real estate deal Palm Beach had known and caused considerable excitement when it became known around the lake. While talking about the sale with the clerk, Geer came into the store. He said that while he had received a good price for his land, the next man that bought it would pay a much larger price, for it was bound to be worth a great deal more in a few years. These were prophetic words. Only a few years later in 1893, Flagler bought the former Geer land for seventy-five thousand dollars to build the Royal Poinciana Hotel.

The Geer family went back to their old home in Michigan and the R. R. McCormicks at once commenced the erection of a fine home that was later said to have cost thirty thousand dollars. It was a frame building with tile floors of the finest quality, the first in Palm Beach, and it had a solid mahogany staircase made from lumber found on the beach. Captain Harry Fozzard of Jacksonville had just launched a new schooner, the *Emily B.*, a lightdraft three-masted vessel some eighty feet in length. Her first voyage to Lake Worth was with a cargo of material for the McCormick house. With the addition of the *Emily B.*, there were now three schooners on the run from Lake Worth to Jacksonville.



Captain and Mrs. U. D. Hendrickson onboard the Emily B.

In 1885 the Jacksonville, Tampa, and Key West Railroad started building southward from Jacksonville with Titusville as its destination. About the time of its completion the company organized the Indian River Steamboat Company. This steamboat company was to take care of the railroad's freight and passenger business from Titusville south to Jupiter. Heretofore most of the freight had been carried in sailboats, although earlier attempts had been made at steam navigation. Uncle Will had been first with the steamer *Cinderella*. She had a deep draft and on her first trip ran hard aground in the Indian River Narrows. In the fall of 1885 another attempt was made with the steamer *Indian River*, which was placed on the run from Titusville to Melbourne. She proved unprofitable and when the tourist season ended, the *Indian River* left and never returned.

In the summer of 1886 Captain U. D. Hendrickson had

the small twin screw steamer *Lake Worth* built for him in Jacksonville. He saw the need of quicker and more certain transportation from Titusville to Jupiter than was afforded by sail. The *Lake Worth*, under the command of Captain H. P. Dye with Frederick C. Voss as engineer, started making regular trips on this run in the winter of 1886-1887.³ This steamer was licensed for only twenty-five passengers, and soon proved entirely too small for the rapidly increasing numbers of tourists headed for Palm Beach.

When the railroad inaugurated its service to Titusville the company bought the side-wheeler *General Worth* and changed her name to *Rockledge*. Under the command of Captain R. P. Paddison, the *Rockledge* made regular trips daily between Melbourne and Titusville. Thus the upper river as far south as Melbourne was receiving daily mail, while the lower river and Palm Beach only had mail once a week. This caused dissatisfaction south of Melbourne and the Indian River Steamboat Company was not long in hearing about it. They brought the small stern wheel steamer *S. V. White* to Melbourne and put her on a three times a week schedule to Jupiter.

In the meantime the steamboat company had three fine river steamers in the process of construction in Wilmington, Delaware. Two of these steamers were intended as through boats from Titusville to Jupiter. This would give a daily mail and passenger service for the entire river south to Lake Worth.

When the steamer *White* commenced making regular trips to Jupiter, the only transportation from Jupiter to the lake was by a small hack, operated by the Brelsford and Dimick, and mail carriers on mule and wagon. When the steamer was a few hours late (and that happened quite frequently), the passengers would have to stay overnight at Jupiter. This sounds quite simple and would have been if there had been any accommodations, but there were none. Something had to

be done to take care of the stopovers, and the *Steadfast*, a boat built by the government to house the men making the coast survey, was purchased and tied up to the south bank of the river as a makeshift hotel. It was simply a large flatboat or scow with a cabin built on deck.

The *Steadfast* served for a time, but one night she sprang a leak and settled to the bottom of the river. Fortunately she was tied close into shore in shallow water. Only one side of the cabin floor was underwater, and that but a few inches, but she was put out of business as a hotel.

Something had to be done quickly and so the Jacksonville, Tampa, and Key West Railroad sent down from Savannah the large stern wheel steamer *Chattahoochee* to be used as an hotel. At first she was moored to the west of the lighthouse dock, but was later moved to the steamboat dock on the south side of the river.

I was in Titusville when the first new steamer built for the steamboat company arrived. It was the *Saint Lucie*, then and ever after the "Queen" of the Indian River fleet. I had arrived in Titusville the night before with a cargo of tomatoes in the *Illinois*. I heard the deep tones of the large steamer's whistle to the northeast and came on deck just in time to see her coming into the dock in all her glory. Her hull was bright red and her upper works snow-white. With her flags flying and her polished brass sparkling in the bright sunlight, she made a picture never to be forgotten.

When she was made fast to the dock I went on board to inspect the new craft. Her captain was Stephen A. Bravo, a descendant of the Minorcans brought to Florida by Andrew Turnbull during the early colonization of the state. Captain Bravo was in a class by himself. While clearly showing his Spanish ancestry, he was a typical steamboat man. His personal appearance and his tremendous voice would attract attention anywhere. His crew always heard his orders and if the weather was calm, so did everyone else within half a mile of his boat.

The two other new steamers that arrived on the river a little later were the *Saint Sebastian* and the *Saint Augustine*. The *Saint Sebastian* was the sister ship to the *Saint Lucie*; that is, she too was fitted with staterooms and was intended for the run from Titusville to Jupiter. With these two steamers a daily mail and passenger service was instituted between Titusville and Jupiter.

The *Saint Augustine* was a day boat and had only two staterooms on her cabin deck. She was built for the Melbourne-Titusville run, one round trip each day. She would leave Melbourne in the morning and arrive in Titusville about noon. After the arrival of the train, which was about four o'clock in the afternoon, she would make the return trip, landing her passengers in Melbourne in time for supper.

To handle the increased business, a large steamboat dock was built on the south side of the Loxahatchee River. At the same time a large force of Negroes started work grading the roadbed for a railroad from Jupiter to Juno at the head of Lake Worth. They had the grade through to Juno in short order and were laying track with handcars while waiting for the rolling stock to come down the river from Titusville. The company was building a large steam lighter at Titusville on which to transport the locomotive and cars to Jupiter. On my next trip to Titusville, I found the steam barge had been launched and was nearly finished. After unloading my cargo of tomatoes, I docked the *Illinois* near this barge.

The next morning I had just finished breakfast when I heard an animated discussion aboard the new steam lighter. A man had been sent to paint the name of the barge on the sides of the cabin, but he and two other men were arguing about the way it should be spelled.

Just as I had taken in the situation a carpenter came on board. He immediately spelled the name L-O-X-A-H-A-T-C-H-E-E. The painter was satisfied and put this spelling on the side of the steamer's engine room. It



Jupiter Lighthouse and steamer about 1880

occurred to me afterwards that I should have told the painter the correct spelling of the name, which was a combination of Spanish and Seminole; "loco," as most everyone knows, is Spanish for crazy, and "hatchee" is Seminole for river, thus the name means "crazy river." Loxahatchee has no meaning whatever; it is just a name invented by a carpenter on the old steam barge at Titusville. The strange part of it is that while all the old settlers at Jupiter knew the name of the river was "Locohatchee," they accepted the new name painted on the steam lighter. Now there is hardly anyone who remembers the correct name of the river.⁴

When the *Loxahatchee* landed the rolling stock of the new railroad at Jupiter, the work of laying the track to Juno was finished in short order. Then a warehouse and dock were built at Juno terminal and everything was ready for the new steamboats and their loads of tourists coming to see Palm Beach. The new railroad became known as the "Celestial Line" because of its stations: Jupiter, Juno, Venus, and Mars. It was a narrow gauge line, and its little locomotive was the kind used in the north in the sixties and

seventies. The smokestack was a wide flaring affair shaped something like a funnel, over the top of which was a wire screen to stop the large cinders.⁵

Captain Hendrickson took his steamer *Lake Worth* off the Indian River and brought her to the lake. The first season she was large enough to handle all the passengers that came to Jupiter on the steamer *White*, but he plainly saw that when the large new steamers commenced making daily trips to Jupiter, and their passengers started coming to Juno by the Celestial railroad, his little steamer would not be large enough. That summer he hauled her out and enlarged her. When she was launched in the fall she was licensed to carry seventy-five passengers.

The following winter the three fine new steamers were in full operation on Indian River. A steamer would leave Titusville after the arrival of the afternoon train, generally about four o'clock, arriving at Jupiter about ten the next morning, starting back for Titusville an hour later. That same afternoon another steamer would leave Titusville bound for Jupiter.

With this service through to Juno the people on the lake demanded daily mail. The Post Office Department agreed and called for bids on a route from Juno to Hypoluxo and return. Uncle Will was the successful bidder. He converted his schooner to a steamer by adding twin screws attached to two ten-horsepower engines and a Robert's watertube boiler. He was assisted in this work by Frederick C. Voss. This old boat, now renovated, was named the *Hypoluxo*. She started on her daily round trips in January 1893, carrying mail, express, freight, and passengers, and for the next three or four years her steam whistle was a familiar and welcome sound to all the people of the lake.

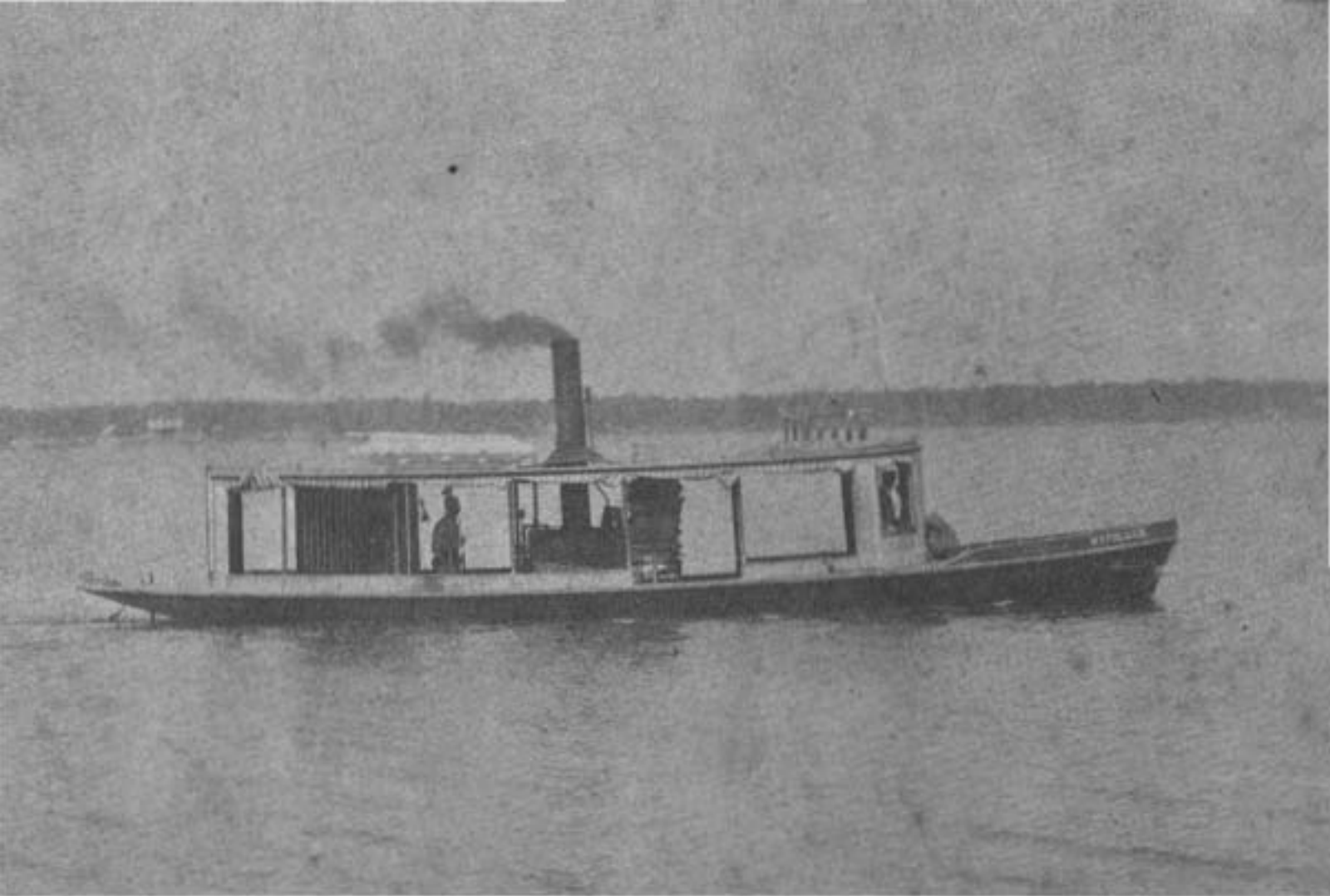
When the new and old steamboats of the company were making regular trips up and down the river, business was lively along its entire length. Titusville, which was headquarters of the company, was enjoying a gigantic boom. The

steamboat company's payroll each month was thirty thousand dollars and most of this money was spent in the town, where every kind of business flourished.

Later on, when many new orange groves started bearing fruit and the pineapple growing on the lower river was at its best, the steamboat company found it quite impossible to handle all of the freight. They brought to the river a freight steamer called the *Profess*. She was of seven-hundred tons net and of large size for the shallow waters of the river; in fact, she was by far the largest vessel that ever attempted its navigation. Every steamboat captain and most of the pilots on the river in those days were well known to me. Archie Lindsay was the first pilot on the *Saint Lucie* and the most popular one on the river in his day, though running a close second was Frank Houston. The entire male portion of the Houston family were steamboat men, beginning with old Captain John Houston, who in 1872 was the mail carrier from Sand Point to Fort Capron. Captain John had served as captain, pilot, and engineer from the very beginning to the end of steamboating on Indian River; Frank Houston was a captain and pilot; Chris and Carroll Houston were pilots; and George Houston was an engineer. In my estimation Captain Bravo stood at the head of the list of Indian River steamboat captains as the most picturesque and remarkable. Other captains were R. P. Paddison, of the old side-wheel steamer *Rockledge*; George Mercier; Charlie Brock; Herman Fisher; and George Gleason.

Early in 1893 I passed the examination for pilot of steam vessels and for the next two years was captain at different times of the *Lake Worth*, *Hypoluxo*, *Gladys*, *Adalante*, and *Denny*.

The building of the East Coast Railroad to Palm Beach spelled the end of the Indian River Steamboat Company. People leaving Jacksonville for Palm Beach would naturally go by the quickest route. Coming by the Jacksonville, Tampa, and Key West Railroad they would have to change



Steamer Hypoluxo

to a steamboat at Titusville, to a train at Jupiter and again to a small steamer at Juno. All of these transfers added about ten hours to the trip. This caused the steamboats to lose much of their patronage. In an attempt to keep a share of the business the company put the *Saint Augustine* on the lake run from Palm Beach to Juno in the winter and spring of 1895. Captain Jones was master and I was pilot. The season ended around April 1, and we took the boat to Titusville and her retirement. The officers and crew were paid off with checks signed by a receiver for the company. I returned to Jupiter on the last trip of the old *Saint Lucie*. The steamboat era on the river had lasted less than a decade.

In the fall of 1892 I sold the *Illinois* and bought the sloop yacht *Oriole*. The *Oriole* was twenty-eight feet on deck and twelve feet beam and was about the fastest and finest sloop in this part of the country. She was built by Bessie Brothers on Indian River from a model by Burgess, the New York yacht designer. The year before I bought her she had been

sold to a man from Baltimore who had spent the winter cruising around the lake. I do not know her original name, but the Baltimore man called her the *Oriole*. He had instructed Captain O. S. Porter to sell her, as he did not expect to return to the lake. I fitted her with a new set of sails made by George B. Carpenter and Company of Chicago. When the tourist season opened the *Oriole* was ready for business.

On a trip to Palm Beach in February 1893, I met Paul Ransome of Buffalo and Fred Townsend, a student on vacation from Williams College, who engaged the *Oriole* for a cruise down the coast to Biscayne Bay. Two Canadian brothers, Will and Harry Chestnut from New Brunswick, had been traveling with them and came along on the cruise as cook and deckhand. After a quick run to Miami, Ransome and Townsend went up to Brickell's store and post office for the mail and supplies. When they returned Ransome asked me if I knew where Kirk Munroe lived, saying he wished to call on him to present a letter of introduction from a mutual friend. I told him Munroe lived at Coconut Grove, some six or seven miles down the bay to the south. He said, "All right, let's go there."

For the next ten days we remained at Coconut Grove. Munroe was not long in finding out that I was interested in his books.⁶ He brought six or seven to the boat for me to read, and after I had finished them he told me how they came to be written. I enjoyed talking with him, or rather listening to him talk. He was the most entertaining man I had ever met.

There was a boy from Key West visiting the Munroes. He had a guitar and used to play and sing for us. We went for a short cruise around the bay in the Munroe's yacht, *Allapattah*, with Mr. and Mrs. Munroe and the boy. One night they came on board the *Oriole* for dinner and afterwards the Munroes sang a number of songs for our entertainment. One that Munroe sang took my fancy. It had

a catchy air, and the chorus was, "Hurrah! Hurrah! We're a Nation they Dread, Three Cheers for Jeff Davis and the Red, White and Red."

On our return to Coconut Grove from this little cruise we found everyone excited about the coming celebration of Washington's birthday and the planned yacht race. On the twenty-first there was to be a "free for all" race, divided into classes according to the length of the boat. On the twenty-second the race was to be limited to members of the Biscayne Bay Yacht Club. There were seven or eight sailing crafts of various rigs up from Key West to enter the first day's events.

On the afternoon of the twentieth my party decided that we should enter the *Oriole* in the race. I did not like the idea, for the *Oriole* had been in the water for over three months and her bottom was foul with moss and small barnacles and there was no time to clean it. Ransome answered my objections by saying no one expected to win the race, but that entering it would be great sport. That settled it, and the next day I went into Alfred Peacock's store and paid the fee of one dollar to enter the *Oriole* in the race. Peacock told me it was to be a fifteen-mile race: five miles dead to windward, five miles dead before the wind, and the last five miles with a leading wind. When I went back on board I saw Commodore Ralph Munroe getting underway in his yacht *Wabun*, which was to be the stake boat. The commodore was the starter and timekeeper for the race.

There were five boats including the *Oriole* in our class of twenty feet and over, but only one, judging by appearances, could sail with my boat. Her name was *Wanderer*, a sloop with about the same waterline as the *Oriole* but with a long overhang at the bow and stern. She carried a flying gaff topsail and a jib topsail, while we only had mainsail and jib, yet the *Oriole* was often called a racing machine because of her long main boom.

We followed the commodore's boat and in doing this I

had to slacken sheets and hold back to keep from sailing ahead of her. Then we sailed around waiting for the starting gun. When it came, it caught us behind the *Wanderer* and some distance astern, so she beat us across the starting line.

The *Wanderer* sailed straight down the bay and rounded the first buoy before us, but once around the buoy we commenced to close the gap. Although there was not nearly enough wind for the *Oriole* to show her best speed, the *Wanderer* carried away her topmast before rounding the second buoy. It must have been a makeshift affair to carry away in that moderate breeze. This accident put her under mainsail and jib as we were, and we gained on her rapidly.

After rounding the second buoy the wind freshened, giving us the breeze we had been wishing for all morning. We were now coming upon the *Wanderer* "hand-over-fist," but we were too near the finish to win. Nonetheless we crossed the line only fifty-six seconds behind the *Wanderer*.

After the race, Ransome said he wished to continue our cruise to Key West the next day. He was to meet Munroe in the island city to conclude a real estate deal. The next morning the wind was howling cold from the northwest. It was after lunch when we finally got underway under a double reefed mainsail. We anchored for the night near the Arseniker Keys. The following morning the wind had moderated to a full sailing breeze.

We sailed through Cutter Bank into Card's Sound, then Barn's Sound, and Jewfish Creek into Blackwater Bay. The outlet from Blackwater Bay was on the west side, a narrow channel between the two high bunches of mangrove trees that looked like islands but were only trees growing in the water. Just before leaving Coconut Grove, Ransome asked me if we would pass Indian Key. He said he knew a man in Buffalo named Perrine, who with his sister had been the only survivors of an Indian massacre on the island sometime about the year 1836. Ransome said Perrine had asked him to visit the island if he had an opportunity.⁷

We anchored off Indian Key the second day after leaving

Coconut Grove, and I landed Ransome in one of our canoes. He had a map of the island drawn for him by Perrine, showing where the dock used to be that he had hidden under during the massacre. After looking all over the key and inspecting every point mentioned in the sketch, we returned to the *Oriole* and continued our cruise to the southward.

When we arrived in Key West we found the *Allapattah*, Munroe's yacht, at anchor near the government dock, and we cast anchor near her. Ransome and Townsend immediately went on shore and put up at a hotel. They intended to leave the following night for Havana. From there they would sail to Colón, Panama, and then up the Pacific coast to Alaska. Harry and Will Chestnut returned to Palm Beach with me in the *Oriole*.



Captain U. D. Hendrickson



*Cap Dimick, owner of the
Coconut Grove Hotel*

The day after our arrival, Palm Beach was astonished by the news that Flagler was coming to select a site for a great tourist hotel. He and his party were to arrive the next day. Albert Robert was acting as Flagler's advance agent. He chartered the *Oriole* for three days in case some of the party might want to make a trip up or down the lake. Everybody was excited and the sole topic of conversation was what Flagler's trip would mean to the settlers of the lake.

The Flagler party spent three days looking over Palm Beach and did not appear to be interested in any other part of the lake. The wind kept blowing a brisk breeze from the northwest for the whole three days they were there. It was rather chilly and no one wanted to go sailing. I spent most of the three days sitting in the office of the hotel where the Flagler party was staying.

Before leaving Palm Beach, Flagler gave orders to Albert Robert to buy certain properties he wanted for his hotel site and grounds. Robert was told to pay whatever the owner asked no matter what it cost. "Buy it," was his order, and Robert bought. For the old Geer home, then owned by the McCormicks, he paid seventy-five thousand dollars. For a slice off the north side of the Brelsford place, taking in the point where their store and post office stood, fifty thousand dollars. On the west side of the lake he bought Captain O. S. Porter's place for thirty-five thousand. Louie Hillhouse sold his homestead, which joined Captain Porter's on the north, for ten thousand dollars. These two tracts of land were laid out as the town of West Palm Beach a year later.

When the boom in land sales started, there was considerable excitement among the landowners on the lake. This was the first real estate boom on the lower east coast, and a buyer could be found for almost any parcel of land at a fair price. Just before the Flagler purchase, Cap Dimick sold his hotel and surrounding land to Commodore Clark. He was wise; he knew that when Flagler's big hotel was in operation there would be little business for the fifty-room Coconut

Grove, so he sold when the selling was good. The Coconut Grove was rented by Flagler to take care of workmen on the Royal Poinciana. It caught fire one night in the following October and burned to the ground, leaving only many fond memories of the good times when it was the social and political headquarters of the entire lake and the home of Mr. and Mrs. E. N. Dimick, the real founders of the tourist resort of Palm Beach.

The building of the Royal Poinciana started in May of 1893. The construction of the Florida East Coast Railroad from St. Augustine southward had been going on for some months but had only reached Eau Gallie when the hotel was started. Here the building material, supplies, and men to work on the new hotel were loaded on the steamers *Saint Lucie* and *Sweeney* and transported to Jupiter, where they were shipped on the little Jupiter and Lake Worth Railroad to Juno. At Juno the material was again loaded on small steamers, lighters, sailboats, and in fact anything that could carry a few hundred feet of lumber and boated to Palm Beach, where a small city of tents sprang up around the building under construction. It was said that almost anything that could be found in a real city could be found in this city of canvas.⁸

There was great activity on the lake that summer and fall with the fleet of small steamers, barges, and sailboats engaged in the work of transportation from Juno to Palm Beach. Flagler even sent his own yacht from St. Augustine to help with this work. She was a Herrshoff steamer called *Adalante*.

The hotel was finished and opened for business in February 1894. The railroad construction was steadily pushing along to the southward and at last reached West Palm Beach (Westpalmbeach as it was spelled at that time) on April 2, 1894.

By 1893, before the coming of the railroad, the people of the lake, especially those who had arrived in the seventies, no longer thought they were living on a frontier. A daily



Members of the Lake Worth Pioneers Association, May 29, 1919. Front row, left to right (1) Mrs. George Rowley, Sr.; (2) Mrs. George Sears; (3) William Lanehart; (4) John N. Clark; (5) J. N. Parker; (6) H. F. Hammon; (7) George W. Sears; (8) Captain U. D. Hendrickson; (9) Mrs. Armour, Sr. Second row, left to right (10) W. J. Metcalf, Sr.; (11) J. W. Porter; (12) George W. Lainhart; (13) E. M. Brelsford; (14) Paul Jones; (15) William Whidden; (16) Capt. Fred C. Voss; (17) George W. Potter; (18) Ben Potter; (19) Henry Sanders, Sr.; (20) George F. Rowley, Sr.; (21) George W. Idner; (22) Joe Wells

mail, express, and passenger service had been started by Uncle Will with his steamer *Hypoluxo*, and the government had established weather stations at Titusville, Micco, and Jupiter that were connected by a telegraph line to all points north and extended to the lake with offices in the hotel at Riviera, Hendrickson's store at Lake Worth, and in the Coconut Grove Hotel at Palm Beach. In 1893 there were eight post offices on the lake (Juno, Riviera, Lake Worth, Palm Beach, Figulus, Jewel, Lantana, and Hypoluxo), four general stores, three tourist hotels, two large boardinghouses and a weekly newspaper published at Juno. Nonetheless, the coming of Flagler and his railroad, the building of the big hotels, and the founding of the city of West Palm Beach brought an end to an era. The pioneer days, like the little boats with their "wings of the wind," remained only as a pleasant memory.

Notes

Preface

1. Ft. Pierce was built during the Second Seminole War by Brevet Lieutenant Colonel Benjamin Kendrick Pierce. Jacob Rhett Motte, *Journey into Wilderness* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1963), p. 176. It is likely that B. K. Pierce is the same as B. U. Pierce, brother of President Franklin Pierce, who rose to the rank of brevet colonel and "gained considerable renown in the Florida War," D. W. Bartlett, *The Life of General Franklin Pierce of New Hampshire: The Democratic Candidate for President of the United States* (Auburn, N.Y.: Derby and Miller, 1852), p. 16. President Franklin Pierce, and hence B. K. Pierce, were cousins of Captain H. D. Pierce. G.L.V.*

Chapter 1

1. For an account of Lang, see Louis Capron, "First in Palm Beach," *Tequesta* 26 (1965): 43-65.
2. See Mrs. Bessie Wilson DuBois, "The Wreck of the Victor," *Tequesta* 22 (1963): 15-22.

*The material for footnotes signed G.L.V. was supplied by Dr. Gilbert L. Voss, chairman of the Division of Biology, Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Science, University of Miami.

Chapter 2

1. A catboat is a type of rig in which the single mast is stepped directly against the stem of the boat and the sail is gaff rigged. Very few are seen today. G.L.V.
2. The "Historical Edition" of the Palm Beach *Daily News* for 1936 contains the statement: "... H. D. Pierce, of Hypoluxo, gives us the definition of the name, which he obtained from a squaw when he first came to the country, viz Long Water. Hypoluxo is the Indian name for the lake." G.L.V.

Albert DeVane of Lake Placid, investigated the origin of the name at both the Big Cypress and the Brighton Seminole Reservations. The Rev. Josie Billy at Big Cypress told him "The Mickasukie word for island is *Om-Pi-Let-Kee*, meaning an island in English [where no water come over] or above high-water mark. Always dry, water all around." At Brighton Mr. DeVane was told "The word comes from the Creek word *Poloko*, meaning round. It is pronounced *Po-Lus-Kee*, with the prefix 'O' before the word. The meaning is a round mound [or island, as we call it] with water spilling over [or we should say it is dry]." In summary, DeVane says, "Mr. Pierce's definition or meaning of the word Hypoloxo as stated by an old Indian woman to Mr. Pierce's mother was a satisfactory definition for the word. The word being understood by Seminoles, Creeks and Mickasukies." Letter from Albert DeVane to Judge James R. Knott, September 27, 1968. It would seem though that the name does refer to the island, and not to the lake.

3. Pink curlew is the native South Florida name for the roseate spoonbill, *Ajaia ajaja*. G.L.V.
4. This was the greater scaup duck, *Nyroca marila*, the common bay duck with a distinctive blue bill. Pierce was a good ornithologist with an extensive library on the subject. G.L.V.
5. In 1968 the Jonathan Dickinson Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution installed a historical marker on North Ocean Boulevard in Delray Beach commemorating the site of the Orange Grove House of Refuge Number 3.

Chapter 3

1. "The caves" consisted of two caverns located behind the ocean ridge and facing west. The larger one was about twenty by twenty feet and high enough for a man to stand erect. A great slab of

stone lay to the right of the opening. Local legend stated that pirate treasure was buried beneath it but no one could ever move the stone to see if it were true. Access to the smaller cave was gained by a crawl way. It was quite small and in almost total darkness. "Long John" Holman, who carried the mail from St. Augustine to Biscayne Bay during the Civil War, used the caves as a stopover and the slab as a table. Today the caves have been nearly demolished by road building. See Ralph Middleton Munroe and Vincent Gilpin, *The Commodore's Story*, (New York: Ives Washburn, 1930; 1966 reprint by the Historical Association of Southern Florida), pp. 95 and 154, where Holman is mentioned as carrying the mail during the Second Seminole War. See also Gilbert L. Voss, "The Orange Grove House of Refuge," *Tequesta* 28 (1968). G.L.V.

2. The name "Cap" was a nickname given to E. N. Dimick by his mother because of his great fondness as a little boy for a white cap. Later people on the lake, thinking it was the familiar abbreviation for captain, often gave him this title, used by the settlers along the southeastern Florida coast only for the captains of the large sailing craft so important in early pioneer days. Dimick was a poor sailor and never made any pretense during his life to being a boatman. G.L.V.
3. Lillie Elder Pierce was the first white girl born in the region of the lake. In 1894 she married Frederick Christian Voss of Bath, Maine, who came to the lake in 1888 as a steam engineer. They lived in the town of Hypoluxo directly across from the old Pierce homestead until Captain Voss' death in 1956. Mrs. Voss then moved to Boynton Beach where she died on September 14, 1967. G.L.V.
4. Dexter Hubel was the first settler in what is now Boynton Beach. His homestead was along the ocean ridge at the end of Ocean Avenue. He built a home at what is now the intersection of Ocean Avenue and Ocean Boulevard. See Gilbert L. Voss, "The Early History of Boynton Beach," *Literary Florida* 5 (August 1949). G.L.V.
5. Henshall mentions a stuffed crocodile that he saw in the Pierce home during his first Florida cruise. One would assume that this is the same animal. J. A. Henshall, *Camping and Cruising in Florida* (Cincinnati: Robert Clarke and Company, 1884), p. 92.
6. According to Munroe and Gilpin (*The Commodore's Story*, p. 95), John Addison was a former scout in the Second Seminole War and lived at Cutler. G.L.V.
7. To "jibe" in sailing terminology is to come around stern to the

wind, let the wind catch the sail on the leach and then come around onto the new tack. If performed correctly with the boom hauled in smartly and then eased off, it is good practice; improperly done, it is dangerous. G.L.V.

Chapter 4

1. J. A. Henshall, *Camping and Cruising in Florida* (Cincinnati: Robert Clarke and Company, 1884).
2. Lightwood, or lighter wood, was the very heavy heartwood of the yellow pine. It was rich in oils and would light instantly, wet or dry, when cut into kindling. It was this ability that gave it its name and it was in common use throughout the pinewoods sections of the Georgia and Florida countryside. G.L.V.
3. *Aguardiente* in Spanish, but called aguadente by the settlers, Bahamians, and Key Westers. The typical aguadente bottles had large round bases and small tall necks and held about five gallons. They were common on the beaches and were carried in sailboats for water jugs. G.L.V.
4. See Mattie A. Heyser, "Lake Worth's first Post Office," *Lake Worth Historian*, 1896, p. 8; Lillie Pierce Voss, "Hypoluxo and its History," *ibid*, p. 20; and C. W. Pierce, "Memories of a Pioneer," Historical Number, *Palm Beach Daily News* (1936), p. 19. Mrs. Heyser claimed the petition for postal service was circulated in 1880, but evidently she is in error. Pierce checked this out very carefully. G.L.V.

Chapter 5

1. For the early history of Dade County, founded in 1836, see F. M. Hudson, "Beginnings in Dade County," *Tequesta* 1 (1943).
2. The sailing craft called the "sharpie" played an important role in the history of the development of Lake Worth. Commodore Munroe stated that he first introduced the sharpie to South Florida in 1881 with the 30-foot *Skipparee* and gives an exciting account of sailing into Lake Worth in 1890 with the 28-foot *Egret*, the first ever to be seen on the lake. Munroe and Gilpin, *The Commodore's Story*, p. 162. This was a figment of the commodore's vivid imagination, as there were at that time at least

a dozen New Haven type sharpies on the lake, of which the *Illinois* at 40 feet was one of the largest. Most were built by H. F. Hammon, a noted lake designer and builder of sharpies, whose 20-foot sharpie was mentioned as going to the lake while the Pierces were still at Jupiter in 1872. Henshall comments that in 1881 there were numerous sharpies on the coast, some of the best being those of Hammon and Hendrickson. Henshall, *Camping and Cruising in Florida*, p. 114. G.L.V.

3. The original Pierce homestead was later sold to Colonel Jacques Balsan and his wife, the former Consuelo Vanderbilt. The Pierce house was used as part of the servants' quarters. The home still stands and is now part of the Manalapan Club that is situated on the south end of Hypoluxo Island. G.L.V.

Chapter 6

1. The daughter of the Sturtevents, Mrs. Julia Tuttle, became known as the "Mother of Miami."
2. See Munroe, *The Commodore's Story*, pp. 97-98.
3. Comptie, comtie, coontie, koonti, or kunti are all variations of the Indian name for a flour or starch made from the root of the cycad *Zamia integrifolia*. Comptie or comtie is the approximate pronunciation of the word from the Muskogee dialect, while coontie or koonti is from the Mikasuki dialect. Pierce, from Lake Worth, was more familiar with the Cow Creek or Muskogee Seminoles, while the people from Biscayne Bay were acquainted with the Big Cypress or Mikasuki tribe, the two languages being quite dissimilar. The name of the typical Indian stew is more often spelled "sofkie" or "sofki." G.L.V.
4. The Coulee family (spelled variously Colee or Cooly) settled in Coulee Hammock about 1835. Mrs. Coulee and two sons were killed by the Indians January 6, 1838. See Motte, *Journey into Wilderness*, (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1963), p. 223. G.L.V.
5. The Indian name for New River was *Coonte Hatchee* or *Kuntihatchi*, which means Coontie creek or river, named so because of the great quantities of coontie growing in the region. See Motte, *Journey into Wilderness*, p. 222, G.L.V.
6. See Mrs. Ruby Leach Carson, "Forty Years of Miami Beach," *Tequesta* 15 (1955): 3-27.

Chapter 7

1. For an account of Pierce's cruise with *Le Chevelier*, see Charles William Pierce, "The Cruise of the *Bonton*," *Tequesta* 22 (1962): 3-78.
2. Samuel James and his wife were Negroes and settled north of Hypoluxo at what is now the city of Lake Worth, originally called Jewel. They were the first homesteaders and the original settlers of Lake Worth. Highly respected by the other settlers, they played a strong role in the development of the area. G.L.V.
3. Burnham's granddaughter, Mary Knight, married Pierce's nephew, Frederick C. Voss, Jr. G.L.V.
4. Cape Canaveral is, of course, today known as Cape Kennedy.
5. Tony Canova was a descendant of the Minorcans brought over to New Smyrna by Turnbull. He married Julie Gingrass of Rockledge. He was a steamboat man and was a pilot on the steamers used in the construction of the Overseas Extension to Key West. G.L.V.
6. This was known as the "Great Wine Wreck" and was also famous in the annals of Biscayne Bay. G.L.V.
7. The spellings of Lanehart and Lainhart have long confused local historians of Palm Beach County. William N. Lanehart and George W. Lainhart were brothers; Benjamin Lanehart was a distant cousin. Lainhart was the original spelling, but William throughout his life insisted on spelling his name Lanehart, and Benjamin used the same spelling. The two different spellings are retained by their descendants. G.L.V.

Chapter 8

1. See also Charles W. Pierce, "Pioneer Politics," *The Palm Beach Post* May 1, 1934. G.L.V.
2. Frank Stranahan was the original settler and founder of what is now Fort Lauderdale. He also ran a hotel for the hack drivers and passengers. See Philip Weidling and August Burghard, *Checkered Sunshine: The History of Fort Lauderdale, 1793-1955* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1966.)
3. Frederick C. Voss later married Charles W. Pierce's sister, Lillie Elder Pierce. The couple made their home for over fifty years at Hypoluxo. Captain Voss was originally a steam engineer from Bath, Maine, but later was better known as captain of small

steamers and finally of the seventy-eight foot yacht *Donnygil*. G.L.V.

4. "Lochahatchee" was actually the correct Indian name meaning "Turtle River." Pierce's account of the way the "x" became a part of the spelling is likely correct, but not that it had been "loco" and thus part Spanish, part Indian.
5. See N. D. Shappee, "The Celestial Railroad to Juno," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 40 (April 1962) 329-349.
6. Kirk Munroe (1850-1930) wrote adventure stories with a Florida flavor and background. Two of his many books were *Through Swamp and Glade. A Tale of the Seminole War* (1896) and *Wakulla: A Story of Adventure in Florida* (Harpers Brothers, 1886). See Irving A. Leonard, "The Florida Stories of Kirk Munroe," *The Carrel*, vol. 9, no. 1 (June 1968).
7. For the story of the Indian Key Massacre see Dorothy Dodd, "Jacob Housman of Indian Key," *Tequesta* 8 (1948): 3-20; and Hester Perrine Walker, "Massacre at Indian Key, August 7, 1840, and "The Death of Doctor Henry Perrine," *Florida Historical Quarterly* (July 1926).
8. See Sidney Walter Martin, *Florida's Flagler* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1949), pp. 150-168.

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